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ABSTRACT

This mixed-methods study discusses the impact of AVID on African American males, specifically focusing on their attitudes towards education as well as the academic and social impact the program has had on the students. By taking a criterion sampling of high school and college students that have been involved in the AVID program for at least one and a half years, the study takes a look at how AVID has had an overall positive impact on the participants. Five significant themes were revealed based upon the qualitative data collected, which consisted of open-ended interview questions. The themes are: Supportive, family-like relationships are built within the AVID classroom; AVID students value education and strive to do better academically; AVID methodologies improve student achievement in preparation for college; AVID impacts student attitudes towards education; and AVID has an overall positive impact on African American males. The quantitative data collected on AVID student graduation rates and post-graduation intentions support the effectiveness of the AVID program in encouraging and supporting more African American males to graduate high school and continue on to higher levels of education.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all of the people that helped and inspired me to complete my thesis. I am grateful for all of Dr. Michele Parker’s, my thesis chair, support, encouragement, and assistance with the entire thesis process. I also want to thank Dr. Scott Imig for always being there to help me out when I had questions about my thesis and Mrs. Emma Jackson for supporting the AVID program and myself each and every day.

I want to thank the administrators at each of the AVID schools for allowing me to gather information on the AVID students and conduct interviews at their schools. The AVID elective teachers work so hard to help every one of the AVID students and I want to thank them for all they do and all the help they gave me in completing my research.

Lastly and most importantly, I want to thank all of the AVID students that have willingly allowed me to interview them, work with them, and open their classrooms to me on so many occasions. It is the students that inspire me and motivate me to grow professionally and reach my highest potential, and I thank them for all they have taught me.
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my two daughters and my husband. I thank my girls for understanding that mommy had to work many nights and weekends on her thesis; I am now ready to spend many weekends playing. I thank my husband for his continued support and encouragement through the entire process. You three mean the world to me and I thank you.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Education is the path to a better future” (Hubbard, 1999, p.372). Unfortunately, there are many youths that do not go on to higher levels of education and sometimes do not even complete high school. A majority of these youths are African Americans. In 2005, African Americans had a 7.3% high school dropout rate in comparison to Caucasians at 2.8% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Of those enrolled in higher education, only 13% are African American. When looking at the bachelor’s degree completion rate, African Americans consist of 8.7% in comparison to Caucasians making up 70% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). In 2003, the Department of Justice reported 12% of all African American males between the ages of 20-34 were in jail. From 1990 to 2007, “Blacks were almost three times more likely than Hispanics and five times more likely than Whites to be in jail” (Department of Justice, 2009).

In New Hanover County, African Americans make up 16% of the total population yet they are 61% of the current jail population. Although despairing, these numbers continue to increase (WWAY, 2008). With the dismal graduation rates, three times a higher incarceration rate in comparison to Caucasians, and a 22% expulsion rate, many believe African American males simply do not care; however, as Smith (2005) points out, this is false. In Smith’s study (2005), 89% of African American youths plan to attend college. So what can be done to assist these youths in reaching college?

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a program designed to increase college enrollment by preparing students in the middle (2.0-3.5 grade point average), typically first-generation college-goers, to matriculate and be successful in college and
beyond. This literature review will look at the current research that shows how AVID can be a catalyst for African American male success both academically and socially.

AVID is a college and career preparatory program for “middle of the road” students. These students have the potential to go to college but need the extra support and guidance to do so; many of the students are first generation college-goers, are historically underserved in four-year colleges, and many are from low-income families. AVID is an elective period at the middle and high school levels in which the students receive organizational, higher-level thinking, reading, writing, and speaking skills. Students research and visit colleges, attend local cultural events, as well as have numerous guest speakers from throughout the community in order to introduce them to various careers, experiences, and places within the local community and beyond. A key component to the AVID program is the tutorials that students participate in two days per week, which are led by college-aged tutors. These tutors not only provide students with the necessary support for the college-prep courses the students are required to take but also serve as mentors and role models. (Nelson, 2007)

The AVID elective teacher must also serve as a role model for the students and both help and support the students on their path to success. In so doing, the teacher builds meaningful relationships with the students through trust and respect, which is what Smith (2005) considers vital to African American student success. AVID aspires to build strong relationships between staff and students and makes sure all participating students are successful through a team of teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, students, and tutors working together to ensure this success. The site team meets on a monthly
basis (if not more frequently) to discuss equity issues, student achievement, and the mentoring of each and every student in the program. (Nelson, 2007, p. 74; AVID, 2008)

With the overall graduation rates and college acceptance rates of African American males within the AVID program in New Hanover County Schools being so high, this study will focus on how the program, if it does, impacts African American males academically and socially. Something must be done to help improve our current African American male statistics and AVID may be the answer. As a part of the researcher’s professional work, data is collected on AVID student graduation rates and in 2008, 100% of the AVID students graduated from high school in New Hanover County and all were accepted to either a 2-year or 4-year college or university. Of the 47 graduates, 14 were African American male. Simms (1995) stresses the importance of African Americans graduating high school and going on to higher levels of education by pointing out the “direct relationship between higher education and African Americans’ participation in the economy” (Simms, 1995, p. 24).

To determine whether or not AVID could effect the college-going rates of African American males, this study will investigate the impact AVID has had on African American male students’ attitudes towards education as well as their academics and social influences since these areas can hinder or enhance their advancement to higher levels of education and in turn career success.

Researcher as Instrument

As a previous AVID elective teacher and now the county coordinator for the program, the researcher has first-hand experience with AVID and each of the AVID schools. The researcher has witnessed the impact of the program on many students and
especially on African American males, some for whom the researcher was worried may not make it through high school, let alone continue on to college; now those students have almost completed their college career as honor students. Therefore, the researcher wants to further research and investigate the impact the program has had on these students in order to determine if AVID can be used as a catalyst for increased enrollment in college by African American males. As Eisner (1991) puts it, the “self (is) an instrument…It is the characteristic that provides unique, personal insights into the experience under study” (p. 33). Since the researcher is professionally involved in the program at the schools under study, she has easier access to the students and classes and has a sound understanding of the program essentials.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In New Hanover County Schools during the 2006-2007 school year 103 African American males dropped out of school. Of those dropouts, 12 dropped out because they were sent to an adult jail facility (New Hanover County Schools, 2008). If Smith’s (2005) research stating that 89% of all African American youths plan to attend college is accurate, why are so many dropping out of school? Something must be done to decrease the number of dropouts and increase the number of African American males going on to higher levels of education. AVID is a program designed to increase college enrollment rates by focusing on students that typically would not go on to higher levels of education (first generation college-goers and historically underserved students in college). (AVID, 2008)

Baur, Sapp, & Johnson (2008) determined that issues such as violence, poverty, and racism within urban areas can hinder students both academically and emotionally. Meanwhile, Guo, Brooks-Gunn, & Harris (1996) made the connection between students living in poverty and school dropout rates. Somers, Owens, and Piliawsky (2008) believe that these are just two of the possible factors for some African American students’ lack of academic success. The study states that “African American children fail to draw the correlation between academic success and later adult career success” (Somers, Owens, and Piliawsky, 2008, p. 2). The study (2008) also found that some “African American students may not perform to their fullest potential for fear of losing the acceptance of their peer group” (p. 8) and that some African American students “abandon the educational process all together because they are not supported by the school system” (p. 2). The study (2008) determined that African American students who earn a high school
diploma are likely motivated to do well because they have the social support and are aware of future possibilities (p. 8). Within the AVID class, “students form a cadre of peers who encourage one another not to drop a difficult class, give up, or lose sight of the goal (of going to college). Together with the tutors and teachers, these peer groups become like a family, providing strong social support for students engaged in difficult work” (Nelson, 2007, p. 74). AVID students are given the social support and are provided with “role models and real world applications to their learning” (Nelson, 2007, p. 74) in order to be successful.

Osborne (1999) believes that the major factor contributing to the achievement gap is students’ lack of identification with academics (p. 556). If students do not identify with academics, they are less likely to put forth any effort into their school work, which sequentially leads to a “higher risk for academic problems, especially poor grades and dropping out” (Osborne, 1999, p. 557). Osborne discusses the research conducted by Steele (1997) stating, “students from disadvantaged minority groups achieve poorer outcomes at every level, even given equal preparation” (Osborne, 1999, p. 555) and that there are explanations to this trend, which include, “low achievement motivation, anxiety, feelings of inadequacy, and feelings of helplessness” (Epps, as cited in Osborne, 1999, p. 555). These are just a few of the factors that lead to the underachievement of African American males. There is also the possibility of African American males feeling education is a “system controlled by the group that subjugated and oppressed them and their ancestors” (Osborne, 1997, p. 558) and that some African American males may, as Majors and Billson (as cited in Osborne, 1999) state, “learn early to project a façade of emotionlessness, fearlessness, and aloofness to counter the inner pain caused by the
damaged pride, poor self-confidence, and fragile social competence that results from their existence as a member of a subjugated group” (p. 558). Osborne (1997) states, “African American boys appear to be the only group that experienced serious and significant disidentification with academics” (Osborne, 1997, p. 734). However, as Osborne (1999) mentions, these hurdles that prevent African American males from achieving academically can be helped/overcome. These students can be encouraged to resist following the trend and if the students are “disidentified” (Osborne, 1999, p. 561) with academics, then they should be encouraged to “reidentify” (Osborne, 1999, p. 561). Osborne (1999) concludes that African American males need to be challenged not remediated. Instead of remediation, African American students should be “given challenging schoolwork in a supportive, collaborative environment that conveys respect for their academic and social potential, and emphasizes a view of intelligence as expandable rather than fixed and traitlike” (Osborne, 1999, p. 562).

Hubbard’s (1999) study revealed an AVID program that instilled the value of education and led to students seeing their academic and social potential. The majority of the AVID students interviewed in his research had been discouraged from taking college preparatory classes by counselors and other individuals. In contrast, AVID motivated them to not only take college preparatory classes but to pursue college and maintain decent grades. Of all the students in the study, they had all credited their academic achievements and determination to go to college to the AVID program. AVID relayed a strong message to students that “Education is the path to a better future” (Hubbard, 1999, p.372). “Without institutional support, and encumbered by race- and class- based inequality, African American students are often left with perceptions of limited
opportunities and confusion about the value of pursuing higher education” (Hubbard, 1999, p. 379). The African American men in the AVID program “had already learned firsthand the reality of discrimination and prejudice” yet these students “made a strong commitment to education” (Hubbard, 1999, p. 375). The AVID students were constantly reminded that they needed to have a college education if they wanted a successful career in the future and they were given the support to succeed (Hubbard, 1999, p. 379).

Parental support and encouragement is another factor contributing to or hindering a student’s academic success, according to Somers, et al (2008, p. 3). By having helpful, supportive parents, students are able to have a “greater sense of autonomy” (Somers, et al, 2008, p. 3). Many African American parents want their children to do well and encourage them to do so (Boyd-Franklin, 1989; Coleman, 1986; Hill, 1972); however, the parents that are considered lower income may feel reluctant to question or simply get involved in their child’s education because they do not “feel adequate enough to contribute to school success” (Hoover, Dempsey, & Sandler, 1997, p. 8). Somers, et al (2008) believes it is the schools’ responsibility to reach out to the families, particularly African American students’ families since there has been research (Epstein, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Xu, 2002) showing that parental involvement is detrimental for these families and schools must get them involved in the students’ schooling in order to help increase academic success (p. 3).

Freeman (1997) points out the need for instilling college possibilities at an early age. Freeman’s research concludes that school curriculum, counseling, and grading have a major impact on whether or not students pursue higher levels of education. The African American students interviewed during the study discussed two major issues that
prevented them from seeking a college education: economic barriers and psychological barriers. The majority of the students interviewed felt they did not have enough money to ever attend college. They also believed college was never an option for them; they seemed to be “intimidated” by college. Since there are so few African Americans in college, they felt like they did not belong there. By informing students of the possibility of attending college at a young age (prior to high school), encouraging students throughout their educational experience, providing students with more black male role models, and accepting the students for who they are, the African American students believe the college attendance rates would increase for African American males (Freeman, 1997). Nelson (2007) realized that “college preparation shouldn’t begin in high school” (p. 74) and therefore, “AVID has a middle school program that instills a college-going mentality in students and prepares them for the transition to high school” (p. 74). The AVID program has even begun an elementary program to further instill the future possibility of a college education and successful future for all students (AVID, 2008).

Milner (2007) continues discussions on increasing African American male college attendance rates by honing in on the statistics surrounding African American males. The guiding principle to what needs to be done to move African American males to the next level of education, according to Milner (2007), is to make sure “excellence precedes everything else” (p. 241). Teachers “must do whatever is necessary for students to learn, achieve, and meet their capacity” (Milner, 2007, p. 241). To begin with, teachers must remember that “to help Black students and males in particular, the challenge is to find ways to support their resistance to negative stereotypes and school
sorting practices and to make choosing failure a less likely option for them” (Noguera, 2003, p. 447). In so doing, teachers need to support and encourage African American males to reach their full potential. The AVID mission states that students will “succeed in rigorous curriculum” (AVID, 2008) and the research conducted by Milner (2007) supports the need for pushing African American males to “reach their potential” (p. 241) because students will reach success by “pressing and pursuing new levels in (their) lives” (Siddle-Walker, as cited in Milner, 2007, p. 241). Milner (2007) pinpoints five central principles to reaching the higher levels of education when teachers and students both “envision life beyond their present situations…come to know themselves in relation to others…speak possibility and not destruction…care and demonstrate that care…(and) change their thinking to change their actions” (p. 241). As Ladson-Billings (as cited in Milner, 2007) points out, teachers and schools must not give up on students and must never “grant the students permission to fail” (Milner, 2007, p. 242). Teachers must be dedicated to helping the students because, as Milner (2007) states, “An undereducated and under prepared Black male student could result in obliteration (drug abuse, prison, or even death)” (p. 242). Both Irvine (2003) and Collins (1991) believe that “Teaching is about establishing relationships…called other mothering… other fathering…Teachers should want for their Black male students the same kinds of opportunities and lifestyles that they aspire for their own biological children” (Milner, 2007, p. 244).

Martin, Martin, Gibson, and Wilkins (2007) hypothesize that:

African American males lack motivation to perform and achieve because they believe that their teachers do not expect much of them and do not care. Black adolescent students are repeatedly denied access to adequate education, are
subjected to low teacher expectations, and often placed in special education classes and excluded from school. (Martin, Martin, Gibson, and Wilkins, 2007, p. 691)

African American males know the statistics about their lack of success as a population and that they are considered “at risk;” these classifications may discourage students from reaching their highest potential (Milner, 2007, p. 243). As Haberman (2000) suggests, “Language is not an innocent reflection of how we think. The terms we use control our perceptions, shape our understanding, and lead us to particular proposals for improvement” (p. 203). Noguera (2003) believes that if we want to improve the academic achievement of African American males we must recognize “that Black males are not merely passive victims but may also be active agents in their own failure” and “interventions designed to help them must take this into account” (p. 437). He further states that educators must “actively engage Black males and their families in taking responsibility to improve their circumstances” (Noguera, 2003, p. 437).

Students that participate in rigorous coursework and enroll in AP courses during the high school years are more likely to earn an advanced educational degree (Adelman, 1999; Bleske-Rechek, Lubinski, & Benbow, 2004). In Austin City Schools, AVID students, which include a large number of African American students, are provided with “a place to belong” (Oswald, 2002, p.ii). The students are more likely to be in class on a daily basis, more likely to be placed into higher level courses, and are passing the end of course tests at a generally high passing rate. The school system wanted to “prepare under-represented groups for a more competitive future” (Oswald, 2002, p. 1) and teachers support and mentor the AVID students, which has been very helpful to the
students during the secondary years (Oswald, 2002). Black, Little, McCoach, and et al., (2008), reinforce the positive effect of the AVID program, specifically at the high school level, by evidencing that “at the high school level, positive program effects have been reported in the areas of performance on standardized tests, school attendance rates, GPA, enrollment in advanced courses, and college enrollment and acceptance rates” (p. 113).

Black, Little, McCoach, & et al., (2008) found that the AVID students “enrolled in eighth-grade algebra at a significantly higher rate than comparison students” and “AVID students’ scores were significantly higher than scores for the comparison group” (p. 118). All participants of the program had stated AVID having a positive impact on them and that they had become better organized because of AVID (Black, Little, McCoach, & et al, 2008, p. 118). The study noted that “AVID students arrive to class with all of their supplies, behave better in school, attend more closely in the classroom, and have emerged as academic leaders for their peers…” (Black, Little, McCoach, & et al, 2008, p. 121).

A program comparable to AVID at the college level is the TRIO program. The Student Support Services (SSS) portion of the TRIO program targets students that are academically at risk and provide them with tutoring, counseling, mentoring, and instruction (Coles, 1998, p. 433). The program “provides low-income, first generation, and disabled undergraduates with various types of academic support” (Mahoney, 1998, p. 383). However, the program provides much more than just academic support. The program consists of counselors, tutors, and office staff that are dedicated and willing to work “beyond the requirements of a typical nine-to-five job” (Mahoney, 1998, p. 383). The staff are depicted as dedicated and “deeply involved in the life of the campus” (Mahoney, 1998, p. 383) and these aspects along with many others, as indicated by two
independent program evaluations, are what make the SSS program so successful (Mahoney, 1998, p. 384). Mahoney (1998) states that “the program has consistently achieved its primary goals for student retention, graduation, and academic performance;” (p. 384) however, above all else, it is the relationships the program staff creates that really help the TRIO participants succeed. The students involved in the program used adjectives, such as “caring, concerned, very eager to help, encouraging, and dedicated to helping” (Mahoney, 1998, p. 386) to describe the strengths of the program.

Coles (1998) discusses specific TRIO participants’ accomplishments and where this success led them in life (p. 436). Of those mentioned, all have thriving careers and all of them “attributed much of their personal and professional success to their participation in TRIO” (Coles, 1998, p. 437). One student, now a Vice President and Controller, recalls using Student Support Services “to help temper my response to certain situations, to provide academic assistance and for general support and encouragement that made me feel that I belonged. With the help of this very important program, I not only recognized that I was worthy, but that I could compete at all levels” (Coles, 1998, p. 438). As evidenced through this student’s comment, the TRIO program not only helps students academically but helps them build their self-confidence as well. All of the participants are “goal-oriented, possess a clear sense of personal vision and great determination to achieve (and)…have great confidence in their abilities” (Coles, 1998, p. 440). TRIO provides the students with skills needed to be successful in life after college and are ready to rise to positions of leadership (Coles, 1998, p. 443).

The AVID program, as described on the national website, encourages AVID coordinators and teachers to perform beyond the typical nine-to-five job in order to
Vital to the success of any program working to raise student achievement and help African American males increase college-going rates is a teacher that not only builds relationships with students but pushes the students to their full potential in order to ensure student success no matter what background they may come from (Rist, 1970; Holliday, 1985). Rist (1970) points out that African American children’s achievement is affected by teachers’ expectations, perceptions, and interactions with children. Rist’s (1970) research revealed that if a teacher puts a label on a child then “a “slow learner” had no option but to continue to be a slow learner, regardless of performance or potential” (p. 435). As Rist (1970) points out, these low expectations of African American students may be a contributing factor to the achievement gap and it increasing the longer the
children stay in school (p. 441). Furthermore, he states that, “when a teacher bases her expectations of performance on the social status of the student and assumes that the higher the social status, the higher the potential of the child, those children of a low social status suffer a stigmatization outside of their own choice or will” (Rist, 1970, p. 448). “For racial groups for which a negative stereotype or oppositional subculture applies, the dropout rate was higher” (Griffin, 2002, p.78). Griffin (2002) feels that students need to be placed in an environment that challenges them with “realistic goals” and providing them with an environment that gives them a sense of belonging (p. 79). Holliday (1985) reinforces this by showing the “critical moderating effect of teacher attitudes on black children’s achievement” (p. 79) and pointing out that “teachers’ attitudes have a stronger direct effect on children’s achievement than the children’s self-perceptions…” (Holliday, 1985, p. 79). She (1985) insists that teachers impact students in numerous ways, ranging from academics to self-perceptions, showing how valuable an effective classroom teacher can be to student success.

Watt, Powell, and Mendiola (2004) have deemed AVID a successful program. Their research concludes that AVID has helped students to be better prepared for college admissions through easier access to advanced courses. The AVID students “are out-performing other students in the same schools, regardless of demographic subgroup, on course completion rates, passing rates on state exams, and school attendance rates” (Watt, Powell, and Mendiola, 2004, p. 257). AVID student academic performance has drastically improved due to the AVID elective (Watt, Powell, & Mendiola, 2004). Mehan (1996) also found AVID to be successful, even beyond the high school years. Between 1990 and 1997, 92.8 percent of AVID graduates enrolled in colleges and
universities. Two years after enrollment, 89 percent of the students were still enrolled (Mehan, Villanueva, Hubbard, & Litz, 1996). Over the years, “AVID has grown because it engages students who are often overlooked as having college potential, develops the academic and social skills that empower them to access the most rigorous curriculum at their schools, and supports them in that acquisition” (Swanson, 2000, p. 27).

In yet another study, AVID students were continuously out-performing their classmates on state tests, were having better attendance rates than their classmates, and had above average grade point averages “despite the added rigor” (Watt, Yanez, & Cossio, 2002, p. 56). All of the AVID students were on track for college enrollment and even more importantly they were on track for success in college (Watt, Yanez, & Cossio, 2002, p. 56). In college, “nearly half of the AVID graduates reported having a “B” average or better” (Guthrie & Guthrie, 2000, p. 3). AVID formed relationships amongst students and in college, “an amazing three-fourths (of the AVID graduates) were still in touch with fellow students and nearly half kept in touch with their AVID teachers” (Guthrie & Guthrie, 2000, p. 3). In looking specifically at African Americans, Gandara, Larson, Rumberger, and Mehan (1998) report African American AVID students are exceeding both local and national averages for college enrollment. Fifty-five percent of African American AVID students were enrolling in four year colleges and universities while the national average is 33 percent.

The major component that makes the AVID program so successful is the involvement of the entire community to ensure student success (Swanson, 1989). “Involving all segments of the community in the classroom enriches the experience of the students and puts the responsibility for education where it belongs: on the entire
community” (Swanson, 1989, p. 64). AVID employs students from local universities to tutor students, and has local business people talk to students about their careers to open the students to possibilities they may have with a college degree (Swanson, 1989, p. 63). “Programs like AVID benefit both individual students and their communities, and these benefits reinforce each other” (Swanson, 1989, p. 64).

There is a need for a program such as AVID to help African American males overcome the numerous obstacles that face them and to encourage them to reach their highest potential in order to be successful academically and socially. While a lot of research has been conducted on African American males’ underachievement and the causes for their underachievement, more research needs to be conducted on how specific programs, such as AVID, impact African American males. The studies pertaining specifically to AVID cultivate support for the program yet none of them focus specifically on the population needing the most support, African American males.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact AVID has on African American male students’ attitudes towards education, overall academics, and social stance since those factors can hinder or enhance their entrance into and success in higher levels of education and in turn career accomplishments. In order to determine how AVID has impacted the current and previous African American male AVID students the researcher reviewed pertinent literature to guide the study. The research questions focus on how African American males are impacted by the AVID program. The questions are:

1. How does AVID impact African American males academically?
2. How does AVID impact African American males’ attitudes towards academics?
3. How does AVID impact African American males socially?

Design

The research will be a mixed methods design. This design was selected since “mixed methods investigations may be used to obtain statistical, quantitative data and results from a sample of a population and use them to identify individuals who may expand on the results through qualitative data” (Hansen, Creswell, Clark, Petska, & Creswell, 2005, p. 226). The majority of the data for this study will be qualitative. Since this research is trying to “understand the experience of a given situation to a group of individuals then qualitative methodologies would be appropriate” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Symon & Cassell, 1998). Qualitative data collection focuses on verbal information rather than numerical information (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003), which will help in determining the first-hand experiences and specific impact of the AVID program on
current and previous students. This data will be gathered through semi-structured, individual interviews of each participant. Participants will be asked approximately sixteen questions during a one-on-one interview with the researcher. A semi-structured interview format was selected to allow participants to elaborate on answers and add unique insight to the research. The students will be asked similar questions, focusing on their goals, attitudes about education, and their previous, current, and future academics. The interview will focus on whether or not AVID has impacted their life. Each of the interviews will be in-depth in order to give the researcher ample time to have a clear understanding of the impact AVID has had on each of the participants. Boyce and Neale (2006) state that in-depth interviews are advantageous because they “provide much more detailed information than what is available through other data collection methods, such as surveys” (p. 3).

“We have to face the fact that numbers and words are both needed if we are to understand the world” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 40). Therefore, quantitative data will also be used to determine the impact AVID has had on African American male students. AVID African American male graduation rates and post graduation intentions will be collected and reviewed to see if the rates are consistent with AVID’s goal and what the qualitative data reveals. The information will be analyzed prior to conducting the qualitative data as well as following the interviews in order to make connections amongst the data. As Firestone (as cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994) points out “quantitative studies “persuade” the reader by de-emphasizing individual judgment and stressing the use of established procedures, leading to more precise and generalizable results” (p. 41). Firestone (as cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994) continues on by stating
that “qualitative research persuades through rich depiction and strategic comparison across cases” (p. 41); therefore reinforcing how valuable it is for quantitative and qualitative data to mesh together.

**Sampling**

The sampling approach of this study will be criterion sampling. Due to the specific population of students involved in this research, a specific criterion was set prior to selecting participants.

**Participants**

The participants in this study are 9 African American male students. The students are in ninth grade (2), twelfth grade (4), and college (3). Nine total students will be selected to participate in order to keep qualitative sample sizes small enough to do justice to the copious information received during the interviews. The students in ninth grade have been in AVID for at least 1.5 years. The students in twelfth grade and college were in AVID for at least 3 years. Students were selected from these grade levels in order to determine if the impact of the AVID program increases from the first year of high school to the final year of high school AVID and beyond high school.

The students were selected from two New Hanover County high schools that have established AVID programs and have seen at least two graduating classes of AVID students. School 1 implemented the AVID program in 2002 and school 2 implemented the AVID program in 2004. The 2 New Hanover County schools the students in ninth and twelfth grades were selected from vary greatly. School 1 has 1,657 students with 37% on free/reduced lunch, and school 2 has 1,805 students with 17% on free/reduced lunch.
(NCDPI). 38.43% of school 1’s student population is African American while 17.25% of school 2’s student population is African American (NHCS, 2009).

**Instruments**

Individual interviews will be the main data collection instrument for this study. Each interview will consist of approximately sixteen questions created by the researcher based upon the focus of this study (See Appendix). Every interview will be audio-recorded for data analysis purposes. The research will need to ensure “trustworthiness” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 601) of the interviews to guarantee reliability of the qualitative research. Patton (2002) encourages the use of both quantitative and qualitative data, known as “triangulation,” (p. 247) because it “strengthens a study by combining methods” (p. 247). Therefore, AVID African American male graduation reports will also be incorporated into the study and used along with the interviews to determine the impact of the AVID program on African American males.

**Data Collection Process**

The data collection will consist of both quantitative and qualitative data in order to utilize statistical information along with detailed information. Prior to gathering qualitative data, each of the two AVID class’ graduation rates by ethnicity and gender will be collected. This data will be used in correlation with the qualitative data to either corroborate or negate the overall effectiveness of the AVID program as it pertains to African American males’ attitudes towards education and overall academics. Letters were sent to New Hanover County Schools’ Central Office and the principals at each of the schools in New Hanover County that have the AVID program; the letters explained the purpose of the study and asked their permission to interview students involved with
the AVID program contingent upon parental permission. Parental consent/assent forms were sent home with African American male students in each AVID class and students were selected based upon those who returned the forms. Emails were sent and phone calls took place to recruit previous AVID students that are now in college. After verbal permission was given to participate, consent letters were signed prior to participation.

The interviews will take approximately forty-five minutes to an hour, depending on the amount of information the participant is willing to share with the researcher. Each interview will take place at the students’ school after school hours. All participants and participants’ parents (if under the age of 18) will have signed a consent/assent form. Each interview will be audio-recorded for data analysis purposes; all interviews will remain anonymous.

Data Analysis

Following the interviews, the data will be transcribed to help the researcher in analyzing the information. The transcriptions will be read, and the researcher will code the transcriptions using the three overlying research questions to guide the coding. The codes will then be grouped into categories. The categories will help bring relevance to the data (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p. 2). Once categories are formed, connections, patterns, and relationships amongst the data will be further established (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p.5). The patterns will in turn lead to the emergence of themes. As Seidel (1998) explains, “analyzing qualitative data is essentially a simple process. It consists of three parts: Noticing, Collecting, and Thinking about interesting things” (p.1). The analysis will not be complete until “sense” has been made out of the data collection,
patterns and relationships have been established amongst all of the data, and general “discoveries” about the data have been revealed (Seidel, 1998, p.5).

The interview data will be used to corroborate, refute, or augment the findings from the statistical data. Descriptive statistics will be used in analyzing the data since it will provide simple summaries about what the data depicts and tables will be used to present the information. Both the qualitative and quantitative data will be analyzed separately and then compared to see if they align (Hanson, et al., 2005, p. 227). The statistical data will be studied to see if African American male AVID students are graduating from high school and are applying to and being accepted into higher levels of education.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Upon close examination of the codes, the codes were grouped into categories and patterns emerged. As these patterns were analyzed, themes about the impact of the AVID program on African American male students emerged. Keeping in mind the three overlying research questions stated in chapter three, the student interviews were coded and placed into categories as listed in Table 4.1. Table 4.1 gives specific student examples of how AVID impacted them socially, academically, their attitudes towards academics, and other ways in which they were impacted by AVID that did not follow under the other three categories. The number of times these examples were mentioned during the interviews (the frequency) is also stated in Table 4.1. Based upon the categories and frequency of the examples, five specific themes emerged about the impact AVID has on African American male students.

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Students bond/are comfortable with one another</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Supportive, family-like relationships are built within the AVID class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students remain close friends beyond high school</td>
<td>3*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AVID elective teacher helps out more than other staff members</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive peer group (AVID classmates) motivates students to do well</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends changed after joining AVID</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Students doing well in school</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students believe they could do better academically</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students want to go to college to get a good job/be successful</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>AVID students value education and strive to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Friends have no part in college decision and believe no one could stop them from going</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>do better academically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students don’t miss school often</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students have high academic expectations</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grades have improved since AVID</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>AVID methodologies improve student achievement in preparation for college.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutorials/study skills help raise grades</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AVID prepares students for college</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note taking helpful tool</td>
<td>3*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Students previously did not care about school, did not take it seriously until AVID</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>AVID impacts student attitudes toward education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AVID keeps students on the right path, directs them to college and away from trouble/bad influences</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AVID motivates, challenges, teaches responsibility</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AVID instills life lessons: to be a leader, to be a better person, to talk through issues, to be organized</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>AVID impacts students in a positive way</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>AVID has an overall positive impact on African American males.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students considered smart, leaders, and goal-oriented by Non AVID students</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students feel more should be in the AVID program</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All college students*

The categories appear in no particular order, and each of the categories was articulated by at least three of the nine participants. While some of the examples may not have been reflective of every participant, they provided meaningful information, which elucidated the impact of AVID on African American males. Three distinct groups were sampled in the study: ninth, twelfth, and college students. When looking at the various grade levels, there were not many differences in their responses as a whole. The two ninth graders interviewed stated they did not care about education prior to being in the
AVID program yet there views have since changed. All three of the college students mentioned note taking as an important skill they learned during AVID that helps them in college yet none of the ninth or twelfth graders mentioned that skill. Also, all of the college students noted the “family-like” atmosphere within the AVID class as being a critical part to the impact of the program. However, other than that, no other examples fell into just one grade level.

Theme 1: Supportive, family-like relationships are built within the AVID class.

All participants discussed the relationships built within the AVID class. The interviews reveal friendships that had formed, teachers that were helpful, bonds that have been built, and peers that have motivated. A major component to the impact AVID has had on African American males includes the relationships formed due to the positive influences of those involved with the AVID program. As one student put it, “the AVID program did a lot because it gave me a close-knit group of people that I could interact with and a teacher that I could talk to when I needed help.” Another student stated that “In AVID we were a group that was always together…kind of like we had a little bond.” In many cases students felt it did not matter who the people in the class were or how different they may be from themselves because as one of the participants said when asked how AVID helps,

It just helps me meet new people, like people in my class I probably would have never hung out with them. They have the same goals as me…so being with a group that had the same goals helps.

All participants that were asked, “Is there any one teacher or person at the school that helps you out more than the others?” mentioned the AVID elective teacher. The
respondents stated a range of reasons for this, such as the AVID teacher providing tutors, helping with school work, encouraging students to bring grades up, listening when needing help, offering advice, calling colleges, and preparing students for college. Although the college students were not asked this specific question, each one of them mentioned the AVID elective teacher and stated that they still stay in touch with that teacher now that they are in college.

Every one of the college students interviewed discussed how they still remain close to their AVID class, even years after graduating from high school. When asking one of the students if he still stayed in touch with his AVID class he said, “I keep in touch with all of them; I guess because from the get-go I got in close with the AVID class and had a tight bond with all of them, like we were family.”

To another student, the bond built within the AVID class meant much more than just building friendships. On a daily basis, as he revealed during the interview, he struggled to find food and a place to stay. When asked what he enjoyed most about being in AVID, he stated, “It was the fact that we were all one group. Sometimes it just felt like I was getting away from my other factors in school that I didn’t want to be around sometimes.”

**Theme 2: AVID students value education and strive to do better academically.**

All nine participants stated that they are doing well academically and could do better. The average participants’ current grade is a B. Five of the nine participants stated that they could study more to improve their grades and two of the participants feel they could stay after school for help more often. All of the participants also believe it is important to attend school and none of them miss school often. When asked their reasons
for missing the few days they have missed, the majority of the time the participants have
only missed school because they were sick or for athletic events (when they are dismissed
early to attend a game). One student in college said “I try not to miss class ever…I feel
like I’m missing something. I rather be in class; I feel like that’s a better environment for
me to be in than in my room or anywhere else.”

When asked why they want to go to college, seven of the participants believe
going to college will lead to future success and better jobs. As one student put it, he
wants to go to college “to get an education so I can get a better job” and another student
said, “living in the US, if you don’t go to college you really won’t have a high paying
job…” Every one of the participants knew right away why they wanted to go to college
and not one of the participants even paused to think about the question. A ninth grade
student said, “I want to go to college to prove that I know I can make it, to show
everybody that you can come from anywhere and you can do anything you want once
you get into college.”

Determination to get to college was revealed by all of the participants. All of them
mentioned how there is nobody that could hold them back from attending college and
many were very adamant about it. A ninth grader stated that “I’m not going to let nobody
stop me from doing what I need to do.” With a similar response, a twelfth grader said that
“I don’t let anyone determine where I am going to go; my mind is pretty much set” and
another twelfth grader said “I made it this far so nothing can stop me now from going to
college.” Not only were participants determined, they set high expectations of
themselves. When asked what their expectations for the year were, nine of the nine
participants focused on academics, such as being on A/B honor roll, having a decent GPA, and getting closer to future career goals by doing better in school.

Theme 3: AVID methodologies improve student achievement in preparation for college.

Seven of the nine participants state that after joining AVID their grades have improved. The methodologies of the AVID program have led to these improvements. Eight of the students credit the study skills taught to them and/or the tutorials they are required to participate in as the reason why AVID has helped their grades improve. Two of the participants also credited the AVID elective teacher, stating that the teacher “stays on me,” “is always up on me,” and “helps me out.” Every one of the college students discussed the skills taught in AVID as being beneficial to them in college. They mentioned study skills, organizational skills, and overall college-preparation. All three college participants talked about Cornell note taking as being extremely helpful to them and none of the current high school students mentioned note taking. One college student explained just how helpful the note taking taught to him during the AVID elective is to him now that he is in college. He said,

I used to take notes just to take notes but now I am thinking about what I write down, trying to figure out what it is saying to me and how I can use it in life and for the test so I can find ways to remember it better.

As Hubbard (1999) points out, the AVID program not only encourages students to not only take college preparatory classes but to pursue college and maintain decent grades in the process. Nine of the nine participants stated that AVID was preparing them for college. All of the students still in the program specifically said that AVID “is preparing me for college.” One of the college students said, “AVID had a lot to do with me being
prepared” while another college student said, “It prepared me for a lot of things I seen in college and a lot of people weren’t prepared for the same things that I was.”

Theme 4: AVID impacts student attitudes toward education.

Although every one of the participants stated they are doing well in school and could do better academically, they did not always feel this way. Prior to AVID, five participants did not value education. As one high school participant stated,

I used to really not care about education, to tell you the truth, I didn’t care about school but I found out that education can help me to get a good job, nice house, and all, it probably, AVID made me a better person.

A college participant believes AVID helped his “mind state” and says, “I always thought I was going to college but had I not been in the program, I probably would have lost that dream…It would have turned into just thoughts.”

All participants talked about various ways in which AVID helps them and all nine participants state that the way in which AVID helps impacts their attitudes towards education. One college participant believes “AVID gave me the confidence to know I could do well if I tried.” Another participant said that “it teaches responsibility and that really makes me a better person” and yet another student said “it got me on track, got me thinking about college and stuff.”

AVID had an impact on every aspect of one student’s life. He not only turned to his AVID friends for support and friendship and looked to the AVID class as a place to belong but he also had a major shift in whom his friends were due to AVID. He says AVID “helped his mind state” and “made (him) think about school and life…and
thinking about getting out of (his) situation.” When asked about his previous friends, he responded by saying,

God knows what they’re doing…one of my best friends he got life for murder and one just got off for murder and a couple of other ones they’re just around. Some sell drugs; some work nine to five, McDonald’s, Burger King. Some just sit there, rottin’, just doing nothing with themselves.

Then, when asked about his AVID friend, whom is now his best friend, in high school, he stated

We motivated each other to try and push ourselves to do our best. We competed and did things like that to see who could get the highest grades. So we just pushed each other to get where we are at right now.

Another student that is currently in college had a similar change in his attitudes towards academics and therefore his friends shifted. He said prior to AVID he “tried to fit in…I didn’t really know who I was so I tried to fit in…but those weren’t the people I should have been with.” After being in the AVID program he began to value education and realize the friends that surrounded him needed to motivate rather than discourage him. He stated that “I don’t have too many friends but some are from AVID and the ones I let go are the ones that didn’t go to college.”

A student that is currently in the AVID program and still has three years until graduation has already had a shift in his attitude toward academics. He states,

Before I got in AVID I used to get into trouble and once I got into AVID I learned that people look up to you in AVID so you got to be a leader and role model for
everybody else. You got to stay after and get your grades up and everything because everybody is going to look up to you.

He continued on, later in the interview, to tell how he had to change from hanging around a “negative group” to one that is “positive.”

The AVID students want to do well academically have positive outlooks on education. As one participant said, “Every African American male that I know that has been in AVID has gone to college…they got positive outlooks on education…there is a mind state that they are going to do good academically.” Another student stressed that AVID “really changed my life…it changed the direction my life was going.”

Theme 5: AVID has an overall positive impact on African American males.

With that being said, AVID has had a positive impact on African American males. All of the participants interviewed revealed how AVID has helped them become more prepared, more successful, and more focused on academics. Appendix 1 shows the factors that are positively affected by AVID participation, such as improved grades, valuing education, gaining a positive peer group, and leadership skills.

When asked to describe their AVID class in one word, participants said it was “excellent,” “exceptional,” “eccentric,” “successful,” and even “perfect.” One student when asked to explain why he said “exceptional” said that the AVID students “exceed all expectations of all our teachers” and another student said that “AVID is just the best thing that ever happened to me.” When a college student was asked to describe his experience with AVID in one word, he said “blessing” because it helped him out and is the reason he ended up in college. Overall, every AVID student stated that AVID impacted them in a positive way and four students specifically stated that more African
American males should be involved in the program. One student said that “it is a real positive program for African American males and more should be in the program” while another student felt “if anyone has the opportunity to get into AVID, I would tell them to get into it and to take advantage of it.”

In looking at the AVID class graduation rates and intentions after graduating, the five themes can be further supported. In table 4.2 the AVID class graduation rates are stated along with their intentions and percent that will be first generation college-goers. The fact that 100% of all AVID African American males in the senior class graduated high school last spring specifically supports two of the themes; AVID students value education and AVID has an overall positive impact on African American males. The students not only value education but plan to go on to higher levels of education and in many cases are the first in their families to do so, setting high expectations of themselves. Of the 14 African American male AVID students, 13 plan to attend a 4-year college or university and 1 plans to attend a 2-year college. Yet again, the AVID African American male graduation rates and intentions support the overall positive impact AVID has on African American males.

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVID Graduation Rates and Intentions for African American Males</th>
<th>School One 7 students</th>
<th>School Two 7 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2008 AVID Graduating Class</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of African American male high school graduates in AVID class</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of African American male graduates planning to attend 4-year college/university</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of African American male graduates planning to attend 2-year college/university</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of African American male graduates that will be first generation to attend college</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The data in this study revealed specifically how the African American male participants have been impacted by their involvement in the AVID program. The participants were impacted socially, academically, and even their overall attitudes towards education were impacted. Not one person mentioned anything negative about the AVID program and many encouraged increasing the number of participants accepted into AVID.

Discussion

Somers, Owens, and Piliawsky (2008) pointed out that many African American males abandon education due to lack of support within the school system. This study evidences how support of peers and teachers within the AVID elective class can increase the value of education by African American males by motivating them, supporting them, and introducing them to college and the skills needed upon entering college. As Hubbard (1999) points out, the AVID program not only encourages students to take college preparatory classes but to pursue college and maintain decent grades in the process. All of the participants in this study are on track for college/university admissions and feel AVID is preparing them for college. All nine of the students believe they can do better academically, although all of them currently have excellent grades.

As Osborne (1999) reveals, African American students can connect to education if challenged and supported and this study evidences how AVID has done that for the nine participants. As the participants stated, they were placed into honors classes and supported by teachers, classmates, and tutorials. In yet another study, Irvine (2003) and Collins (1991) discuss the importance of teachers establishing relationships with the
students. Within this study, the African American males discuss the relationships that have been built and how these positive peer relationships have helped them be more successful. As a part of the AVID program, as Watt, Yanez, & Cossio (2002) mentioned, all students in the AVID program are on track for college-enrollment and so in many cases that is part of the reason these relationships were formed because they all have the same goals and expectations of themselves.

**Conclusion**

The themes and inferences unveiled in this study are evidence of the positive impact the AVID program can have on African American males. This study could be used as support for the importance of involving even more African American males into the AVID program to increase academic success, the building of positive relationships and admissions into higher levels of education. The study shows how the program could possibly help prevent African American males from dropping out of school by instilling the value of education in them and surrounding them with a positive and supportive peer group.

**Future Research**

In examining the data, it was evident that AVID is an influential program for African American males. A follow-up study that would further support the effectiveness of the AVID program would be an extension of this study to include students other than just African American males to see how AVID impacts all students and to see if there is a difference between students of different backgrounds, ethnicities, and gender. Due to the positive impact of AVID on African American males at the high school and college level,
another study would be looking at the impact on middle school students and using this research to determine if the program should be expanded down to the elementary grades.

Limitations

Due to the focus of the study being on qualitative data, one must consider that qualitative data focuses on subjective, interpretive, and contextual data rather than numerical data, which could affect the validity of the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). To improve the validity, quantitative data will also be incorporated into the study to either reinforce or contradict the qualitative data.

As a whole, the researcher felt there were some limitations on the study. Starting out, the researcher wanted to interview several previous and current AVID students of various grade levels to have as much input from African American male students as possible about the impact of AVID on their lives. However, due to time constraints, the researcher could not interview as many grade levels or students as originally planned. The researcher decided to keep the numbers small in order to give the data justice by spending ample time reviewing and analyzing the qualitative data. The researcher was reassured in this method when conducting interviews as the repetition of responses increased.

Implications

As a result of seeing the impact the AVID program has on African American males, it is imperative for school systems to expand the program to reach even more students and further support the program in any ways necessary to continue its success. Due to AVID being a program that is increasing the rate of African American males
going on to higher levels of education, the program should be introduced to more students and more should be encouraged to participate in the AVID program.
REFERENCES


Quarterly, 30, 363-383.


Appendix 1

Factors affected by AVID participation

- Trouble, N=3
- Low grades, N=9
- No family attended college, N=5
- Lack of value in education, N=6
- Friends with bad influences, N=3
- Leader, Better student, N=3
- Improved grades, N=9
- First Generation College, N=1*
- Value education, N=9
- Positive peer group & lasting friendships, N=7

* Those interviewed that are currently in college
Appendix 2

9th and 12th Grade Student Interview Questions

1. Is there any one teacher or person at the school that helps you out more than the others? Explain that person.
2. How are you doing in school?
   a. What grades do you currently have in your classes?
   b. How could you do better academically?
3. How many days of school have you missed so far this year? Why?
4. What are your expectations for yourself for this school year?
   a. After high school?
   b. Six years from now?
5. If they want to go to college:
   a. Why do you want to go to college?
   b. Do you have any family members that attended or are attending college?
      i. Why do you think they did/did not attend college?
   c. Do you think you are prepared to go to college? Why or why not?
   d. Do you feel like there is anything or anyone that could possibly hold you back from going to college? Explain.
   e. Once you finish college, what do you hope to do?
6. If they are not sure if they will attend college or not:
   a. How will you decide whether or not you will attend college?
   b. What is one thing you think may hold you back from going to college?
   c. What makes you so unsure about going to college?
   d. If you decide not to go to college, what do you think you will do?
   e. Do you have any family members that attended or are attending college?
      i. Why do you think they did/did not attend college?
7. Do you think your friends have a part in your decision about whether or not you will attend college?
   a. (If they plan to go to college) Will you select the college you attend based on where some of your friends may be attending?
8. Why did you decide to participate in AVID?
9. What would someone else (someone not in AVID) say about an AVID student?
10. What is one word you would use to describe your AVID class? Why?
11. Since you started in AVID, do you think your grades have improved?
12. How is AVID helping you academically?
13. How is AVID helping you with things other than academics?
14. If you could change one thing about the AVID program, what would it be?
15. What is helping you decide you want to continue with and graduate from high school? (If they previously said they planned to go to college) Go on to college?
16. How has AVID impacted you?
Appendix 3

College Student Interview Questions

1. What made you decide to go to college?
2. What grades do you currently have in your classes?
   a. How could you do better academically?
3. How many classes did you miss this semester?
   a. When you missed classes, why did you typically miss them?
4. Statistically, very few African American males that begin college do not earn a degree, so what motivates you to remain in college?
5. Do you have any family members that attended or are attending college?
   a. Why do you think they did/did not attend college?
6. What are your expectations for yourself for this school year?
   a. Where do you see yourself six years from now?
7. When you were in high school
   a. What helped you prepare for college?
   b. When did you decide you wanted to attend college?
   c. What was your biggest obstacle in determining if you would attend college?
   d. Do you think you were prepared for college? Why or why not?
   e. Was there anyone in high school that you felt was holding you back from attending college?
   f. What helped you “beat the odds” and get a high school degree?
8. How did your friends influence your decision to attend college?
   a. How do your friends influence your decision to stay in school?
   b. In joining AVID, did you lose any of your friends? Why or why not?
9. Thinking back to your AVID class, did most of them go to college?
10. Do you keep in touch with any of your AVID classmates? Why or why not?
11. Why did you participate in AVID?
12. What is one word you would use to describe your AVID class? Why?
   a. What is one word you would use to describe your experience with AVID? Why?
13. Do you think AVID helped you academically?
   a. If it did, how did it help you?
   b. If it did not, why do you think that is?
14. Do you think AVID helped you with anything other than academics? Explain.
15. If you could have changed one thing about the AVID program, what would it have been?
16. Thinking back, how do you think AVID impacted you?