

AN INQUIRY OF FACTORS AFFECTING BLACK MALE COLLEGE SUCCESS

Presented at the
Association of Institutional Research
Annual Forum - Longbeach, CA
May 20, 2013

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Background

- Special Interest Project of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) with the African American Male Resource Center (AAMRC) at Chicago State University (CSU)
- Aaron Patawaran – Principal Investigator and Undergraduate Research Assistant IER
- Latrice E. Eggleston, Ph.D. – Associate Director IER and Project Study Coordinator
- Resche D. Hines, Ph.D. – Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management and Director of IER

Background

- Special Project Aligns with CSU Enrollment Management Strategic Plan - ERG
- To increase **Enrollment** (E) of male students
- To improve **Retention** (R) of all students including male students
- To raise the **Graduation** (G) rate of all students including male students
- To improve the overall experiences of students to meet their academic and social development needs

Purpose and Research Questions

- This study explores the factors that may have significantly affected the academic success of Black males who are juniors and seniors at a urban institution.
- In particular, the following questions guide this inquiry:
 1. What factors are barring Black men from enrolling in college? And once enrolled, what can the institution do to help ensure these men persist and graduate within six years?
 2. What role does social capital play in Black males' success in degree attainment?

Literature Review

- Harper (2006); Palmer and Maramba (2011)
Black males make up only **four percent** of total enrollment at colleges and universities; the same percentage of their enrollment in 1976
- The research posits that factors such as oppositional culture, under preparedness, and lack of financial support and social support hinder Black male success (Braith, Rentie, and Toldson, 2009; Davis, Maramba, and Palmer, 2011; Paul-Dixon, 2007).

Conceptual Framework

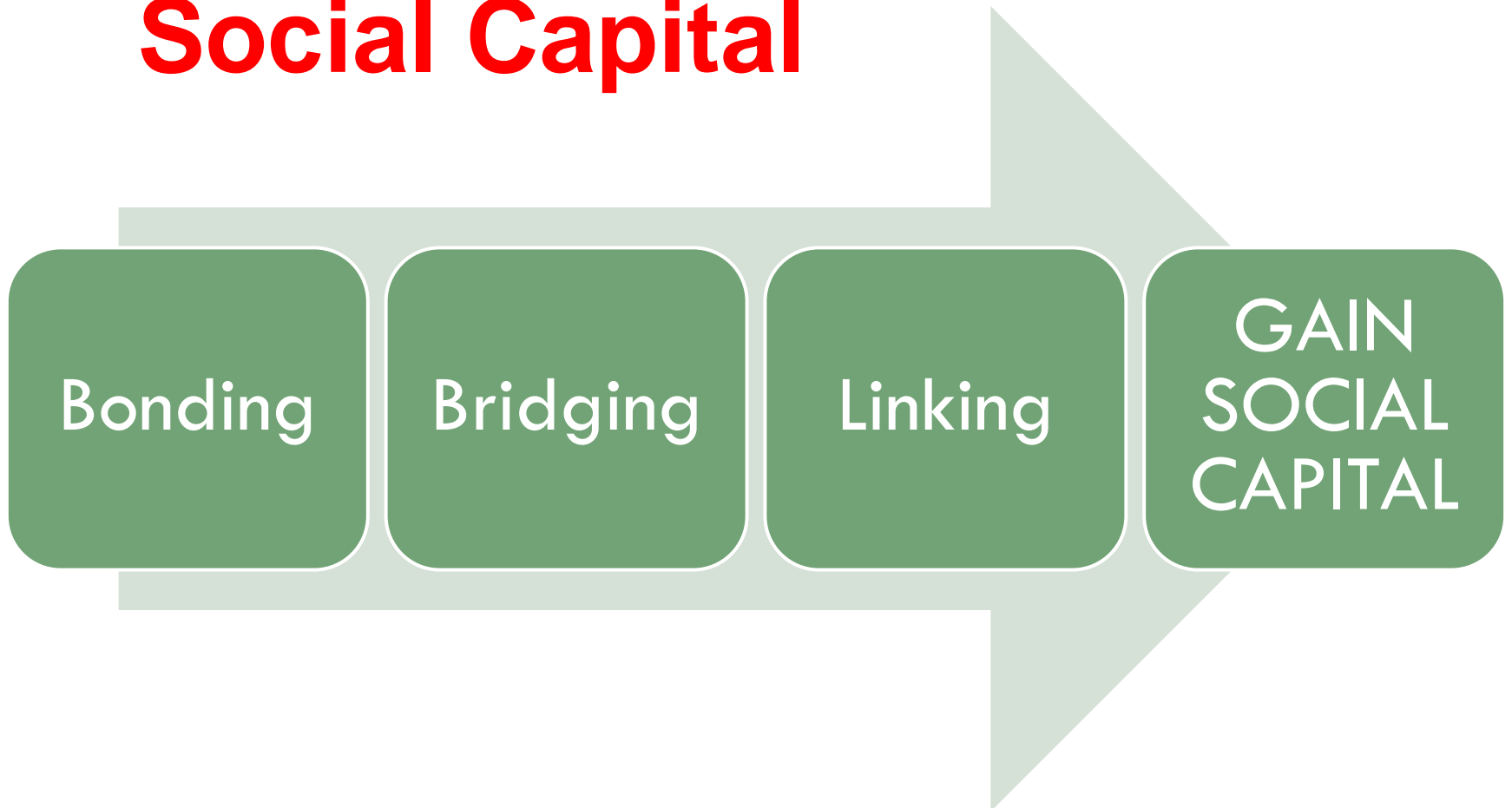
- **Social Capital**
- Woolcock and Narayan (2000)
- There are three distinct types of social capital; **bonding, bridging, and linking**
- **Bonding social capital** refers to cases where individuals are in similar situations or already have close relationships that allow them to benefit from the relationship with one another.

Conceptual Framework

- **Bridging social capital**
 - Sees alike persons in loose relationships, such as acquaintances, workmates or classmates.
- **Linking social capital**
 - Connects people in totally different situations and places or allows them to build a network to capitalize on more readily available resources.

Conceptual Framework

Social Capital



Methodology

- **Qualitative Method of Inquiry**
- Case study of single site
 - Urban Midwest University
- Data Collection
 - Focus group interviews (African American males students)
 - Purposeful sampling of students – juniors and seniors in good standing
 - One orientation session 30-45 minutes
 - Two one-hour semi-structured interviews
 - Video and audio recorded

Methodology

□ **Setting**

- Urban Midwest University
- Student Population average 6,100 – 7,000 students
- Female Population 70% of student body
- African American Population approximately 85%
- Five Colleges on campus that offer 38 Undergraduate degrees and 27 graduate degrees including one professional degree in Pharmacy and one doctoral degree in Educational Administration and Leadership

Methodology

□ **Setting**

- Predominantly Black Institution (PBI)
- Over 50% of first-time students are transfer
- Graduation rate 21% (2012 & 2013)
- New transfer graduation rate 42% (2013)
- Undergraduate degrees awarded 720-840 yearly

Methodology

□ **Data Analysis**

- Interviews were transcribed and coded by themes
- Field notes from observations were written and analyzed
- Peer debriefing of themes to validate accuracy and trustworthiness of interpretation

Findings

□ **Participants**

5 participants – All African American Males

Majors - Business Accounting (1); Criminal Justice (2);
Early Childhood Education (1); Physics (1)

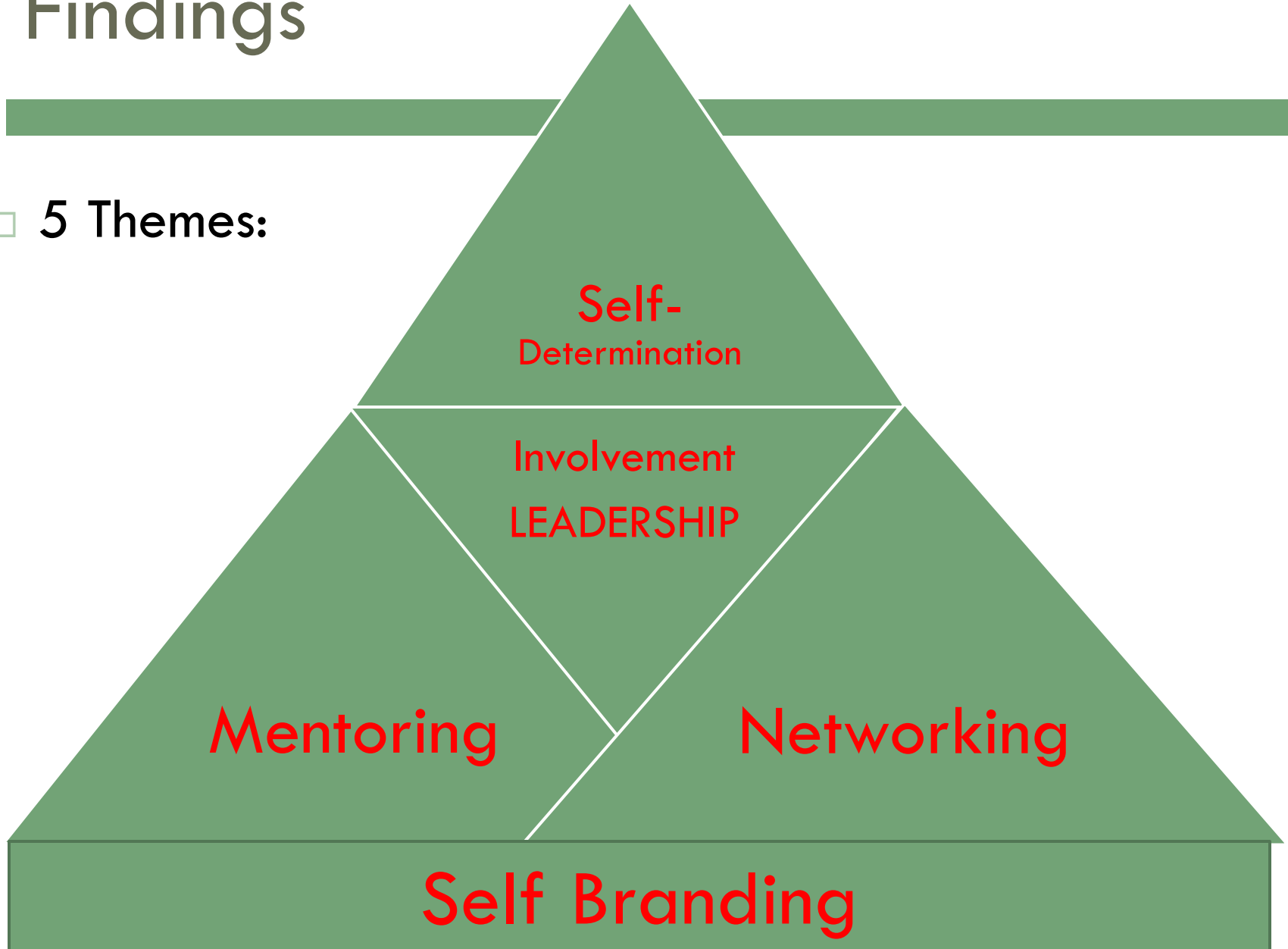
Transfers (all)

Age range (27 – 38 years)

GPA range (self-reported) – 2.7- 3.8

Findings

□ 5 Themes:



Findings

- **Self-Determination** refers to being an advocate for your own success – you do what you need to do to be successful.
 - “I made myself accessible. I had enthusiasm. You have to humble yourself. Some men and women don’t know how to humble themselves even when they are wrong.”
 - “I have to reach higher than the norm and I know that I have to score high and get good marks to achieve my goal.”

Findings

- **Involvement – Leadership:** Critical to being engaged on campus and seeing the light at the end of the tunnel - graduation.
 - “We have to be willing to step out-of-the box and do things that make us uncomfortable.”
 - “I am involved in the Criminal Justice department...I am involved in a reentry program that I started with a Faculty member...including mentoring juveniles in a juvenile detention center.”
 - “The slogan says to “Get Involved” and your going to want to get involved to graduate.”

Findings

- **Mentoring** refers to developing relationships with those who can show you how to do things and assist you in advocating for yourself.
- “One of the keys to make young people successful is to put them with a mentor in their field of study that they want to go into.”
- “I can build relationships with people that can last a lifetime.”

Findings

- **Networking** refers to getting to know others that can successfully help you navigate the university and your career.
- “I define my success as getting to know and meet people.”
- “I didn’t know anything about the AAMRC, when I saw those brothers working, I connected with the Director who connected me to other resources.”
- “The field based placement center was my home. They took me under their wing...they helped me find a job...”

Findings

- **Self-Branding** refers the ability of students to market themselves in every endeavor they encounter in the goal to achieve success.
 - “I have to market myself and advocate for myself.”
 - “I participated in a session about branding yourself. That was very powerful for me...I understood the branding and marketing of myself as the only male in a female dominated area.”

Conclusion

- ❑ Black males college success includes self-determination, involvement and leadership, mentoring, networking, and self branding.
- ❑ Gaining social capital can play a vital role in aiding Black males in achieving academic success.
- ❑ Programs are needed that focus on bringing more focus to the needs of transfer students.

Implications for Further Research

- Study the impact of transfer students and their matriculation
- Study the impact of leadership training that includes developing skills to network and advocate for self
- Study the impact of relationships among students and faculty
- Study the impact of students experience with campus departments

Implications for Further Research

- More in-depth qualitative and quantitative studies
 - ▣ Increasing underrepresented groups
 - ▣ Economic benefits
 - ▣ Educational attainment
- Develop mentoring programs that address not only first-time freshman but also transfer students

CSU IER – www.csu.edu/IER

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Chicago State University Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.csu.edu/IER/index.htm>. The website header features the Chicago State University logo and the text "Institutional Effectiveness & Research". Navigation links include "Cougar Connect | A to Z | Campus Directory | Map & Directions", a "Quick Links" dropdown menu, and a search bar with the text "Search CSU" and a "Go" button. A left sidebar contains a menu with the following items: "University Profile", "Fact Books", "Accreditation & Self Study", "Forms & Surveys", "Research & Data Services", "Contact Information", and "Home". The main content area features a large photograph of a building with trees in autumn, overlaid with the text "Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research". Below the photograph is a section titled "Mission" with the following text: "The mission of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) is to support institutional decision making at Chicago State University by providing leadership and oversight for complex analyses for both academic departments and university administration, and to collaborate with other universities to provide comparative data. IER is a highly collaborative unit and is responsible for creating an environment which promotes the use of institutional data, analysis and research for decision making in keeping with CSU's educational mission. This office is also charged with the creative exploration of issues of institutional importance, which include retention trends,..." The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the system clock as 11:55 PM on 4/11/2013.

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Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research

Mission

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