

2020

After-School Enrichment Programs and Secondary Education Achievement among African American Males

Willis Roger Carter
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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Willis Roger Carter

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Walden University
2020

Abstract

After-School Enrichment Programs and Secondary Education

Achievement among African American Males

by

Willis Roger Carter

MA, University of Michigan, 1999

BS, University of Detroit, 1986

Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

August 2020

Abstract

The purpose of this single case study, at one high school in the Midwest region of United States, was to examine after-school enrichment programs and their connections to improving academic achievement for African American (AA) male students. The central question of what factors in structured after-school enrichment programs (ASEPs) contribute to academic achievement for AA males was studied using social learning theory and punctuated equilibrium as the theoretical guide. Data were collected via face-to-face interviews and surveys administered to 10 administrators, 10 parents, and 10 teachers who met the criteria for inclusion in the study. Data collection also included classroom observations of teachers' attitudes toward interactions with students during ASEP activities. Data were inductively coded and then subjected to a thematic analysis leading to 4 themes including continuing learning opportunities for teachers; building student confidence and student motivation; recognizing that communication is a central component of ASEP; and providing policymakers with data needed for decision making. Key findings may have implications for informing public policymakers, as well as school and district leaders, on issues related to after-school enrichment programs and how they may help African American male students to be more successful in school and in life. The positive social change implications stemming from this study include recommendations to policy makers to address policy and funding issues involving; professional development of teachers; improvement in communication with parents; and enhancement of ASEP activities and programs.

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Dedication

“To the creator of the sun, the stars, the moon, and the universe; the creator of all things, the giver of life, all mighty God, with him all things are possible!”

I dedicate the publication of this work to my entire family, my late mother (Gertrude) and father (Ernest), sisters (Bessie and Barbara Ann) and brother (Ernest, Jr). You will forever be in my thoughts and I know that you are looking down upon me with your generous smiles. To my living brothers, Alonzo, James, and Nate, words cannot express my gratitude for your support. To my mother in-law (Sally), your prayers and faith took me to the finish line. To my nieces, nephews, and other relatives, never give up on your dreams.

A special dedication to my wife, Dr Mary, for her total support. Dr. Mary, you have been there from day one to encourage and support me from the beginning to the end, each day and night. Words cannot express my love for you.

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As I reflect on where my journey in education first began, I am reminded of how Dr. Clifford Watson brought me out of the darkest side of ignorance and guided me to the light of education and truly changed my life. The Malcom X Academy staff, students, parents, and community embraced me with love and support. I will always be grateful and indebted for their support. The Academy molded me into the person I am today. A special acknowledgment and thank you goes to an educator, administrator, leader, and mentor who planted the seed of education into me, the late and great Dr. Clifford Watson.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The education reform system in the United States is focused on increasing high school graduation rates and closing the academic achievement gap for disadvantaged students, specifically in low performing schools (Gardner, Lopes & Council, 2014). Despite progress toward academic achievement, ethnic disparities in academic performance remain. This is particularly true among African American males. Becerra (2012) found that levels of racial and socioeconomic disparities are increasing in public schools. Public policy makers are challenged to create policies and solutions to address these disparities. As public schools collaborate to determine how to improve academic outcomes for students, after-school enrichment programs may be potential sources of academic support for African American males as well as other students. According to the National Collaboration for Youth (2011), youth development programs have a role to play in educational outcomes, stating that:

meaningful progress in improving educational outcomes must involve multiple stakeholders and a variety of sustained efforts over time. Community-based and youth development organizations need to be at the strategy-development table of school reform with examples of how they can help American children succeed both in and out of school (p. 3).

After-school enrichment programs (ASEPs) that are comprehensive and promote learning experiences for students through the development of supportive activities can increase student learning and positive outcomes (Farrell, Collier-Meer, & Pons, 2013). Most after-school programs provide activities that include academic enrichment for

students, mentoring, and the development of problem solving and socialization skills (Kremer, Maynard, Polanin, Vaughn & Sarteschi, 2015). McDaniel and Yarbrough (2015) pointed out that after-school programs provide structured schedules, which include mentoring programs that target individualized learning, as well as social and behavioral needs of students. ASEPs also foster interpersonal competence, help students define life goals, and promote educational success. Perhaps one of the most effective components of ASEPs is the provision of supervision and safe childcare for parents to minimize social disparities (Butler-Barnes, Chavous-Hurd, & Varner, 2013).

I conducted this study to explore participants' perspectives and opinions on enrichment programs that place emphasis on socialization and cognitive skills and how such programs may contribute to improvements in the academic achievement of high school African American males. Further, the intent was to gain a deeper understanding about the problem and why public policies and policymakers' decision-making processes about after-school programs are important. Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the study, background of the study, problem statement, purpose statements, research questions guiding the study, and the theoretical framework underpinning the study. The nature of the study, definitions of terms, assumptions, scope and limitations, and delimitation, as well as the significance of the study and implications for social change are also included in Chapter 1. A summary of the chapter is also included.

Background of Study

The transition into high school is important and sometimes leaves many students feeling overwhelmed. Grades 9 through 12 are pivotal points during which students may

drop out of school (Dotter, 2012). Supporting students with academic enrichment programs infused with effective socialization and enhanced cognitive skills may help to reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed and thus improve student retention. The quality and availability of ASEPs are often dictated by policies and funding. Lake, Joachim and Darmound (2015) found that under-funded schools, high unemployment rates, policing efforts that target youth at risk of poverty, and environmental barriers, are precipitating factors that have negative consequences for urban youths, especially young African American males. The availability of quality programs and the under-funding of programs affect the overall health of the population of young males who need to take advantage of after-school programs.

The well-being of African American males in Detroit, Michigan draws attention to the city's social and economic crises. This city, where the study was conducted, has experienced large economic declines, home foreclosures, and job losses (Lake et al., 2015). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), the United States unemployment rate in December 2014 was 5.6%. Comparatively, the unemployment rate for Detroiters was 7.6% during the same time. Prior studies revealed that opportunities to rebuild family wealth have not been favorable in Detroit (Watkins, 2016). In addition to high unemployment, Detroit is also stricken by violence and a high crime rate, as illustrated in Table 1, which shows crime statistics from 2012 (Homefacts, 2014; Watkins, 2016).

Table 1

Crime Comparison in Detroit, Michigan per 100,000

Crime	Detroit	Michigan	National
Murders	55	681	5
Rapes	62	3,434	27
Robberies	685	10,379	113
Aggravated Assaults	1321	28,437	242
Burglaries	1899	52,243	670
All Property Crimes	5,792	2,327	2859

The problem is further complicated by the high dropout rate and achievement gap of high school students from Detroit Public Schools. Enrollment in Detroit, Michigan public schools declined 71% and 213 schools closed between 2000 to 2015 (State of Michigan Center for Education and Performance, 2015). Most of the enrollment losses were the result of population shifts, financial losses, and low academic performance (US Department of Education, 2014). Schools with consistently low-test scores were either closed or reopened with new programs or students were transferred to nearby schools with higher test scores. According to a 2014 Department of Education report, there were 93 open public schools in the Metro Detroit School District in comparison to 385 in 1975.

When compared to suburban school districts in the metropolitan area between 2007 and 2012, the Detroit Public School District had the lowest percentage of students who were deemed proficient (State of Michigan Center for Education and Performance,

2015). These results placed Detroit behind suburban and rural school districts. Gardner and Mayes (2013) found that African American male students in the target community may lack college preparedness for entry level college courses and have limited information about the college process. The underperformance and low academic achievement of African American male students is a major problem nationally (United States Department of Education, 2012). These challenges are intensified by a student's lack of capacity to understand and apply oral and written information, which may have an impact on their ability to not only identify, but also express an understanding of societal issues. Graduating from high school is a significant milestone and promotes academic attainment, citizenship, and career development (Whaley & Noel, 2012). Between 2013 and 2014, the graduation rate for Detroit, Michigan high schools was 64%, which was 12% lower than the statewide rate. Yet, this was 5% higher than Detroit's 2011 rate of high school completion (State of Michigan Center for Educational Performance and Information, 2015).

According to the 2012 Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) test results, the achievement gap among African American male students is rising (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014). The College Board reports indicate that African American male students are 2.4 times as likely to have been suspended, and twice as likely to have repeated a grade when compared to White male students (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2015). High school graduation rates reveal that in 2012, 67% of African American male students graduated on time in Detroit Michigan, when compared to 84% of White male students, and 71% of Hispanic students (NCES, 2015).

The portrait of African American males in our society often depicts them in environments surrounded by drugs, athletics, and academic failures (Ellis, Rowley, Nellum & Smith, 2015). According to Butler-Barnes, Williams and Chavous (2012), African American males are most likely to be suspended from school, experience less academic success and score below the achievement scores on most student performance measures. Socioeconomic status, single parent homes, and negative neighborhood influences have an impact on a student's ability to learn and to achieve positive outcomes (Conchas, Lin, Oseguera, & Drake, 2015). Under exploration in this study was how structured ASEPs for high school African American males may positively influence their academic achievement and retention to graduation to then make recommendations for how public policymakers may use findings from the study to inform their decision making processes and policies.

Problem Statement

Further studies are needed to address the academic achievement gaps in Detroit public schools and examine whether enrichment programs that place emphasis on socialization and cognitive skills can improve academic achievement. In Detroit, as within the rest of the nation, retention and academic achievement among African American males remain a source of concern, even though many laws and policies have been directed toward the goal of education equity within the United States (Rothstein, 2014). According to McKinsey and Company (2014), with closure of the educational achievement gap between the United States and those of better performing nations over the last decade, the United States gross domestic product in 2016 would have been \$1.3

trillion to \$2.3 trillion higher. Many students in America are no longer competitive with students across the developed world. Hanushek, Peterson, and Woessmann (2013) reported that the United States ranked 27th in mathematics according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for International Student Assessment rankings for 2012. Sixteen countries produced twice as many high achievers per capita as the United States (Hanushek, Peterson, & Woessmann, 2013).

The general problem is that the American educational system is in a crisis and the academic achievement and ability of students to be competitive globally have decreased on a local, national, and international level. This highlights the general problem of the United States being confronted with the real possibility that we may fail to meet a global challenge. The specific problem to be addressed in this study was the status of African American males and the growing gaps in high school completion rates, low academic achievement of this population of students, and ineffective after-school programs. Despite state and national provision of policies and programs, African American male students are academically and socially behind their peers (Harris, Hines, Kelly, Williams, & Bagley 2014). These gaps are a national and public policy concern and suggest an alarming future for African American male students. While the number of after-school programs have gone up, the conditions for this group of students has changed very little.

The increase in the number and types of academic enrichment programs has been attributed to federal funding from the United States government. In 2017-2018, a 50-million-dollar increase was allocated for after school enrichment and summer programs for low socioeconomic families (Frazier, Mehta, Atkins, Hur & Rusch, 2013). In 2017,

President Trump's administration proposed eliminating all federal funding for after-school programs, while indicating that afterschool programs were not effective (Frazier, et al., 2013). According to Dotter (2012), federal allocations are the primary source of funding for ASEPs. Also, additional funding and public policy support is needed as this would allow the State of Michigan to meet the needs of more school students. Public policymakers are confronted with a moment of opportunity and urgency.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore and gain a deeper understanding of how and why ASEPs influence academic achievement of African American male students at one public high school and how adequate funding of such programs supports academic achievement. This study will focus on perspectives and opinions of teachers, administrators, and parents on what factors may contributed to program success and examine whether certain practices in specialized programs may foster positive student outcomes. Results of the study may serve to provide information needed to assist educators and policymakers in determining whether or not after-school enrichment programs make a positive impact on student academic achievement, thus, leading to increased attention and funding of such programs. Further, this study may support efforts to address the requirements set by the 21st Century Learning Centers, which requires schools to provide students with academic enrichment opportunities as well as additional activities designed to support their regular academic program. Using a qualitative method and case study design allowed me to (a) benefit from participants' perspectives and opinions, (b) gain a better understanding of the problem, and (c) identify

factors that may contribute to effectiveness or ineffectiveness of ASEPs. Additionally, the qualitative research method provided an opportunity for me to obtain and capture the perspectives and opinions of study participants needed to address the research questions guiding the study (Creswell, 2013).

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

Research Question 1: How do educators describe or define factors that contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of structured ASEPs designed to improve academic achievement outcomes for high school African American males at one metropolitan high school?

Research Question 2: How do parents identify and describe factors that contribute to the effects of a structured after-school enrichment program on their child (ren)?

Research Question 3: Why and how do educators think ASEPs help re-direct African American male students' attitudes, self-efficacy, and motivation toward their academic success?

Research Question 4: How, if so, do the practices identified by educators and parents generate issue definition and agenda setting of public policy decisions by lawmakers on ASEPs when using the PET?

Theoretical Framework

The study was underpinned by Albert Bandura's (1963) social learning theory and the punctuated equilibrium theory (PET). Bandura's theory was effective in helping to understand and explain why after- school enrichment programs, infused with

socialization and academic enrichment may positively influence the motivation and academic success of high school African American males. The PET was effective in helping to gain insights into policies and policymakers decision making processes.

According to Bandura (1986), self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief to take actions and perform tasks successfully. An example of academic self-efficacy occurs with student's determination to control emotions, behaviors, and surrounding environments (Bandura, 1977). Within academic achievement, research on self-efficacy has identified that there are gender differences among students and academic achievement (Shin, 2011). What remain unclear are the disparities of academic self-efficacy for African American male students and how structured after-school enrichment program activities may help to address these disparities. Further, a deeper understanding of policymakers' awareness of the problem, and their decision making regarding the problem, is needed.

The PET was used with Bandura's theory as the foundation of this research. The PET was originally developed to understand the dynamics of policy change in subsystems but has extended to a more general formulation of punctuated change in policymaking, according to True, Jones, & Baumgartner (2006). True et al. (2006) used the PET to explain the observation of political processes which changes during time and often represents stability and incrementalism over time. Birkland (1997) suggested that the PET also places policy processes on dual foundations of political institutions and bounds rational decision-making. The theory places a focus on two related elements of the policy process such as issue definition and agenda setting (Givel, 2010). Founded on

the rationality of human decision making and on the nature of government institutions, the PET makes a strong claim that it is closely aligned with how policymakers approach policy decisions at the national level (Atkinson, Lovett & Baumgartner, 2014).

As issues arise in public agendas, existing policies can either be questioned or reinforced as issues are defined in the public. Wood (2006) suggested that reinforcement can create obstacles which, according to True, Jones, and Baumgartner (2006), may challenge policies and create opportunities for revisions in policy outcomes. According to Saunders and Chan (2014), government programs are sometimes eliminated, even if they continue to function as they did in prior years. On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reauthorizing the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and replacing the No Child Left behind (NCLB) Act (Michigan Department of Education, 2016). Robinson (2004) suggested that the logic of the politics is that punctuations are more likely to occur for government related issues.

The PET was appropriate for use in this study because the budgeting and policy making in the Detroit Public School system is representative of stability and change. In Michigan where the study was conducted, financial challenges have impacted academic enrichment programs and academic achievement of all students, particularly for students needing after-school care. Baumgartner and Jones (1993) noted that the PET posits that a change may not seem obvious during initial change, however throughout time, there is noticeable change. The intent of this research was to identify factors that are stable and

practices that are deemed effective in successful ASEPs. Policymakers and educational leaders may use the findings from this study to review, and if needed, restructure ASEPs.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of the qualitative case study was to explore and gain a deeper understanding of how and why ASEPs influence academic achievement of African American male students at one public high school and how adequate funding of such programs supports achievement. The study was used to explore and examine participants' perspectives and opinions on the impact of after-school programming and the effects such may have on the overall academic achievement and motivation of African American high school male students. The study was conducted in a large public-school district in a Metropolitan Midwestern part of the United States.

The population for this study consisted of high school administrators and teachers with 5 or more years of public-school experience and involvement in ASEPs, and parents who have used after-school programs for their high school students. A purposeful sampling approach was used for the study. Denbo (2002) suggested that a sample should be comprised of participants who fit the criteria and from whom the most can be learned. Purposeful sampling increases effectiveness and credibility of studies consisting of small sample sizes as found in this study (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008; Leedy & Ormon, 2005; Patton, 2002). Ten high school teachers and 10 high school administrators who have been involved in ASEPs for 5 or more years and 10 parents of high school students who have been participants in the after-school enrichment program at the research site

comprised the sample group for this study. Permission to conduct the study at the research site was requested and granted.

After receiving IRB approval, potential parent participants were invited to join the study via a letter of invitation mailed to parents and an email invitation sent to teachers and administrators. Potential participants who contact me, indicating a willingness to participate in the study, were given an informed consent form which explained the purpose of the study. The first 10 potential participants from each of the categories who completed and returned the informed consent form became part of the research study as the sample group. The actual sample group consisted of 10 teachers, 10 administrators, and 10 parents. The confidentiality of participants is important in research as it was in this study. Survey responses, observation notes, interview notes, and audio recordings were coded with an alpha-numeric code for the purpose of confidentiality.

Data were collected using semistructured open-ended questions during face-to-face interviews (Appendix A) and the administering of a teacher and parent survey. The interviews took 45 minutes per participant. I took detailed notes during the data collection using an interview notes coding sheet (see Appendix F). Notes were organized, entered into NVivo and transcribed during data analysis. Permission to use the existing surveys had been granted (Appendix G). Completion of the surveys (Appendix H & I) took 5 to 7 minutes.

Case study research supports the use of semistructured, open-ended questions that allows the participants a full opportunity to share experiences and opinions (Noyes & Williams, 2009). This design also supports the use of surveys and questionnaires. The

questions used for the face-to-face interviews were field tested using three experts in the field. Questions were revised based on feedback from the experts and revisions appear in Appendix A. Triangulation of data collected from teachers, administrators, and parents will be used to enhance credibility of the study. Data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and NVivo 10 software. NVivo is a software program that takes keywords and help with organizing and analyzing data leading to themes and patterns.

Definition of Terms

Behavioral engagement: A student's willingness to actively engage and participate emotionally and, cognitively in school activities (Harris, Hines, Kelly, Williams & Bagley, 2014).

Cognitive engagement: A mental state in which students' place emphasis on and learning specific topics over a period of time (Harris, Hines, Kelly, Williams, & Bagley, 2014).

Educational barriers: Academic boundaries and social injustices that undermine individuals' self-perception and opportunity to achieve in academics (Becerra, 2012).

Racial identity: A group of individuals who share a common history, and are classified together on the basis of, national origin, race, religion language and geographic distribution (Ellis, Rowley, Nellum & Smith, 2015).

Socialization: A process by which individuals learn to acquire norms, values, and behaviors of a group (Conchas, Lin, Oseguera & Drake, 2015).

Socioeconomic status: A class or group of individuals that share similar occupations, income, and educational characteristics (Alike & Edosa, 2012).

Assumptions

This study includes three assumptions. The first assumption is that an adequate sample population will agree to be a part of the study. It was assumed that study participants will be willing to participate in the study and sit for an interview discussing the study topic. Another assumption was that participants will answer questions honestly and completely. Further, I assumed that an adequate number of participants could be recruited and would be willing to participate in the study.

Scope and Delimitations

The study was limited to one high school in a large Midwestern Metropolitan area. Delimitations in a study are the things that the researcher can exercise control over. This study will be limited to one high school in one public school district. Teachers, administrators, and parents invited to participate in the study will be from the site where the study will be conducted. Ten teachers, 10 administrators, and 10 parents were recruited to serve as the sample group. All recruited participants stayed in the study. No participants withdrew from the study.

Limitations

The population in this research study was limited to parents of students who have utilized the after-school enrichment program and teachers and administrators at one school in one Metropolitan city. Therefore, the transferability of findings to other ASEPs may be limited. Also, the administrator and teacher interviews were conducted using a small sample size. Larger sample sizes are more representative of the general population being studied, but at times larger samples sizes are not feasible (Yin, 2014). The issue of

slow to no responses to surveys which was a concern did not occur and posed no threat to the study.

Significance of the Study

The potential to assist African American males is critical given the urgent need to eliminate academic disparities and close the academic achievement gap. This study is significant because limited research has been located that addresses the impact of ASEPs on academic performance. Through the lens of educators, identifying academic and social challenges confronting African American male students may assist policy makers to develop legislations that address the needs of low achieving students. This study may also inform public policymakers' decisions on whether or not additional specialized programs should be developed, implemented, and funded to increase learning outcomes and reduce the academic achievement gap among African American male students. McDaniel and Yarbrough (2013) suggested that school leaders have excellent opportunities to create messages for public policy makers on urgency regarding the effects of academic enrichment programs and academic achievement.

Implications for Positive Social Change

There is research available to indicate that ASEPs can be beneficial to students, families, and communities (Kremer et al., 2015). A number of after-school programs are sports centered or quiet time child-sitting centered. The implications for this study may rest in exploring after-school programs designed for academic enrichment and socialization skills building. Additionally, data obtained as a result of this study may provide information needed by policymakers in their deliberations on policies and policy

changes affecting African American males and after-school enrichment program options. Further implications are the potentials for this study to inform policymakers on critical information needed to understand the factors that distinguish academic gaps between students who are successful and students who cannot make social, political, and economic contributions to society. This study may identify social and economic challenges that impact academic achievement outcomes among African American males and may identify strategies beneficial to public policymakers that can be used to create positive social change for these students.

Transition and Summary

African American males in the 21st century face an array of problems that have adverse effects on academic achievement and social change. Chapter 1 included an overview of social, environmental, and cultural barriers impacting the academic achievement for African American males. This chapter also included the nature of the study, theoretical framework, key research questions, assumptions, scope and delimitations. The concept of ASEPs serves as a vehicle to promote social change and improve academic outcomes for African American high school students was discussed. Gaps in research literature were noted regarding the self-efficacy theory among African American male students, academic outcomes, and societal expectations. Chapter 2 contains a review of the relevant literature to thoroughly discuss the research problem and the theoretical framework.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

The problem exists in public schools where African American males continue to lag behind their White counterparts in academic achievement (McKown, 2013). A review of the current literature addressing academic gaps among African American high school students and whether enrichment programs have an impact on academic achievement and improves socialization skills will be the focus of this research study. The need for the study and gaps in research is identified in each section of the literature review. Literature relating to quantitative and qualitative research methods is discussed and the case study research design is substantiated. A discussion of theories underpinning the study is included. Based on topics that emerged during the literature review, Chapter 2 is divided into seven main sections: (a) African American academic achievement; (b) environmental influences and academic achievement; (c) peer pressure and academic achievement; (d) single parents and large family homes and academic achievement; (e) socioeconomic status and academic achievement; (f) enrichment programs and academic achievement; (g) socialization skills and academic achievement. The chapter also includes a transition and summary.

Literature Search Strategy

To search relevant databases for peer-review journals, I used Walden University Library to access EBSCO, Academic search Premier, ERIC (Educational Research Information Center), and Business Premiers. In conducting the database search, key words including *achievement, African American males/students, Black students, minority students, high school, urban education at risk students, after-school programs,* and

enrichment programs were used to identify studies on academic achievement of African American students.

Theoretical Foundation

Bandura's Theory

This study was unpinned by Bandura's cognitive theory and by the punctuated equilibrium theory (PET). In 1963 Bandura renamed the social learning theory, calling it the social cognitive theory, and introduced the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). The four major sources of self-efficacy expectations are: (a) self-confidence, which represents positive goals that individuals set out to accomplish, (b), vicarious experience, which occurs when one lives through the behavior of others, (c) verbal persuasion, which occurs as a result of favorable arguments, and (d) emotional arousal which occurs in threatening situations and produces avoidance behaviors which lowers self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986, p.201).

Bandura, Barabenielli, Caprapra, and Pastorelli (1996) found that increased academic self-efficacy correlates to an individual's strength, performance expectations, and positive educational outcomes. According to Whaley and Noel (2012), when enrichment programs are offered to students, positive outcomes can be achieved. Whaley and Noel further suggested that individuals who demonstrate high self-efficacy in academics have greater persistence and often engage in skills that further enhances their knowledge. The ideal of the social learning theory is derived from behavior that is learned through modeling and observing other behaviors, attitudes and emotions (Bandura, 1977).

According to Bandura (1977) individuals are continuously learning and constructing meaning throughout their lives by communicating with others within their communities. Also, when learning by direct experiences, individuals construct conceptions of behavior from observing the effects of their actions and learning by modeling. For example, Li and Lerner (2013) argued that one key component of social learning is the self and how one perceives the events occurring around them. If African American male students believe in success, they can strive to reach their goals.

The sociolearning theory also emphasizes that cultural beliefs and attitudes may impact how instructions and learning take place (Whaley & Noel, 2012). The theory is focused on the degree to which individuals learn by observing others. The basic principle is that learning is an internal process that may or may not change behavior (Kandemir, 2014). Yarahmadi, (2012) noted that socioeconomic and structural barriers may influence attitudes that are associated with the academic development of students. In academics this is demonstrated by an individual's ability to ignore stereotypes, harmful environments, and negative influences (Arana, Castadana, Blanchard & Aguilar, 2011). Understanding the way that sociocultural influences help to regulate factors such as motivation and self-determination may also positively or negatively impact academic outcomes (Whaley & Noel, 2012). Participants' opinions and perspectives will help to gain insights into how and why structured ASEPs may contribute to higher self-efficacy and the impact of such on African American high school male students at the research site. Such insights may be used to help educators, political leaders, and policymakers

stay abreast of the stability and change needed in after-school programs to address the needs of this population of students.

PET

PET is a theory of organizational information processing. The PET suggests that information processing is disproportionate. That is, policymaking in education is designed to resist change and make mobilizations necessary if established interests are to be overcome (Manna, 2006).

PET and Education

School systems are complex organizations and acts on the flow of information that is guided by public policies (Jones, and Baumgartner, 1993). Public educational needs and funding for enrichment programs have become challenging. These challenges arise from events that symbolizes that something is disproportionate or from the accumulation of problems over longer periods of time (Birkland, 1997). Examples can be seen with local school districts running out of funds and turning to state leaders for support. Also, financial crises and low academic achievement among African American male students are problems which are driving education policy in Michigan (Jochim & Darmond, 2015). According to (Jones, 2006b), the ways in which policymaking systems allocate attention to problems are critical components of problem recognition and subsequent policy actions.

Punctuated Equilibrium and Economics

Robinson (2004) found that school systems with high levels of bureaucratic structures adjust their expenditures to fiscal reality because bureaucracy enhances

information acquisition and processing. Breunig and Koske (2005) noted that school systems with stronger chief administrators are subject to attenuated budgetary punctuations. Wrabel, Saultz, Polikoff, McEachin and Duque (2016) agree that incremental adjustments in school administrative reorganizations can act to avoid the need for deep budget cuts and sweeping organizations in the future.

Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones explored the reasons for punctuations in federal spending in their 2005 *Politics of Attention*. They laid out two general reasons for these: Cognitive and Institutional Frictions. The idea was that limitations on attention caused over-attention to small numbers of items and under-attention to the bulk of issues that fail to cross the threshold of urgency and gain attention (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993). For example, as issues rise and fall in urgency, individual and institutional attention shifts. Baumgartner and Jones suggested that these shifts are not slowly and proportionately, but in jumps and spurts.

According to McClendon (2003), in regions where spending is driven by demographic trends such as education and economics, these regions should have processes distinct from those domains that are subject to endogenous or exogenous shocks. Saunders and Chan (2014) noted that some regions are heavily driven by external events, such as school violence, school strikes and union support. For example, education spending is largely driven by how many students are in a classroom setting. Rotherham (2015) suggested that policies with important demographic elements associated with their spending patterns are not immune from spending cuts that creates deficits in school system, which may lead to significant shifts in teacher salaries and

other spending, on a per-capita basis. As Jones and Baumgartner (1993) have argued, there is no reason to expect the response to be proportional to the changing cues, as the cues themselves may change quite rapidly.

Punctuated Equilibrium and Academic Enrichment Programs

Because education is not specifically stated in the United States Constitution as a federal responsibility, states have the authority to create, fund, and govern schools (Manna, 2006). During the sixties, the state and federal government increased their involvement in educational policy to address concerns regarding inequities in schools, funding, and the achievement gaps between minority students (Saultz, McEachin, and Fusarelli 2016). President Obama signed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on December 10, 2015, which replaced the NCLB and is the most recent reauthorization of the ESSA. ESSA reduces the role of the executive branch by limiting the ability of the secretary of education to grant waivers that would require states to adopt specific academic standards, assessments, accountability systems, or teacher evaluation systems (Rotherham, 2015; Senate Bill 1117, 2015).

Public Policy and Academic Achievement

The primary role of the federal government is to provide resources and establish programs aimed at helping disadvantaged students. Currently, the United States Department of Education has identified four key principles to improve academic achievement: (a) adoption and implementation of college- and career-ready academic expectations for all students, (b) differentiated recognition, (c) accountability and support for effective instructions and leadership, and (d) the reduction of duplication and

unnecessary burdens (U.S.DOE, 2011). In efforts to meet the new college and career readiness expectations, states had to implement the Common Core Standards (CCSS) and assessments or demonstrate their standards and assessments contained rigor.

Manna (2006) suggested that the passage of the NCLB Act was possible because state governments had enacted reforms organized around standards and assessments. Policy makers who promoted the NCLB supported the arguments which states developed to justify the involvement of higher levels of government in classroom processes and outcomes (Neely, 2016). Manna (2006) found that although federal officials were able to borrow strength from the states in the case of NCLB the process could be reversed and state officials could take advantage of waivers provided by the government to advance reforms as leverage in promoting other policy agendas. A priority for educational leaders and public policy makers should be addressing the cognitive skills of African American male students and the impact after-school academic enrichment programs may have toward closing the academic achievement gap.

Academic Achievement Gap

African American Males and Academic Achievement

Poverty, lack of access to adequate housing, crime, and social stereotypes are frequent challenges that public schools encounter in urban areas (Conchas, Lin, Oseguera, & Drake 2015). According to Tatum and Muhammad (2012), social disorders also have significant impacts on a student's ability to learn and the quality of education provided in schools. Ellis, Rowley, Nellum, and Smith (2015) conducted a qualitative study at a public high school in Southeast Michigan to explore whether or not racial

stereotypes were associated with school efficacy and school performance among African American male students. The authors also investigated factors which contributed to school efficacy among African American males. During the study, the researchers noted that African American male's acceptance of being Black was central to their identity. Ellis et al. (2015) found that despite negative racial and academic stereotypes, having a positive sense of self in relation to being African American, increased self-efficacy among the students and promoted academic success. Ellis et al. (2015) concluded that ethnic identity is an important socio-cultural indicator that promotes positive outcomes for African American male adolescents.

Using the multiple marginality frameworks, Concha et al. (2014) conducted a qualitative case study with 24 high school African American males who were enrolled in an urban college preparatory academy. The multiple marginality frameworks is often used to predict gang involvement and represents ecological, economic, sociocultural and psychological factors that underscore street gangs and youth participation. Using semi-structured interviews, the authors explored the youth's perceptions of social mobility during the historic election of the first African American President, Barack Obama. Conchas et al. (2014) examined student perspectives regarding race, schooling, and academic achievement and were interested in how student experiences and perceptions in and out of high school influenced their aspirations and expectations. Findings from the study showed that racial stereo types had negative effects on the students' outlooks and community support played a pivotal role in the student's social mobility (Conchas et al., 2014).

In a quantitative longitudinal study, Fitzpatrick, Cote-Lussier, Pagani, and Blair (2013) examined whether or not ethnicity and teacher perceived signs of disadvantage kindergarten student reports affected the teacher's relationship with their students once the students entered the fourth grade. The authors found that elementary school teachers were more likely to report experiencing conflict with African American students regardless of their academic risk. Fitzpatrick et al. (2013) concluded that African American students who were perceived as disadvantaged reported having less positive and supportive relations with their teachers. These findings are parallel to Conchas et al. (2015) study which found that socioeconomic status did predict the odds of children reporting negative relationships with their teachers.

Harris, Hines, Kelly, Williams, and Bagley (2014) conducted a qualitative study using Bronfenbrenner's ecological model to explore factors associated with academic engagement and the success of Black male student athletes in high school. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model suggests that multiple environments (e.g. home and school community) and people within those environments influence the educational experiences of all students. The authors noted that academic achievement of minority students is increased when family and community partnerships are formed. In the case of academic success, Harris et al. (2014) contended that cultural competence from school stakeholders can lead to a reduction in the achievement gap between African American and White students. Yarahmadi (2012) added to this argument and posited that principals, teachers, and counselors can facilitate the development of social support

systems through collaborative efforts that focus on cultural and educational experiences of African American student athletes.

The social disorganization theory (McCoy, Roy, & Sirkman, 2013) suggested that neighborhood structural factors contribute to delinquencies, crimes, and other problems in urban neighborhoods through the breakdown of social ties and neighborhood organizations. Maintaining a safe learning environment is essential if students are going to trust each other and their teachers. Burdic-Will (2013) conducted a quantitative cross-sectional study within the Chicago Public school district to examine the effects of school violence on learning and academic achievement. Eight years of crime data from the Chicago Police department was used to compare the effects of violent crime rates on academic achievement. Burdic-Will found that students in high violent crime schools were more likely to be minorities, typically lower achieving in middle school and were raised in poor and more violent neighborhoods when compared to students from lower violent crime schools. Burdic-Will (2013) argued that the effects of school violent crime on achievement is related to reductions in learning through cognitive stress and classroom disruptions, rather than changes in perceived safety or the school's climate.

White and Khan (2013) conducted a case study with first generation freshmen minority students to explore the role of language practices in student success and outcomes. White and Khan employed first year academic minority students who were on academic probation due to grade point averages (GPAs) that had fallen below 2.0. Each of the students was also facing dismissal from the university if they failed to raise their GPAs. White and Khan sought to understand how a lack of academic literacy could

affect a freshman's ability to succeed and feel welcomed in a predominantly White public university. The authors found that students lacked familiarity with strategies that focused on academic reading, fluency, note-taking, test-taking and essay writing. Lastly, each of the students reported discomfort with being expected to act "White" within their styles of academic and social communication. White and Khan (2013) concluded that the students did not possess literacy skills that were needed for survival at the university.

White Males and Academic Achievement Gap

O'Connor, Porowski, and Passa (2014) conducted a study to examine whether or not exclusionary discipline has a disproportionate impact on African American and other racial/ethnic minority students (e.g. Hispanics) in comparison to White students. Data were obtained from Maryland's State Department of Education K-12 school from 2009-2010 and 2012. According to O'Connor et al. (2012), exclusionary discipline is a concern and has been linked to poor academic achievement. The study also found that among the 24 school systems located in Maryland, African American students had higher rates of out of school suspension or expulsions when compared to Hispanic and White students. African American students also had the highest rate of school removal, at 8.8% and Asian students had the lowest, at 1.0%. Additionally, among students disciplined for attacks and fighting, 89.7% of African American students received out of school suspensions, compared with 86.8 %of Hispanic students, and 82.9% of White students. According to Butler-Barnes, Williams, and Chavaous (2012) this is consistent with national research literature, which found that African American students receive more disciplinary actions, including out of school suspensions than all other racial categories.

O'Connor et al. (2014) concluded that exclusionary disciplinary exacerbates behavioral, attendance problems and contributes to poor academic performance which makes dropping out of school more likely.

According to the Pew Hispanic Research Center (2012), the average number of years of schooling for Latinos males is 10.6 years, compared with 12.2 years for African Americans males and 13.3 years for White males. The national high school graduation rate for Latinos is 53.2% compared with 74.9% for White students (Becerra, 2012). Using data from the National Survey of Latinos, Becerra (2012) conducted a study to examine adult Latino's perceptions of educational barriers affecting academic achievement among Latino students in grades K-12. Becerra (2012) found that levels of income, levels of education, and higher levels of linguistic acculturation of the participants were barriers that impacted academic success among Latino K-12 students. Becerra (2012) concluded that participants with higher levels of income and higher levels of education believe that schools and teachers who label Latino students with behavior and learning problems contribute to why Latino students do not perform as well academically when compared to White students.

African American Males Low Self Esteem and Academic Achievement

Using the resilience theory, Butler-Barnes et al. (2012) conducted a community based longitudinal study to examine culturally based factors (e.g. racial pride and religion) that promote academic achievement and enhance positive educational beliefs among African American youths. The authors measured educational utility beliefs, racial pride, religiosity and grade performance. The authors found that African American

youths who reported higher educational utility beliefs had higher grade point averages. Racial pride, church attendance and religious beliefs were not predictive of grade performance. The authors also discovered that while there were strong and positive associations between education utility and GPA for youth's students with low educational utility beliefs and low religiosity were more at risk academically. Butler-Barnes et al. (2012) concluded that possessing optimistic views regarding education for personal successes was more significant among youths who did not share religious faith.

A longitudinal study to examine whether there was a relationship between individual academic outcomes and peer relationships was conducted by Lync, Lerner and Leventhal (2012). Lync et al. also examined student engagement and GPAs in the fifth grade to determine whether peer cultures were predictive of grade six GPAs and school engagement. Findings from the study indicated that beyond the role of immediate peer groups, larger bodies of peers, with whom the students had no direct contact with, also influenced the student's individual behaviors. Findings concluded that behaviors within peer cultures were closely related to student achievement and students selected peers who had similar levels of academic achievement.

Kandemir (2014) conducted a quantitative study to examine the relationship between achievement goals, self-esteem and academic efficacy using the relational model survey. The author found that students who possessed responsibility traits were more eager to learn and exhibited high performances. Kandemir also found that students with neurotic personality traits identified with avoidance goals. Students with neurotic personality traits exhibited signs of stress during their daily activities and did not show

emotional consistency. For this reason, Kandemir (2014) suggested that these students may avoid duties related to learning or performing. Kandemir (2014) noted that students with neurotic personality traits also exhibited increased anxiety regarding their learning styles and concluded that students who are conscientious, stable and study may be able to achieve academic goals.

African American Males Behavior and Academic Achievement

National data on the education of African American children within the United States reveals that 50% of African American children are more likely to not finish high school when compared to White children (Douglas & Peck, 2013). Ehrenreich, Reeves, Corley, and Orpinas (2012), designed a qualitative study to explore whether or not aggression was linked to poor academic performance and to examine student's perceptions regarding their paths to high school graduation. The Healthy Teens Longitudinal Study, which can be used to investigate adolescent social development, was used for data collection. Four themes emerged illustrating the different among high aggression students and low aggression students.

First, high aggression students revealed that external sources such as the environmental and social stressor were constant variables in their lives. Second, low aggression students consistently made references to internal stressors such as worrying about how to balance their school responsibilities and life. Third, in terms of graduating from high school, many low aggression students linked personal drives such as parental expectations and being successful as motivating factors. Last, high aggressions students favored having money and becoming an athlete as their source of personal motivators.

Ehrenreich et al. (2012) also found that while parents were found to be the greatest influence among all the students when completing high school, the coach was found to be more significant, especially for aggressive students. Ehrenreich et al. (2012) concluded that none of the comments regarding the coaches were about their athletic abilities; rather the comments were based on caring and positive relationships that the coaches had developed with the students.

Montague, Enders, Cavendish, and Castro (2011) conducted a longitudinal study in a large urban school district located in the southeastern region of the United States to investigate whether or not early academic performance (e.g. grades 1-4) predicted academic and behavioral outcomes for at risk adolescents once they reached high school. Montague, et al. (2011) found that when adolescents were rated by their middle and high school teachers on the BASC Behavior Symptom Index, over half of the students were identified when they were young as being at risk for developing emotional and behavioral problems. Also, gender and ethnicity did not influence growth of behavioral problems, however, risk status did.

In predicting behavior problems, Montague et al. (2011) found that at-risk students experienced a decline in achievement and had more behavioral problems over time when compared with non-at-risk students. Montague et al. noted that students who are identified early as at-risk may need remedial support throughout high school to continue making the progress needed to meet graduation requirements. Further, Montague et al. concluded that students who internalized behavioral problems had greater

risk for poor academic outcomes in comparison to those with externalized behavioral problems.

In a similar study, Henry, Knight, and Thornberry (2012) used longitudinal data to determine if a school disengagement warning index was related to dropouts as well as other behavioral problems during adolescence and early adulthood. Findings from the study suggested that the school disengagement warning index was closely associated to violent crimes, police contacts, and problem drug usages. The school disengagement index was also positively related to most serious delinquencies and problematic substance use outcomes throughout adolescence and into early adulthood. Findings from the study further concluded that early warning signs of high school dropout are an important factor towards linking early school disengagement to problem behaviors in young adult hood.

Using data from a longitudinal 4-H study of Positive Youth and Development, Li and Lerner (2013) conducted a study to examine how interrelationships of behavioral, emotional, and cognition influence school engagement over time. The 4- H youth study was a longitudinal investigation of adolescence which focused on defining, measuring and understanding the features of positive youth and development. Additional, features of the 4-H study was to understand the aspects of positive youth and development and engage adolescence accordingly. Data for the Li and Lerner (2013) study was obtained from youth boys and girls in grades 9-11. Li and Lerner (2013) found that school engagement was specialized whereas behaviors, emotions and cognition are synonymous and resonates over time. Li and Lerner also found that positive emotions and motivational thoughts intensified participation and positive feelings among the youths.

The authors discovered that behavioral engagement was a significant predictor of emotional and cognitive engagement. Overall, the authors contend that positive feelings about school indirectly affect achievement outcomes while triggering adaptive behavioral patterns. Li and Lerner (2013) concluded that adolescences that recognize the importance of education in their lives are likely to be engaged and attempt to succeed academically.

African American Males Cultural Identity and Academic Achievement Gap

Douglas and Peck (2013) conducted a qualitative study to examine how and why people of African descent utilize community based pedagogical spaces that exist outside of school. Using primary and secondary sources, Douglas and Peck studied Black churches and barbershops and recruited Bermudian men between the ages of 30-70 years. They utilized a historical theoretical framework and border crossing theory to present an historical examination of how African Americans redefined education in learning spaces outside of schools. The two learning spaces described in the study were the Black church and the Black barbershop. According to the Douglas and Peck the history of education for African American people is one that has occurred outside of traditional schooling and within alternative education venues such as families, barbershops, social protest groups and music. Douglas and Peck (2013) found that non-school educative venues are impactful centers of learning, socialization, and support. The authors also found that as a community based pedagogical space, the Black barbershop has become a sanctuary where Black men can find community, camaraderie, and cultural identify. Findings from the study indicated that Non-school based education venues (e.g. black church) and

personal lessons learned from lived experiences represented a rich lineage of community based education for people of African descent Douglas and Peck concluded that it is important for all K-12 educational stakeholders (teachers, students, administrators, community members and etc.) to understand that education for African Americans can occur outside of schools. According to Douglas and Peck (2013) the ideology that learning can occur outside of school is not uncommon among African Americans.

Butler-Barnes, Chavous, Hurd, and Varner (2013) conducted a cross sectional sample study to explore the impact of African American adolescent's racial discrimination experiences on academic persistence. The authors also examined how personal and cultural assets (e.g. self-acceptance, self-efficacy and racial pride) served as protective measures for African American adolescents. Participants in the study included 220 African American adolescents in the seventh, eighth and ninth grade from socioeconomically diverse school districts. The adolescents ranged from 12-16 years of age. Butler et al. (2013) found that adolescents who were low on racial pride, self-efficacy and self-acceptance had lower academic persistence. In comparison adolescence with higher personal and cultural assets displayed a positive sense of self. Overall, the authors concluded that school based racial discrimination experiences have negative effects on academic persistence. However, personal assets and social support systems in the lives of African American adolescents may foster an environment that helps adolescents cope with discriminatory and other negative experiences.

African American Males Home Environment and Academic Achievement Gap

Alika and Edosa (2012) conducted a correlational study to determine whether or not there was a relationship between broken homes and academic achievement. Alika and Edosa sought to explore whether there was a relationship between socio-economic status of parents and academic achievement of students from broken homes. The population consisted of adolescents in senior secondary school in Edo State. The participants included 150 boys and girls from broken homes. Findings from the study showed that there was a negative relationship between academic achievement and broken homes and those broken homes negatively determined academic achievement of secondary school students and this translated into poor academic achievement (Alika & Edosa, 2012). Findings from the study also indicated that females from broken homes performed better in terms of academic achievement than their male counterparts. Alika and Edosa contend that socio-economic status of parents plays a role in determining academic achievement of secondary school students from broken homes. Such as the higher the economic status of parents the more likely it is that students will perform better in school (Alika & Edosa, 2012).

In another study using Bronfenbrenner's framework, Hines and Holcomb-McCoy (2013) conducted a quantitative study to explore the relationships between parenting styles and African American male's academic achievement as evidenced by self-reported GPAs and enrollment in advanced placement courses. The authors also sought to understand which combinations of ecological factors such as family structure, church attendance and parent monitoring best predicted African American male academic

achievement. Participants in the study included 153 African American students in the 11th and 12th grade. The majority of the participants were 17 years of age, African American and Hispanics. Over half of the students identified their parents as having an authoritative style of parenting (Hines, Holcomb- McCoy, 2013). Findings from the study also indicated that Microsystems, such as the father's education and family, had the greatest influence on the academic achievement among the students. In comparison, there was not a significant relationship between parenting style and academic achievement. Further, Hines, Holcomb- McCoy (2013) found that the father's expectation was a negative predictor of GPA for African American males which confirms the importance of boy's relationships with their fathers.

African American Males and Socioeconomics /Home Environment

Iruka and Pungello (2012) conducted a longitudinal study to examine the relationships between race, socioeconomic status and school readiness among African American and White families. Fifty-seven percent of the participating families were African Americans. The authors found that racial gaps for pre academic knowledge were evident among White children in comparison to African American children. Socioeconomic status was also positively related to school readiness for both African American and White families. For example, higher socioeconomic status parents were more likely to engage in sensitive parent child interactions. In comparison the authors found that low socioeconomic status parents were more likely to engage in negative/intrusive interactions with their children. Iruka and Pungello (2012) concluded that as socioeconomic status decreased, negative intrusive parenting behaviors increased.

Changes in parental behaviors were reflected in children with low pre-academic knowledge, and overall, the factors that mediate the association between socioeconomic and pre-academic knowledge do differ between African American and White American families. Further, Iruka and Pungello (2012) found that socioeconomic status predicted the financial stress for both African American and Whites families.

Bavarian et al. (2013) conducted a longitudinal study to evaluate the impacts of a school based social, emotional and character development (SECD) program on educational outcomes for low income urban youths. Four hundred eighty-six K-6 through K-8 Chicago Public Schools participated in the study. Among African American boys and students receiving free lunch, growth was also found in Idaho Standards Achievement Tests in reading and math. Also, the promotion of positive behaviors resulted in less time being spent by teachers on classroom management. The authors contend that the SECD program had positive impacts on students whereby reducing absenteeism, increasing motivation and academic achievements. The authors postulate that the impact on academic outcomes was attributed to the provision of problem-solving skills, motivational strategies and the development of self-control techniques. The authors concluded that SECD programs can improve academic achievement as well as improve student behaviors.

Through the usage of convenience sampling, Hayes (2012) examined the influences of parental involvement on high school adolescent outcomes. Hayes sought to explore how urban African American parents engaged in different behaviors while fostering positive achievement outcomes. Participants in the study consisted of 145

parents/guardians from the Southwestern region of the United States. Seventy-two percent of the African American parents who participated in the study were mothers. Hayes (2012) found no significant relationships between parental involvement, employment status, and adolescent outcomes. Hayes also found that African American parents promoted school success with their high school adolescence by engaging in more frequent conversations about school and learning rather than engaging in direct school involvement activities and discussing high values regarding academic success. The current results suggest that adolescence can benefit from parental involvement when it comes in the form of positive parent/adolescent communication. In contrast, Hayes (2012) did not find a significant relationship between adolescent academic achievement outcomes and school-based involvement. Overall, these results suggest that parental involvement may not routinely result in positive student outcomes.

Yarahmadi (2012) conducted a descriptive correlational study to investigate the relationship between perceptions of social support from family, teachers, friends, self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement among African American high school students. Yarahmadi found that only perceptions of support from family were involved in predicting academic achievement. The author also found while there was relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and perceptions of support from teachers, friends and academic achievement, the relationship could not be substantiated.

In another study, Robinson and Werblow (2012) found that some Black mothers are able to help their sons achieve academically, despite odds that often face the school age youth. The authors concluded that academic achievement is affected by the

perceptions of family support, friends, teachers and self-efficacy beliefs. Therefore, increasing family efficacy in support of children and raising their perception level of support can lead to academic achievement.

Robinson and Werblow (2012) conducted a qualitative case study to examine the relationships that single African American mothers shared with their sons and how the relationships influenced educational successes of their sons. The study was conducted in a large impoverished California district with a school history of poor academic performance. African American males selected for the study were 16 to 17 years of age with grade point averages of 3.0 or better. Robinson and Werblow found that many of the African American mothers wanted their sons to be successful educationally and socially. For example, the mothers learned negotiation skills in order to advance the educational developmental of their sons. Finding from their study further suggested that many of the mothers were operating from a logical viewpoint of potential success grounded in high expectations. Such as the mothers were concerned with building character and creating strong individuals who could become successful within the educational system. Through communication, the mothers taught their sons how to become productive students regardless of perceptions that may have been held by teachers. Overall, Robinson and Werblow (2012) contend that many of the mothers were committed to their son's education and believed that they were the only ones who cared as to whether or not their sons made it through the educational system. The authors concluded that the ultimate goals of the mothers were to turn their sons into successful men who could care for themselves.

Using the transition theory, Serbin, Stack, and Kingdon (2013) conducted a longitudinal study to predict and understand performance across the transition from primary to secondary schooling among “at risk” youths. In contrast to other studies, the authors found that gender differences in academic performances prior to transition to secondary schooling was not significant but widened across the transition and became significant thereafter. For example, the authors contend that performance for both boys and girls declined from primary to early secondary schooling, however, girls as a group appeared to adjust better in secondary school. Serbin, Stack, and Kingdon also found that youth, especially boys from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, had more difficulty after their transition to secondary schooling. Additionally, the authors found that parenting differed for girls and boys at most age levels and that girls had developed stronger social skills and better spelling abilities prior to their transition to secondary school and these were helpful in coping the transition. Serbin, Stack, and Kingdon (2013) concluded that social skills and parental support is significant in vulnerable populations and the transition to secondary schooling is a critical challenge for young adolescents.

In a qualitative study conducted by Hines and Holcomb-McCoy (2013) the possible relationships between parenting styles and African American male’s academic achievement were explored. The study focused on evidenced on self-report GPAs and enrollment in advanced placement courses. The authors also sought to understand which combinations of ecological factors such as the family structure, church attendance, and parent monitoring best predicted African American male’s high school achievement. Participants in the study included 153 African American and Hispanic 11th and 12th grade

males at two large school districts outside of a major city in the Midwestern region of the United States. The majority of participants were between 17 and 18 years of age. Hines and Holcomb-McCoy (2013) found that 30% of the participants identified their parents as having authoritative styles of parenting whereas 11% reported their parents as having an authoritative style of parenting. No significant relationship was found between parenting styles and the participant's enrollment in honors courses or academic achievement.

Findings from the research indicated that the father's education and family structure had a positive influence on the academic achievement of the participants. Further, findings showed that the influence of a father's presence in the development of young African American males is significant towards the African American student's outcomes. This confirms the importance of African American male relationships with fathers or positive male role models. The authors concluded that an African American father's educational backgrounds, expectations and the family structure play a significant role in the academic development of African American males.

High School Drop Out Rates and Enrichment Programs

High school dropout rates among African American male students were around 14% compared to 11% for Hispanic and Native American students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, according to NCES (2014). In the state of Michigan, African American males have the lowest high school graduation rates in the country at 33%, this compared to White males in Michigan who have graduation rates of 74% (NCES, 2014). Ellis, Rowley, Vellum, and Smith (2015) found that race, class, and

demographics are significant indicators of high school graduation drop-out rates for students in the United States.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that, “51.3 % of 12th grade African American males demonstrate deficiencies in reading, compared to 36.1% of African American females, 24.3 % of White males, and 13.1 % of White females” (United States Department of Education, 2014). Public policy initiatives are needed to improve educational outcomes, and maximize economic, social and psychological outcomes of African American male students. McKown (2013) suggests that racial/ethnic, as well as urban and rural disparities are historic and persistent features of schools within the United States. Henry, Knight, and Thornberry (2012) found that in urban and rural school districts, racial/ethnic minorities face disproportionate levels of high school drop-out rates when compared to suburban school districts.

The United States is experiencing dramatic shifts in student demographics, including a growing percentage of African American and Latino students (United States Department of Education, 2014). During the 1970s, 79% of the student population were non-Hispanic, 14% were African American, 6% were Hispanic, and 1% was Asian (United States Census Bureau, 2014). The Census Bureau projects that by 2020 or sooner, more than 50% of youth ages 15-19 will be from ethnic and racial minority groups (United States Census Bureau, 2015). The changing demographics present policymaker with opportunities to examine and develop tools to improve schooling for all students (Turner, 2015).

According to Sahin and Ayar (2014), ASEPs are effective tools worthy of policymakers' attention, especially the programs that imbed mentoring activities in the curriculum. Functions of ASEPs include the provision of supervision and safe childcare for parents to minimize social disparities (Butler-Barnes, Chavous, Hurd & Varner, 2013). Academic enrichment programs also pair students with supportive adults who act as role models, provide academic support, and promote positive behaviors (Kremer et al., 2015). Academic enrichment programs also facilitate the development of interpersonal competence, define life goals, and promote academic success (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). During ASEPs, students collaborate and develop a variety of socialization, interpersonal and communication skills with their teachers and peers (Kremer et al., 2015). ASEPs foster inquiries, reinforce academic concepts, and promote critical thinking skills (Biggert et al., 2013). Butler-Barnes et al. (2013) contend that students who are committed to sharing ideals and experiences are motivated to achieve higher levels of learning. The mentoring activities in ASEPs may improve academic performance scores, reduce the drop-out rates, and encourage students to work together to share ideals (Biggert et al., 2013).

Harris, Hines, Kelly, Williams, and Bagley (2014) argued that ASEPs servicing high school students should continue to incorporate activities such as tutoring services, homework assistance, and additional learning opportunities that prepare students for college and the workforce. Haram, Fergus, and Noguera (2011) explained that ASEPs also provide assistance with career development and skills for lifelong learning. Further, students are expected to demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills that can

be transferred via mentors and can help students to compete in society. Historically, community-based mentoring activities, such as the YMCA and Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America, fostered youth-adult mentoring relationships and improved youth outcomes. However, the adoption of these formal programs, and the impact of afterschool enrichment programs have not been fully explored by evidence-based literature.

A responsibility among school board members is to promote civic engagement, reform education, and improve academic achievement among students within the United States (Belcastro, 2015). Schools play a role in preparing children for their adult responsibilities as United States citizens. According to Guttman (1987), education is to prepare all students for a lifetime of civic engagement, including voting, participating in civil services and contributing to society. This study is needed because as states and the federal government introduce incentives and education reform to meet the goal of 60% post-secondary attainment, there is concern that African American male students will be left behind, therefore, widening educational gaps (McKown, 2013). Nationally in 2012-2013, 59% of African American males graduated from high school and less than eight% of African American males earned college degrees (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015).

Transition and Summary

Major themes identified during the literature review are presented via a comprehensive overview of (a) Bandura's theory and the PET, as theoretical frameworks underpinning the study, (b) African American academic achievement, (c) home/negative

neighborhood influences) environments and academic achievement, (d) peer pressure and academic achievement, (e) single parents and large family homes and academic achievement, (f) socioeconomic status and academic achievement, (g) enrichment programs and academic achievement, (h) socialization skills and academic achievement. The availability of ASEPs, infused with strong mentoring activities and an academic component, may lead to promoting economic and civic participation among African American male students, making this a public policy issue.

In Chapter 3, I have provided a description of the research method used for the study, including the research design and rationale for choosing this approach. I also discussed the role of the researcher, presented the research questions guiding the study as well as described the population, sample and sampling procedures. Lastly, I have discussed issues of trustworthiness and ethical concerns and the measures taken to safeguard the rights and anonymity of the research participants.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore and gain a deeper understanding of how and why ASEPs influence academic achievement of African American male students at one public high school. This study focused on what practices contributed to student and program success to determine how and why specialized programs can foster positive student outcomes. Findings from this study may also provide data needed by public policy makers to make informed decisions when discussing the need and value of after-school enrichment and funds needed to increase learning outcomes and reduce the academic achievement gaps among African American male students.

Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the research design and rationale, the research questions guiding the study, participant recruitment procedures, the role of the researcher, population and sampling, sampling procedures, data collection and analysis. This chapter also includes a discussion of instrumentation and strategies to establish validity and trustworthiness of the study. I also discussed measures taken to protect the participants and respect ethical considerations.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

Research Question 1: How do educators describe or define practices that contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of structured ASEPs designed to improve academic achievement outcomes for high school African American males at one metropolitan high school?

Research Questions 2: How do parents identify and describe factors that contribute to the effects of a structured after-school enrichment program on their child?

Research Questions 3: Why and how do educators think ASEPs help re-direct African American male students' attitudes, self-efficacy, and motivation toward their academic success?

Research Question 4: How, if so, do the practices identified by educators and parents generate issue definition and agenda setting of public policy decisions by lawmakers on ASEPs when using the PET?

Research Design and Rationale

The academic achievement gap that exists among African American male students creates challenges in terms of ensuring that they attain the level of education needed to prepare them to be successful within society. According to Yin (2014), qualitative research methodology allows for the studying of people lives under real world conditions. A qualitative research methodology is consistent with the purpose of this study, which was to explore and analyze the effects of enrichment programs on academic achievement for African American students at on public school in the Midwest region of the U.S. Qualitative research is useful in conducting in-depth studies of smaller populations and groups (Yin, 2014). Additionally, qualitative research seeks to find solutions to a social or human problem and explore the social or human problem through the lens of the individual, people, groups or culture under study (Yin, 2014).

A qualitative case study design was selected as the methodology for this research study. Yin (2014) described several different case studies and noted that case studies are

needed to understand complicated social issues. Case studies provide researchers with holistic views of events. A case study is also an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life content and addresses a situation in which the boundaries between phenomena within real-life content are not clearly understood (Yin, 2014). One advantage of using a case study approach is that significant statements made by the participants are analyzed, and data can be gathered by spending a short period of time in the field (Yin, 2014). Additional study designs appropriate for use with qualitative research were considered for this study. Yin (2014) described three other qualitative research approaches that could have been used for this study including (a) grounded theoretical, (b) phenomenological, and (c) ethnographic. I did consider these other designs but decided in favor of a qualitative case study after carefully reviewing other methods and designs.

A grounded theory approach is best used when the researcher's goal is to generate a theory for the information gathered from the participants. My study explored the teachers and administrator perspectives but not to develop a theory. A phenomenological approach is used in studying a small number of subjects to gain insights into lived experiences and feelings. Last, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2005) an ethnographic approach is designed to understand cultures, group behavioral patterns, and observation is the main data approach. I initially considered ethnography; however, this design was not selected because the study participants' perceptions were being collected and were not based upon the student's cultural backgrounds.

Quantitative studies are research involving hard science and statistical analysis often resulting in charts, graphs, and numbers. This study was about participants' perceptions and solutions to a social or human problem. I determined that a quantitative research design would not be beneficial because of the potential to over generalize the findings and overlook significant details about the perceptions of the participants (Creswell, 2009). Further, this study did not use hard sciences, involve comparisons and relationships, or result in statistical analysis.

Role of the Researcher

I am a teacher at a local high school in the state where the study was conducted. My self-awareness of issues that affect African American boys has encouraged me to take a proactive approach and explore social issues confronting African American boys. Yin (2015) proposed that researchers identify biases, values, and personal backgrounds such as gender and culture which may shape interpretations formed during a study. My role during this research project was to collect data, analyze the data, and organize it into categories and themes and report findings as accurate results. In order to establish research credibility, I reported all personal and professional information that may affect participant selection, responses, data collection analysis, interpretation, and conclusions (Yin, 2014).

Data collection for this case study included interviewing 10 schoolteachers and 10 local school administrators, who work in the school and reside in the Southeastern Michigan school districts where the research was conducted. The teachers and administrators were asked to complete a survey prior to sitting for the interviews. I also

surveyed 10 parents of high school African American male students who have been involved in the after-school program. To minimize bias, I interpreted the data with caution. Member checking feedback was requested from participants and I included scholarly research to help provide objectivity.

To preserve confidentiality and avoid misrepresentation of the participants, I took measures to ensure that interviews are protected with privacy for the participants. Interview responses will be coded using alpha-numeric coding. This protected the names of participants and also allowed me to identify any participant who later decides to withdraw from the study. I informed participants more than once that their participation was voluntary and that they could discontinue the study at any time without problems or repercussions. The credibility of the researcher is important in qualitative research as the person who is the major instrument of data collection and analysis (Patton, 2002). With determination of being objective, I was aware that my interpretations of what I hear or read, may or may not be what the participants meant during the interview. I offered to use member checking to ensure that the recorded responses were transcribed accurately from the participant's responses. As part of the member-checking process, each participant was provided with an opportunity to review the transcribed information for accuracy, and if needed corrections will occur. No participants agreed to review the transcripts.

Methodology

Location and Population

The study was conducted in a large public-school district in a Metropolitan Midwestern part of the United States. The population for this study consisted of high school administrators and teachers with five or more years of public-school experience and involvement in ASEPs, and parents who have used after-school programs for their high school students. All participation was voluntary, and all participants were over the age of 18.

Sampling and Sample Procedures

A purposeful sampling approach was used for the study. Denbo (2002) suggested that a sample should be comprised of participants who fit the criteria and from whom the most can be learned. Purposeful sampling increases effectiveness and credibility of studies consisting of small sample sizes as found in this study (Cohen & Crabtree, 2008; Leedy & Ormon, 2005; Patton, 2002). Ten high school teachers and 10 high school administrators who have been involved in ASEPs for 5 or more years and 10 parents of high school students who have been participants in the after-school enrichment program at the research site comprised the sample group for this study.

Recruitment

Upon IRB approval potential participants were invited to join the study via a letter of invitation sent to teachers and administrators by the school principal's office and an emailed invitation to parents. Potential participants who contacted me, indicating a willingness to participate in the study, were given an informed consent form explaining the

purpose of the study. The first 10 potential participants from each of the categories who completed and returned the informed consent form became part of the research study as the sample group. The confidentiality of participants is important in any study. Survey responses, interview notes, observation notes, and audio recordings were coded with an alpha-numeric code for the purpose of confidentiality. The target number of participants was obtained with the first letter and email sent by the school principal, so a second or third invitation was not sent. No participants withdrew from the study. I confirmed data saturation for this study by collecting data from the determined sample of participants through surveys, interviews and observation leading to triangulation of data from multiple sources

Instrumentation

Data collection consisted of surveys, audio recorded face-to-face interviews, and classroom observations. The Parent's After-School Survey and the Teacher's After-School Survey were used with written permission from Tulare County Office of Education where the surveys were developed (Tulare, n.d.). The surveys were administered to teachers, administrators, and parents who agreed to be participants in the study. The surveys were designed by the Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE), Visalia, CA and permission to use the instrument was obtained prior to beginning the study. The surveys (see Appendices D and E) were once posted to TCOE's regional after school website and removed in 2008 due to a website re-design. Understanding the proposed use of these surveys, officials at TCOE approved the use of the survey and indicated that it would be appropriate to cite Tulare County Office of Education, Visalia,

CA for my study and extended appreciation for the pursuit of further study in this area of expanding learning programs as students' needs for support evolves. The survey supports the collection of data from parents and teachers on ASEPs and their feelings and opinions of the program policies, procedures, and operations.

Data were collected using face-to-face interviews that followed appropriate interview protocol and the administering of the survey. The interview lasted 45 minutes per participant and included completing the survey that took approximately 5-7 minutes to complete. The questions used for the face-to-face interviews were field-tested using five experts in the field. Methods triangulation was used to enhance credibility of the study.

Field study is used in social research to help validate interview questions, surveys, and other tools. The questions used for the interviews in this study were field tested by three experts in the field to determine if the questions would help to answer the research questions (Noyes & Williams, 2009). Using field test can help to improve the instruments to be used and give a researcher time to make needed revisions prior to the interviews or administration of a data collection tool as well as help the researcher determine if the intent of the instrument is met (Creswell, 2008). The field test helped to validate the interview tool (Creswell, 2005). Responses from the experts were used to make improvements in the questions and improve question clarity. Experts used to conduct the field test were not included as part of the study sample.

Data Collection

A survey was administered to teachers, administrators, and parents who agreed to be participants in the study. The survey was followed by interviews with teachers, parents, and administrators. I, as the interviewer, was the primary data collection instrument. After introductions were given and participants were made to feel at ease, the participants were informed that they may choose not to answer any of the questions and may withdraw from the study at any time without any problem. According to Yin (2014), in qualitative study in-depth interviews, surveys, and observations are the primary processes used in data collection. Semi-structured and open interview questions (Appendix A) were used in collecting data for the study. Interviews took place at a location away from the school where participants felt comfortable.

Ten semi structured open-ended interview questions were used to guide the interview. Moustakas (1994) indicated that five to seven interview questions are appropriate for a case study. The interviews occurred after school hours. Once participants had agreed to be part of the study, I contacted them to schedule an appropriate time for the interview and a location that would allow for privacy with minimal interruptions. During the interview, I took detailed notes to keep track of the responses from the participants. For each participant, a code was placed in the right-hand corner of the notes at the top of the note sheet. The code was also recorded as the first message on the audio recording. I assigned the alphanumeric codes as a way of keeping data organized as it was collected, in addition to using codes to protect the identity of the participants. The recorded data were checked, transcribed, and stored in my secure

password protected desktop computer located in my home office as soon as the interviews were completed.

Data were also collected using classroom observations. The observations, which lasted for 50 minutes each, occurred during the ASEP activities and focused on the operations of the classroom environment. I observed the setting, environment, mannerism, and activities of teachers and used descriptive and reflective notes to capture and record the data. I used the Observation Checklist of Program Settings and Environment and collected data for each of the three classrooms observed. I observed participants to gain a clear understanding of the classroom dynamics, the procedures of teachers, and their behaviors. The observation of the teachers included the time they entered the classroom, scheduled activities lesson plans, teaching materials and verbal interactions with the students. Data were reviewed multiple times and organized as part of emerging patterns and themes. Data were only handled by the researcher.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and NVivo 10 Software. NVivo is software used in qualitative research to support the coding, organization, and analysis of data leading to emerging themes and patterns from study findings. Data were entered in the Microsoft Excel spread sheets and NVivo as collection took place to make the data manageable, as recommended by Merriam (2009). Further, simultaneous collection and analysis of data provided opportunities for me to determine if any aspect had been overlooked and if additional member checking was required. Data from the interviews,

surveys, and observations were transcribed and entered in NVivo for the coding, organizing, and analysis of themes and patterns.

Once interviews were completed, audio files were transcribed, and individual transcripts were created for each participant. Data collected were read over and over and key words and phrases were coded. After reading data, codes were developed into themes. Merriam and Associates (2002) suggested that in case study research, data analysis involves several procedures to find relevant meanings and to provide a detailed description of the case. I followed the procedures involving categorizing and looking for patterns, similarities, and differences in the transcribed data as identified by Creswell (2009) and illustrated in data analysis steps that were followed as discussed in Chapter 4. All data and information were stored encrypted on a password protected computer and locked in a file cabinet which is secured in my office, which is also locked.

Data collected from the surveys were reviewed multiple times and responses were record for analysis and interpretation following the data analysis steps. Data collected from classroom observation were also reviewed multiple times and the data analysis steps identified by Creswell were followed. No discrepant cases were identified as further elaborated on in Chapter 4.

Issues of Trustworthiness, validity, and transferability

Trustworthiness in research ensures that the findings of the study represent the data that was collected. In this study, I used member checking to enhance trustworthiness and credibility of data. Moustaskas (1994) contended that member checking helps to improve and ensure validity of the study. I was prepared to call the participants and read

various portions of their transcripts if I needed clarification, but it was not necessary to ask the participants to confirm their responses as any questions were cleared up during the interview. Specifically, this study triangulated data collected and transcribed from interviews, surveys, and observations.

Triangulation

Patton (2002) suggests that researchers who use only one method of gathering data can be vulnerable to making mistakes. The use of multiple sources, interviews, surveys, and observation assisted me in the validation the data and in checking the findings against multiple sources to test for consistency among the emerging themes (Patton, 2002). In qualitative research, triangulation is used as the equivalence of validity and credibility. According to Christensen, Johnson, and Turner (2010), triangulation is the approach of using multiple sources of data when looking for similarities, differences, and emerging themes and patterns. I used three data collection methods as part of study triangulation.

Validity, Credibility, Transferability

According to Merriam and Associates (2002), to underscore the validity in case study research, member checking should occur. With member checking, the participants were provided opportunity to review and discuss with me their individual transcribed interpretation to make sure that I accurately interpreted their perspectives. Member checking occurred as the interviews were taking place. No participants agreed or felt it necessary to return for further member checking. Conducting interviews and reading copies of the participants' transcripts allowed me to cross check for regularities and

irregularities in the data (Creswell, 2009). In this case study, I was the only one collecting and analyzing data.

Protection of Human Participants

IRB approval to conduct was obtained prior to research beginning. Research participants consented voluntarily to participate in the study after they had been fully informed about the study and its purpose. Research participants were exposed to minimum risks. Participants were advised that they could discontinue the research study at any time. Participants were also informed that their identities would not be revealed and that their responses would be coded with alphanumeric codes to protect their identities.

Data Storage

All written and electronic data collected and reported are stored in a password protected computer secured and locked file in my home when not being analyzed. I am the only individual with access to the participant's data. The findings and analysis of data collected from the study will be shared with Walden University. Data will be kept for five years after the study is completed. Data will be encrypted, and data storage device will be destroyed. Any paper files will be destroyed by shredding.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of this single case study was to explore and examine practices that influence or enhance the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of ASEPs on academic achievement for African American male students at one high school in one metropolitan city. The intent was to seek to determine whether and how specialized programs foster

positive role models. Findings from this study may also assist public policy makers to determine whether or not additional specialized programs should be developed, implemented, and funded to increase learning outcomes, and to reduce the academic achievement gap among African American male students and their counterparts. A qualitative method and case study design was utilized to explore the research questions for the study. Obtaining and understanding participants' beliefs and gaining insight about enrichment programs are needed to address the research questions and understand what factors influence academic achievement among African American male students. Also included within this chapter is the research methodology, data collection procedures, rationale chosen to conduct this research proposal, and how the participant's rights would be protected. Furthermore, this chapter includes how the data collection instruments were chosen, the criteria that were used to establish validity and trustworthiness and an explanation of how the participant's rights would be protected. Chapter 4 includes the findings of the study and Chapter 5 contains the study recommendations and conclusions.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore and gain a deeper understanding of how ASEPs influence academic achievement of African American male students at one public high school and how adequate funding of such programs may supports academic achievement. The focus of this study was on perspectives and opinions of teachers, administrators, and parents. From those perspectives, I sought to clarify practices that may contribute to the success of ASEPs. Further, the focus was on examining whether or not specialized programs can foster positive student outcomes and how such data may be useful for public policymakers. Findings from the study are presented in this chapter using seven key headings: (a) settings, (b) demographics, (c) data collection, (d) data analysis, (e) evidence of trustworthiness, (f) results, and (g) summary.

Surveys, interviews, and classroom observations were used to collect data needed to answer four research questions guiding the study:

Research Question 1: How do educators describe or define factors that contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of structured ASEPs designed to improve academic achievement outcomes for high school African American males at one metropolitan Detroit high school?

Research Questions 2: How do parents identify and describe factors that contribute to the effects of a structured after-school enrichment program on their child (ren)?

Research Questions 3: Why and how do educators think ASEPs help re-direct African American male students' attitudes, self-efficacy, and motivation toward their academic success?

Research Question 4: How, if so, do the practices identified by educators and parents generate issue definition and agenda setting of public policy decisions by lawmakers on ASEPs when using the PET?

Setting

Study participants were parents, high school teachers and high school administrators from a large public school in a major city in the Midwestern region of the United States. All interviews and survey completions took place during the months of May thru July 2019. I conducted the interviews during after school hour and on the weekends in an agreed upon location that was convenient for the participants. The agreed upon locations were libraries. Each library had private meeting rooms that I reserved for 90 minutes. Because the meeting rooms were private, this allowed for the participants to be comfortable and open with sharing their opinions and experiences. With the permission of participants, I was also able to record the interviews, which helped with the transcription of my notes and the participants' responses.

Observations of the teachers' interactions with the students occurred during the after-school enrichment sessions. I sat in the back of the classroom, as not to disturb the interactions between the teachers and the students. There were no conditions that influenced any of the participants or their experiences during the data collection that would in turn influence the interpretation of the findings presented in this study. No

observation was conducted of the students, only of the participants who had agreed to be a part of the study.

Field Testing

Field testing is used in social research to help validate interview questions, surveys, and other tools. According to Noyes and Williams (2009) and Creswell (2008), using field test can help to improve the instruments to be used and give a researcher time to make needed revisions prior to the interviews or administration of a data collection tool. The questions used for the interviews in this study were field tested using three experts in the field to determine if the questions would help to answer the research questions. Experts were given a copy of the questions and asked to review the questions and provide any insight or feedback that they felt would improve or make the questions better. Experts also provided feedback needed to help the researcher determine if the intent of the instrument was met. The field test helped to validate the interview tool. Aside from grammatical and reformatting suggestions, no changes were made to the questions as a result of feedback from the experts. Experts used to conduct the field test were not used as participants in the study.

Population and Sample Characteristics

The population for this study included high school administrators, teachers, and parents from a large public school in a major city in the Midwestern region of the United States. Teachers and administrators with 5 or more years of public-school experience, who had been involved in ASEPs and parents who had used after-school programs for

their high school students, were recruited for the study. A purposeful sampling approach was used for the study.

Demographics

Thirty participants were selected to participate in the study. Participants ranged in age from 21 to 65 years. Ten participants were teachers, 10 were school administrators, and 10 were parents. The demographics of the study were diverse and illustrated the makeup of the teachers, administrators, and parents in the school where the study was conducted (see Table 2).

Table 2

Demographics of Teachers in Study

Pseudonym-T	Age	Gender	High School Curriculum	Years Teaching	Years Teaching ASEP
Teacher 1	40	Male	Math	8	5
Teacher 2	45	Male	English	10	8
Teacher 3	35	Female	Science	8	6
Teacher 4	30	Male	History/Social Studies	7	5
Teacher 5	55	Female	Math	9	5
Teacher 6	52	Male	English	17	7
Teacher 7	37	Female	Science	20	8
Teacher 8	37	Female	History/Social Studies	25	5
Teacher 9	21	Male	Science	15	6
Teacher 10	52	Female	Health/Physical Education	12	6

Table 2 shows the diversity of participants who were classroom teachers. Experience with classroom teachings ranged from 5 to 22 years. Teachers' experience with ASEP ranged from 5 to 10 years. Teachers were from all disciplines of the high school curriculum: 2 Mathematics, 3 English, 2 Science, 2 History/social studies and 1 Health and physical education as illustrated in Table 2.

Positions occupied by administrators varied and ranged from principal, vice principal and dean. Table 3 details the demographics of the administrators in the study. The 10 administrators included 5 (50%) African Americans and 5 (50%) White.

Table 3

Demographics of Administrators in Study

Pseudonym-A	Age	Position	Gender	Race	Years Experience
Administrator 1	65	Principal	Female	AA	30
Administrator 2	52	Dean of Culture	Female	AA	15
Administrator 3	60	Vice Principal	Female	White	20
Administrator 4	44	Dean of Culture	Male	AA	6
Administrator 5	62	Vice Principal	Male	AA	25
Administrator 6	35	Vice Principal	Female	AA	10
Administrator 7	38	Vice Principal	Male	White	12
Administrator 8	30	Vice Principal	Female	AA	6
Administrator 9	32	Vice Principal	Female	White	5
Administrator 10	55	Student Information System Administrator	Male	AA	22

Participants who were parents included 10 (100%) African Americans; five (50%) males and five (50%) females (see Table 4). Ninety percent of parents who agreed to be in the study had used ASEP for their students for 3 or more years. Parents ranged in age from 39 to 53 years.

Table 4

Demographics of Parents in Study

Pseudonym-P	Age	Gender	Race
Parent 1	45	Female	AA
Parent 2	39	Female	AA
Parent 3	40	Male	AA
Parent 4	52	Male	AA
Parent 5	45	Male	AA
Parent 6	51	Female	AA
Parent 7	53	Female	AA
Parent 8	40	Female	AA
Parent 9	52	Male	AA
Parent 10	42	Male	AA

Data Collection Procedures

Case study research supports the use of semi-structured, open ended questions and allows the participants a full opportunity to share experiences and opinions (Creswell, 2009). This design also supports the use of interviews, surveys, and participant

observations as means of collecting data. After receiving IRB approval collection of data procedures were initiated.

Potential participants were invited to join the study after obtaining permission from the school administrator and upon IRB approval (IRB 04-23-19=0101160). An email letter of invitation inviting potential participants was sent to parents from the school principal's office. I also sent out an email to potential participants (e.g. teachers and administrators) inviting them to join the study. The first 10 potential participants for each group who contacted me indicating an interest in participating in the study were given an informed consent form. Participants who met the criteria for inclusion in the study and who completed the inform consent became part of the study sample group. I contacted participants, via telephone and they were scheduled for a date, time, and tentative location for the interviews. The survey was completed during the first 5 minutes of the interview session. The telephone call provided me with the opportunity to establish an initial rapport and to reaffirm their written consent to participate in the study.

Interviews

A sample list of the interview questions was approved through the IRB process as part of the informed consent process and the full list of questions is available in Appendix A. Before starting each interview, I explained the purpose of the study, ensured that the participants understood that the interviews would be recorded, and summarized the potential benefits of the findings. Finally, I verbally informed the participants that they had the option of member-checking the transcribed data if they were willing to do so. I also informed the participants more than once that their participation was voluntary and

that they could discontinue the study at any time without problems or repercussions. Prior to beginning the survey the interview participants were assigned an alphanumeric code for the purpose of confidentiality. The confidentiality of participants is important in any study. The code was recorded at the top of the survey for each participant and at the beginning of interviews prior to recording the responses. Each participant's interview lasted appropriately 45 minutes and the interviews were recorded using a hand-held recorder. The first five minutes were used for participants to complete the survey.

In order to facilitate a smooth and easy flow each interview was recorded following a set of questions that I prepared (see Appendix A). All questions were not asked in the same order to each participant because in a few cases, an answer to one question led to another question that helped to expand or clarify some of the answers. Field notes (coded with appropriate alphanumeric codes) were taken during the recorded interviews in case clarification of answers that were given by the participants was needed. There were no organizational conditions that influenced any of the participants' experiences or responses during the data collection process that would interfere with the interpretation of the findings presented in this study. Participants' comments to interview questions are reported as part of data in response to the four research questions that were used to guide the study.

Surveys

Surveys were administered to all participants, which included teachers, administrators, and parents. Each participant completed a survey before the interview process began (see Appendices H and I). Informed consent was obtained at two times,

prior to the interview being scheduled and immediately before the survey was given. By signing and dating the survey along with the researcher I was able to again remind participants that the study was voluntary, that their information would be kept confidential, and that they could discontinue the study at any time without any problems or concerns.

Parent surveys. The parents' survey provided a section to capture information that would be useful for evaluating the parents' perceptions of the program. The survey also included information about parent demographics, access to course materials, and curriculum related resources for student(s). Parents were also asked to answer information regarding the teachers' effectiveness and availability. All 10 parents completed the survey as indicated in Table 5. When responding to survey question on program value and effectiveness, eight (80%) of the participating parents indicated that they found the ASEP valuable and effective, one parent participant (10%) felt that the program was not valuable or effective, and one parent (10%) felt that the program was somewhat valuable and effective (see Table 5).

Table 5

Parents' Responses on Survey

Pseudonym-P	Age	Gender	Race	Program Value Effectiveness	Teacher Availability
Parent 1	45	Female	AA	Yes	Yes
Parent 2	39	Female	AA	Yes	Yes but difficult
Parent 3	40	Male	AA	Yes	Yes
Parent 4	52	Male	AA	No	No
Parent 5	45	Male	AA	Yes	No
Parent 6	51	Female	AA	Yes	No
Parent 7	53	Female	AA	Yes	Yes
Parent 8	40	Female	AA	Yes	Yes
Parent 9	52	Male	AA	Somewhat	No
Parent 10	42	Male	AA	Yes	No

Teacher surveys. The teachers' survey included information about teacher demographics, access to course materials, and curriculum related resources for students. The teachers' survey focused on program value and effectiveness and whether or not students' demonstrated signs of effective critical thinking associated with ASEP practices. According to data collected from the teachers' surveys, all 10 participants (100%) felt that the program was valuable and effective and the practices prevalent in the program support the development of critical thinking in the ASEP (see Table 6).

Table 6

Teachers' Responses to Survey

Pseudonyms	Age	Gender	Race	Program Value Effectiveness	Students Demonstrate Effective Critical Thinking Skills
Teacher 1	40	Male	AA	Yes	Yes
Teacher 2	45	Male	White	Yes	Yes
Teacher 3	35	Female	White	Yes	Yes
Teacher 4	30	Male	AA	Yes	Yes
Teacher 5	55	Female	Asian-Pacific	Yes	Yes
Teacher 6	52	Male	Hispanic	Yes	Yes
Teacher 7	37	Female	AA	Yes	Yes
Teacher 8	37	Female	Middle Eastern	Yes	Yes
Teacher 9	21	Male	Native American	Yes	Yes
Teacher 10	52	Female	White	Yes	Yes

Administrator surveys. The survey administered to school administrators included information about administrators demographics, access to course materials, and curriculum related resources for students. Ten administrators were also asked to answer information regarding the program value and effectiveness as related to their students. According to survey data collected from the administrators, nine (90%) of participants felt that the program was valuable and effective. (see Table 7).

Table 7

Administrators' Responses to Survey

Pseudonyms	Age	Position	Gender	Race	Years Experience	Program Value Effectiveness
Administrator 1	65	Principal	Female	AA	30	Yes
Administrator 2	52	Dean of Culture	Female	AA	15	Yes
Administrator 3	60	Vice Principal	Female	White	20	Yes
Administrator 4	44	Dean of Culture	Male	AA	6	Yes
Administrator 5	62	Vice Principal	Male	AA	25	Yes
Administrator 6	35	Vice Principal	Female	AA	10	Yes
Administrator 7	38	Vice Principal	Male	White	12	Yes
Administrator 8	30	Vice Principal	Female	AA	6	Yes
Administrator 9	32	Vice Principal	Female	White	5	Yes
Administrator 10	55	Student Information System Administrator	Male	AA	22	Somewhat

Observations

In social research, observations may be useful for providing contextual information needed to make sense of data collected and to learn about sensitive issues that participants may be unwilling to discuss (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As indicated in Chapter 3, credibility can also be achieved through observation and interaction with the participants. Observations of participant can be used to increase the validity of a study and may help the researcher gain a better understanding of the context and phenomenon under study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Also, validity is stronger with the usage of additional strategies used with observation, such as interviews and surveys, as shared by a number of sources.

During observations for this research study, I assumed the role as a complete observer, as such; I did not participate in the activity that was being observed. I used the observation protocol to note all the observations. I recorded the events as they occurred by making descriptive notes during this qualitative case study, as recommended by multiple sources. I kept a careful record of events to provide a relatively incontestable description for further analysis and ultimate reporting. Observations of teacher participants were conducted in three after-school enrichment program sessions and took approximately 40 minutes per session. Constantly reminding myself of the need to record what I observed with a nonjudgmental attitude and with limited biases, made it possible for me to maintain a sense of objectivity and keep an open mind during the observations. After establishing rapport with participants and making sure that I blended into the setting, as not to disturb participant's natural behavior in the classroom, I was

able to quietly observe and gather data. I conducted the observations in order to visualize the dynamics of the classroom, further triangulate data and verify or disapprove the responses from the interviews of teachers and administrators.

Data Analysis Procedures

As mentioned in Chapter 3, I used an inductive data analysis approach to explore the impact of after school enrichment programs and whether or not the programs were effective for African American male students (Yin, 2009). The inductive analysis approach allowed for the use of numerous sources in categorization of data, based on the ground up method (Yin, 2014). Based on the ground up method, semi structured interview data from the participants' responses established the foundational source for categorizing themes and data (Patton, 2015). Creswell's (2009) six step plan for data analysis, as described in Chapter 3, was used to assist in the data analysis process. In the process interview data, surveys, and observations were analyzed using the following modifications of Creswell's (2009) six step plan:

Step 1: Prepare and Organize Data

Data were organized and transcribed verbatim so that I could visually sort the text for a deeper analysis. I organized and analyzed data for this study based upon the responses from the participants in regards to factors that impacted academic achievement for African American male students. The first step that I took was to analyze data immediately following the interviews and observations. I then prepared verbatim transcripts into a Microsoft word document. I also transcribed my field notes after each interview to capture insights discovered while listening to the way participants responded

to the interview questions. Following the transcription, I checked the audio recording and transcripts for accuracy and used pseudonyms to conceal the participants' identities and maintain confidentiality throughout the study. Prior to the start of the data analysis phase, I organized the field and summary notes chronologically, and I compiled the verbatim transcripts from participants. I imported the transcribed information into NVivo software. NVivo software is a useful tool for organizing, coding, and analyzing qualitative data (NVivo, 2012). The software provided features for performing data analysis to ensure uniformity and validity of the process. NVivo is also used for coding data from several sources for easy identification of commonalities.

As outlined in Chapter 3, after transcribing notes from the audio recorder and interview notes, I (a) reviewed and sanitized the data, (b) formed initial coding through recurrent or accentuated words and phrases, (c) reanalyzed data, (d) analyzed second cycle coding, (e) aligned thoughts and phrases to properly assess themes, (f) formed themes, (g) created interim visual models to represent the analysis, (h) reviewed all aforementioned steps, (i) drafted a synopsis to support the visual models, and (j) repeated any of the above steps as required for accuracy (Patton, 2005). Following the reading, organizing, and coding phases of the analysis of data, I compared the codes that emerged from the interviews, surveys, observations, and summary notes to identify commonalities. The constant comparative method of data analysis helped me to discover similarities and differences among the collected data. To streamline the number of codes, I combined codes that were redundant. To reduce the overall number of codes, I set aside those that did not directly address the research questions.

Step 2: Data Review

To ensure that I accurately understood the data, I read the transcripts thoroughly numerous times. This provided me with opportunities to add, change, or merge codes as I gained a further understanding of the responses from the teachers, parents, and administrators. After numerous reviews and analysis of the transcripts, I kept data that was relevant to the research questions.

Step 3: Detailed Analysis

With a horizontal approach, I started organizing the materials into meaningful data segments and categories. As I sought to capture the participants' experiences of after school enrichment programs, I used field notes and my observations containing the observed expressions of the respondents, and my impressions of what they emphasized. I considered the idea of what their freshly compared insight and experience could add to the existing knowledge of the phenomenon. Data were read and listened to numerous times to gain a sense of the general meaning of the materials. As the primary research instrument, I went over the transcribed data line by line to see what responses aligned with the four major research questions.

Additionally, I looked for words and phrases that were repeated, comments that stood out in particular responses, what the participants verbalized as being important, what might have been found in the literature review in Chapter 2, and responses that reminded me of the theories used to underpin the study. I reviewed each interview with these questions in my mind. I used NVivo 12 to perform word and phrase frequency queries throughout all of the transcribed data. I then gathered the various recurring

words, phrases, and concepts highlighted from the text and placed them in nodes within NVivo software. Nodes are containers into which words, concepts, or themes can be placed or indexed for future retrieval and analysis (NVivo 12, tutorial).

The following are some examples of identified words and phrases from the transcribed data that represents the overall impressions of administrators, parents and teachers and what they emphasized regarding the effects of after school enrichment programs for African American male students. These identified words and phrases were meaningful to the study and were consistent as the participants begin to speak about the effects of after-school enrichment program on African American male students.

- Access and equity
- Making a difference
- Absenteeism
- Increased confidence
- Extended Learning Opportunities
- Service
- Social Awareness
- Problem Solving
- Engagement
- Promotes Confidence

For example, words and phrases from administrators included:

- “I work with my teachers to see how I can support their classroom strategies.”

- “There is limited research to support additional after-school enrichment programs.”
- “Teachers must maintain high expectations and teach the skills needed for student success.”

Words and phrases from teachers included:

- “Students can have constant feedback.”
- “Test scores and grades have improved significantly.”
- “The impact of the afterschool enrichment program can be seen in the student’s attendance, student grades and test scores.”

Words and phrases from parents included:

- “Parents cannot leave everything up to the school systems, we must be involved. Program must be student centered.”
- “The enrichment programs are beneficial to my child however I am not able to attend meetings to speak with teachers because I have to work 16 hours a day”
“As a parent, if I am not involved, how will I know what my child needs are.”

Step 4: Descriptions and Generation of Themes & Subthemes (practices)

Thematic analysis allows researchers to identify and organize relevant themes and, which can be used as units of analysis in detailed re-readings of a data set that included transcripts of interviews, study objectives, research questions, surveys, observations narratives, and field notes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013). To begin the thematic process, I performed repeated readings of the data sets while identifying the most salient significance in the collected materials.

Through a process of refining the codes, I determined *major themes* that addressed the research questions. The iterative process of observing and assessing the themes to identify how they aligned with the research questions allowed me to review the collected data thoroughly (Saldana, 2014). Aligning the emergent concepts with the existing literature also improved the credibility and the conceptual basis emerging in the case study (Saldana, 2014). Table 8 displays the revealed themes and subthemes.

Table 8

Revealed Themes

Theme no	Main Theme	Subthemes
Theme 1	Continuing learning opportunities for teachers are essential for effective ASEP	Academic support Teacher advocacy Collaborative Planning Mentoring Partnerships
Theme 2	Communication is a central component of ASEP effectiveness	Lack of communication Teacher-parent interactions Requesting timely support Priority notification of meetings
Theme 3	Building student confidence and student motivation in ASEP	Telephone contact Test and grades Impact on Cognition Social competence School influences
Theme 4	Provide policy makers with data supporting additional funding and support	Lack of resources Limited budget Material resources Financial incentives

Codes, Categories, and Discovery of Emergent Themes

According to Creswell (2009), in case study data analysis, while QSR software can be helpful in the storage and management of recorded and transcribed data, it is still the responsibility of the researcher to discover, code, categorize and interpret the themes. To initiate the coding, categorizing of themes, I had to unbracket myself as the researcher. Bracketing as discussed in Chapter 3, is a means of the researcher suspending his or her judgment, preconceived ideas, biases, and expertise regarding the topic being studied (Creswell, 2009). Bracketing also allows the researcher to be an objective listener and observer while collecting the data. Codes can be used to identify recurring patterns, organize the chunks of data that go together, and trigger deeper reflection on the meaning of data (Creswell, 2009, Saldana, 2015). NVivo 12 pro software was used to code and capture code emergent themes that derived from data and the research questions that were used in this study. Open coding (Saldana, 2014) was used to reduce the collection of data into smaller and manageable sets of themes that were descriptive of the afterschool enrichment programs for African American male students. The identified text/phrases that coincided with the four main research questions were highlighted and categorized for further analysis.

Upon completion of each interview and observation, I uploaded the participants' transcribed interviews, observations, surveys and field notes into NVivo 12 to conduct coding. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) indicated that coded data are useful when retrieving materials. The purpose of the interview questions, observations and surveys was to collect in-depth information and address the main research questions. Following

completion of the data collection, audio transcription and member checking, I begin the analysis process by coding the participant's key statements (Creswell, 2009). I read each transcribed interview, line by line to assess accuracy in comparison to the audio recordings while simultaneously searching for commonalities among the data (Creswell, 2009; Maxwell, 2013; Saldana, 2015). For example within Research Question 1, which asked, "How do educators describe practices that may contribute to the successful outcome(s) of structured after-school enrichment programs designed to improve the academic achievement of high school African American males at one metropolitan high school?", the following codes were initially used:

- Beneficial
- Extended learning opportunities
- Promote individual growth
- Developing social skills

Step 5 Presentation and description of Themes and subthemes (practices)

The themes and identified practices that emerged during data analysis addressing the four research questions are presented in narrative form in this chapter (Creswell, 2009). A detailed discussion and multiple perspectives and quotations from participants are presented as part of the presentation of findings in this chapter (Creswell, 2009).

Step 6 Interpretation

This step focused on interpreting data and writing a narrative, that goes beyond the description of data and making an argument in relation to my research question. Creswell (2009) and Lincoln & Guba (1985) suggested that asking, "What were the

lessons learned” captures the essence of the research. A thick rich description of the narrative was used to convey the interpretation of findings in Chapter 5.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) contended that qualitative research should seek to establish truthfulness and credibility within the research findings. In doing so, the researcher should consider the methods used to ensure the quality of the study (Polit & Beck, 2014). Amankwaa (2016) noted that trustworthiness of a study entails rigor and researchers should establish protocols and procedures for a study to be considered worthy of consideration by others. According to Guba (1981), four distinctive strategies that the researcher should use to establish trustworthiness entails establishing (a) credibility (b) dependability (c) confirmability and (d) transferability. All four of these constructs were used in this research. Data collection and analysis processes were conducted in a manner that helped me avoid any research bias or inconsistencies.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) credibility establishes confidence in the truth of the findings and is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore and gain a deeper understanding of how and why ASEPs influence academic achievement of African American male students, and how academic funding of such programs assist academic achievement. To ensure that my research was credible I employed member checking. According to Stake (1995) to add credibility to a qualitative study member checking provides a way for the researcher to ensure the accurate portrayal of participant voices by

allowing participants the opportunity to confirm or deny the accuracy and interpretations of data.

Member checking was performed at the beginning and completion of the interviews. I clarified the participants' statements during and after the interviews. All participants were open to clarification. One participant informed me that "it was important to have the facts" straight for a successful after school enrichment program. I also made follow-up telephone calls with several of the participants to avoid mistakes that may have been in the transcripts and to ask for clarification of unclear responses. Changes or corrections were noted in the transcripts.

Credibility

The criteria of credibility establish the confidence or the truth of the study and are significant to the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In establishing credibility with the participants, I employed observations and member checking. Polit and Beck (2012) posits that credibility deals with the focus of the research and refers to the confidence in how the data addresses the intended of the study. To reduce biases, I employed the method of triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) by using interviews, observations, and surveys.

Transferability

Denzin and Lincoln (2011a) contend that research studies should be generalizable or transferrable to other settings or groups. Also, transferability allows the researcher to demonstrate that the study's findings are applicable to other studies. The purpose of this study was to explore and gain a deeper understanding of how and why ASEPs influence

academic achievement of African American male students. Data collected from parents, teachers, and administrators made it possible to understand how my research can be applied to other settings. In addition, as noted in Chapter 3, I provided thick descriptions of the context, location, and participants studied. According to Shenton (2004), external validity refers to how well the outcomes of a study can be expected to apply to other places, settings or populations. In order to establish validity and reliability of the research findings, data collection from participants made it possible to understand the research context as it applied to other studies. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommends providing thick rich descriptions of the phenomenon being investigated. For this reason, a thick and detailed descriptions of the participants and their environments was necessary to ensure transferability. Through detailed information and phrases from the participants, the information can be transferred to other settings (Stake, 1995).

Dependability

When addressing the issue of dependability, the process taken within the study should be reported step by step whereas enabling another researcher to repeat the study and obtain similar findings (Patton, 2002). NVivo 12 software was used to develop and confirm themes during my research. In addition, field notes were also kept during the interviews and observations of participants. Lincoln and Guba (1985) contend that a dependent study should be accurate and consistent. Coding and re-coding procedures were also implemented to ensure dependability. Detailed field notes and triangulation were also used to enhance dependability.

Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted that confirmability refers to objectivity and the control of research biases. Confirmability also ensures that the findings of the data can be confirmed or repeated by other researchers (Stake 1995). I employed a detailed trail and records of my data collection methods by employing field notes and making regular entries during the process. I also made certain to store all interviews, tape recordings, and observation data into NVivo 12 database which is password protected. This also afforded me an opportunity to base my findings on the participants' responses (member checking) and ensure consistency with my data (Polit & Beck 2014).

Findings

Due to the large amounts of research data collected, reporting each item of the results collected would be massive. Therefore, key themes that consistently emerged during the data collection period were combined to accomplish the results of this research. Four major themes emerged from data analysis. Nine practices identified and determined to be effective for the success of African American males, also emerged.

Themes

- Theme 1: Continuing learning opportunities for teachers are essential for effective ASEP's
- Theme 2: Communication is a central component of ASEP's effectiveness
- Theme 3: Building student confidence and student motivation in ASEP's
- Theme 4: Provide policymakers with data supporting additional funding and support

Practices

Emerging from the four themes were nine subthemes. I called each subtheme a practice because each subtheme referred to an action that related back to the theme. Practice 1 was set and follow benchmarks and build rigor into the curriculum. Practice 2 suggested the use of strategies to motivate students through support and high expectations. Practice 3 was to provide ongoing feedback and growth opportunities for teachers. Practice 4 was to provide a safe environment for students to build self-confidence. Practice 5 of respecting students' time and building of solid student-teacher relationships was supported by Practice 6 which suggested making a connection with students where they are and finding ways to motivate them as effective strategies. Practices 7, 8 and 9 focused on creating enhanced opportunities for parent-teacher communication; continued curriculum improvements designed with a strong enrichment component, and the production, maintenance, and distribution of data supporting effectiveness of and need for academic ASEPs.

Research Questions (RQs)

The study was guided by 4 research questions:

RQ 1: How do educators describe practices that may contribute to the successful outcome(s) of structured ASEPs designed to improve the academic achievement of high school African American males at one metropolitan high school?

RQ 2: How do parents (P) describe practices that may contribute to the successful outcome(s) of a structured after-school enrichment program on their student(s)?

RQ 3: How, if so, are the attitudes of educators, toward the practices used in the after-school enrichment program, demonstrated in behavior and interactions during program activities as noted during observation?

RQ 4: How, if so, do the practices identified by educators and parents generate issue definitions and agenda setting of public policy decisions by policymakers on ASEPs when using the PET?”

Findings from Research Question 1, Theme 1 and Theme 2

Research Question 1 asked “How do educators describe practices that may contribute to the successful outcome(s) of structured ASEPs designed to improve the academic achievement of high school African American males at one metropolitan high school?” Responses from Administrator (A) and Teacher (T) participants led to the identification of the first two themes. Theme 1 is continuing learning opportunities for teachers are essential for effective ASEP’s. Theme 2 is building student confidence and student motivation in ASEP’s.

Educators overall indicated that adhering to benchmarks and making the after-school experience relevant was important. A1, 3 and 8 stated that, “The after-school enrichment program uses the states’ benchmarks to evaluate the rigor of lesson plans and their teachers are required to attend professional development days at least 4 times a year if they are going to be considered for the after-school enrichment program.” A3 also stated, “I provide teachers with instructional materials to guide classroom behaviors in addition to acknowledging the teachers’ efforts during staff meetings. Another administrator and a majority of the teachers indicated, “Instructional strategies are geared

toward engagement, for example, learning objectives are written on the board for students to follow. A6, A8 and A10 agreed that teachers have the responsibility of monitoring (e.g. after school enrichment classroom visits), supporting, and providing feedback of instructional practices that teachers provide during the after-school enrichment program. Administrators voiced that “The afterschool programs are staffed with certified teachers who focus specifically on reading comprehension, writing, and math.” Teachers (T) responding to Research Question 1 had similar opinions or perspectives about contributing practices when it involved continuous learning opportunities for teachers. T4 indicated during the interview that, “The principals do a great job obtaining resources, speakers, and providing team-building for teachers who teach in the ASEP.”

An important outcome of ASEPs is college prep and introduction of rigor in the classroom. Participant T1 stated that, “The ASEPs are very beneficial to students and also provide college credits for those who attend”. A1, A5, and A8 were in agreement with T1. A3 stated, “We have also seen a positive impact on student motivation and increases in grades and test scores among our male students.” A6 stated, “Our ASEPs are very rigorous and have a positive impact on grades and test scores, also in order for a teacher to participate in the after-school enrichments program, they have to be evaluated as highly effective and attend the required professional development days.” A4 replied, “Teachers often emphasize that they have high expectations of the African American male students, and they believe that the students can meet the expectations.” A7 and A9 stated, “meetings are held bi-weekly with our teachers to review the students’ progress and teachers discuss ways and different practices to help students succeed.” A2 stated

that, “during the bi-weekly staff meetings, teachers are informed that they are accountable for the student’s success. Many of our teachers are provided with reports from the after-school enrichment teachers, regarding how their students are doing within their classroom. Participant A4 agreed stating that, “It is a team process, and it takes a village to raise these children and also [the practice of] parental meetings were essential to the outcomes of the students and if more parental involvement occurred, this would help with the academic outcomes.”

A majority of the administrators voiced that the school has a history of competitiveness and the teachers are committed to the students’ success while utilizing various teaching strategies for the students. Teachers described the practices that contribute to positive outcomes for African American boys in high school with similar responses. T1 stated, “In my opinion, ASEP help students socially because of the smaller classroom environments. Students are more comfortable expressing themselves because there are fewer students within the classroom setting.” T1 further stated, “I have seen most students’ grades and confidence improve when they participate in afterschool enrichment programs. T8 and T9 had similar responses and agreed with T1. T2, T7 and T10 also agreed and added, “Academic enrichment programs play a vital role to support AA males to matriculate through high school.” T3 stated, “Afterschool enrichment programs provide students with self-confidence and they know that there is a support system that will help them achieve their academic goals...” T1 stated, “Students can always count on receiving assistance and tutoring in subjects related to their academic program. T6 agreed with T10 stating that, “The academic enrichment program is a big

help to our students because their test and reading scores have improved remarkably.”

T5 stated, “I think and also believe that the academic enrichment program is competitive and it is very important that our African American males attend, while many of them had GPA’s below 2.8 and now we are seeing GPA’s that are ranging between 2.9 to 3.2.”.

Teachers, administrators and parents agreed that adhering to state benchmarks and building a curriculum with rigor were important aspects of the ASEP. Two practices that emerged during analysis of findings from Research Question 1 were:

- Practice 1: Set and follow benchmarks and build rigor into the curriculums.
- Practice 2: Provide ongoing feedback and growth opportunities for teachers.

Findings from Research Question 2 and Theme 2

Research question three asked, “How do parents (P) identify and describe factors that contribute to the effects of a structured after-school enrichment program on their child(ren)?” Research question 2 led to the identification of Theme 2: Communication is a central component of ASEP effectiveness.

Data collected via the parent surveys and parent interviews were used to answer Research Question 2. Parents overall gave the program and services high marks.

P1 stated, “I believe that the afterschool enrichment program has helped my son tremendously with his studying habits. As a result of the program, my son is much disciplined and plans to go to college. “This Program has increased my son’s self-esteem. He is noticeably confident and uses to be shy and did not communicate often. I believe that he likes the style of his male teacher because he is always speaking about his

suits and how you need to look professional if you are going to speak to people”. P1 also stated, “My son will be a first generation to attend college.”

The need to have more direct involvement with the teachers emerged as an important practice. P1 shared that, “I would like to have more contact with the teachers, and cannot because he has to work long hours, but I am happy that the male teacher is working with my son.” P5, P6, and P8 also agreed with P1. These 4 (40%) participants suggested that the teachers really provide their students with quality and up to date resources that pertain to real time/life and can be used to further develop their study habits.” P5 stated, “I like the curriculum instructions that the after-school enrichment program has developed for my son...my son has improved with his communication skills. However, my son does not always bring home his progress report and at times I find it difficult to get my son’s results on-line, and I wish that the teachers would respond to the online messages that I send.” P3 and P9 echoed that the program supports students academically and allows for growth in many areas, however they have found the communication lacking among the teachers and administrators. This concern was echoed by a majority of the parents. Most of the parents indicated that they work long hours and wish that they could speak to the son’s teacher more often.

P4 verbalized, “The after-school enrichment program promotes attendance and has helped to increase my child’s confidence, grades, and test scores.” P6 and P10 made suggestions to have parent teacher conference on the weekends. P2, P7 and P10 shared very similar perceptions and opinions that their sons had been provided with opportunities to develop relationships, the parents also indicated that they were glad that

their children were receiving tutoring and assistance with their classroom homework assignments. P2 also stated, “The after-school enrichment program has helped his son a lot.” P2 also verbalized that he believes that he should be more involved stating, “I work seven days a week and sometimes I believe that the teachers are the parents because his son spends a lot of his time in school.” P2 was very empathetic while verbalizing that he wished that he could spend more time with his son. P8 and P4 spoke about the afterschool enrichment program providing their sons with math and computer skills. They voiced that they had little experience in math and computers and the enrichment program has been very good at strengthening their son’s skills. Most of the parents voiced needs to spend more time with their children but because of long work hours they were not able to always speak with the after-school teachers. P5 stated, “I believe that my son is growing up to be a nice productive young man. This is his second year in the program, and I have seen maturity. I am a single parent and I believe that it takes a village to raise a child”.

Findings from parent interviews further supported Emerging Themes 1, 2 and 3 and identified additional Practices 3 and 4.

- Practice 3: Create enhanced opportunities for parent-teacher communication.
- Practice 4: Continue with curriculum design that supports strong enrichment components.

Findings from Research Question 3 and Theme 3

Research question 3 asked, Why and how do educators think ASEPs help redirect African American male students’ attitudes, self-efficacy, and motivation toward

their academic success?” Data collected during surveys and interviews in response to research question 2 led to the confirmation of Theme 3: Building student confidence and student motivation in ASEP and the identification of two additional practices.

- Practice 5: Use strategies to motivate students through support and high expectations.
- Practice 6: Provide a safe environment for students to build self-confidence.

Three separate observations of the ASEPs were used to gather information needed to respond to research question 3. Observations in rooms 1, 2, and 3 provided further insights through revealing the quality of teacher-student interaction and that the teacher’s behaviors and interactions with the students were calm and reassuring. The teachers were also able to model and engage with the students while demonstrating to the students that they cared about their learning and academic outcomes.

During Observation 1 the teacher administered a quiz to students and when the students answered correctly, high fives were given by the teacher. These interactions supported observations that I made regarding the ASEPs. The teachers used engaging and constructive conversations with the teaching instructions and activities. The teachers were open minded and allowed many of the students to learn at their own pace. The teacher provided positive feedback and words of encouragement when a student solved the computer dilemma, during observation 2 (C-Day). This interaction demonstrated a strong relationship between the teacher and the students, which is significant to academic success. During observation 3, although the students struggled with the assignments, the teacher communicated to the students that they needed extra help or were not doing their

homework, thereby, requesting to have the parents involved. The teachers were holding the students accountable for doing their work and steadily worked with the students. Observations revealed a sincere practice of the teacher's willingness to assist the students with developing their analytical and critical thinking skills while identifying strengths and areas of improvement for each student.

Having conducted the interviews and the surveys prior to observing the classes provided me with insights regarding the teachers' attitudes and visible behavior and led to identification of two more effective practices for the support of AA males in the classroom within Themes 2 and 3:

- Practice 7: Respect for students' time and build solid student-teacher relationships.
- Practice 8: Connect with students where they are and finding ways to motivate them.

Findings from Research Question 4 and Theme 4

Research question four asked, "How, if so, do the practices identified by educators and parents generate issue definitions and agenda setting of public policy decisions by policymakers on ASEPs when using the PET?" Practices identified from data collected via surveys, interviews, and observations align well with the themes and created data and information that can be used by policymakers who utilize the PET. Data collected from parents included P1 who stated, "I would like to make certain that the after-school enrichment program continues to provide quality and rigor for my son. Sometimes, it is difficult because I am always hearing in the news about funding that is

going to be cut from the schools.” Parent (P) 3, P4 and P7 shared similar concerns.

These parents also shared concerns that the instructional strategies that the after-school enrichment program offers is beneficial, however at times, the male students has informed them that there are sometimes not enough books and the teachers are often looking for resources to purchase books. Teachers and administrators also expressed the need to obtain funding to keep the class size down and obtain necessary resources. Most of the parents also stated that additional funding should be provided for ASEPs. In addition, most of the administrators and teachers voiced strategies such as smaller classroom sizes for students during the after-school enrichment program would provide greater benefits for African American students. In fact, T3 indicated that he hopes that the school system does not increase his after-school enrichment classroom because of lack of teachers and potential budget cuts. T8 stated that most of the teachers who teach in the enrichment programs have been evaluated as highly effective and this is a bonus for students. A1 and A3 stated, many of the male students benefit from access to supportive teachers and academic vigor, and this is what makes the students achieve academically [and this is costly]”. T1, T5, T7, T10 had similar responses suggesting, if they could have additional resources such as computers, more curriculum in-services, and support from the state this would be a great benefit for the after-school enrichment program. A1, A2, A3, voiced that recruiting highly effective and caring teachers who encourage students is very important for sustainability of the program. A7 and A9 also voiced that reading, math and science were central in the after-school enrichment program and if they could offer additional compensation to teachers who are highly

effective who taught in the program that would be a great motivator for the teachers. Administrators, teachers, and parents all agreed that maintaining and, if possible, enhancing funding for after school enrichment is needed. Data collected provided results leading to Theme 4 - Provide policymakers with data supporting the needs for additional funding support and one additional practice.

- Practice 9: Produce, maintain, and distribute data supporting effectiveness of and need for academic ASEPs.

Discrepant Cases

Discrepant cases are described as any data that does not necessarily fit within a category or data that is an exception to any specific pattern in the data (Creswell, 2012). Discrepant cases may become evident during data analysis, and issues can occur at the beginning, during and after the data collection (Creswell, 2012). To deal with issues, Creswell (2012) identifies a number of strategies that can be used to deal with ethical problems that may arise. For interview transcripts, one of the ways to identify discrepant cases is to use member checking, self-checking or an external auditor. Once an issue arises in a transcript, the researcher can go back to the interview notes that were collected during the interview process or to the voice-recording of the interview. There were no discrepancies.

Data Saturation

Data saturation is considered to have been achieved by the researcher when new information ceases to emerge during data collection and analysis. This point in data analysis occurs when the researcher is reasonably sure that further data collection and

further analysis would prove to be redundant since no additional themes or patterns would be expected to emerge. I confirmed data saturation for this study by collecting data from the determined sample of participants through surveys, interviews and observations leading to triangulation of data from multiple sources.

Transition and Summary

Information recorded from the parents, teachers, and administrators during the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by me. Each participant was provided with an alpha-numeric code to ensure confidentiality. In responding to the research questions educators described practices, including extending learning and professional development of teachers, increasing communication with parents, and creating opportunities to build student's confidence and increase student's motivation as important practices needed for academic achievement of African American male students in the after-school enrichment program. Educator's attitudes and the importance of such in fostering successful outcomes of after-school programs were noted by all participants. Additionally, the practice of generating issue definitions for public decisions was identified as important in this study. Each recorded session was stored in my home office on an external hard-drive, a zip-drive, where files are encrypted, and password protected. Data analyses led to the emergence of 4 Themes and 9 essential practices for effective ASEPs. Chapter 5 focuses on the interpretations of the results, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications for social change and the conclusion.

Chapter 5: Recommendations and Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore and gain a deeper understanding of how ASEPs influence academic achievement of African American male students at one public high school and how adequate funding of such programs may supports academic achievement. The focus of this study was on perspectives and opinions of teachers, administrators, and parents on what practices may contribute to the success of ASEPs. Results of the study may serve to provide information needed to deepen understandings among educators and policymakers about the impact of after-school enrichment programs and how they influence student success, thus, leading to increased attention to and funding of additional ASEPs. Further, this study may support efforts to address the requirements set by the 21st Century Learning Centers, which requires schools to provide students with academic enrichment opportunities as well as additional activities designed to support their regular academic program. Chapter 5 contains the interpretation of study findings, limitations of study, recommendations for future study, implications for policymakers and social change and a chapter conclusion.

Interpretation of Findings

Themes

Data analyses led to the emergence of four themes and nine practices deemed essential for effective ASEPs. Theme 1: Continuing learning opportunities for teachers are essential for effective ASEP; Theme 2: Communication is a central component of ASEP's effectiveness; and Theme 3: Build student confidence and student motivation in

ASEP's; Theme 4: Provide policymakers with data supporting additional funding and support.

Practices

Best practices in the ASEPs is developing teaching strategies that employs an integrated and comprehensive approach to the application of 21st century skills, rather than teaching and testing in silos. Nine practices emerging during data analysis: Practices 1 suggested. "Set and follow benchmarks and build rigor into the curriculum" and Practice 2 emerged as a result of the need to, "Create enhanced opportunities for parent-teacher communication". Practice 3 Provides ongoing feedback and growth opportunities for teachers.". Practices 4 and 5 addressed, "Using strategies to motivate students through support and high expectations; and "Providing a safe environment for students to build self-confidence". Practices 6 and 7 focused on, "Respect for students' time and building of solid student-teacher relationships ", and the need for "Connecting with students where they are and finding ways to motivate them". Practices 8 and 9 emerged showing strong support for ASEPs to, "Continue with curriculum design that supports strong enrichment components", and creating ways for, "Producing, maintaining, and distributing data supporting effectiveness of and need for academic ASEPs".

Research Question 1, Theme 1, Practices 1 and 2

Research Question 1 asked "How do educators describe practices that may contribute to the successful outcome(s) of structured ASEPs designed to improve the academic achievement of high school African American males at one metropolitan high

school?” Theme 1, continuing learning opportunities for teachers are essential for effective ASEP, led to the identification of two practices that teachers and administrators suggested were vital to effective ASEP programs. Practice 1 included the need for setting and adhering to benchmarks that build rigor into the curriculum that are outlined by the state and the school. Practice 2 entailed ensuring that ongoing feedback and growth opportunities are provided for teachers were identified as essential practices.

According to Anderson and Ward (2014), although informal learning is an important part of a teachers training, its success is highly dependent upon many factors such as whether or not teachers share common values, beliefs and school cultures that promote trust and collaboration among their peers. In comparison, as was identified by the principles and administrators during my interviews, formal professional development courses offer structured preparation with specified curriculum, such as professional development workshops. Also as mentioned in Chapter 2, professional development workshops emphasizes improving teachers pedagogical content knowledge in addition to providing additional innovative teaching strategies, which can be accomplished by having highly qualified teachers who use strategies such as promoting problem-based learning and establishing, modeling and maintaining the study group and team work approach within the classrooms (Desimone, 2009). Close to 90% of the teachers and administrator cited a need for additional professional development opportunities.

A variety of teaching strategies were being used by the teachers to enhance learning, promote academic achievement and develop the male students' critical thinking skills. Commonly used teaching strategies identified by teachers and administrators in the

ASEPs were: project-based learning, cooperative learning techniques, debates, discussion questions, group work didactics, PowerPoint presentations, questions and answers, simulations, team learning, video learning, and vignettes. While no one strategy was used by all the teachers, all the strategies identified were the most prevalent. Of the identified teaching strategies, the strategies used most frequently were PowerPoint presentations, group work, project based learning, and cooperative learning techniques. As discussed in Chapter 2, to prepare African American students for social responsibilities, the manner in which they are taught must be changed (Whaley & Noel, 2012).

In regards to practices that contribute to successful academic outcomes and academic achievement, True, Jones, and Baumgartner stated that, “Policy making often proceeds smoothly with marginal or incremental accommodations, it also is regularly torn by lurches and significant departure from the incremental past” (2007, p. 156). Many of the educators indicated that the after-school enrichment program offered a variety of activities to increase student engagement and improve student outcomes. The teachers indicated that the male students felt proud to attend the after-school enrichment program and believed that they had support systems available to assist with their academics in addition to building their social skills. Many of the teachers echoed similar responses and characterized the after-school enrichment program as having a strong sense of academic rigor. One teacher shared that the administrators hold them accountable for the students’ outcomes and their evaluations are based upon how well the students achieve.

The teachers and administrators agreed that male students who attend the after-

school enrichment program benefit greatly from the instructional activities provided, such as formative assessments and group learning. From interviews with the administrators it is apparent that collaborative professional development can raise teacher effectiveness in a variety of schools with varying socio- cultural, social, and economic backgrounds which is consistent with what was found by Whitcomb (2013). Additionally, extended learning opportunities and various teaching strategies using team based assignments, cooperative learning, and teaching according to the state benchmarks have improved the quality and rigor in the after school enrichment program.

The literature review in Chapter 2 supports the theory of punctuation such as teachers have become facilitators of learning and ASEPs are now being transformed into engaging and learning environments (Gibb, 2017) Collectively the teachers and administrators voiced practices that contributed to improve academic achievement for male students entailed, involves the frequent and continued assessment of their teaching strategies and whether or not they are teaching according to the states benchmarks.

Research Question 2, Theme 2, Practices

Research Question 2 asked, “How do parents (P) describe practices that contribute to the successful outcome (s) of a structured after-school enrichment program on their child (ren)? Communication, as a central component of ASEP effectiveness, emerged as Theme 3 and led to the identification essential Practices 3 and 4 regarding the need to create enhanced opportunities for parent-teacher communication and for a continuation of curriculum design updates that support strong enrichment components.

During the interviews, many of the parents described the after-school enrichment program as being able to foster a positive environment for their children. Participants of the study viewed the teachers as being highly skilled in addition to fostering positive relationships with their children. Some of the parents expressed that the social interactions provided to their children were great; however, there was a need for the teachers to communicate directly with them regarding their child's progress. Parent and teacher communicating is a significant factor in improving parents' satisfaction with teachers and schools (Hines & McCoy, 2013). Despite the findings in the literature review, during the interviews the parent participants discussed that in practice communicating with the teachers was not easy due to scheduling conflicts. While the understanding of communicating is significant, understanding why communicating and collaboration is hard to achieve between parents and teachers is significant to establishing effective parent- teacher relationships.

Communication between the parent and the ASEP teachers were significant to the parents and stood out during the interviews. Many of the parents stated that the strategies provided to their children were working well, however their wish was to have daily and weekly progress of what was going on during the after-school hours. Parents expressed that the technology provided to their students was working well, however when messages are sent to them via technology, at times they struggle with being able to retrieve many of the messages and etc. A majority of the parents communicated that receiving messages on-line regarding their child's progress was a barrier in the ASEPs. Moreover, the

possibility to communicate may lead parents and teachers to a better appreciation of each other's expectations, concerns, and views.

In Chapter 2, Dotter (2012) mentions that dissatisfaction and lack of communication should not be perceived as problems that interfere with the parent - teacher relationship, but as a productive process that needs solutions. For this purpose, this should be the first step in developing parent-teacher collaboration so that both parties can develop open lines of communication and establish a foundation of trust. Being able to have access to communication may afford parents and teacher the opportunity to develop positive relationships while acknowledging each other concerns.

A great deal of positive feedback was received during the interviews regarding the strategies used; however there was a consistent theme regarding lack of communication between the after- school enrichment programs teachers. I have filled a gap in the literature, however, further research on the views of both parents and teachers would provide a more comprehensive understanding of their relationships and assist to reduce gap in communication between the groups. Supporting the literature in Chapter 2, consistently many of the parents favored the 21st century technology that was being provided to their children during the after-school enrichment program; however they themselves were experiencing difficulty retrieving reports regarding their child's progress. Teachers are the strategists of education that leads to the greatest challenges of our 21st century global society (Douglas, 2013). An important consideration is that teachers must continue to foster strong critical thinking and interpersonal communication skills in order for students to be successful and compete in a global world. The parents

believed that all of the teachers in the after-school enrichment program were rated highly effective and this meant their child would be provided with the best resources and learning opportunities available.

Research Question 3, Themes 3 and 4, Practices 3,4,5,6

Research question 3 asked, “Why and how do educators think ASEPs help re-direct African American male students’ attitudes, self-efficacy, and motivation toward their academic success?” Analysis of data collected led to emerging Theme 3 and the identification of four essential practices that support successful ASEP. Practices included (3) using strategies to motivate students through support and high expectations; (4) providing a safe environment for students to build self-confidence; (5) respect for students’ time and building of a solid student-teacher relationship; (6) and connecting with students where they are and finding ways to motivate them. These practices, including setting high expectations for students, appear to also increase students’ motivation to do well. This motivation is further enhanced when the environment is considered safe and supportive. Additionally, there is some evidence that it helps to build the students’ self-confidence. According to Bandura’s (1996) social cognitive theory, an individual’s belief about the impact he/she can have upon society is important to realizing the actual impact (Bandura, 1996). In terms of the Social Cognitive Theory (1997), students are more likely to use their resources towards achieving positive social outcomes if they believe in their own capacity to achieve the outcome. Respecting students, even their time, as expressed by one participant helps to build a solid student-teacher relationship and help students and teachers to connect in supportive ways.

During the observations, the teachers were able to provide meaningful strategies that built upon the students' prior knowledge and experiences while actively engaging the students in instructional tasks, which assisted them to achieve an understanding of their lesson provided. The teachers also provided collaborative learning opportunities that encouraged the male students to ask questions and clarify and expand upon their thoughts and develop constructive solutions. Most of the educators demonstrated and verbalized that the ASEPs were great programs which afforded them with the ability to make connections with their students. Positive student relationships, high expectations for students and cooperative learning strategies were observed with the teachers.

Data collected during the observations and analyzed also supported these findings and were in keeping with the literature review in Chapter 2 regarding the PET, which infers that teachers in education are drastically shifting to an approach in teaching, which requires fundamental changes to how educators think about their strategies and processes (Thomas & Brown, 2011). The following words were used to describe the classroom atmosphere; calm, organized, welcoming, structured and interactive engagement. Follow-up of homework assignments in the ASEPs were in line with school assignments that were provided in the classrooms. Data collected during the observation process also revealed that during the after-school enrichment program, students were given the opportunity to review and learn more about their in-class assignments, practice their test taking skills in addition to going back over items that may have been confusing to them. As seen during the observations, how supportive the environment is and nurturing of the teacher to the students needs influences the way in which students choose to engage in

instructional and learning activities. It was also clear in the literature review that supportive environments are also significant to the way in which students put forth efforts to reach learning goals.

Positive interactions between the teachers and students were observed during my observations. No negativity or remarks were observed during my classroom the three observations and within my journal notes. According to (Gibb, 2017), the preparation of students to meet 21st century educational strategies is crucial. Berman, Chaffee, and Sarmiento (2018) emphasizes that perseverance, good work ethics and outgoing attitudes are not necessarily something a student has or doesn't have, but rather are potentialities that can be brought forth in response to their environment. Although, teachers and administrators cannot control all elements of a student's environment, it was clear during the observations that teachers can play important roles in shaping the response a student has to their environment. While a teacher cannot be expected to control all elements of a student's environment—the contexts in which education happens includes much that is beyond a teacher's control. Teachers can play an important role in shaping the response a student has to this environment through the provisions of relationship-building, teamwork and empathy.

Research Question 4, Theme 4, Practice 9

Research question 4 asked, “How, if so, do the practices identified by educators and parents generate issue definitions and agenda setting of public policy decisions by policymakers on ASEPs when using the PET?” Theme 4 which highlighted the need for providing policymakers with accurate data that can be used for supporting additional

funding led to identification of Practice 9. Parents, teachers, and administrators expressed the importance of producing, maintaining, and distributing data illustrating the effectiveness of and need for academic ASEPs. Lastly, findings from responses of research question number 4 explains how the practices identified by educators and parents generate issue definition and agenda setting of public policy decision makers on ASEP's when using the PET. Parents and administrators unanimously voiced concerns regarding a need for the states to provide additional instructional support for the school.

A key message was to increase the number of ASEPs for the school in addition to adding more instructional time outside of the regular school day. A majority of the practices identified by educators and parents linked successful and sustainable education outcomes to policy funding. As discussed in Chapter 2, policymakers have become interested in the role of after-school programs and impacts on students (Saunders & Chan, 2014). Federal funding from the government was perceived as a long-term investment to support outcomes of the ASEPs. The educational funding to support after school enrichments programs was recognized as being incremental. Most of the parents and educators perceived policymakers as key actors and political figures who did not have a great amount of knowledge regarding the educational and school systems. There is a need for policymakers to obtain research-based information regarding after school enrichment programs and whether specific strategies are resulting in better program quality and equitable outcomes for students (Saunders & Chan, 2014). In addition, most of the participants were in support of a hands-off approach from policy makers when it came to identifying expertise, practice development, and agenda setting with the

academic enrichment programs sustainability. Teachers and administrators stated unanimously that problems around education and funding are at the center of issues related to equality in our country. For democracy to work, providing funding to school programs must be appropriately balanced. Jones and Baumgartner (1993) emphasized that school systems are complex organizations and act on the flow of information that is guided by public policies. Overall educators and parents believed that the ASEPs has improved over the years in dramatic ways, however the shift from too little to too much funding (more cuts) has created a dilemma for ASEPs and other academic institutions within Southeastern region of the U.S. where the study was conducted

Relating the Study Findings to the Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical frameworks used in this study to frame and understand the analysis of findings were the PET and Bandura's Social Learning Theory. These two theories were used to highlight the practices of ASEPs as deemed necessary from the 21st core competencies. PET ((Baumgartner & Jones, 2010) contends that conditions for organizational change happen when (a) an issue is defined differently or new dimensions of the issue get attention (b) new actors get involved, and (c) issues become more salient and receives heightened media and broader public attention.

The PET offers a lens through which individuals can explore Theme 4 and discoveries regarding how systems develop over time and react to changes in the environment. The origin of the PET is an adaptation of Charles Darwin's (1859) theory of evolution which hypothesized that most species change little over geological time, and tends to remain at a stable condition, and at a steady state of equilibrium. In addition, the

steady state can occasionally be punctuated by brief periods of intense activity that triggers a change in speciation (Eldredge & Gould, 1972). Historically school systems within Southeastern Michigan have been slow in adapting to the changing and learning needs of diverse student populations, especially African American male students. For example, as noted in Chapter 2, the graduation rate for African American males within the Southeast region of Michigan is among the lowest in the nation (McKown, 2013).

The application of the punctuated equilibrium theory to my study sought to explore and gain a deeper understanding of the school systems' processes, especially the role of adaptive performance targets in mediating the probability of increasing student outcomes and organizational changes. Tushman and Romelli (1985) noted that, the punctuated equilibrium theory suggests that the impetus for organizational change and adaptation is triggered by performances below aspiration levels and the content of change depends on the outcomes of the organizations process. The PET was useful in explaining two tendencies in the public policy sphere (a) the tendency of large organizations to exist in a stable and steady state – conditioned by their deep structure – changing only periodically and gradually, and (b) the occasional tendency for these steady state institutions to experience punctuations, brought on by rapid, sudden and dramatic change (Baumgartner & Jones, 1991).

According to Eldredge and Gould (1972), external changes can trigger internal responses that overwhelm the equilibrium, which is the natural state of many high schools within Southeastern Michigan. Such events and the reactions they trigger have acted upon deep structures of the school system and represents evidence of an

organizations punctuation (Tushman & Romanelli, 1985). The application of PET to education, after- school enrichment programs, and academic achievement of African American male students is evident within my research study. Sastry's (1997) punctuated model emphasized the influences of external environments on the ability of school systems to recognize poor performances and recognition was the first step to initiate any type of system change. According to Sastry (1997) when organizational imbalances occurred (low test scores and the need to improve academics outcomes), they were remedied by altering external perceptions and by overcoming internal inertia to change performances. Gold (1999) also noted that the period following a punctuation can be very productive.

During the observations, the attitudes of the teachers were observed closely. Teachers were actively providing personalized learning to the African American male students during the after-school enrichment program. The teachers were able to further assist the students to further develop their critical thinking skills, for example through explorations and imaginary. As a result, the students were able to actively engage with the teachers and make connections to the real world. This is supported by Bandura (1977) social cognitive theory, which emphasizes that effective strategies occur when teachers are able to adapt their teaching styles to meet the needs of students. Thus, the teachers were able to provide learning opportunities to meet common core strategies and 21st century learning goals of the ASEPs while homing in on the students understanding and maximizing opportunities for successful student outcomes. Extra attention was also

placed on creating a digital learning environment with the technology and resources available and expanding the learning opportunities among the AA male students.

Limitations of the Study

Patton (2002) indicated that all research has limitations, and none is perfectly designed. This study was limited to exploring in terms of the selection of participants and whether ASEPs had an effect on academic achievement for all AA males. Although I was looking at ASEPs through a different lens, I spoke with individuals who understood the significance of academic outcomes for AA male students and participants who were directly involved with AA male students. My study provided a glimpse into the lived experiences of parents, teachers and administrators who represented a larger continuum of the school system. There was no reason to believe that my participants were the only ones involved in the after-school enrichment program did not care about the academic success of AA male students within the school, or that participants were not honest and forthcoming in their responses.

Recommendation for Policy and Practice

Opportunities exist for exploring other factors that contribute to successful afterschool enrichment programs. For school systems interested in pursuing academic enrichment programs, it is important to note that the school identified in this study did so under policy change (21st century goals). Baumgartner & Jones, (2010) refers to policy change as incremental shifts in existing structures or new and innovative structures. Findings from this study shows that incremental change is strongly associated to successful ASEPs.

The use of PET and Bandura's social learning theory, employed in this study, help when explaining the relationship between after-school enrichment programs and AA male academic achievement. By closely examining the research provided, this research study uncovered common themes and practices that other schools may want to consider. These findings have implications for ASEPs and those engaged in after-school programs.

Higher levels of participation in ASEPs appear to offer the opportunity to improve school attendance and graduation rates for AA male students. Evidence on teaching indicates that instructions that draw on students' pre-existing understanding, interests, culture, and real-world experiences can make the curriculum more meaningful to students. Students are also more responsive when they are actively engaged in problem solving and applying new knowledge to real world problems. In large states such as Southeastern state where the study was conducted, increases in graduation rates, may positively impact AA male students to be productive within society.

This research study found that teaching within the ASEPs was a shared experience between the teacher and the student. Best practices in the ASEPs is developing teaching strategies that employs an integrated and comprehensive approach to the application of 21st century skills, rather than teaching and testing in silos. Twenty-first century educations should mimic the workforce where employees are now driven towards shared utilizing team concepts, developing collaborative relationships and shared experiences when solving problems.

Discussion of Implementation for Social Change

While there were limitations to the study findings, this study offers a unique process of change than one which assumes that major change can happen within school systems. This study focuses attention on punctuations within ASEPs and offers insight to assess whether any proposed changes require punctuation due to the urgency of increasing academic outcomes for AA male students:

1. Provide additional funding to public schools with additional resources going to schools who serve under-privileged students.
2. Engage students in community and global initiatives outside of ASEPs as part of their educational experience. This will promote student to become global learners
3. Provide transportation and offer programs in times that are accessible to students. Students are more like to attend programs that are more accessible. Providing transportation may increase participation and access.
4. Support ongoing professional development of staff teaching in ASEPs. Highly effective staff who build positive relationships with AA male students plays a central role in enhancing quality within the program.
5. Create partnerships with local businesses to support ASEPs
6. Expand on this current research study to deepen the body of literature of literature on this topic and include more schools.

The research methods used within this study should be reapplied to the study of adoption of additional ASEPs to allow all school systems within society to implement similar programs. To make a difference within academic enrichment programs requires

the sustained commitment of groups of policy makers, parents, educators, administrators and the community. Understanding the quality and validity of this research will help policymakers and educational leaders make sense of the data and apply it in additional ASEPs. Thus, political responses to innovation often changes by ways in which research and issues are defined by educators

Within the United States, education creates a passion for positive social change within society. Learning from the successes of the program studied may have long term effects on other ASEPs. I am hoping that this research will draw attention to issues surrounding education reform and expand the scope of interest for parents, educators, and policymakers, while leading to positive social change. This study illuminates a concern with not only improving academic outcomes, but also promoting social change, democracy, and by focusing on individuals with goals aimed at allowing all individuals to effectively contribute to society.

Conclusion

Within the United States, education is important to all students, especially AA male students. High school institutions within the United States are facing performance criteria by policy makers and the community. Moreover, there is a growing expectation that high schools will use data driven research to drive decisions regarding needed funding for academic enrichment programs. Part of this research study was to bring awareness to federal policy makers of the challenges facing ASEPs and the complexities of incorporating 21st century strategies to AA male students during the afterschool enrichment program. Administrators, teachers, and parents throughout the United States

have an obligation to prepare AA male students for their future. It is a gift to know that through ASEPs, AA male students have opportunities that are based on best practices in the 21st century of education which will prepare them for their future. Among the benefits of this research is the ability to explore the implications of the benefits or academic enrichment programs and how such programs can make a positive difference in the lives of AA male students.

The PET draws attention to the assumption that friction (e.g. low academic achievement) could interrupt normal conditions which would then create a strong impetus for failing schools to take strategic actions to address deep-rooted problems that have persisted over time. Punctuated equilibrium was useful in understanding how the complex process of change unfolds in a school's system by providing a way to observe how a period of equilibrium was disrupted and to examine how schools responded to the discontinuity. The theory emphasized the volatile and unpredicted nature of the improvement process that is amplified when a school is under sanctions, or transition periods that are often dominated by cognitive confusion and emotional distress (Gersick, 1991). These patterns changed over time and the factors that resulted in the afterschool enrichment program increasing academic achievement for AA male students were the focus of his study. Continued research in this area will make strategies and best practices readily available for more academic institutions who want to see more AA male students graduate, go to college and become productive citizens within society.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol and Questions

Good Morning/Afternoon,

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this important study. I believe your opinions and perspectives will be valuable in gaining deeper insight into the after-school enrichment program and the effectiveness of the program we have designed here at this high school.

As a reminder, this interview is being audio recorded. You have been informed that your participation is voluntary and that your involvement in the program will be kept confidential. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without any repercussions at all. While there is no compensation associated with participation in this study, I believe the finding may benefit students, educators, policymakers, and society as a whole. Again, thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Thank you for completing the Teachers Survey and giving your responses to the survey questions. Your Alphanumeric Code is _____. Data obtained from you will be given this code to protect your identity and confidentiality. As a reminder, this code must be used if you later decide that you want to withdraw from the study.

Now to our interview,

1. What is your position here at the high school? (if a teacher, what subject?)
2. How long have you been in this position?
3. Have you been directly involved with after-school programs? If so, in what capacity and for how long?

4. How familiar are you with the after-school program here at this high school?
Would you describe it as an academic-enrichment program or just an after-school program?
5. Why do you describe it that way?
6. How beneficial do you feel the program is for African American male students and how important do you think it is for them to be involved in after-school enrichment programs?
7. How would you describe the possible impact of after-school academic enrichment programs on African American male students' grades, test scores and school attendance?
8. What perspectives do you have regarding academic enrichment programs and claims that they are a vital component of a well-rounded education for African American male students?
9. What changes have you seen in grades, attendance, test scores, social skills, and motivation for students who are involved in the after-school enrichment program?
10. What is your opinion on if and how student involvements in after-school enrichment programs help students socially? What about helping them to improve academic performance? On what do you base these opinions?

Appendix B: Interview Notes Coding Sheet

Interviewee Code _____

Your Alphanumeric Code is _____. Appendix C: After-School Program

Parent Survey

After School Program Parent Survey

Please read each statement carefully and indicate your level of agreement in the columns on the right. Please place an "X" inside the box that most clearly reflects your response. If you have no experience with the subject of the statement, mark "No Opinion".

		Level of Agreement				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
1.	I feel that I have a clear understanding of the Program's goals and objectives.					
2.	The Program is a safe place for my child to work, learn and have fun.					
3.	The hours of the Program meet my needs.					
4.	The Program staff maintains open communication with me. They provide me with adequate information about my child and program activities.					
5.	The Program rules and policies have been clearly communicated to me.					
6.	The program staff has provided helpful information about, and referrals to, health-related services when my family has needed them.					
7.	I feel welcome to visit the program and my child's classroom.					
8.	My child has access to quality materials and curriculum related resources in the Program.					
9.	The program leader recognizes my child's academic needs.					
10.	My child's program leader usually provides extra help when needed.					
11.	The program leader helps my child understand his/her homework.					
12.	The program leader instructs in ways that allow my child to relate what he/she is studying to his/her life.					
13.	The Program has helped my child develop analytical skills.					
14.	My child has learned to think in an organized manner in the Program.					
15.	There is adequate supervision provided in the Program.					
16.	The Program has helped my child do better in school.					

17.	My child's program leader works with my child's classroom teacher to help my child learn.					
18.	I am satisfied with the instruction and activities provided to my child by the Program.					
19.	The school principal supports the Program at my child's school.					
20.	The classrooms teachers in my child's school support the Program.					
21.	The custodians and other classified personnel in my child's school support the Program.					
22.	My child's program leader has good classroom and behavior management skills.					
23.	The site coordinator and program leaders maintain good discipline among the students during program activities.					
24.	It is important to my child's program leader that my child do well in school.					
25.	My child usually enjoys the time he/she spends in the Program.					
26.	My child can be successful in the Program and eventually in school.					
27.	I would recommend the Program to other parents for their children.					
28.	The site coordinator recognizes me when I visit the Program and at activities or events.					
29.	The site coordinator does a good job of getting resources, trainers and teambuilding with staff.					
30.	I encourage my child to complete his/her homework, even he/she is having trouble with assignments.					
31.	I often help out or volunteer in the Program.					

Please add any comments you have in response to the following questions:

What three (3) things do you like about the Program?

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

What three (3) changes would you like to see in the Program?

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

For each item, please check the description that applies to you.

<i>I have lived in this community for:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> less than one year	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 years or more	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years		
<i>My child has been in the Program for:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> less than one year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 years or more
<i>Do you own your home?</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No		
<i>My family income range is:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5,000 - \$ 9,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 - \$19,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 - \$39,999	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 - \$14,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 - \$29,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 - more	
<i>Ethnicity:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> African-American			
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander			
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian			
<input type="checkbox"/> Latino/Hispanic			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) _____			

Appendix D: After-School Program Classroom Teachers' Survey

Please read each statement and indicate your level of agreement in the columns on the right. Please place an "X" inside the box that most clearly reflects your response. If you have no experience with the subject of the statement, mark "No Opinion".

	Level of Agreement				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
The After School Program staff keeps me well informed which of my students participate in the program.					
The After School Program is a worthwhile program for the students.					
The program staff communicates with me as to my students' needs, assessments and/or concerns either verbally or through connection forms.					
I believe the program has helped my students improve their:					
a) reading skills					
b) math skills					
My students who participate in the after school program enjoy attending the program.					
The after school program is meeting the needs of my participating students:					
a) academically					
b) socially					
My students in the after school program turn in their homework:					
a) regularly					
b) completed					
c) correctly					
I share resources with program staff to help them align after school with my class curriculum.					
My students participating in the program have behaved better in school.					
The parents of my students are happy with the program.					
I have no problem with the after school program using my classroom.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
The program leader assigned to my classroom keeps everything in order, neat and clean.					
The site coordinator and program leader attend to my classroom concerns immediately when an incident occurs.					
The site coordinator has a good team and works well with his/her staff.					
The site coordinator has established good relationship with the school staff.					
The site coordinator has excellent ways of providing quality resources to his/her staff.					
The program staff should have continuing training in:					
a) classroom management					
b) working with school-age kids					
c) hands-on activities					

Please provide the answer for the following:

Grade level you teach: _____

Number of years in the teaching profession: _____

Length of time teaching in this school site: _____

Do you live in the same school community? _____

What three things do you like about the after school program?

What three changes would you like to see in the program?

Appendix E: Open Codes Derived from Data

Significant phrases from the data	Open Codes
Students are constantly asking for help with homework.	Collaboration
Students can have constant feedback.	Feedback
Students can speak up and be heard	Enhanced Communication
Students have the opportunity to receive college credits.	Professional Growth
Educational benefits carry over into the real world	Social Awareness Improvement
Academic enrichment programs are extremely important	Enrichment Learning -Extended learning opportunities
Test scores grades and social skills have improved gradually.	Promotes Confidence
We have rigorous and quality program which has a positive impact on student grades and test scores	College Awareness and preparation
The impact of the enrichment programs can be seen on the attendance, student's grades and test scores.	Absenteeism
Students are able to develop peer relationships	Developing Social Skills
More funding is needed to support education ASEPs..	Funding
Politics and political leaders should not define decisions for ASEPs, the decisions should be made at the school level.	Public Policy
Provide feedback to Students.	Feedback

Problem Solving Skills	Problem Solving
Provide information on a daily basis	Social awareness
Student develop self awareness strategies	Increased Confidence
Cares about the social well being of students.	Promote Individual growth
Students meet regularly to discuss lessons	Extended Learning Opportunities
After school enrichment program keeps students off the streets	Beneficial Drug and Violence Prevention
Teaching ASEPs allow me to give back to the community	Service
Whenever you deal with policy maker, there is always barriers to funding	More funding for enrichment programs
Students like the structure that is often provided in ASEPs.	Engagement
As a teacher in afterschool programs, I provide lessons that students bring in to assist with their learning process while in the classroom.	Academic Preparedness Linkage between day and afterschool personnel
As a school administrator, I like to work with my teachers to see how I can support their classroom strategies.	Evaluation of Program progress and success
The ASEPs provide opportunities to students who need extra hours to complete high school graduation	Making a Difference – Extended Learning Coordinate Learning with the regular school lessons Opportunities
There is limited resources to support additional ASEPs. More	Adequate Funding

funding is needed.	
The state does not support inner-city schools unlike suburbia	Access and equity
The enrichment programs are beneficial for my child however I am not able to attend meetings to speak with the teachers because I have to work 16 hours a day.	Communication
I am thankful for the enrichment programs because as a parent, my math and reading skills are not really great and at least my child can learn from the experts.	Family Involvement/Teacher Communication
The activities in the enrichment programs are challenging and promote the development of social and inter-personal skills. Teachers must maintain high expectations, and teach the skills needed for student success	Develop personal and interpersonal skills, Quality Afterschool staffing
Parents cannot leave everything up to the school system, we must also be involved. Program must be student centered	Family Involvement/Teacher Communication
As a parent , if I am not involved, how will I know what my child needs are?	Family Involvement and Accessibility
A lot of the parents are not able to attend the school conferences because they have to work, they rely on their children to provide them with the updates. Striving for partnership with parents is important.	Family Involvement
The enrichment programs are great, because with the classroom being so large, sometimes you cannot provide each student with all of your attention. Some students need to be in a smaller classroom setting to retain the information.	Communication/Classroom Size

<p>One administrator replied that the after-school programs makes students more goals oriented and confident. The participant also stated, “early intervention to learning is the key to academic success”.</p>	
<p>One administrator, replied that some students feel uncomfortable asking questions in the classroom and the after-school enrichment program provides opportunities for students to speak freely.</p>	<p>Enhance Communication Student Achievement Growth</p>

Appendix F Axial Codes Derived From Open Code Data

Open Codes	Axial Codes
<p>Enhanced Communication Feedback More Parent Engagement Communication Enhanced Communication Student/ Academic Achievement Develop Personal/Interpersonal Skills Teacher/Administrator extended hours to meet parents</p>	<p>Improve Parent Teacher/Administrator Communication Communication as the Central component of teacher/parent involvement.</p>
<p>Collaboration- Information sharing among parents Parental Involvement Family Involvement Teacher/Administrator Involvement Accessibility Develop Social Skills After School Staffing</p>	<p>Information Sharing</p>
<p>Public Policy Funding Social Awareness Beneficial to students/Parents. Academic Support Funding Enrichment Programs. Educators are not paid enough Making a Difference – Extended Learning</p>	<p>Funding and additional support for teachers and additional ASEPs. Broken School System</p>

Equity	
Lack of Resources	
Improve Grades	Student confidence
Social Awareness	
Increased graduation Rates	Student Motivation
Relationship Building	
Students are empowered to ask questions	Increased Student Collaboration
Increased engagement	Information Sharing Between Student and Teacher

Appendix G: Themes Derived From Axial Coding

Axial Codes	Themes and Practices	Research Question
<p>Create training and professional development for school staff.</p> <p>Place and emphasis on the developmental, cultural and academic relevance for students</p>	<p>Educators identified after-school enrichment programs as being beneficial to AA male students.</p> <p>No options for students to fail. High expectations for teachers and staff.</p> <p>Students are engaged in meaningful lessons</p> <p>Support that reinforces academic achievement.</p> <p>Individualized and Differentiated Instructions.</p> <p>Working at one's Pace.</p> <p>Instructional practices support teachers.</p> <p>Sub themes – 1.Improved student outcome 2. Academic Gains</p> <p>Individualizing lessons to students specific needs.</p> <p>Smaller learning sessions addresses the students needs.</p>	<p>RQ1 How do educators describe practices that may contribute to the successful outcome(s) of structured after-school enrichment programs designed to improve the academic achievement of high school African American males at one metropolitan Detroit high school</p>
	<p>Observations</p> <p>Relationship between student and teacher is critical</p> <p>Emotional engagement help</p>	<p>RQ2 How, if so, are the attitudes of educators , toward the practices used in the after-school enrichment</p>

	<p>increased students performance. Teachers demonstrated respect to help all students feel welcomed.</p> <p>Teachers counseled students on the importance of being respectful towards everyone.</p> <p>Teachers were able to connect the lessons to the students daily lives.</p>	<p>program, demonstrated in behavior and interactions during program activities.</p>
	<p>Increase Communication with Parents and Administrators.</p> <p>Effective communication is critical between Parent/Teacher and Administrator</p>	<p>RG3 How do parents describe practices that may contribute to the successful outcome(s) of a structured after-school program on their child (ren)?</p>
<p>Provide initiatives of federal agencies and the community to address after-school enrichment programs.</p> <p>Determine research initiatives that are provided by the government.</p>	<p>Additional Funding Opportunities for school systems</p> <p>Research – that includes + expenditures on training, education, youth policy, culture, and information technology.</p>	<p>RQ4 How, if so, do the practices identified by educators and parents generate issue definition and agenda setting of public policy decisions by lawmakers on after-school enrichment programs when using he punctuated equilibrium theory?</p>