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The Impact of Spiritual Mentoring Among African American Males at Eastern Kentucky University

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Cozart, Harvey. (2016). *The impact of spiritual mentoring among African American males at Eastern Kentucky University*. D.Min., Asbury Theological Seminary.

Academic and social integration into university culture can be very difficult for African American students who are the minority on campus. I think that without support and guidance, African American male students can become withdrawn and isolated, and struggle with their own personal identity, self-esteem, and academic achievement. Many African American males struggle academically, socially, and spiritually at predominantly white universities. Lang stated that African American males proportionately to their peers do not graduate from college, and that there exists a large disparity in the number of African American males who enroll in college and those who graduate (1988). Colleges and universities need to work harder at addressing the academic survival of African American male students. There are very few programs in predominantly white institutions that offer guidance and social support in the context that most African American males would need to be successful in school. Cuyjet suggests that there is a lack of research in the area of retention and mentoring of African American male college students on a predominately white college campus (1997). African American male college students are the least successful group at navigating and succeeding in higher education. For myriad reasons, most African American male college students do not fare well on college and university campuses (Cuyjet, 1997).

The purpose of this study was to investigate how mentoring impacted African American males at Eastern Kentucky University in the areas of

Christian identity formation, education, and personal identity formation within a college ministry context during the span of the mentoring relationship/experience from 2003 to 2007. I randomly selected 10 to 12 African American males who attended Eastern Kentucky University and were a part of a past spiritual mentoring experience within a college ministry context from 2003 to 2007. I then conducted interviews with the males that I selected. Interviews were carried out in person and by phone on an individual basis. The use of interviews served as one of the primary sources for data collection. The interviews were both open ended and focused-interviews that were semi-structured. This project relied upon several methodological tools traditionally used in case study research, including documentation, interviews, and observations. This study was a pre-intervention study, in order to help universities and campus ministries develop a more effective way to engage African American males at a predominately white institution.

As a result of my research, I discovered four major findings. First, subjects seem to thrive when connected with a group of their African American peers within the positive mentoring environment generated through collegiate, Black and Christian. Second, subjects began to grow in their confidence and ability as leaders when given opportunities to lead. Third, subjects began to make positive life decisions and grew spiritually when engaged in learning scripture and taking spiritual retreats that focused on growing in their faith. Last, subjects began to develop a greater desire to excel academically even before college, through the pressure of family or a desire to leave the negative environments in their hometowns.

The findings of this study demonstrated that mentoring had a significant impact on African American males who attended the spiritual mentoring program at Eastern Kentucky University. These findings demonstrated mentoring can play a significant role in the life of a person and encourage growth and balance. Mentoring can bring about positive change and empower those being mentored to discover their identity and spiritual direction.

Manuel, William M. (2017).

***Missional virtues in leadership: Assessing the role of character strengths of Christian social entrepreneurs in creating missional organizations.* Ph.D.I.S., Asbury Theological Seminary.**

In the past few years, social entrepreneurship and the development of faith-based non-profits has grown both in practice and in interest as a missiological activity within Christianity. Studies of the leadership of nonprofit founders typically focus on the traits, skills, and strategies in order to understand the growth of these organizations. The relationship between the character strengths of Christian social entrepreneurs and the growth of their organizations has not been explored in previous studies. This dissertation attempts to bridge that gap by asking the question: What are character strengths that have been influential and beneficial in the leadership needed by Christian social entrepreneurs in starting organizations that lead to stability and growth in mission? The findings of this dissertation are that there are particular and identifiable virtues and character strengths that are possessed by Christian social entrepreneurs which enable them to lead in the growth of the organizations that they have started. This study is accom-

plished through in-depth interviews that focus on critical incidents and areas that illuminate the virtues and character strengths of Christian social entrepreneurs who have positively affected the growth of their organizations, utilizing the theoretical concepts of Positive Organizational Scholarship and Martin Seligman and Christopher Peterson's Classification of Virtues and Character Strengths framework.

Meier, Timothy G. (2017). ***The effect of mentoring on interns in a cross-cultural setting to produce increased missional engagement.* D.Min., Nyack College, Alliance Theological Seminary.**

The purpose of writing *The Effect of Mentoring on Interns in a Cross-Cultural Setting to Produce Increased Missional Engagement* is to examine the relationship between mentoring and mission. This is accomplished through interviewing interns who have served with C&MA/Envision in a cross-cultural setting for a minimum of two months. For a minimum of 45 minutes, 17 interns were interviewed, and the results show a strong correlation between high mentoring and high missional engagement.

Jackson, Tatrabian D. (2016).

***The relationship between transformational leadership style and employees' perception of leadership success in higher education.* D.B.A., Liberty University.**

The problem addressed examined whether two merged academic institutions were successful in implementing a transformational leadership style within the united organization. Successful leadership cannot be limited to the perception of only the leader, but must include the perceptions of the follower as well. The focus of