

ABSTRACT

SOCIAL WORK

FELTON, TERRY J.

B.S. MERCY COLLEGE, 2012

THE EFFECT THAT AFRICAN AMERICAN FATHERS HAVE ON THEIR SONS:
NONRESIDENTIAL FATHERS AND A PRESENT FATHER IN THE SCHOOL

Advisor: Youseung Kim, Ph. D.

Conceptual Paper dated May 2017

This study explores the effects that African American fathers have on their son. The type of African American fathers that were examined were those that were nonresidential and those that were active in their son's education. These areas were both individually analyzed to completely understand them. The similarities and differences were discussed to determine if there is or is not a commonality and correlation between them. The information that was retrieved does help establish an argument that these factors have an impact on the son's lives individually and combined. The findings of this research propose that fathers are a determining factor in how their sons succeed in life and there is a need for social workers to be sensitive to that idea.

THE AFFECT THAT AFRICAN AMERICAN FATHERS HAVE ON THEIR SONS

A CONCEPTUAL PAPER

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE

WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR., SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY

TERRY J. FELTON

CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

May 2017

© 2017

TERRY J. FELTON

All Rights Reserved

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to recognize those individuals who were instrumental in assisting me with writing this conceptual paper. They were all most helpful with allowing me to present this information to them and give me feedback about it. These individual were there to hear me complain, rant and laugh at the most inappropriate times. I would like to thank Halle Carey for all the laughs about “CAROL!” I would like to thank Victor Cornett for keeping the group in line while we were in the library at 11pm. I would like to thank Dr. Youseung Kim for the being a great professor, who taught us the importance of Research for three semesters. I would like to thank my mother for helping me through all of my schooling and being my greatest supporter. I thank all of the professors and the staff here at Clark Atlanta University for being such a great help for me in this journey of Graduate School.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Purpose of the Study	4
Significance of the Study	5
II. LITERATURE REVIEW	7
Historical Perspective	7
The Effects of Nonresidential Fathers on their sons.....	8
The benefits of involved fathers in son's educations	9
Afrocentric Perspective.....	10
Theoretical Framework.....	14
III. METHODOLOGY	16
Methods of the Study	16
Limitations of the Study.....	18

IV.	PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	19
	Analysis Results of Participants, Methodoloies and Measurements	20
	Analysis Results of the Outcomes	21
V.	SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION.....	24
	Summary of the Study	24
	Implications for Social Work.....	27
	REFERENCES	30

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the African American community, fathers fall into different categories regarding their interaction and impact in the lives of their sons. One category is made up of those fathers who have an active role and have a positive influence on the growth and maturity of their sons. Another category is made up of those fathers who have no involvement and are not positive role models in their son's lives. Unfortunately, just as the positive and inactive fathers fall into categories, their sons fall into categories as well. The sons are categorized by their outcome from the relationship that they had with their fathers. Those categories are composed of young black males who had a positive and a negative outcome as a result of their paternal relationships. This conceptual paper will focus on how nonresidential fathers have a negative influence on their sons and how their sons are not equipped to properly function within society as a law-abiding citizen and a well-rounded individual. The other issue that will be discussed is the outcome of those African American males which had a father involved in their education. These two topics will also be compared and contrasted to understand if they have correlation with each other by analyzing the information used to research them.

When there is a positive father figure in the life of a son, he may have a better outcome on how he functions in society. When there is an absence of a positive father

figure, it seemingly becomes the direct and indirect task of other family members and individuals outside of the family to fulfill the role of the absent father to that son. Throughout the history of the black family it has been seen that there are various voluntary and involuntary situations that cause fatherlessness in the home. The absence of black fathers in the home has been found to have negative results on the social and education development of their sons.

The focus topic of this paper is to explore the positive and negative influences that fathers have on the outcome of their sons. By exploring this topic there is a chance to understand the effects of residential and nonresidential fathers and the benefits of having active fathers in their son's education.

Statement of the Study Issue

The roles of fathers have a major effects on the lives of their sons and many fathers do not realize the power and the influences that they possess. Over the past few years there has been research conducted with hopes of understanding the influences fathers have in the lives of their sons. The purpose of this conceptual paper is to research the correlation between the roles of African American fathers and the effect they have on their sons. Society believes that many African American fathers are absent and are "deadbeat dads" resulting in no positive influence the lives of their sons. Paschall, Ringwalt, and Flewling (2003) researched the effects that the absence of a father has on their sons. The findings of their study provide examples that an absentee father has a negative effect on their sons, which can result in their sons having behavioral challenges and legal issues. Since a father's absence may cause delinquency, there is a need for

further intervention in African American communities. If there are more interventions there may be a limited and lower number of African American that join gangs and that become involved in criminal activity.

It has been found that the interaction of positive fathers with their sons, have a major impact in how well their sons develop academically. Brooks, Jones, and Latten (2014) researched the levels of educational success in the African American community and those students raised in homes where education was promoted earned higher grades. According to Brooks et al. (2014), 53% of those African American males student participants achieved graduation from High School and 53% that entered into higher education as a result of their father's involvement in their academic careers. It was also found that other participants had other non-paternal reasons for achieving high grades in school, like those students whose purpose for being educationally successful was due to the financial status they would obtain.

As this issue is examined there is a chance to understand the roles of fathers and how they can be a positive, negative, or a non-influential factor to their sons. Since every father-son situation is different there will be different outcomes discussed in this conceptual paper. Some African American males are raised in homes by their biological family (where fathers may or may not be residential) and others are raised by foster or adopted family. In some of those homes there may or may not be a father present and the sons become a successful individual. In other homes the sons can have a completely different outcome and not be as successful as other African American males their age. Amato and Gilbreth (1999) found that there is no evidence or connection between the interaction of fathers outside of the home and their sons having an upbringing that is

conducive for them to become developed as accepted by society. In this conceptual paper this topic will be further examined to explore what correlations these issues have with each other and how they are not similar.

Purpose of the Study

In African American communities, there is a combination of young African American males who were positively and negatively affected by their fathers. For example, in the Metropolitan Atlanta region of Georgia, there are Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) and Predominately White Institutions (PWI's), where there are young African American men pursuing higher education. Those young men have different reasons for attending a college or university, but achievement seems to be what they all have in common. Within the communities where those young men are attending college, there is a large population of homeless African American men who are within college age (18-25). Those men account for sons who are displaced for various reasons and the unanswered question is, was there a father present in their lives before their displacement? The intent of this conceptual paper is to understand father's influences and how their involvement or absence affects the outcome of their sons. The word influence is defined as having the authority to redirect a person, place or thing (Merriam-Webster, 2015).

When the influence that a father has on his son is taken into consideration there are other factors such as heredity and paternal guidance that can be explored. To take into consideration the habits and family traits that people have, it can be said that children act out their personal characteristic and what is demonstrated in front of them. Since children

are very impressionable at early ages and look to their parents as role models, they begin to do what they have seen their parents do. This can be seen when sons mock their fathers and do things like getting dressed like them and begin to treat other people the way that their fathers treat them. The influence of fathers can be viewed as beneficial in the early developmental stages of their son's lives, as fathers can be seen as the first example that their sons have of how men should conduct themselves. An African American father in the home who enforces the importance of succeeding in life might be viewed as something rare in the American society, but in those cases where it does occur it may assist in the structural outcome of their children (Jones, 2013). It is seen predominately in the African American community that fathers are not present in the home of young African American males where they can offer positive guidance to guide them through their lives. In other situations there are fathers who are present in the lives of their sons and are not positive role models for their sons to follow after. When there is a positive and successful father in the home there may be a chance that their son may follow after the father's example.

Significance of the Study

This topic is significant because it will explore how African American fathers play a major role in their son's lives and how they have an influence in the successes of their son's lives. It is significant to study these issues as there may be a chance to limit the amount of inactive fathers in the African American community. If a father's interaction with their sons is significant in how prosperous their sons become, then fathers may need to be educated on the importance of fatherhood. Davis, Jenkins, and

Hunt (2007) tell their stories of how having a fatherless childhood affected their development, but it also tells of how they overcame their life obstacles. Those three doctors were reared in homes where they experienced and saw many things that led them down the wrong path, but they all overcame their issues and were a support system for each other. Their story is an example self-determination and having a non-paternal support system.

The significance of this issue results from the need of African American fathers to take their rightful place within their communities. Since there are so many stigmas about African American fathers in the black community, there is a need for their reputation to be repaired. In order to repair their reputation there must be a change in how African American fathers view their roles within their communities and families. By altering the way black fathers view themselves and their roles in the black communities, there may be lower crime rates and higher standard of quality in those communities. McGhee (2014) reported from an event, where a group of successful African American men went and spoke to at-risk African American boys at an inner city high school. Those men encouraged the young African American boys and were examples of being former at-risk youth who overcame their life circumstances by making a better life for themselves. Kafele (2009) gives a detailed summary of his life and the challenges he faced as a youth with a nonresidential father. He explains that he was mentored by a teacher who positively guided him and redirected him to becoming a better person. By studying this issue there may be a clear observation of the role of the African American fathers and how their positive, negative, or non-influential interactions have an effect on the lives of their sons.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will discuss the impact that the issues of nonresidential fathers and the benefit of having a father present in a son's academic career. These issues will be viewed from a historical perspective, an Afrocentric Perspective and a Theoretical Framework in order to understand the importance of these issues from the past to the present.

Historical Perspective

Over the course of history, the topic of nonresidential fathers and their influence in their son's lives has been researched very little. Although the issue of fatherlessness has been recognized, it has not thoroughly been investigated to determine when it began and how far it has evolved. In America it has been seen over the past 400 years that the interwoven family structure of the black family has been unraveled and it began with fathers not being effectively represented in the home. According to Lewis (1978), this was initially seen when the Africans whom were captured and were involuntarily shipped to America were separated from their families to be sold into slavery. Since there was a separation of fathers from the children, there were voids formed in the black family makeup. During the time of slavery in the southern region of America, the slaves were

not legally allowed to marry one another and maintain their standard of the nuclear family unit. As a result of black families not being able to function in the traditional way, the role of fathers were limited in how they interacted with their sons. During that time many fathers could have been taken numbered among the senseless killings of slaves and their sons were left fatherless. When slavery was taking place many fathers could have also been removed from their sons if they were sold to other slave masters and/or were runaways on the Underground Railroad to escape slavery.

As the years passed and slavery was no longer legal, there were other factors that began to cause limitation of the involvement of fathers in the lives of their sons. Some of those factors were but not limited to-The Civil War, World War I and II, The Civil Rights Movements, incarceration and the crack/drug epidemic. Throughout the Twentieth Century, there were many events that removed fathers out of the home involuntarily. There were also many causes for fathers to voluntarily leave their homes and abandon their families, which left many sons fatherless. It was found that many fathers in African American communities were not involved in their son's lives due to divorce, separation, death and rejection of the idea of having a child (Popenoe, 1996). This issue caused many of those abandoned sons to act out in various ways and some even followed in their father's footsteps and abandoned their offspring. This issue has been an ongoing matter, which has not been addressed properly to bring an end to it.

The Effects of Nonresidential Father on Their Sons

In African American communities, it is not uncommon for black mothers to be the head of households and no father living in the residence. There also seems to be normalcy

of young men having no guidance or fatherly counsel to positively navigate their lives. According to Turney and Wildeman (2013), this issue has been prevalent for many years and has been an ongoing problem in the black household. Compared to other races there is a need for more African-American fathers to be positively active in the lives of their sons. There are more cases of non-African American fathers being residential and active in their son's lives. Although there are cases when nonresidential fathers have a relationship with their sons, there is still a void in the sons development.

There are many reasons why African American father are seen as nonresidential fathers such as death, serving in the military, divorce, separated from child's mother and incarceration. The reasons why some fathers are nonresidential are seen as both voluntary and involuntary in many cases, but many of them have negative effects on the development of sons born to those fathers. According to Thomas, Krampe and Newton (2008), many young black boys grow up with mainly female role models since there was no male in the home. The void of fatherlessness can be observed as a cause of esteem issues that can lead those black boys to find ways of coping with and to fill the void in their lives. Some of those choices could be joining gangs and getting involved in lifestyles that pacify their desire for male leadership and companionship.

The Benefits of Involved Fathers in Son's Educations

It is mostly seen in African American homes that fathers are more involved in their son's athletic activities than they are in academic activities their sons may be a part of. In many cases there is a rarity of finding fathers being active in their son's education and showing and interest in how well they do academically. List and Wolfe (2000) have

found that when fathers are active in their son's academic career, their sons tend to do exceptionally well in school. Their research was based on the father's involvement on a postsecondary academic level and how black fathers compared to white fathers were active in their child education. In many black homes it is mainly seen that the mothers are the primary attendees in their child's parent-teacher conferences and other academic related activities.

A father whom shows an interest and have an involvement in their son's education benefits them in all aspects of their education. This can be seen by how serious the sons take education, the grades that they earn, and the career choices that they make for themselves. According to Fogarty and Evans (2009), there is a connection between a father's involvement and their children's academic success. The father's involvement results in lower failing/dropping out rates and the children have a better chance of graduating from all levels of education. This is due to the fathers encouraging the youth to succeed in their academic career and their career choices. Fathers also invoke a wide vocabulary and a set of social skills in the youth, and there is a limitation of misbehavior amongst those boys who have tempers (Howard, Lefever, Borkowski, & Whitman, 2006).

Afrocentric Perspective

In approaching the topic of a father's interaction with their son there must be a clear understanding of the factors that contribute to it. Since this topic deals with core family matters there need to be an effective and evidence-based tool, which will properly address issues that arise in the family unit. The Afrocentric Perspective is a way of

thinking, which has been effective in addressing the issues of the whole group and not only the individual's issues alone. This perspective brings illumination to the value of the group and combines all aspects of a situation to better service the individual within the whole group by helping the whole group. The seventh Afrocentric Perspective value relates a person to all that makes up who they are and that is the physical, the mental, the connection they have to a higher power and the people that make up their community (Asante, 1987). This value gives the full spectrum of how the Afrocentric Perspective is used to address the needs of a person and that it involves everyone and everything that is connected to the individual. The main purpose of seeing things from an Afrocentric viewpoint forms a bridge of culturally addressing the needs of African Americans with an African foundation. The Afrocentric Perspective does not focus on an individualistic point of view, but it brings all aspects of a person's being together to capture the needs of the whole group and not just individuals.

The usage of the Afrocentric Perspective is needed to understand the study issue-nonresidential father's influence on their son's lives, as there is a need to address the entire family and the outside entities that make it up. Since there are different reasons why a father is not present in the home, there is a need for different ways of addressing the issue (Congress & Gonzalez, 2013). The only way to understand the issue of voluntarily nonresidential fathers is by collecting information from the whole group and this information can assist in the development of their growing sons. As described in the seventh value of the Afrocentric Perspective, when there are involuntary nonresidential fathers, information gathered by social workers may give the developing son a sense of identity.

The Afrocentric Perspective uses the seven principles of Kwanzaa called “Nguzo Saba” (Johnson, 2001), which engulfs the need for the family to come together and work together. Kwanzaa has created an avenue of reinstating the African Americans to the roots of their African Ancestors. The two Afrocentric Perspective concepts that best describe how Kwanzaa is implemented are “Spiritual Balance” and “Collective view of Self”. These two ideas speak on the importance of the invisible aspects of one’s being and the importance of knowing one’s place in the larger group. It was also a way of bringing the African hardships in relation with the day to day issues had by African Americans. The first principle of Kwanzaa is “Umoja (Unity)-to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race”; the third principle is “Ujima (Collective work and responsibility)-to build and maintain our community together and make our sister’s and brother’s problems our problem and to solve them together” (Johnson, 2001, p. 416). By using this outlook on the needs of the whole community and the principles of Kwanza gives a greater understanding of the importance of the family unit.

The Afrocentric Perspective is a major component in the study issue- the influence of an active father in son’s education. This is evident by the usage of family values and by the third concept of the Afrocentric Perspective addresses how a person’s ability to persevere, despite opposition they may encounter is an important trait for them to possess (Asante, 1987). According to Weber (1993), it was found that there are many young African American school males who do not have an active father role in their lives. As a result of them lacking in that area, they do not take education seriously and seek for masculine affirmation in other areas, i.e. - street credit and involvement in gangs.

It is therefore imperative that young black males have a positive and active father involved in the academic career. According to the Afrocentric Perspective, the responsibility for qualified staff in the human services field is to help remove all inhumane treatment and replace it with empowering tools (Asante, 1987); there is a need for the whole group to come together and fill the void that individuals have in the group effectively.

When addressing the professional implementation of the Afrocentric Perspective, social workers need to be informed that their roles encompass its values and concepts. There is a need for them to see the greater needs of young black males who lack in the area of nonresidential fathers and do not reap the benefits of having positive father's involvement in their education. Since the premise of the Afrocentric Perspective is focused on meeting the individual's needs by meeting the needs of the group, professionals that serve "the larger group" need to understand the importance of their roles. When social workers are educated on the importance of their profession they will effectively utilize the factors that make who a person is, such as the physical, the spiritual aspect, the mental, and the individuals who make up their communities (Asante, 1987). That portion of the perspective encompasses one of the major aspects of the field of social work, as those are the factors that make a human's system, and all of them are equally important.

The Afrocentric Perspective encompasses the values that clients will need to make a change in their lives, such as a person's ability to persevere, despite opposition they may encounter is an important trait for them to possess (Asante, 1987). When clients are empowered and encouraged to use their inner abilities that they possess, they may

differently, there is a chance for them to make the necessary changes in their lives. This can only be achieved if the social worker begins to implement these values of the Afrocentric Perspective within their practice and personal theoretical framework for dealing with clients.

Theoretical Framework

The first theory that addresses these study issues is the General Systems Theory since it best deals with the nature of a father and son relationship. This theory addresses the idea that everything that directly and indirectly influences a person biologically, psychologically, socially and spiritually. Those outward forces play a major part in how a person survives on a day to day basis (Germain, 1978). The General Systems theory is shown in this study by the need to fully understand all aspects of fathers and sons relationships. The General System of fathers is a possible determining factor of how they may interact and influence the lives of their sons. If there is an area that is unmet in the father's life, there may be issues that could arise in his involvement in his son's life.

Since the General Systems theory affects the lives of fathers it may also affect their son's life, since there is a system that make up outward factors of the son's life. According to Germain (1978), every person has their own General System which influences them. Although many of the systems may overlap when it comes to the family structures, each individual is influenced differently by the system. The system has a negative and a positive effect on each person's life. All of the aspects of the father's outer and inner influences affect how he will interact with his son, whether negatively and

positively. The same is seen in the life of the sons as they are influenced by the outer and inner influences of their General System.

The second theory that focuses on the interactions of fathers and sons is the Social Learning Theory. According to Bandura (1971), the premise of the Social Learning Theory is that people are influenced by their direct and indirect social interactions. Just like the General Systems Theory the Social Learning theory has to do with how the individual is influenced by their environment. The Social Learning Theory on the other hand involves the interactions that people have with one another.

This theory is related to these study issues by the socially learned actions of the fathers and the sons, and how they interact with each other. Many times in African American communities it is not uncommon for there being a lack positive residential fathers in the homes of young black boys. Although nonresidential fathers may have a negative impact on their sons, they still have an impact on the development of the younger men in their communities. Many black males mimic what has been the model in front of them and either know or do not know the full extent of the consequences of their actions. Many fathers have learned their behaviors from the men that were in their communities, and are continuing both the negative and positive behaviors. This is also seen in the behaviors of many black sons who had a residential or nonresidential father and those who had a father who was involved in their education. They begin to act out the same behaviors that were displayed in front of them.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this paper is to research the effects that fathers have on their sons. The effects that fathers have on their sons have both a positive and a negative impact on the development of their sons. There are issues that arise when sons grow up with nonresidential fathers, which appears to be evident by the way that the sons navigate through their life journeys.

When fathers are residential and are involved in their son's education there appears to be an impact on how their sons develop. This conceptual paper researches these interactions and examines the correlation between these study issues. The purpose of this paper is to compare and analyze those fathers who are nonresidential and have no involvement in their son's education. This paper is designed as an attempt of exploring these study issues and ascertain how these findings can promote change for these topics in the future.

Methods of the Study

The information obtained for these study issues were accessed through the Robert W. Woodruff Library database, Google Scholar, JSTOR and sources found in journals and other literature. The keywords that were used in the Robert W. Woodruff Library

Database were: effect on sons, absentee fathers, residential fathers, nonresidential fathers, son's education and positive male role models. There were 125 books, journals and articles found using these keywords.

In Google Scholar, the same keywords: effect on sons, absentee fathers, residential fathers, nonresidential fathers, son's education and positive male role models were used and over 9,000 books, journals and articles were found on this topic. Many of the articles that were found were directly not related to these study issues and were not used. The sources that were that were found and used were specifically related to these study issues.

When using JSTOR, I was able to find many journal articles using the same keywords. Many of the journal articles were related to my study issues, but not all of them had information that were related to this paper. I found over 1,000 journal articles that were related to these topics by using the above keywords. The articles that were chosen to be included in this paper as sources were directly related to the study issues in this paper.

When reading journals and other literature some of the sources that were cited by the authors were extracted and used in my paper, as long as they were related directly related to my study issues. Some of the sources were similar to the study issues, but they were not directly related to the topic of African American fathers and their sons. The amount of sources found by reading other literature was around 200, but many of them were not used. The sources that were not related to my study issues were rejected and were not used in this paper. Four articles were accepted to be used for this conceptual paper as these articles were closely related to the study issues presented in this paper.

Limitations of the Study

The focus of this paper is to gain a better understanding of the relationships between black fathers and their sons. In many African American community there seem to be family issues that go unaddressed with no resolutions and are passed down from generation to generation. It appears when family issue go unaddressed and are not publicized, there are limited resources on those topics. The first limitation of retrieving information for these study issues and keywords was the limited amount of input from the black community on these topics. Since this exact topic does not appear to be addressed as a societal issue, there seems to be limited information to access about it on search engines. The second limitation of locating information to conceptualize these topics was the lack of information, which explicitly dealt with these study topics. The third limitation experienced while researching these topics was the lack of literature directly related to African American fathers and theirs sons. Most of the literature that was retrieved from the search engines and databases were related to the experience of other ethnic groups and not exclusively African Americans.

The most common issue that was encountered during the search for information on these topics was a lack of detailed information. When the articles and journals were searched for African American nonresidential fathers and their sons, there was very limited information found regarding that topic. The same was experienced when the topic of African American fathers and their involvement in the son's education. There were many articles located during this research that reflected the experience of Caucasians, Latinos and non-Americans, but there was limited amount of information found on African American.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter reflects the common findings that stood out among all of the studies and summarizes those findings for participants, methodologies, measurements and outcomes. These findings of the study issues (nonresidential fathers having an effect on the lives of their sons and if there is a positive correlation between fathers being active in their son's education) both support and reject these ideas.

The issue of nonresidential fathers and the effect that may have on their sons appears to be situational. The information that was found appeared to be vague regarding this idea, but there seems to be no definite answer on the effect nonresidential fathers have on their sons. While doing this research it was discovered that attempting to determine the connection between nonresidential fathers and their sons could not be searched alone. The topic of fathers and their involvement in their son's education was needed to further examine the first study issue. To gain a better understanding of how these issues are related, four studies were analyzed by categorizing how nonresidential African American fathers affect their sons, how African American fathers influenced their son's education and how African American female head of households were represented. These findings and analyses of the findings were extracted from the

literature, which was examined to determine if there is a connection between these study issues.

Analysis Results of Participants, Methodologies and Measurements

The four studies that were analyzed can be categorized as three being qualitative and one being quantitative. The three qualitative studies had sample sizes that were exceptionally high, and the amount of participants ranged from 230 to 818 compared to the sample size of the one quantitative study with an extremely large amount of participation of 1,443 participants. The participants across the studies were African American, White, and Latino males that ranged from ages 12 to 88 in the United States. The researchers of both, the one time and longitudinal studies gave the participants surveys that the researchers used as a form of data collection.

The researchers of two of the qualitative studies obtained their data by administering a one-time in person survey to their participants. Of the three qualitative studies, there was one 6 year longitudinal study where participants were a part of an ongoing violence and substance abuse prevention study focusing specifically on African-American male adolescents. The participants submitted surveys at the three year mark and then at the six year mark, which was the conclusion of the study. The qualitative study was an ongoing study that measured how adolescents were affected by the family structures which they were reared in. The participants were all participating in those studies voluntarily and their removal of from the study at any time was at their own discretion.

Two of the quantitative studies selected their participants when they were apart of already established programs i.e. violence and substance abuse group and higher education mentorship program. The participants in the mentorship program were given surveys when they were selected to participate in either of the programs and they submitted the surveys before leaving the facilities. The participants in the one longitudinal quantitative program had two three years points when they had to turn in their surveys. The last quantitative study was conducted and measured by giving surveys to African American males at an urban Eastern Southern University. Those participants that submitted a survey voluntarily participated in that study. The one qualitative study was conducted over a 13 year period and the participants were selected by in-home face to face interviews and then self-administered, which they mailed back to the researcher. The participants in these studies were also voluntarily participating and could withdraw themselves from the studies at any time.

The studies conducted all used different research designs to obtain and measure the collected data. The studies that measured the influence that fathers have on their son's education used the "Fathers Presence Questionnaire" survey (Thomas et al., 2008) and a Likert scale survey (Brooks et al., 2014). The studies that measured the effects of nonresidential fathers on the development of their sons utilized the "Youth Risk Behavior Supplement" survey (Paschall et al., 2003) and the "National Longitudinal Survey of Youth" survey (Falci, 2006).

Analysis Results of the Outcomes

All of the four articles used have common findings and they all found that African American fathers make an impact on their son lives. According to Paschall et al. (2003), the effects that a nonresidential father has on his son can display as delinquent behaviors by the son. Although the fathers have an effect on the sons, there are different ways that black fathers effect their children. African American fathers have been found to have a positive impact on their son's education when they are actively involved in it. These fathers have also been found to still have an influence on their son's development when they are nonresidential. The effects of nonresidential fathers included juvenile activity i.e. joining gangs and committing crimes and poor life decisions which lead the child lacking the guidance, to become a well-rounded adult. The other influences fathers have on their sons are educational and career decision, as evidence by some sons choosing to either be in STEM or non-STEM majors.

The articles that are used to connect these two issues supported the idea that there is a correlation between them. These articles did that by providing information about fathers and the impact that they do or do not make on the son's lives. The thing that stood out about the articles was the contrast that the information presented. Although fathers have an impact on the way that their sons develop whether they are residential or nonresidential, the issue is if their lack of presence causes delinquency. According to Falci (2006), there is no connection between nonresidential father and a significance of distress and bad choices in their sons, but in Paschall et al. (2003) there is a connection between nonresidential fathers and the juvenile activity and distress. This is also found in the two articles that referenced fathers' involvement in their son's education. The two

articles involved college age African American males who are in college and are surveyed about their father's involvement in their lives and education. According to Thomas et al. (2008), of the African American sons that were in college, 21% of African Americans lived with only their mother; 12% of the African Americans had some visitation from their fathers; and 20% of African American had no visitation of contact with their fathers. According to Brooks et al. (2014), 50% of the participants in this study reported that their father's involvement was a motivation to achieve. These two articles show that there is a correlation between fathers being involved in their son's education. These articles support the idea that there is a correlation between the father-son dynamic of education and that some sons have self-motivation to excel academically.

Each article was beneficial and supported each other by the information falling in line with the running themes and the prevailing findings. It is seen that there is a connection between fathers and sons and whether the father lives in the home and/or involved in the son's education. With this information there is a foundation to build further studies upon and research these topics further. If research is further conducted on these issues there is a chance to revise policies, laws, and how social workers interact with clients.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

First, this chapter will summarize how the findings of the study issues were similar and how they had no correlation between them. Secondly, this chapter will give examples of how African American communities, schools, and the legislative branch of the U.S. government can make changes in how they address the issue of fatherlessness in all aspects. Lastly, this chapter will discuss the importance of how further research and implications of these issues will benefit the field of social work in the future.

Summary of the Study

In the African American community there are many family issues that go unaddressed. The topic of fathers and sons is something that is seen and spoken about, but it is never addressed to the point that it can be fixed. Many fathers and sons in the black community do not have good relationships and that is if they ever had a relationship. This is due to that many black boys grow up with no father in their home for various reasons. Many of those reasons are due to fathers being away at war, deceased, or not having a relationship with the child's mother. The purpose of this conceptual paper is to explore two study issues- The effect that nonresidential fathers have on their sons and to prove that there is a positive outcome of fathers being actively involved in their son's

education. By these issues being addressed there is a chance for fathers in the black community to take the responsibility and privilege of fatherhood more seriously. By these topics being addressed there is a further chance of the black community being educated on these prevailing matters that seemingly effect everyone in that community indirectly or directly.

The literature that was used to support and explore these issues were accepted due the validity of the information that is in them and how they relate to these issues. The issues of the effect of nonresidential fathers and the impact of educationally involved fathers on their sons are closely related. According to Thomas et al. (2008), "The majority of African American children younger than 18 do not live with their fathers (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002). Furthermore, African American fathers are frequently thought to be peripheral in their children's lives because many of them do not reside with their children. These perceptions of the invisibility of African American fathers, coupled with the reality of many African American children not residing with their fathers, raises issues about the role of African American fathers and their absence or presence in their children's lives" (p. 530). There is clear evidence that there is a lack of fathers in the homes of their sons and with this being known, there is a need for the black community to come together and deal with the reality of these issues. In relating the issue of nonresidential fathers to how important fathers are in their son's education, it is seen that fathers make an impact on the educational majors and the career that their sons choose (Brooks, Jones, & Latten, 2014).

To further summarize these study issues there is a need to understand that there is a connection between these two issues. When there is a limited amount of fathers in the

homes there is a strain put on black mothers, as they have to take on the full responsibility of caring for their sons and at many times there is a lack of resources to care for them (Paschall et al., 2003). In African American communities when there are no fathers living the homes, there is a chance that mothers that have to take on all responsibility this also has an effect on the sons. Since there may be a chance that the mother might be burned out and unattainable to give their sons the attention and support that they need, they might have feelings of neglect from the mothers as well. According to Franklin (2003), although there are circumstances when there is no father in the home with their sons, there is still a connection when there is a relationship forged with the father's family. When this takes place the son may not lack a structured support system, as he would if he did not have that group of people to stand in the gap for his father. According to Falci (2006), the relationship that a child has with the parent that they live with is far more important and has a greater importance inside and outside of the home than that relationship that a child has with a parent that lives outside of the home. If it is so that there is no father in the home and the mother cannot give a child what they need emotionally and educationally, the child will find ways to fill the void in their life or yield to their circumstances and accept failure.

With the information discussed and explored on these topics, there is a clear understanding that nonresidential fathers and those fathers that are actively participating in their son's education both are connected and have great impact on the development of the sons. Since this information is known there is a need for communities, schools and those in the field of social work to educate and advocate for young black males to have positive male role models in their lives. There are many reasons why biological African

American fathers are not represented and have no interaction with their sons, but those fathers that can be reached need to receive information on these issues. With the knowledge that African American boys need a positive male role model in their lives, the mothers of those boys need to be educated why it is important for this to take place. In schools there are Social Workers that can advocate for programs to be implemented in school where there is a predominance of fatherless black boys. The programs would not be a form of social control, but it would be a way of assisting with the issue of fatherlessness in the African American communities. The issue of fatherlessness needs to be properly addressed in African American communities and by addressing the issue more current and future parents can be educated on this issue.

Implications for Social Work

The issues of nonresidential fathers and the effects of having a father active in their son's academics have an impact on all communities. All communities are influenced by these issues, due to African American men fathering son's in all communities and not just in black communities. The sons of those African American fathers have a chance of having a father who may become nonresidential and may be active in their academics. Those issues and influences will transfer to future generations of African American fathers and sons if they are not addressed. With these existence of these issues being known there is a need for legislatures to take these intimate issues and address them nationally. The problem that may arise if legislatures become involved in these issues is the father's civil and human rights. Since the United States of America is a free country, there are limitation to what those in legislation can do to address those issues. In the USA

people are allowed to have children and not take care of them, as long as there is someone caring for the child (i.e., adoption, foster care and family taking care of the children).

When it comes to legislation implementing a policy there would be very little that they could do to effectively educate father to be more active in their son's lives. If there were more programs focused of paternal parenting, there may be a larger number of fathers who will become more interested and active in the education that their son's receive and the career choices that they begin to make. If there are no programs implemented or policies put into place (as there are none in place at the present time), there is a need for teachers and school social workers to educate families as a whole about the importance of fathers being present in the son's education. There are programs that encourage and support African American males in their academic career such as the 100 Black Men, Inc., and Black Fraternities, but the impact that a father has on their son's life makes different impact in their lives.

In the future of Social Work there is a need for extensive research on these topics, as there is limited information about both of them. In order for future generations to escape the issues of those that preceded them, there will need to be advocates in the field which are passionate about fathers and their relationship with their sons. Those social workers who will pick up the torch and see these matters through will need to go to every possible channel to get these issue addressed (i.e., schools, government officials and community activist). They will also have to investigate the communities and the systems which make those communities up to successfully address the issues. The questions that they will have to ask are: Who lives in those communities? What resources do they have?

What has been done in the past to address those issues and what can be done differently? Does the community as a whole want to be helped or just a select few? When those questions are answered, then the journey can begin to assist those communities, which are dealing with the fatherlessness and the effect it has on the future generations of African American males and their education.

In conclusion, this information can be found beneficial for future African American youth that may experience fatherlessness in the home and regarding their academics. The impact that a nonresidential African American fathers have on their sons can lead those sons to seek for fulfillment in that area. There is evidence that African American fathers makes a positive impact on the education and career goals that their sons make, so there may be a chance that future fathers will see how important they are to it. Although this may not be applicable to all African American fathers and sons, as there may be uncontrollable conditions and situations that may arise (i.e., death and serving in military), there still needs to be a system implemented in schools to assist in this matter. If these issues continue in communities where African American sons live in there is a chance for future communities to have the same issues. When these issues are addressed and a solutions is implemented in black communities, the future relationships of African American fathers and their sons might become healthier and complete.

REFERENCES

- Amato, P. R., & Gilbreth, J. G. (1999). Nonresident Fathers and Children's Well-Being: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *61*(3), 557–573.
<http://doi.org/10.2307/353560>
- Asante, M. (1987). *The Afrocentric Idea*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Bandura, A. (1971). *Social Learning Theory*. New York, NY: General Learning Press.
- Black, M., Dubowitz, H., & Starr, R. (1999). African American Fathers in Low Income, Urban Families: Development, Behavior, and Home Environment of Their Three-Year-Old Children. *Child Development*, *70*(4), 967–978. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1132255>
- Boyd-Franklin, N. (2003). *Black Families in Therapy. Understanding the African American Experience* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Brooks, M., Jones, C., & Latten, J. (2014). International Journal of Social Science Studies. *African American Males Educational Success Factors*, *2*(2), 76.
[doi:10.11114/ijsss.v2i2.273](https://doi.org/10.11114/ijsss.v2i2.273)
- Congress, E., Gonzalez, M. (2013). *Multicultural Perspectives in Social Work Practice with Families* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Springer.
- Davis, S., Jenkins, G., & Hunt, R. (2007). *The Bond: Three young men learn to forgive and reconnect with their father*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.

- Davis, S., Williams, A., & Akinyela, M. (2010). *An Afrocentric Approach to Building Cultural Relevance in Social Work Research*. *Journal of Black Studies*, 41(2), 338–350. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25780780>
- Falci, C. (2006). Family Structure, Closeness to Residential and Nonresidential Parents, and Psychological Distress in Early and Middle Adolescence. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 47(1), 123–146. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4121003>
- Fogarty, K. & Evans, G. (2009). The hidden benefits of being an involved father (FCS2137). Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. Retrieved from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/HE137>.
- Germain, C. B. (1978). General-Systems Theory and Ego Psychology: An Ecological Perspective. *Social Service Review*, 52(4), 535–550. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30015668>
- Howard, K. S., Lefever, J. E., Borkowski, J. G., & Whitman, T. L. (2006). Fathers' Influence in the lives of children with adolescent mothers. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20(3), 468-476.
- Johnson, V. D. (2001). The Nguzo Saba as a Foundation for African American College Student Development Theory. *Journal of Black Studies*, 31(4), 406–422. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2668023>
- Jones, T. (2013). *Journal of African American Males in Education*. *Black Fathers' Parental Habitus as a Practice and Strategy in Home and Schools*, 4(1), 1-3.
- Kafele, B. K. (2009). *Motivating black males to achieve in school and in life*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

- Lewis, R. (1978). Slave Families at Early Chesapeake Ironworks. *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 86(2), 169–179. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4248203>
- Linneman, T. J. (2011). *Social Statistics: The Basics and Beyond*. New York, NY and London, UK: Taylor and Francis.
- List, J., & Wolfe, L. (2000). The Effect of Father's Presence on Postsecondary Educational Attainment among Whites and Blacks. *Research in Higher Education*, 41(5), 623–636. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40196405>
- McGhee, T. (2014, April 1). Successful African-Americans tell black students they can make it too. The Denver Post. Retrieved from http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_25470761/successful-african-americans-tell-black-students-they-can?source=infinite-up
- Paschall, M. J., Ringwalt, C. L., & Flewelling, R. L. (2003). Effects of parenting, father absence, and affiliation with delinquent peers on delinquent behavior among African-American male adolescents. *Adolescence*, 38(149), 15-34. Retrieved from <https://login.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2050/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/195934606?accountid=8422>
- Popenoe, D. (1996). A World without Fathers. *The Wilson Quarterly (1976-)*, 20(2), 12–29. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40259161>
- Thomas, P., Krampe, E., & Newton, R. (2008). Father Presence, Family Structure, and Feelings of Closeness to the Father among Adult African American Children. *Journal of Black Studies*, 38(4), 529–546. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40034420>

- Turney, K., & Wildeman, C. (2013). Redefining Relationships: Explaining the Countervailing Consequences of Paternal Incarceration for Parenting. *American Sociological Review*, 78(6), 949–979. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43188367>
- Weber, M. J. (1993). Immersed in an Educational Crisis: Alternative Programs for African-American Males. *Stanford Law Review*, 45(4), 1099–1131. <http://doi.org/10.2307/1229205>
- Influence. (n.d.). Retrieved February 22, 2016, from <http://www.merriam->