



## SERIES VOLUME PROFILE

**Series Title: Diversity in Higher Education**

**Volume Title: *Volume 6--Black American Males in Higher Education: Diminishing Proportions.***

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**Foreword:** Shirley McBay—Quality Education for Minorities Network

**1. Invisible Men – Almost: The Proportional Diminution of African American Males in Higher Education.** Michael Cuyjet – University of Louisville

An introductory chapter consisting of an overview of the overall perspective of the proportional diminution of Black American males in higher education with contents drawn from the preceding chapters.

**2. A Historical View of the Barriers Faced By Black American Males in Pursuit of Higher Education.** Raymond Gavins – Duke University Education

Black slavery and White racism, *de jure* and *de facto* Jim Crow in the South and nation, “massive resistance” to *Brown v. Board of Education*, which overruled “separate but equal” schooling, plus educational advances and disparities by race since 1954, frame a narrative of Black males’ quest for higher education. Bondmen were denied literacy and freemen of color rarely attended school, much less pursue advanced study, during the antebellum period. Union victory in the Civil War, slavery’s abolition by the Thirteenth Amendment (1865), and Reconstruction marked the rise not only of Negro schools and colleges but also of southern sharecropping, called “the New Slavery,” and extralegal violence against Blacks that foreshadowed their disfranchisement and segregation, both by laws and customs, until the 1960s. African American males thus pursued collegiate and professional training in a national climate of White supremacy, which postulated their mental and moral inferiority, ignoring their economically disadvantaged backgrounds and unequal precollege opportunities. Although confined to historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), they breached the color line little-by-little at White institutions, foreshadowing *Brown*, the civil rights movement, and desegregation. HBCUs and historically White institutions, therefore, contributed to growing numbers of Black male college graduates and potential professionals. In 1980, however, 11 percent of young Black men had completed 4 years of college, compared with 25.5 percent of young White men. An “achievement gap” persists to date, reminding us of the deep-

rooted ideologies and structures of racial inequality that Black males have faced in pursuing higher education.

3. **A Historical View of the Contributions of Black American Males in Higher Education.** Stephanie Y. Evans – University of Florida

This chapter highlights significant Black male scholars (students, faculty, administrators, and activists) who have contributed to educational and intellectual advancement in the United States. As the *Black American Males in Higher Education* collection demonstrates, being Black and male means facing overwhelming challenges to educational opportunity. Yet, as this chapter presents, there is a rich but hidden history of participation by African American men in colleges and universities dating back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Though we certainly know the contributions of a few educators, namely Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, and Carter G. Woodson, there is a deep, broad, and vastly complex story of the relationship between Black men and academic institutions. In this chapter, readers will become more familiar with the founding fathers of Black American male collegians and their scholarly legacy for academics of future generations. The author traces the vital and illustrious history of African American men's educational attainment and offers a brief overview of the magnitude of their contributions to academia, past and present.

4. **The Demography of African American Males in Higher Education.** Richard R. Verdugo, Ronald D. Henderson, and Thomas H. Dial – National Education Association

In 1980, of African Americans enrolled in higher education, 58.1 percent were females. By 2004, fully 65 percent of African Americans enrolled in higher education were females. While the number of African American males did not decrease over that time frame, their rate of increase was so small that it was overwhelmed by the much larger increase among African American females. In order to better understand the dynamics of why African American males are not enrolling at similar rates in higher education, we first need to unravel a number of issues that only a demographic analysis can provide. The purpose of our chapter is to examine three demographic issues concerning African American males in higher education: size, distribution, and composition. Our findings suggest that while African American females do enroll at higher rates than African American males, there is important variation by geographic region, urban versus non-urban, and by poverty status. Further analysis as to why such variation exists can go a long way toward developing appropriate policy that would increase the enrollment of African American males in higher education.

5. **Participation Rates of Black Males in Higher Education from 1968-2007.** Marie-Claude Jiguet, Roderick Harrison, and Florence Bonner – Howard University

Concern has deepened for the growing gap in college enrollment and completion rates between African American men and women. African American men comprised 45 percent of all Blacks enrolled in four year institutions in 1971, but only 36 percent in 2004. This gap has often been couched in the wider context of several indicators (employment, health, and incarceration measures) based on which the relative status of Black males is poor or

deteriorating. Our chapter will note that the gender gap in rates of college enrollment and completion among African Americans is consistent with, though much larger than, similar gaps among all major race and ethnic groups in the United States, and between males and females in most nations. In important senses, the problem is not specific to African Americans or African-American males. We will present statistics showing that in 2006, comparable percentages of African American men and women between 25 and 29 years old had completed high school. The higher female to male ratios for Blacks (1.8 to 1 in 2004) reflect at least two additional factors that have received too little attention and merit further analysis. First, about half of the gender differential among Blacks seems attributable to the enrollment rates of Black women over age 25 in institutions of higher learning where enrollment ratios are substantially lower (1.4 to 1) for Blacks between the ages of 18 and 24 year. Second, the ratios are even lower (in the 1.2 to 1 range) when one examines percentages of 14 to 24 and of 25 to 29 year olds who attended or completed college. This suggests that some of the gender gaps in the *stock* of Black females and males enrolled at any point in time may reflect differences in the *flows* of Black women and men into and out of degree-granting institutions. Our analysis of the Current Population Survey School Enrollment data suggests that the higher enrollment rates of Black women in advanced degree programs, and the more rapid completion of degrees seem to contribute more than does attrition to Black men entering and leaving degree-granting institutions more rapidly than Black women, and hence to the higher stock of Black women at any given point in time.

6. **The Educational Status of African American Males in the 21st Century.** Antoine M. Garibaldi -- Gannon University

This chapter assesses the educational attainment of African American males between the 1990s and early 2000s. Beginning with a summary of a 1987-88 study conducted by the author on African American males in the New Orleans Public Schools, national data are provided on the high school graduation rates of African American males and females, as well as trends in their enrollment and degree completion at the undergraduate, graduate and first-professional levels. The data show a growing educational disparity between African American women and men in all higher education institutions, but also in public and private historically Black colleges and universities. The author offers recommendations to improve the performance, enrollment and graduation rates of African American males in order to close the current college gender gap.

7. **Making so Big a Dream Near and Dear to All African American Males.** Launcelot Brown, Malick Koyate, and Rodney Hopson – Duquesne University

It is an accepted fact that a college degree is the smoothest road to the job market. The research literature is replete with reports and statistical evidence that show the relationship between an individual's level of education and the kind of job he or she is able to access. Also, it is common knowledge that a steady well-paying job or owning one's business is the way out of dependency and poverty, and the feeling of inadequacy and meaninglessness in everyday life. Yet, many young Black males do not have the opportunity, or some would argue, do not grasp the opportunity to go to college. Moreover, many of those who do go never graduate. This is a troubling phenomenon, and

begs the question why are our African American males not dreaming the American Dream, or if they do dream, how do their dreams differ?

The problem of the diminishing African American male in higher education is a complex societal issue and defies simple solutions. We contend that too many African American males have internalized the obstacles to their own academic achievement. In presenting our argument we discuss the following topics as explanatory factors, and examine the literature to discuss suggested strategies for addressing the concern. In addition to an examination of strategies from the research literature, topics discussed are: Who is the African American male and how is he different from and/or similar to non-U.S. Black males? What are the Assumptions about the Black American male? Dreaming the American dream: Who dreams and what kind of dream? Some explanations for the Black American males' decreasing representation in higher education are presented as well.

8. **Where are the Brothers? Alternatives to Four-Year College for Black Males.** Rhonda V. Sharpe – University of Vermont, and William A. Darity – Duke University

There has been much discussion, but little research about why African American males do not attend and or complete a college education. We examine the alternatives which might reduce or compete with the decision to invest in a college education. We analyze the number of men incarcerated, trends in labor force participation, and occupation and wages by educational attainment. We find that even when the number of 18-24 year old African American males incarcerated increased, the number of African American males 18-24 years old enrolled in college had a larger increase suggesting that incarceration is not a plausible explanation for the growth rate in degree attainment for African American males. We find that the decrease in the overall percentage and in the percentage of 18-24 year old reporting employed as their labor force status and the increase in the percentage for these groups reporting not in the labor force and unemployed may have an impact on the college enrollment. Additionally, an increasing percentage of African American males have an associate's or bachelor's degree, but a larger percent change in the percentage with some college. African American males with some college earn significantly less than those with an associates or bachelor's degree, but earn significantly more than African American women with some college or an associate's degree. This supports Dunn's (1998) finding that African American males do not invest in college because they desire "quick money". The earnings differential between African American males and females may also explain the degree attainment gap between, as it is the African American females with a bachelor's degree that earn significantly more than African American males with some college.

9. **Overcoming Barriers: Characteristics of Black Male Freshmen between 1971 and 2004.** Kimberly Griffin – Pennsylvania State University, Uma Jayakumar – UCLA, Malana Jones – UCLA, and Walter Allen – UCLA

Despite the multiple barriers they face and public discourse focusing on the underachievement of African American men, there is a population of African American males that successfully finish high school and enter college. Our chapter provides a demographic overview of African American males that have gained access to college in the past thirty years based on data from a national sample of African American males

collected by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. We consider the following trends: the widening of the gap between college attendance for Black males and females; changes in the socioeconomic backgrounds of Black male college students; and growth in Black males' academic achievement and self confidence. Additionally, our chapter discusses the changing motivations amongst Black males to attend college, their post-college aspirations, and how they make choices about college attendance. Exploring these trends in tandem with current research on African American males and their experiences allows us to make policy recommendations regarding possible policies and programs that can be created to facilitate access to higher education.

10. **One Initiative at a Time: A Look at Emerging African American Male Programs in the California Community College System.** Edward C. Bush – Riverside City College – and Lawson Bush V – California State University, Los Angeles and Don “Ajene” Wilcoxson – Riverside City College

The authors draw upon the African proverb: “How Do You Eat an Elephant?” One Bite at a Time to couch emerging practices and programs connected to and within California community colleges that are specifically designed to counter historical and topical institutional neglect and exclusion one initiative at a time. To this end, we discuss the Umoja Community, Men of Ujima Manhood Development Program, and the African American Male Educational Network and Development (A<sup>2</sup>MEND) organization. The authors maintain that the study of Black men in general is in need of its own theoretical framework that can articulate their position and trajectory in the world drawing on and accounting for their pre- and post-enslavement experiences while capturing their spiritual, psychological, social, educational development and station. Thus, we first build upon Critical race theory (CRT) and African-centered theory to construct an emergent conceptual approach that more accurately articulates the experiences of African American men in community colleges and that both explains the existence of the aforementioned independent educational programs and organizations and provides the framework to produce and maintain additional self-determined spaces. Beyond theory and research, however, the authors call community college educators to a personal accountability and action to create spaces, initiatives, programs, organizations, and institutions based on the conceptual framework outlined in this current chapter.

11. **Power of Mentoring: Black American Males and the Community Colleges.** Derrick Brown, Sylvia Marion Carley and Kenneth Ray, Jr.– Hillsborough Community College

Community College African American male student enrollment and academic success is diminishing. The authors explore the importance and wisdom of mentoring programs for African American males attending community colleges. The chapter considers issues of student persistence and retention and how they relate to effective community college mentoring programs. Specifically, the authors discuss how community college mentoring programs can counteract inherent obstacles for African American students attending commuter style campuses. A description of how some community colleges successfully engage African American male students in order to achieve Kuh's four attributes of a supportive college environment and overcome the issues of college departure such as being a first generation college students; lacking academic self-concept; institutional engagement with students; and student involvement on campus. The authors highlight

successful community college programs which include the national “Students African American Brotherhood” program, Santa Fe College’s “My Brother’s Keeper” and Hillsborough Community College’s Collegiate 100.

12. **Who’s Afraid of the Big, Bad Wolf?** Candice Baldwin, Jodi Fidler, and James Patton --  
William & Mary University

Access to higher education for Black men has increased since the 1980s, yet they are not enrolling or graduating from institutions of higher education (IHE) at a rate comparable to that of their female counterparts. Black males represent a mere 36 percent of the Black college student population in all IHEs and only 32 percent in historically Black colleges and universities. Research shows that the problems on many college campuses can be linked to the status and perceptions of Black men in society as a whole. This chapter will delineate the salient factors that affect the success of Black men in higher education and will offer strategies that IHEs can use to increase the success of their Black male students.