Students of Color Perceptions of Parental Support on Retention at HBCUs

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Abstract

African American and Latino students attending historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have arrived facing greater barriers to education than perhaps their white counterparts at majority institutions. To improve retention efforts at HBCUs, the research literature suggests that considering parents and families as partners in their student's academics may be an effective strategy for student retention. Qualitative research design was used to examine the lived experiences and perceptions of thirteen (n=13) traditional African American and Latino college seniors enrolled at two HBCUs in the south, through the lens of Consortio Cum Parentibus (in partnership with parents). The analysis revealed that participants found parental support to be beneficial to their retention; students appreciated parents collaborating with the institution to ensure student success; and while they appreciated their autonomy, they valued the life lessons taught and appropriate life skills modeled by parents that promoted their independence. The findings from this research provided greater understanding of the impact of parents/families as motivational partners in the college process; in addition, the researchers recommend institutional and family strategies to address the level of support given by parents and families as it relates to retention.

Keywords: Contsortio Cum Parentibus, students, parental support, retention, historically black colleges and universities

1. Introduction

One of the most pressing issues impacting higher education is how to design effective strategies to increase student retention rates (Kahu & Nelson, 2018). Higher education is viewed as a stepping stone to economic and upward mobility, however higher education institutions are diverse, as are the students' attending. Students' experience differential outcomes, such as degree completion rates and earnings, based on their demographics (Baum et al., 2013; Bowen et al., 2009; Creusere et al., 2019), as well as institutional type (Giani, 2016; Heil et al., 2014; Monsen, 2018; Thompson, 2019). Despite record increase in minority enrollment, minority students' graduation rates appear to still lag behind their white counterparts. In comparison to the national average, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) retention rates for full-time enrollment are nine percentage points lower at 63% and six percentage points lower for part-time enrollment at 36% (Gasman, Nguyen, & Commodore, 2017). A variety of factors have been cited for retention gaps, including inadequate college preparation and a disproportionate number of low-income students enrolled at HBCUs (Fakayode, Yakubu, Adeyeye, Pollard, & Mohammed, 2014; Gasman & Nguyen, 2015). To improve retention efforts at HBCUs, research identifies family beliefs and values toward education as a primary influence on college student retention and completion (Byun et al., 2012). The purpose of this study was to understand how student perceptions of parental support influence retention at HBCUs. Student perceptions were examined through the lens of Consortio Cum Parentibus which translates to *"partnership with parents."* The following research questions framed this study:

1.How do students perceive parents as partners in their educational success?
2.How does a partnership between parents and the institution impact the retention of African American and Latino students?
3.How do students suggest that parents can be involved while maintaining their own autonomy?

Although there are qualitative and quantitative studies that speak to parental support at predominantly white institutions to promote family involvement in retaining students, the literature fails to address the unique populations of HBCUs and scantly captures the African-American and Latino students' perceptions and experiences of parental support on their retention. Student success and institutional success are inextricably linked; however, ownership of student retention rests primarily with the institution and the experience provided to students (Ruffalo Noel-Levitz, 2017). Positive parent involvement and support have resulted in improved student psychosocial and identity development (Schultheiss & Blustein, 1994; Winter & Yaffe, 2000), as well as improved health and physical wellness (Abar & Turrisi, 2008). Parents and family members can provide students with the social and emotional supports they require when confronted with new social settings in college (Cutrona et al., 1994) and provide needed social support and validation for students of color, who may perceive the campus environment as uninviting or unsupportive (Rendon, 1994). More importantly, parental involvement and support have been shown to increase the likelihood of completing a degree (Herndon & Hirt, 2004). More research should be conducted to understand the nature and extent of parental motivation in order to help HBCUs engage parents and families and create expectations within the partnership. While this is an issue, the lack of involvement or ineffective partnerships between higher education institutions and parents persists. This study seeks to better understand how families influence student retention. The findings have the potential to facilitate a greater understanding of the impact of parents and families as a partner in college retention for African American and Latino students.

2. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The Consortio Cum Parentibus model (2007) provides a framework that depicts the characteristics of the relationship between colleges, students, and parents, Figure 1 (see appendices) as well as an implementation guide by categorizing it in the tenets listed below:

1.When it comes to educating students; the college, student, and parents work together as partners while upholding fundamental legal and ethical standards.
2.Colleges are not omnipotent insurers of student's safety and a safe environment but do have reasonable safety duties.
3.There should be a focus on decision-making, accountability for decisions, and the implications of decisions.
4.Parents are actively involved in student education, but student's right to self-determination and autonomy should carry more weight than the parental right to know– unless there is an explicit risk of serious injury.
5.Colleges can provide assistance in the parent-student relationship by teaching both students and parents how to facilitate autonomy and communication (Henning, 2007).

For this study, tenet number five was utilized in forming the research and interview guide questions because it ties specifically to the institutions' responsibility to teach both students and parents how to facilitate communication and autonomy.

3. Related Literature

In Consortio Cum Parentibus Model

In loco parentis refers to a legal relationship in which a temporary guardian or caretaker of a child assumes all or some of the responsibilities of a parent (Garner, 2009). Since 1913, when Gott v. Berea established it as a legal doctrine, in loco parentis has been the philosophical foundation of higher education policy and practice. State v. Pendergrass (1837), in which the court ruled that a teacher had the right to discipline a school child, established in loco parentis as a legal doctrine for colleges in the United States. This meant that universities could regulate students' personal lives, including their speech, association, and movement, and take disciplinary action against them without regard for their right to due process (Lee, 2011). Gott v. Berea (1913), in which the Kentucky Court of Appeals ruled that Berea College could prohibit students from patronizing local restaurants because the college stood in loco parentis regarding the physical and moral welfare of its students, cemented it for American colleges. While in loco parentis granted supervisory rights to colleges, it had not necessarily imposed obligations for those colleges to protect students. The doctrine defined the relationship between colleges, students, and parents. The death of in loco parentis in Dixon v. Alabama Board of Education (1961), a case in which six African American students were expelled without due process for their participation in a lunch counter sit-in civil rights demonstration, changed that relationship. The Fifth Circuit heard the case and ruled that a public college could not expel students without providing at least minimal due process.

Cultural shifts over the last four decades, as well as an increase in litigation in higher education, gave rise to new models such as the constitutional model, contract model, fiduciary model, and bystander model as replacements for in loco parentis to provide not only a philosophical foundation for higher education policy and practice, but also to redefine the relationship between colleges, students, and parents (Henning, 2007). The In Consortio Cum Parentibus Model is most fitting with traditional-aged students, but campuses are becoming more diverse. Professionals will need to consider the impact that following such a model will have on nontraditional students who

may have less parental involvement, students who have hostile parents, and students from culturally diverse backgrounds who may have more parental involvement than outlined above. Finally, Henning (2007) suggests that higher education consider how we collaborate with parents. Working with parents alone is insufficient. Some parents may be difficult partners who necessitate a different approach than others. Every parent is unique, and we must tailor this relationship to each of them. As colleges have seen an increase in family involvement, they have worked to engage them in productive and appropriate ways for their students' development (Sax & Wartman, 2010; Wartman & Savage, 2008; White, 2005).

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are defined by the Higher Education Act as an institution that was established before 1964 to serve and educate the Black community (Fletcher, 2012). African American students were restricted from receiving a formal education from predominantly white institutions based on race and racist practices that were embedded in the education system (Lovett, 2011). Before the Civil War, Black students were refused admission to institutions by legal segregation and isolated from the standard United States higher education institutions (Bracey, 2017). The first three historically black colleges were founded before the Civil War: The Institute for Colored Youth (now known as Cheney University), established in Pennsylvania in 1837; Lincoln College (now known as Lincoln University), established in Pennsylvania in 1854 by the Presbyterian Church, and Wilberforce College (now known as Wilberforce University), established in Ohio in 1856 by the Methodist Episcopal church (Roebuck & Murty, 1993; Brown & Yates, 2005; Drewry & Doermann, 2001). HBCUs allow students to experience an institutional environment that is culturally responsive, family-oriented, nurturing, and inclusive of the student in which they serve. It is valuable to the student to connect within the campus community that is a representation of them. In addition to giving students the opportunities to participate in culturally specific events and activities that reaffirm their racial identity and support their sense of belonging, HBCUs give students the rich social capital they need to comprehend and navigate collegial norms and regulations (Brown & Davis 2001; Palmer & Gasman 2008). Retention is the focus for many institutions, especially historically black colleges, and universities (HBCUs). Many of the HBCUs have tied their retention efforts to the mission of the college. Through the support of federal and state agencies, HBCUs established institutional strategies, such as academic support services, counseling, and retention centers, remediation, career services, merit-based scholarships, and emergency loans, corroborate and private donations, and Title IV programs like Summer Bridge and Trio programs (Wright, 2008). Today, HBCUs still uphold the mission of educating African Americans but have expanded their mission and vision to be inclusive of other diverse populations to increase their enrollment.

Parent and Family Involvement in Higher Education

The desire to maintain strong family bonds, the expectation that the family will be the primary source of instrumental and emotional support, a sense of loyalty to the family, and a commitment to the family over individual needs and desires are all examples of familismo (Negy & Woods, 1992; Staples & Mirandé, 1980). This means that even as the number of Hispanic students who are the children and grandchildren of immigrants on college campuses grows, familismo remains an important part of their lives. Finding a family-like system in higher education may foster relationships where informational, emotional, social, and academic supports address the demoralizing process of balancing values in the university context (Castellanos & Gloria, 2007; Gloria, 1997).

Mendoza et al. (2011) conducted a qualitative case study to better understand the experiences of 28 Hispanic students at a predominantly white intuition. The findings point to two family-focused phenomena that serve as important support systems for students and boost their motivation and success: campus family and family of origin. The ability to invite students' families to tour the campus, speak with professors and advisors, and become involved in their student's higher education experience was one implication shared from the study. Institutions should provide Spanish-speaking staff as well as staff who can work with families to gather in their own communities to discuss what the institution is like and how families of origin adjust to having a student in college (Mendoza et al., 2011).

Benito-Gomez, et al. (2021) qualitative study titled, "If I Hadn't Had that Support System, I Think I Would Have Dropped Out by Now" examined college students' perceptions of parental support and its impact on student adjustment towards having important implications for maximizing retention rates within higher education. The findings highlight the importance of promoting collaborative relationships between parents and institutions in an effort to promote student adjustment.

Brooks (2015) qualitative study investigated African-American college students attending a Historically Black University, who perceive family structure, relationships, and support as impacting their academic persistence and the collegiate experience. Findings showed that African-American students needed family support as they pursued higher education. Brooks (2015) stated that many universities want to improve retention and graduation rates, particularly at HBCUs and by incorporating and acknowledging the importance of family. The connections made

from the literature review and this study are the inclusion of parents by students and the institution towards assisting in students' transition and student success outcomes like retention.

The literature reviewed shows a commonality that higher education institutions are creating support structures that can serve a diversified parent group while providing the right balance of support and independence to students in transitioning and persisting through college. The literature also captured how the interconnectedness between the student, college, and parent, displayed retention as a larger outcome.

4. Methodology

Qualitative research methods were employed for this study to provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of parental involvement on retention. Qualitative research empowers research participants to tell their stories and allow their voices to be heard (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research is most appropriate for measuring complex issues such as family dynamics, parent needs, and unique cultural or familial attitudes (Creswell, 2005). This gave license to thirteen African American and Latino traditional college seniors enrolled in a state-supported and private HBCU in Texas to share their lived experiences and perceptions around three major questions: How do students perceive parents as partners in their educational success? How does a partnership between parents and the institution impact the retention of African American and Latino students? How do students suggest that parents can be involved while maintaining their own autonomy? The site selection for this study included two, four-year Historical Black Colleges and Universities (one private and the one state supported). Purposive sampling was used, with participants representing the following criteria: traditional college student; identifies as African American or Latino; and classifies as a graduating senior within the next two academic semesters. In-depth interviews, with a duration of 60-90 minutes was conducted via Zoom video conferencing application and recorded with the written consent of participants. This study ensured the confidentiality of all participant responses and pseudonyms were assigned to participants. Labeling of digital files concealed the identity of study participants and institutional affiliation. No follow-up interviews were conducted with study participants. Data from the interviews were analyzed and coded by themes. Demographic data about the participant's and parents' educational backgrounds are presented in Table 1(see appendices).

5. Discussion of Findings

The outcomes of the study validated the Consortio Cum Parentibus (2007) Model tenant five, which argues that colleges may help in the parent-student connection by instructing both students and parents on how to foster autonomy and communication (Henning, 2007). These findings supported and extended existing literature demonstrating that parental support had a positive impact on student retention. While the findings of this study tie students' views of parental support to retention, it is crucial to note that other established characteristics were also linked to retention. There are several possible explanations for why parental support influenced students' likelihood of retention like the parenting style that a student was raised under, the level of homesickness a student experiences, the demand for support needed at home, the degree of parent-student attachment, student autonomy, student motivation, the student's satisfaction with the institution, socioeconomic status, first-generation status, and the student's acclimation. Table 3 (see appendices) provides each superordinate theme related theoretical construct from the In Consortio Cum Parentibus Model.

Research Question 1

How do students perceive parents as partners in their educational success?

Theme One: Levels of Parental Support

Parents are considered as partners in college students' educational progress, both in and out of the classroom, according to the theoretical framework, Consortia Cum Parentibus Model (2007).Working with parents is not enough on its own. In contrast to parents who could be outstanding partners, other parents might be challenging partners and necessitate a different strategy. Each parent has a different profile or need, thus the interaction with each one needs to be tailored. Participants viewed their parents as positive supporters and partners in their educational success based on their parents' ability to advise within their new relationship as parents of a college-aged student and the level of support and care given to address participants' social, emotional, and financial needs. Various studies (Edelman, 2013; Ratelle et al., 2005) illustrate that parental support continues even after the child enters college. Participants discussed how they were faced with challenges or felt uncertain as they maneuvered through college, balancing the adversities of life such as death, miscarriage, and establishing a sense of belonging in a new environment. Participants voiced how they found reassurance through parents to keep going and pursue their degree. Parents' support may improve students' academic performance and aid in their social and personal development (Cheng et al., 2012).

The majority of participants' narratives emphasized how they believed their parents support aided in their achievement of goals, perseverance, and retention. Jose, a first-generation student, described how his parents noticed and valued his experiences in college. His parents made notable sacrifices to take off work at a week's time, in order to provide support in making sure Jose was present for band camp. Jose understood that his parents

were also making the financial sacrifice to ensure their happiness. Emotional support from parents was reassuring to Jose even when he felt like giving up on being a part of the band. Parents gave their student social, emotional, and financial support. Parents made tough decisions and sacrifices for participants to remain active and enrolled in the college. Participants perceived parent social interactions as affirmations of their self-trust and belief in their capability for success, which resulted in participants feeling more assured about their path in college and in life. In reviewing literature related to parental support in higher education. Within this research question, first-generation participants expressed regret that their parents were limited in the understanding of the college-going process and support needed. These participants found parental support and guidance through faculty members on campus that aided in their will to persist.

Research Question Two: How does a partnership between parents and the institution impact the retention of African-American and Latino Students?

Theme Two: Institutional Involvement of Parents

Henning (2007) suggested that the application of the In Consortio Cum Parentibus (2007) Model on a college campus can actively reach out to parents educating them so that parents can more easily and effectively play a proactive role in their child's college life. The findings to this research question provided information on how participants viewed parental engagement as a result of institutional initiatives. Participants viewed parents as reinforcers of information and resources provided by the institution. However, only participants that attended Institution A could attest to their parents being reinforcers of information and resources, due to Institution A having a centralized office designated to parents and families. Institution B did not have a parent and families office. The office of parents and families at Institution A held events and programs that connected parents and families with the campus and the day-to-day lives of students. Parents today want to know what's happening on college campuses and how it affects their children lives; when the right balance is in place, the outcome can be beneficial (Ferrara, 2011; Gerdes, 2004; Hoover, 2008; Lipka, 2007; Lum, 2006; Somers & Settle, 2010; White, 2005). Institution A participants felt the institution did a good job with keeping their parents informed of pertinent information, which in return motivated parents to follow up and reiterate the messages to students on behalf of the college. Participants in the study discussed the need for parental programs and what this support resource would look like for them. Parker shared the recommendation of having alumni parents serve as mentors to guide and support first-generation students and their families through the transition from high school to college. Parker said, "You have HBCU graduates, and you have their parents and families, maybe they could like mentor another parent or family that's also a first-gen. So, like the legacy parents could mentor like the first-gen parents. Just kind of help them and guide them through it."

Participants felt that support programs for parents were needed to help their parents understand the experiences of students in college and work together with the institution to help in their retention. The dynamic between students, parents, and institutions has shifted from the doctrine of in loco parentis, in which parents expected the university to care for their children, to the current situation, in which parents have a direct relationship with the university (Henning, 2007). Coburn & Woodward (2001) states the goal of family orientations is to support the transitions of both the student and the family members, while also giving the family members resources to support students, connecting the family to the institution, and defining that relationship. Study participants also highlighted how the institution transitioned their families into the college culture. Participants felt that parent orientation was a great way for parents to learn about the campus rules, expectations, and to connect with the campus and others. Researchers have found that college orientation in higher education promotes interaction and engagement with the institution through activities, meetings, presentations, and institutional messages (Pascarella et al., 1986; Education Advisory Board, 2010). Participants expressed the need for increased inclusion of parents during the academic year in the form of programming and events to foster parent-to-institution relations. Participants suggested programs and events that would be valuable to parents, such as parent 24/7 hotline, parent and student field day, and parent groups. The literature supports participants' findings of increased inclusion of parents.

Research Question 3
How do students suggest that parents be involved while maintaining their own autonomy?
Theme Three: Student Independence

From this research question participants valued parents' involvement, but strongly desired to develop independence and autonomy in their transition into college and adulthood. Students are not alone during this transition period because the college transition is also a pivotal moment for parents who now must adapt and learn how to support best their children's independence, intimacy, identity, and intellectual development (Coburn & Treeger, 2003).
According to the Consortio Cum Parentibus (2007) Model, unless there is an explicit risk of serious injury, the student's right to self-determination and autonomy should carry more weight than the parental right to know. During the college years, students are often provided the first opportunity to make their own decisions. Parents' input is beneficial in the process, but when parents continue to exert undue influence over their children's decision-making, the educational process suffers (Henning, 2007). Participants discussed the importance of their parents'

involvement while in college but recognized that they needed to transition into adulthood by establishing parental limits and boundaries. Leslie described gaining her independence from her parents after entering college. She noted that she was dependent on her parents to do things for her. As time progressed, Leslie took ownership of her own decision making and thinking more independently. She said,

"I feel like it took me coming to college for my parents to be like she finally has some independence. She's not a little girl anymore. She can learn new things on her own. I had to break out of that mental flux, because I was so use to my dad doing everything for me. So, I had to actually learn how to do things for myself. My parents were like we can talk you through it but ultimately you need to learn this for yourself."

 Being independent as a student also entails mastering time management and daily organization skills (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Participants shared how they created independence from parents in designing their class schedule, making decisions instead of being told what to do by parents, adapting to a new environment and the ability to rationalize situations. When faced with challenges in coursework and dealing with the stressors of college, participants sought nonjudgmental support and a listening ear from their parents. Participants utilized appropriate life skills modeled and instilled by parents to aid in self-advocacy and conflict. Participants viewed their parents' character and commitment to service organizations, as well as their use of self-help talks and books on life, as traits they wished to emulate as adults. Participants discussed how their parents' levels of support changed as they progressed through college and now as they prepare to enter their profession. Participants observed a decrease in the level of support and increased over time as they gained independence, but that the support from parents as advisors never ceased.

6. *Implications for Parent and Family Engagement at HBCUs Research and Practice*

The findings of this study provides several implications for future research and practice. In this study, family was the cornerstone of African American and Latino culture. The majority of participants communicated their deep connection to their parents and families as motivators along their collegiate journey. Studying African American and Latino students' perceptions of parental involvement on retention from a strengths perspective opens doors for future research. For example, a triangulated qualitative study of students, parents, and student affairs practitioners could be used to conduct additional research on the effects of parental involvement on retention. The use of multiple data sources provides a more rich, in-depth understanding of the phenomena of parental involvement in higher education and allows participants to make sense of parental support and its influence on retention. This future study allows for cross-validation and the exploration of issues such as why students do not persist and how a retention model that encompasses parental support can aid in retention. Finally, this study being unique to HBCUs, it is unclear whether these findings could be replicated at a different type of institution, such as a PWI. If minority-serving institutions start including parents as retention partners, research comparing the outcomes of parental involvement at institutions with different profiles or family demographics would be useful.

HBCUs foster the history and legacy of the African American ethnicity and identity by providing a family-like environment, empowering, nurturing, and inspiring students, and serving as movement center for social justice reform (ASHE Report, 2010; Palmer & Gasman, 2008). Enrolling into college has a major impact for a student, as well as their parents and families. HBCUs have served as the blueprint of education and inclusivity of large population of low-income and first-generation college students. To showcase their level of commitment to their students and the community, HBCUs could organize a parent and family resource fair during homecoming week that featured information and resource tables from service providers and agencies in the community. This event would be open to families and students of all ages and abilities plus resources for families such rent-assistance programs, health screenings, legal assistance, food distribution, and career services. It is critical that any information disseminated is done so in a language that is supportive of and conscious of the HBCU population. Informational brochures and activities, for example, should be bilingual in Spanish and English. For specific demographics such as first-generation and bilingual families, institutions should investigate a more hands-on approach to parental participation.

K-12 education has provided a construct as to how they review school relations policies in which parent engagement is defined and measured. HBCUs could utilize the primary features specified in their parent participation policy as a template. HBCUs should create a formal definition of parental engagement and who qualifies as a parent. The policy's goal should be to establish a learning culture that is student-centered and family-driven, while simultaneously recognizing family variety and individuality.

According to the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Family Engagement Plan (2018), goals were outlined by guiding principles of quality family engagement through six components of the family engagement plan (child outcome oriented, foster reciprocal relationships, connect to family, community and school needs, plan with family input and involvement, and culturally and linguistically responsive), which resulted in quality family engagement policies practices. The components of the Family Engagement Plan such as plan with family input and involvement and foster reciprocal relationships could be the baseline for policy for HBCUs to glean from. The family input and

involvement policies and practice consist of providing families with the knowledge needed to feel comfortable participating in school activities, this policy could be implemented in higher education in the form of a non-credit virtual parent support course offered through by student affair practitioners to educate parents on their role as a partner with the institution to support students' success outcomes. To foster reciprocal connections component describes how family is regarded as a source of knowledge and as a partner in responsibilities and goals. HBCU presidents and stakeholders may embrace this policy by developing a parent coalition to have a simplified procedure and point of contact that teaches parents' rights and explores effective methods to promote students' growth and education. An effective institutional response should be represented to understand and address the needs of its students. As parental involvement is likely to revolve around a specific student need, institutions can ensure that the services they provide do serve the needs of students represented at HBCUs. These policies should emphasize the value of supporting parental participation while cautioning against instances of excessive influence as it may hinder students' development and independence.

7. *Conclusion*

Through the lens of the In Consortio Cum Parentibus (2007) Model, the study sought to understand African American and Latino students' perceptions of parental support on retention at two HBCUs. Using qualitative methods, this analysis found that participants found parental support to be beneficial to their retention; students appreciated parents collaborating with the institution to ensure student success; and, while they appreciated their autonomy, they valued the life lessons taught and appropriate life skills modeled by parents that promoted their independence. Overall, In Consortio Cum Parentibus's (2007) Model-tenant five, which connects the empirical data to the theoretical framework, affirms the current dynamic between colleges, students, and parents to advance higher education policy and practice. This is the first study of its kind to explore parental retention support among African American and Latino students at HBCUs. Furthermore, investigating the problem from various perspectives and sample populations should expand on the current literature on students of color retention as well as generate literature on parental support at HBCUs. The study demonstrated substantial strength in its ability to provide students of color a voice about their retention, which is not normally quantifiable. Limitations for this study was the difficulty in recruiting and obtaining student participants during the summer academic term, when classes were delivered online through an asynchronous or synchronous platform, forcing students to be physically unavailable for in-person interviews on campus. Virtual interviews were an accommodating alternative for the researcher to go forward with data collection; however, virtual interviews hindered the ability to interpret nonverbal cues such as body language.

APPENDICES

Figure 1
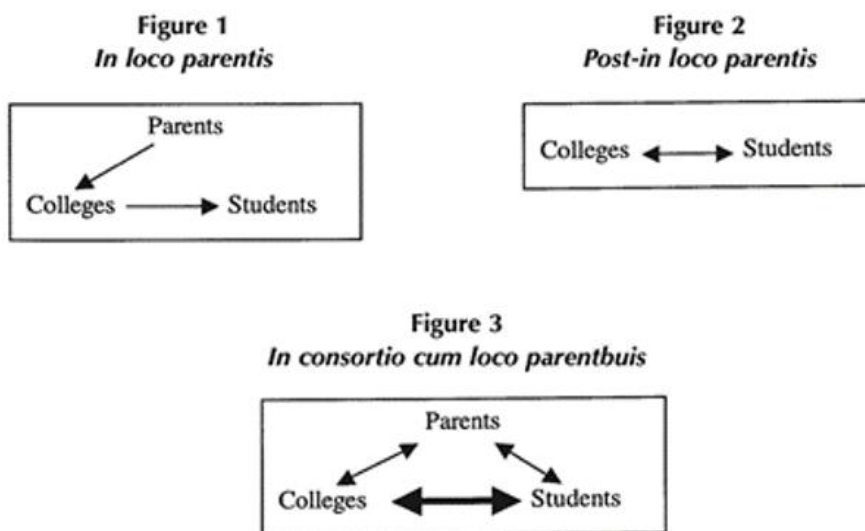The In Consortio Cum Parentibus Model

Figure 1, from a bi-lateral one-way relationship between colleges and parents that existed during in loco parentis to a bi-lateral two-way relationship between colleges and students (without parents) that existed after the fall of in loco parentis (indicated in Figure 2) to tri-lateral two-way relationships that involve colleges, students, and parents. The primary relationship is still between colleges and students (as indicated by the bold arrow in Figure 3), but parents are seen as a valuable addition to the picture in this mode (Henning, 2007).

Table 1

Participants Demographics and Parents Educational Background

Name	Age	Gender	Race	Institution Attended	Major	Parents' Highest Education Level
Monica	18 or older	Female	African American	Institution B	Sociology	Mother and Father: High School Diploma
Ann	18 or older	Female	African American	Institution B	Business Administration	Mother and Father: Bachelors
Sebastian	18 or older	Male	African American	Institution A	Health (minoring in Biology and Political Science)	Mother and Father: Masters
Nia	18 or older	Female	African American	Institution A	Political Science and Communications	Mother and Father: Bachelors
Valencia	18 or older	Female	Latino &African American	Institution A	Sociology	Mother: High School Diploma, Father: Associates
Leslie	18 or older	Female	African American	Institution B	Biology	Mother: Bachelors, Father: Army
Jose	18 or older	Male	Latino	Institution A	Music Performance	Mother: High School Diploma, Father: No High School Diploma
Zane	18 or older	Male	African American	Institution B	Sociology	Mother: High School
Parker	18 or older	Female	African American	Institution B	Education	Mother: Bachelors
Gilbert	18 or older	Male	African American	Institution B	Business	Mother: No High School Diploma, Father: Bachelors
Jennifer	18 or older	Female	Latino & Indian	Institution A	Biology (minoring in Chemistry)	Mother and Father: Masters
Cameron	18 or older	Male	African American	Institution B	Criminal Justice (minoring in Business Administration)	Mother: Bachelors, Father: N/A
Marcus	18 or older	Male	African American	Institution B	Biology	Mother: Bachelors, Father: N/A

Table 2
Identifying Themes

Research Questions	Superordinate Themes	Subthemes	Theoretical Framework Construct
RQ1. How do students perceive parents as being partners in their educational success?	1. Levels of Parental Support (How participants viewed their parents' involvement in and towards their educational success)?	1.1 Parents as Advisors 1.2. Parents as Social, Emotional, and Financial Supporters 1.3 Parents as producers of structure, supervision, guidance, and motivation	Consortio Cum Parentibus model (2007) Tenet 5: Colleges can provide assistance in the parent-student relationship by teaching both students and parents how to facilitate autonomy and communication.
RQ2. How does a partnership between parents and the institution impact the retention of African American and Latino Students?	2. Parental Institutional Involvement (How participants identified ways in which their institution welcomed parents' involvement and support)?	2.1 Parents as reinforcers of information and resources 2.2 Need for increased inclusion of parents 2.3 Parents as equal partners	Consortio Cum Parentibus model (2007) Tenet 5: Colleges can provide assistance in the parent-student relationship by teaching both students and parents how to facilitate autonomy and communication.
RQ3. How do students suggest that parents can be involved while maintaining their own autonomy?	3. Student's Independence (How participants perceived their independence from their parents while still having their support)?	3.1 Parental limits and boundaries 3.2 Non-judgmental support 3.3 Modeling appropriate life skills 3.4 Independence from parents	Consortio Cum Parentibus model (2007) Tenet 5: Colleges can provide assistance in the parent-student relationship by teaching both students and parents how to facilitate autonomy and communication.

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