PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS REGARDING THE EFFECTS OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL AVID PROGRAM ON THEIR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

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By
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CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

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Dr. John Borba Professor of School Administration	Date
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, Thana. She is my biggest supporter in completing this writing project. She provided for the family while I spent countless hours dedicated to researching literature, writing and editing, and meeting with my university advisor.

This work is also dedicated to my Christian brothers in Jesus Christ. They supported me when I had informed them about my decision to pursue this writing project. They continue to ask me about the progress and remind me of the Lord's wisdom.

Finally, this work is dedicated to my children, McKayla, Bartholomew, Debra, Alexzander and Solomon. My older children helped care for their younger siblings while their mother prepared meals for the family. Their willingness to give up some of their daily activities to help around the house is much appreciated. For my two youngest children, I hope they might consider participating in their high school AVID program.

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ABSTRACT

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is one of many high school programs that prepare students for college. In 1980, the AVID program began as a support class to help struggling students. Over the years, the strategies developed by Mary Swanson, transformed the program which has been adopted by school districts throughout California to help underrepresented, first generation minority, and low socio-economic high school students realize the dream of going to college. Many other states and countries have also adopted the AVID strategies into their schools.

The AVID program offers three components. In the first component, AVID offers students the opportunity to learn Cornell note-taking strategies, participate in weekly tutorials, and Socratic seminars. Secondly, students have an opportunity to volunteer time to work with community organizations. Lastly, students learn about career opportunities available to them.

Several themes emerged from the analysis of the interview data. The participants, in this study, use the strategies taught in their high school AVID program to successfully complete college courses. They are more confident speaking in public because AVID required them to take part in community service. Participants appreciate that their high school AVID program provided opportunities to visit college and university campuses and to learn about career choices.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) is one of many college preparatory programs available on middle and high school campuses that promote "college-going" mindsets, collaborative peer tutorials, and ensure that students meet minimum qualifications for four-year university admission requirements (Redic, 2014). AVID's mission is "to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society" (AVID Year in Review, 2014).

AVID began in 1980s, stemming from a settlement in the federal case, *Kari Carlin et al. v. Board of Education, San Diego Unified School District.* The lawsuit alleged that San Diego Unified School District's (SDUSD) neighborhood policy did not provide equal access to education and facilities for all students (Lanthorne, 2008). The neighborhood policy mandated students to attend schools in the areas where they resided. Older schools had outdated facilities, so activities were limited compared to newer schools. Teachers, with the most experience, transferred to newer schools, leaving younger, less experienced teachers at older schools. As a result of the lawsuit, SDUSD agreed to correct an imbalance in services to the socio-economically disadvantaged students (Zau & Betts, 2004).

In 1980, Mary Swanson was a teacher at Clairemont High School, one of twenty-three schools located in the northern part of San Diego. Swanson and other teachers began remediation for the socio-economically disadvantaged students.

Swanson started a group of 32 students, who were put through a rigorous English curriculum of reading and writing and a class called AVID that emphasized study skills and collaborative tutoring. Students at local universities were hired as tutors for her students, with funds received from grants. Four years later, in 1984, 30 of the 32 students graduated and continued onward to community colleges or four-year universities (AVID Center, 2016).

Swanson identified eight components in her master's thesis for a program that would help underrepresented students succeed:

1. A non-traditional classroom setting, meeting the academic and emotional needs of individual students,
2. The teacher as advisor/counselor/student advocate,
3. An emphasis on objective data,
4. The student at the center of decision-making regarding educational goals,
5. A student contract outlining willingness to work and setting learning goals,
6. Student support from teachers and skilled, trained tutors,
7. A curriculum emphasizing academic reading and writing, and
8. Reliance on the Socratic process. (AVID Center, 2016)

These eight components became the foundation, philosophy, and practices of the AVID program. The program was designed not only to help underrepresented students to succeed in high school but in college as well. Prior to AVID's adoption, Swanson used the components in her classes and wrote lessons for other teachers who

used her strategies. The AVID program was adopted in 1987 by Board of Education of the SDUSD and made mandatory for all of its high schools (AVID Center, 2016).

Swanson worked on other projects for the purpose of committing other teachers to AVID strategies in their classrooms at Clairemont High School. She formed the Clairemont-Cooperative Academics Project (C-CAP) which published curriculum, teaching methodologies and college prep-writing guides. These writing guides were adopted by the California Department of Education (CDE) and SDUSD for student assessment and the Writer's Assistance Program. She partnered with the San Diego County Office of Education for the purpose of offering AVID to students who attended county schools. She dedicated much of her time to research, writing AVID curriculum and pedagogy, and training coordinators to provide professional development for other educators (AVID Center, 2016).

As of 2014, AVID had served at least 800,000 students at 5000 schools in 44 states. The AVID website, www.avid.org, showcases how students benefit when schools offer AVID on their campuses. At the middle school level, AVID provides students with academic language support, leadership skills and cohorts of like-minded peers who share the commitment to college readiness. In the high school program, AVID students are placed on a college track which requires them to enroll in Honors and Advanced Placement classes. In the 2013-2014 school year, approximately 35,500 seniors enrolled in AVID. Eighty percent applied to four-year universities and received notice of acceptance (AVID Center, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

Day (2012) concluded that students who participated in high school AVID programs were significantly better prepared for success beyond high school than students who did not participate in AVID. However, Redic (2004) concluded that high school students who participated in AVID did not perform better academically than students who did not participate in AVID but qualified for the program. Franklin (2011) found that AVID students have higher rates of college readiness than non-AVID students but recommended that further research should be conducted to determine post-secondary academic success. Consequently, the purpose of this study will be to identify the perceptions and opinions of college students regarding the effects of high school AVID on their post-secondary education.

Research Questions

1. What are the types of services offered to students in high school AVID programs?
2. How do college students benefit academically from AVID program services received while in high school?
3. What non-academic benefits do college students experience as a result of AVID program services received in high school?

Interview Questions:

1. Identify and describe the types of AVID services that were provided in your high school AVID program.
2. Identify and describe study habits and academic skills that were emphasized in your high school AVID program.

3. Describe the services that are offered to AVID students who struggle in one or more high school classes.
4. Did the services provided by AVID in high school prepare you for success in college? Elaborate.
5. How do high school AVID teachers ensure that all students remain successful in the AVID program?
6. Were you aware that AVID was being provided in college? If you participate in the AVID program on the college campus, explain how it differs from AVID services provided in high school?
7. What are some AVID strategies you have used in other areas beside academics that have made you more successful today?
8. Did AVID services offered in high school helped you to establish a career goal?
9. How can the AVID services offered in high school be improved? Give examples.

Significance of the Study

This study may provide educators and policy makers with positive or negative insight regarding the adequacy of high school AVID programs. Also, the results of this study may serve a useful purpose in improving the quality of AVID programs.

Operational Definitions

The following terms are defined in order to assist the reader in understanding the references made in this study:

- *Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)*. A program that offers high school students a classroom environment and school experience that promotes a culture of going to college, a rigorous academic course of study, and tutorial services.
- *TRIO*. First three federal programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search and Student Support) created to help low income Americans enroll and graduate from college.

Summary

This chapter explained the need to examine the effectiveness of high school AVID on student success in post-secondary institutions. Chapter 2 will present a review of the literature relevant to the topic of this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions and opinions of college students regarding the effects of their high school AVID program on their post-secondary education. The review of literature will present research about college preparation programs and the impact on underrepresented students.

The Evolution of College Preparation Programs

Student access to college should begin at a young age. Frequent reminders and constant exposure to topics about college in K-12 schools increase the likelihood of attending college. For example, teachers and counselors should post pennants and posters to give students daily exposure to colleges and universities. Beginning in the middle school years, counselors need to communicate with students and parents about college opportunities and financial resources (Dounay, 2006). Teachers should engage students in conversations about college. Whenever applicable, teachers should incorporate college experiences in classroom lessons to encourage discussions and further readings (McClafferty, McDonough & Nunez, 2002).

School staff must work in collaboration with parents to help students achieve admission to college. Parents want to make better choices for their children. Parents from diverse cultures and backgrounds want and can create home environments that support and encourage learning. Kellagan stated that the "home environment is a

very powerful factor in determining school performance, achievement, interest in learning, and number of years schooling children will receive" (as cited by Carter, 2002, p. 8).

In middle and high school, students and their parents are informed about graduation and eligibility requirements for college. High school students should have access to brochures located at counseling centers, participate in college workshops or college fairs, and take part in the college experience through summer programs (McClafferty et al., 2002).

McDonough noted that when counselors are readily available to students and parents, they assist in making a college education a reality. Counseling ninth-grade students and their parents is most effective when information regarding knowledge of college entrance requirements, pre-college coursework and college costs are provided to them. Furthermore, when college counseling begins at the middle school level, there is a higher probability that more students will enroll in four-year universities (as cited by McKillips, Rawls, & Barry, 2012).

Model College Preparation Programs

Many young people fail to attend college due to lack of resources, inadequate advising by counselors and teachers, inequitable college preparation programs, and lack of experienced teachers in the area of college preparation (Venezia, Kirst & Antonio, 2003). There is a need for college transition programs to provide high school students awareness about benefits for continuing education beyond high school (Zafft, Kallenbech & Spohn, 2006).

Bangser (2008) pointed to two federally funded college preparatory programs named TRIO and GEAR UP that provide resources for students and parents. Bangser also mentioned other programs such as AVID and Project GRAD.

TRIO Programs

The TRIO programs are university outreach programs designed to motivate, support and prepare disadvantaged students for college. The California State University system report on Student Outreach Academic Programs indicated that the Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services were the first federal programs that Congress created to help low-income Americans enroll and graduate from college. These programs came to be known as the TRIO. Congress had stipulated that two-thirds of the participants in the TRIO programs must be from low-income families whose parents did not graduate from college (CSU, 2010).

After 1968, the TRIO programs added the Equal Opportunity Center (EOC) and Veteran Upward Bound (VUB) to expand services for adults and Vietnam veterans who wish to attend college. Beginning in 1976, TRIO established an annual budget for training staff and directors. The Upward Bound Math and Science (UBMS) program was created in 1990, to encourage current and former Upward Bound students to pursue a path in mathematics and science (Department of Education, 2014). In 1986, the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program was created to assist doctoral degree students from under-represented families (Department of Education, 2014).

Upward Bound

The Upward Bound Program (UB) was created in 1964 under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1965. Its purpose is to help students prepare for college. Upward Bound serves low-income high school students whose parents did not graduate from a four-year college. Upward Bound activities focus on mathematics, science, composition, literature and foreign languages. Academic tutorials are available in reading, writing, study skills, mathematics and science. The Upward Bound program helps students to apply for college admission, receive financial aid, and select courses for high school college preparation and completion (Department of Education, 2014).

Talent Search

The Talent Search (TS), also known as the Educational Talent Search (ETS), was created in 1965 to help students apply for "newly authorized" federal financial aid (Department of Education, 2014). The Talent Search program includes services to cover academic, career, and financial counseling to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Also, the program works with high school drop-outs to complete their high school education and pursue post-secondary education (Department of Education, 2014). Redic (2014) added that students participating in Talent Search receive free tutorials on weekends and have the opportunity to experience six weeks of college life during the summer at participating college campuses.

Equal Opportunity Centers

In 1972, an amendment to the Higher Education Act created the Equal Opportunity Center (EOC) Program for adults who want to pursue post-secondary education. The Equal Opportunity Center provides counseling, college information and financial aid options. Its goal is to increase the number of adult participants in post-secondary institutions. Other activities in the EOC program include, but are not limited to, public information campaigns about post-secondary education awareness and tutoring (Department of Education, 2014).

GEAR UP

GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program) was established in 1998, in partnership with local public and private organizations, to help middle-school students be successful in high school and college. Redic (2014) stated that the mission of GEAR UP is "to create a college going culture, help administrators and teachers raise high expectations in students, and increase the number of students entering and graduating from college" (p. 5). Student participation in the GEAR UP program starts in the seventh grade. Students participate in grade-specific, research-based activities that will teach them to understand important skills needed to be successful for college. By the end of the twelfth grade, students have received mentoring, tutoring, advising and counseling from program staff (Department of Education, 2014).

AVID

In 1980, Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) was developed by Mary Catherine Swanson. AVID services are available to students in elementary, middle and high school. At the elementary level, AVID focuses on communication and organization skills, and WICOR lessons which stand for Write to learn, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization and Read to learn (AVID Center, 2016).

In high school, AVID students are placed in rigorous core classes which provide an opportunity to earn college course credit by taking the Advancement Placement tests. AVID students are provided tutorial services that involve the development of critical thinking, study and organizational skills. Also, AVID students participate in activities that give them opportunities to visit different college campuses and assist students and parents in completing financial aid and college applications (AVID Center, 2016).

Project GRAD

Project GRAD (Graduation Really Achieves Dreams) started as a scholarship program for students in Houston, Texas. Project GRAD consists of five important requirements: First, classroom management and discipline must be consistent for all participating schools. Second, schools must use MOVE-IT Math strategies (an acronym for Math Opportunities, Valuable Experiences and Innovative Teaching). The MOVE-IT Math strategies involve using songs, games, literature and hands-on manipulatives to teach mathematics concepts to students in grades K-6. Third, schools must adopt the “Success for all” reading and writing program for students in

grades K-5. Fourth, Project GRAD schools must recruit new participants. Unlike other college preparation programs, each Project GRAD high school graduate is guaranteed a $1,000 scholarship per year for college under three conditions. The three conditions require high school graduates to have taken at least three years of mathematics (including algebra, geometry and algebra 2), maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher, and complete two summer institutes at the local university (Opuni, 1999).

Summary of Studies

Olsen, Seftor, Silva, Meyers, DesRoches and Young (1998) conducted a study on the Upward Bound Math-Science (UBMS) program. In 1990, UBMS was created by the TRIO programs to provide additional curriculum and staffing to ensure that current and prospective students participating in the Upward Bound program will enter the field of mathematics and science. The purpose of the study was to determine if participation in the UBMS program results in higher achievement in high school mathematics and science courses, increases enrollment in four-year universities, and increases the likelihood that students will pursue careers in the mathematics and science fields (Olsen et al., 1998).

The study involved 1,425 Upward Bound Math-Science participants throughout the United States and a comparison group of 2,146 students who did not participate in Upward Bound Math-Science. Students, in both groups, completed a survey to determine demographic and family information. High school transcripts of UBMS students and those in the comparison group were used for comparing the

number of advanced mathematics and science courses that were taken while in high school. College transcripts of UBMS students and those in the comparison group were used for verification of college attended, type of college attended and number of years to complete a degree program (Olsen et al., 1998).

A descriptive analysis of the results showed that UBMS students are more likely to take advanced science courses in high school compared to students in the comparison group. The percentage of UBMS students taking chemistry was 91% compared to 78% for students in the comparison group. The percentage of UBMS students taking physics was 53% compared to 41% for students in the comparison group. However, UBMS students did not take more advanced mathematics courses than the comparison group. Also, UBMS students' mean grade point average for mathematics and science was 2.7 and 2.8 respectively, while the mean grade point average for students in the comparison group was 2.6 for mathematics and 2.7 for science. UBMS had a more positive impact on Hispanic students than African American students and White students. The mean grade point average for UBMS Hispanic students was 3.2 compared to 3.0 for students in the comparison group. Mean grade point average for African Americans was 2.9 for the treatment and comparison groups and mean grade point average for White students was 3.3 for both groups. Mean grade point average for UBMS female students was 3.2 compared to 3.1 for female students in the comparison group. Mean grade point average for UBMS male students was 3.1 compared to 3.0 for male students in the comparison

group. Graduation rate for UBMS students was 100% compared to 99% for students in the comparison group (Olsen et al., 1998).

Also, the results showed that 95% of UBMS participants are likely to attend college compared to 90% of the students in the comparison group. Eighty-two percent of the UBMS students are enrolled in four-year universities compared to 71% of the students in the comparison group. There were no data to determine degree completion rates between the two groups (Olsen et al., 1998).

Finally, the results showed that 44 % of male and 24 % of female UMBS participants are more likely to pursue careers in the mathematics and science compared to 28 % of the male and 19 % of the female participants in the comparison group (Olsen et al., 1998).

Pitch, Marchand, Hoffman and Lewis (2006) conducted a study on the effectiveness of the AVID program. The purpose of the study was to determine whether the AVID program has been successful in a Las Vegas district school. The researchers attempted to determine if students enrolled in AVID take more honors and advanced placement (AP) courses compared to non-AVID students, if AVID program enrollment increases over time, and if the AVID program had administrative support at the individual sites (Pitch et al., 2006).

The researchers selected two groups of student participants. The first group consisted of 135 students who were enrolled in the AVID program for two consecutive years. The second group consisted of 152 comparable students who did not participate in the AVID program. During the 2004-2006 school years, both

groups of student participants were in the ninth and tenth grade respectively (Pitch et al., 2006).

School records were reviewed to determine AVID and non-AVID student participation in AP/Honors courses during the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 academic years. AVID teachers were surveyed at the end of the 2005-2006 academic year. The survey asked for their perceptions regarding the overall impact of AVID on students (Pitch et al., 2006).

Three trends emerged from the analysis of the data. The results showed that AVID students took more AP/Honors courses per semester than non-AVID students in the two-year period. The average number of AP/Honors courses taken by AVID students was 6.72 in the first year and 4.86 in the second year. Whereas, the average number of AP/Honors courses taken by non-AVID students was 3.69 for the first year and 2.09 for the second year (Pitch et al., 2006).

The second trend showed an increase in the number of students who enrolled into the AVID program during the two-year period. In 2004, the Nevada school district introduced AVID to decrease student drop-out rates and increase college enrollment for underachieving students (Marchand et al., 2007). In 2005, there were only 135 students who participated in the AVID program in the school district. The number of students participating in AVID program increased to 1,055 in 2006. The 1,055 AVID students represent 2% of the entire district and 70% of the minority students. The number of AVID teaching staff also increased to accommodate the increase in student participation (Pitch et al., 2006).

The third trend showed that AVID teachers and staff were very positive about the AVID program. The survey results showed that most teachers feel that the AVID program has positive effects on students overall. Eighty percent of teachers responded that site administrators were very supportive of the AVID program (Pitch et al., 2006).

Moore, Slate, Edmonson, Combs, Bustamante, and Onwuegbuzie (2010) conducted a study on preparedness of high school students for college. The purpose of the study was to examine the college readiness of high school students and determine if significant differences existed among high school students and if differences existed between ethnic groups. The study involved 1,099 schools in Texas during the 2006-2007 academic year (Moore et al., 2010).

Researchers downloaded student data from the Texas Education Agency's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) website. A descriptive analysis of the data showed that 44.76% of traditional high school seniors attending the 1,099 traditional high school campuses were college-ready in reading. The rate for mathematics was 48.16%. To determine whether the percentage of traditional high school students who were college-ready in reading and in mathematics statistically differed, a dependent samples t-test revealed that the difference in percentages was statistically significant, $t(1098) = 8.24$, $p<0.0001$. In the 2006-2007 academic year, less than one-half of the State of Texas' graduating traditional high school seniors were considered college ready in either reading or mathematics and less than one-third of them were college ready in both reading and mathematics. Only 31.11% of

the traditional high school graduating seniors were college-ready in both reading and mathematics (Moore et al., 2010, p. 9).

An inferential analysis revealed significant differences in college readiness in reading and mathematics between White, Hispanic and African American students ($p<0.001$). Descriptively, college readiness in reading showed White students in first place, Hispanic students in second place, and African American students in third place. College readiness in mathematics showed White students in first place, Hispanic students in second place, and African American students in third place. College readiness in both subjects showed White students in first place, Hispanic students in second place, and African American students in third place (Moore et al., 2010).

Berger, Turk-Bicakci, Garret, and Song (2013) conducted an impact study on the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) created by Bill and Melinda Gates. The purpose of the study was to determine if students attending Early College experienced better outcomes than traditional high school students and the level of support provided to underrepresented students to achieve their college goals (Berger et al., 2013).

Researchers reviewed 154 Early College locations and selected 10 sites during the 2005-2008 school-years. There were two groups of students: 1044 students enrolled in Early Colleges labeled as the treatment group and 1414 students who were not offered admission to Early Colleges labeled as the comparison group.

Researchers gathered administrative data from the ten selected Early College sites, school districts, state departments of education, and National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). Additional sources of information not available were collected from student surveys. Intent-to-treat (ITT) analyses were used to compare the outcomes of students who were offered admission to Early Colleges and students who were not offered admission (Berger et al., 2013).

Researchers found that being admitted to an Early College had a statistically significant positive impact on students. The results from the ITT analysis showed that Early College students earned higher scores on the ELA assessment and experienced high school graduation rates higher than students in the comparison group. On ELA achievement, Early College students scored at the 64th percentile while students in the comparison group scored at the 59th percentile. However, students' grade point averages and mathematic scores were not significantly different for students in both groups (Berger et al., 2013).

ITT results also showed that Early College students have more advantages in the areas of degree attainment ($p<0.001$). Early College students enroll in college as early as the ninth grade. By the time they were in twelfth grade, 52% were enrolled in college compared to 19% of students in the comparison group. Twenty percent of Early College students earned associate degrees by the time they graduated from high school compared to 1.4 percent of students in the comparison group. The rate of Early College students who have earned bachelor's degrees were lower since all student participants had not attended four-year colleges. It was projected that 2.3

percent of Early College student participants would earn bachelor's degrees compared to none of the student participants from the comparison group (Berger et al., 2013).

The ITT analysis also showed all minorities, female and low-income students have benefitted due to their participation in the Early College system compared to traditional students. The impact on college attainment was higher for female than male students. Female students in Early College were almost 20 times more likely to attain college degrees than female students in the comparison group. Male students in Early College were seven times more likely to attain college degrees than male students in the comparison group. Early College had a greater impact on minority students to attain college degrees than White students. About 30 percent of Early College minority students were more likely to attain college degrees than minority students in the comparison group. Only 8 percent of the Early College White students were more likely to attain college degrees than White students in the comparison group. Low-income Early College students were 25 times more likely to attain college degrees than low-income students in the comparison group. However, high income Early College students were only 7 percent more likely to attain college degrees compared to higher income students in the comparison group (Berger et al., 2013).

Researchers concluded that the Early College was very effective and supportive of students toward the path to college. Early College had a positive impact on female, minority and low-income students regarding completion of their degree programs.

Summary

The review of literature presented research regarding college preparation programs and its impact on under-represented students. Chapter III will present the methodology that includes the sample population, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions and opinions of college students regarding the effects of their high school AVID program on their post-secondary education. In this chapter, the following topics will be presented: (1) sample population, (2) data collection and (3) data analysis.

Sample Population

College students previously enrolled in their high school AVID program in the San Joaquin Valley of California were the targeted population for this study. More specifically, the targeted sample was composed of three former AVID high school students. The targeted sample met the following criteria: (1) currently enrolled at a community college, (2) participated in his or her high school AVID program for four years and (3) recently graduated from high school. Fictitious names were used to protect the identity of each participant. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants for this study. "The researcher selects participants on purpose because they are considered to be most appropriate for the study" (Clark & Creswell, 2015, p. 235).

Data Collection

This researcher visited a community college campus to gather information about academic support services that are offered to the students and spoke with staff

personnel and/or student participants. From this visit, this researcher sought the names of students who had participated in their high school AVID program for at least four years. The students were contacted via electronic mail or telephone and asked to participate in the research interview. The first three students who accepted the invitation to participate were asked to attend a face-to-face meeting.

The face-to-face meeting was scheduled with the participants to discuss their roles in this study. In this initial face-to-face meeting, the participants were given a copy of the questions that would be used during the formal interview (see Appendix A). The participants were given a copy of the Informed Consent form (see Appendix B) as well as a written copy of the description of this study. A formal interview was scheduled at a place and time convenient for each participant.

The source of data for this qualitative study came from the in-depth individual interviews conducted with each of the three participants. The data gathered from these interviews were utilized to gain a detail description of the observed and perceived experiences from each of the participants as they progressed through the high school AVID program.

Each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes. The questions were read as they appeared on the questionnaire. However, there were instances when this researcher asked follow-up questions to prompt elaboration and clarification or to gain a deeper understanding from the participant's perspectives. The interviews, with the consent from the participants, were audio recorded for later transcription and analysis. For the present study, this researcher transcribed and e-mailed a copy of the

transcribed interview to the respective participant within 48 hours of the interview to ascertain accuracy. If a participant felt the transcript did not reflect the experiences stated in the interview, a second meeting was scheduled.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study followed the qualitative procedures advocated by Creswell (2005). These procedures were as follows:(1) transcribe the data, (2) code the data, (3) describe the developing themes and (4) summarize and validate the findings.

The procedure began with an accurate transcription of the audio files. The transcriptions included not only all the words used during the interview but also bracketed notes indicating prolonged pauses, laughter, interruptions or sections of inaudible portions of audio from the interview.

This step was followed by color coding of the text and labeling of the text to form descriptions and themes in the data. The coding of text involved an initial reading of the transcriptions to get the sense of the whole while considering themes, trends and patterns, using a different color highlight for each. This process of identifying trends, patterns and themes helped to answer the research questions, which are essential in describing and understanding this study. The trends, patterns and themes give the reader a sense of being there and give a voice to the participants of the study.

The results were reported in a format that summarizes the findings from the data analysis. In these discussions, this researcher used the data to support themes

identified. This researcher was encouraged to include the personal views of the participants because their views "can never be kept separate from interpretations, personal reflections about the meaning of the data…" (Creswell, 2005, p. 251).

Summary

Chapter III presented and discussed the population sample, data collection and analysis. Chapter IV will report the results of the analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions and opinions of college students regarding the effects of their high school AVID program on their post-secondary education. This researcher interviewed three recent Hmong high school graduates, in the Sacramento area, who participated in a high school AVID program and are currently enrolled at a community college or state university. These three former AVID students provided feedback on the effects of their high school AVID program on their post-secondary education. This chapter provides a summary of the interviews as they relate to each research question.

Interview 1

Ashley is second-generation female Hmong student who attends a local state university. She is the eldest of four children in her family. Both of Ashley's parents have post-secondary degrees, so it is expected that all children will be attending college. Since Ashley is the eldest of the children, her parents expect that she is a good role model for her younger siblings culturally and educationally.

What are the types of services offered to students in high school AVID programs? (R1)

Ashley participated in her high school AVID program for four years. She explained that AVID teachers put a lot of emphasis on weekly tutorials and Cornell

note-taking strategies in the first two years. Then, the AVID program shifts to exposing students to post-secondary education through workshops and taking field trips to college and university campuses.

Ashley felt that AVID teachers expect students to achieve success independently. Throughout her high school years, Ashley credited her success to studying independently. Although students helped each other in small groups for the weekly tutorial sessions, they were not taught to be accountable to each other. AVID is an elective course but rigorous academically; students are expected to maintain minimum grade point averages required for college entrance. When students are placed on academic probation, they are expected to show improvement in their weekly grade checks. However, Ashley was unaware that AVID teachers provided additional assistance to students beyond weekly grade checks and tutorials.

AVID teachers try hard to get students motivated about academics, career choices and going to college. In addition to tutorials and teaching Cornell note-taking, AVID teachers motivate students to participate in Socratic seminars and group projects to develop collaboration and speaking skills. Students complete online surveys to gain an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and career options. Through these activities, students begin to see similarities in each other and become better friends.

How do college students benefit academically from AVID program services received while in high school? (R2)

Ashley believes that learning how to take good notes from the AVID program has helped her successfully complete high school. Good note-taking is especially helpful in her college classes since many classes are lecture style. Ashley credits the AVID program for teaching her to take good notes, to review her notes shortly after class and to participate in study groups.

She did not see the benefits of the AVID program until the third year of high school when teachers began to talk about college activities and exploring career options. Ashley recommends that AVID teachers begin talking about college in the ninth grade to attract and retain students.

What non-academic benefits do college students experience as a result of AVID program services received in high school? (R3)

Ashley remembers that AVID provided opportunities to volunteer time helping local charities and community events. She believes that volunteering is a great way for students to have fun working together and helping others. She stated that the Socratic seminars and the tutorial sessions helped her overcome shyness and confidently speak to other people.

Interview 2

Thomas is the fourth son in a Hmong family of eight children. He attends a local university and wishes to attend medical school. He wants to pursue a medical

degree. Two of his older siblings are medical professionals. He and his siblings are first-generation college students.

What are the types of services offered to students in high school AVID programs? (R1)

Thomas remembers that his high school AVID program focused on planning and organizing. He remembers teachers stressed the importance of accomplishing daily activities through the use of an agenda and/or a checklist. In addition to learning different AVID strategies, Thomas recalls that planning for and applying to the various colleges were his most memorable moments in the AVID program. He added that completing questionnaires to assess his strengths and weaknesses and selecting a career were also important.

Learning to take good notes was one thing that Thomas said AVID teachers do consistently. Since Thomas had many AP courses, he was fortunate to learn how to take good notes in class. The AVID teachers encouraged students to review their notes shortly after class to avoid losing important information. For Thomas, he spent time rewriting his notes and creating flash cards to help him study.

Thomas felt he was pretty successful on his own and did not see the tutorial sessions as beneficial. He knew that students made up questions for the tutorial sessions. He recommends that AVID reduce the amount of time designated for group tutorials or give students the option to choose other activities. Teachers were personable with students, treated students with respect, and redirected students whose grades needed to improve.

In his senior year, Thomas remembers completing surveys and questionnaires to identify which career field best fit his personality. He was surprised to learn of two options, medicine and engineering. He is currently pursuing the medical option.

How do college students benefit academically from AVID program services received while in high school? (R2)

Thomas recalls that in high school, AVID teachers and the counselor helped him select classes that would meet the requirements of most universities. AVID upperclassmen helped AVID lowerclassmen to select classes too. AVID teachers, counselors and AVID upperclassmen taught him to seek advice from university advisors and students in the pre-medical program to select only required courses that are needed for transferring to medical school. Thomas stated he would not have completed all the required transferrable courses within two years on his own.

The AVID classroom activities and workshops showed Thomas that going to college is possible although his parents do not have much money. AVID teachers gave students generic college applications to practice completing in class, helped students with personal statements, and practiced writing personal resumes. The class research activities taught Thomas that there were lots of financial aid, grants and scholarships for everyone. Thomas and his parents attended additional AVID sponsored workshops about college and financial aid. He was able to secure financial resources that paid for his first two years of college education. Thomas noted that he is applying to various minority scholarship programs that will pay for his medical education.

What non-academic benefits do college students experience as a result of AVID program services received in high school? (R3)

Thomas credited the Socratic seminars for helping him to become an active participant in study groups. The Socratic seminars required students to read an article or book passage and to debate opposing views. These Socratic seminars forced Thomas to speak in favor of or in opposition to an idea. He had to train himself to stay focused on the topic and defend his opinions. Thomas learned to speak confidently and has become a leader amongst his co-workers, his siblings and within his Hmong community.

Thomas felt that there were times when the AVID teachers spent additional time with students who were more vocal. Students who were shy like himself did not receive as much help. He thinks AVID teachers need to ask quiet students to show their completed work and to give them additional guidance as needed.

Interview 3

Philip has just completed his second year at the local community college. He is the first-born of six children. One of his parents has a master's degree from a local university. His parents have very high expectations for Philip and his siblings to attend college. In addition to attending classes at the community college, Philip has to help care for his younger siblings while the parents are away.

What are the types of services offered to students in high school AVID programs? (R1)

Philip remembers going to weekly tutorial sessions. His AVID teachers required that students complete tutorial forms that involved copying the question or problem per verbatim, identifying vocabulary terminology, and writing an explanation to show what has been done prior to the tutorial. Philip recalls being reminded by the AVID teachers that he needs to work together in pairs or groups. His teachers believe students learn better working with others.

AVID teachers spent a lot of time promoting college. Students learned about different types of colleges and sources of money for college. Although one of his parents went to college, he was thankful to learn the steps that are required to become successful in college. Philip believes the best part of the AVID program was the field trips to the campuses of local community colleges and universities.

He was unaware of AVID students who struggled in their classes. He presumed that AVID teachers talk to those students and encourage them to work harder. Phillip says that most of his AVID classmates had good grades. AVID teachers encouraged students to help each other.

Philip recommends that AVID teachers reduce the number of tutorial sessions and weekly check of binders and progress reports. As much as these activities help students to be organized and focused, they do not increase learning. The tutorial sessions did not help students since most already had good grades. The AVID

program needs to increase college awareness and to set aside more time for exploring different career options.

How do college students benefit academically from AVID program services received while in high school? (R2)

Philip noted that his high school AVID program taught him to be organized and take good notes. Philip stated that life after high school has been very busy. He has to attend classes, help his parents look after the younger siblings, and find time for himself and his friends. He was able to get important tasks completed because AVID teachers trained him to write in daily planners and check off each item when completed.

He remembers that some high school classes were boring because teachers talked too long. Most college professors lecture the entire class period. For Philip, note-taking in high school was copying words, phrases, or diagrams from chalk boards onto his Cornell papers. Philip says that note-taking in the college classes is more difficult because professors cover so much more information. For him to complete his first two years of community college, Philips admits that he had to review his notes and organize them frequently, participate in study groups, and spend hours reading the classroom textbooks.

What non-academic benefits do college students experience as a result of AVID program services received in high school? (R3)

Philip knew from a very young age that he wanted a career in engineering. Philip thought the online surveys and aptitude tests were good ways to see which

career choices would fit students' personalities. He is currently exploring specific areas of engineering for which he may wish to specialize. He has left open the option to be a secondary math teacher.

Philip does not feel like the AVID strategies have helped him personally. He uses organizing skills to help him prioritize and manage his busy schedule and uses the tutorial skills to help younger siblings on their homework assignments.

Summary

Chapter 4 provided an analysis of the data collected in relation to each research question. Chapter 5 will provide a summary, themes and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMEDNATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions and opinions of college students regarding the effects of their high school AVID program on their post-secondary education. This researcher interviewed three recent Hmong high school graduates, in the Sacramento area, who participated in a high school AVID program and are currently enrolled at a community college or state university. These three former AVID students provided feedback on how they perceived the effectiveness of their high school AVID program. This chapter provides a summary of the interviews as they relate to each research question.

This chapter summarizes the analysis from Chapter 4 and draws on themes based on responses to the research questions. In addition, this researcher will provide recommendations for further study.

Summary

This researcher prepared three research questions: (1) what are the types of services offered to students in high school AVID programs; (2) how do college students benefit academically from AVID program services received while in high school; (3) what non-academic benefits do college students experience as a result of AVID program services received in high school? The following summarizes the findings from the interviews that were based on the research questions.

What are the types of services offered to students in high school AVID programs? (R1)

All three participants agreed that AVID teachers spent the first two years of the high school AVID program teaching Cornell note-taking strategies, encouraging student collaboration through the weekly tutorials, and empowering students to be independent through Socratic seminars and volunteering opportunities. Participants mentioned that AVID teachers began to get students focused on post-secondary education and careers in the third and fourth year of the AVID program. Students begin to research community colleges, universities, financial aid, and career options.

How do college students benefit academically from AVID program services received while in high school? (R2)

All three participants would have enrolled in a community college or university even if they did not participate in their high school AVID program. Two participants said that they are more successful in college courses because their high school AVID teachers have taught them note-taking, organization skills and time management. One participant said that his AVID teachers, counselor and other AVID students had helped him to choose classes related to his degree and how to get financial aid to pay for his education.

What non-academic benefits do college students experience as a result of AVID program services received in high school? (R3)

Two participants appreciated that their high school AVID program had provided them the opportunity to learn about career choices available to them. Both

students felt validated when the results from the career survey suggested career options that they have already chosen to pursue. All three participants felt that they are more confident speakers due to their participation in classroom activities like Socratic seminars. They are more active in their communities, families, and social gatherings because they had an opportunity to volunteer as AVID students.

Theme**s**

What are the types of services offered to students in high school AVID programs? (R1)

The participants agreed that learning Cornell Note-taking, time management and organization skills prepared them for college. Manual and computerized career inquiry, community service, field trips to local college and university campuses allow students to gain experience beyond the classroom.

How do college students benefit academically from AVID program services received while in high school? (R2)

Although most classroom assignments and activities were repetitive and cumbersome, all three learned to take notes, to be organized and to develop time management skills for success in college.

What non-academic benefits do college students experience as a result of AVID program services received in high school? (R3)

The participants are more confident in themselves and in public speaking because of AVID activities like Socratic seminars and the involvement in organizations and community activities.

Implications

The Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) college readiness program which started in 1980 has been successful helping AVID students to perform better than non-AVID students on standardized tests, maintain higher grade point averages, and experience high acceptance rates to colleges (Cronin, 2013). School districts that have not adopted the AVID program in their high schools may want to consider visiting neighboring districts to observe the positive effects of the AVID.

Educators in school districts that have AVID in place may wish to review the extent to which college awareness is covered during the first two years of high school. Educators may also wish to consider a wider wide variety of assignments and activities that are related to the college experience. Perhaps, more about the college experience should be covered during the first and second years of high school, in the same manner as the third or fourth years.

Recommendations

1. Conduct a quantitative study to compare college degree completion of high school AVID students and non-AVID students.

2. Conduct a quantitative study to compare college degree completion rates of high school AVID students of Asian, Hispanic, African American, and White backgrounds.
3. Conduct a quantitative study to compare high school graduation rates between students who participate in the AVID program and students who did not participate but qualified.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH QUESTION MATRIX

1. What are the types of services offered to students in high school AVID programs?

2. How do college students benefit academically from AVID program services received while in high school?

3. What non-academic benefits do college students experience as a result of AVID program services received in high school?

Interview Questions	1	2	3
1. Identify and describe the types of AVID services that were provided in your high school AVID program.	X		
2. Identify and describe study habits and academic skills that were emphasized in your high school AVID program.	X		
3. Describe the services that are offered to AVID students who struggle in one or more high school classes.	X		
4. Did the services provided by AVID in high school prepare you for success in college? Elaborate.		X	
5. How do high school AVID teachers ensure that all students remain successful in the AVID program?	X		
6. Were you aware that AVID services were being provided in college? If you participate in the AVID program on the college campus, explain how it differs from AVID services provided in high school?		X	
7. What are some AVID strategies you have used in other areas beside academics that have made you more successful today?			X
8. Did AVID services offered in high school helped you to establish a career goal?			X
9. How can the AVID services offered in high school be improved? Give examples.		X	

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I am requesting your voluntary participation in a research project as part of the fulfillment of my master's degree through California State University, Stanislaus. The purpose of this study will provide educators and policy makers with insights in identifying the perceptions and opinions of college students regarding the effectiveness of AVID program participation in high school.

As part of the data collection, I plan to conduct interviews by asking questions that have been developed specifically for this study. The interviews will take approximately60 minutes. You may withdraw or refuse to answer any questions at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. The interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed for analytic purposes. There are no foreseeable risks to students who participate in this project.

The information you give will be protected from all inappropriate disclosure under the law. Your name or references that may identify you will not appear in any reports of this research. The information gained will be used for educational purposes and professional publications. Only this researcher will have access to the information collected for this project. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. All data will be maintained for a period of three years and then destroyed by this researcher.

If you agree to participate, please confirm your decision by signing below. If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Benjamin Vue, at 916-627-8122 or my supervising professor, Dr. John Borba, at (209) 648-3570. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the CSU Stanislaus Institutional Review Board at (209) 667-3493 and/or the Compliance Office at (209) 667-3551.

I have read the information described above and agree to participate in this study.

_____

Name of the Participant (Please Print)

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date