

I think that this work is important for the scientific community as it explores and pursues several gaps /through lines in the research

- 1) The need for more research centering the lived experiences of Black men
- 2) The intersections of rural Black men at PWIs

I think that what the abstract does not set the reader up for is how the intervention is incorporated into the work. Reading the abstract does not explicitly describe that.

Background- I think that the introduction sets the reader up nicely to understand the study, the need for the study and the gaps in the literature.

The background section could also be clearer from the outset that the intervention was part of the study. This was a sticking point for me as I reviewed the work. Literature Review This section was comprehensive and very well received. Methods- I find that the methods section needs the most work. In no particular order, I list several ways to enhance the methods section and where it needs clarity.

- 1) The section could be strengthened by a 1-2 sentence guide at the top of the section to orient the reader to what's coming next.
- 2) More details are needed about the population and research activities. How many participants? How many participated in the pre- and post-survey? How many participated in conversations/ structured group sessions?
- 3) What type of Likert scale was used? A 5-point or 7-point?
- 4) Perhaps including the instruments as supplemental or Appendices would help the reader access the quality of the work.
- 5) Perhaps including some of the open-ended questions would also help the reader access the transferability and quality of the work.
- 6) I recommend subsections if allowable by the journal, such as a) data collection b) data analysis.
- 7) Were the qualitative data analyzed inductively or deductively?
- 8) The methods section should include a clear outline of how the theory or conceptual framework informed the analysis. Currently, I cannot tell how the conceptual framework contributes to the work.
- 9) What was the structure of the intervention? What happened in the intervention? I found this to be lacking sufficient information. Findings

1) I find myself wanting to see a table of pre & Post results of each of the instrument items. Again, along the lines of transparency, I think this would enhance my assessment of the work. General Some stylistic and writing choices, such as overuse of the “m hyphen” and colons, distract from the context. For example, “The literature points to the urgent need for multi-layered, culturally responsive interventions: Social Belonging Programs are evidence-based belonging interventions that include group dialogue, peer support, storytelling, and faculty/staff mentorship—improve engagement, validation, and campus and community connections for African American men (Brooms, 2017; Strayhorn, 2012; Harper, 2015).” The statement after the colon almost comes out of no where and the thought seems incomplete. Perhaps a rewrite of this sentence and the sentence following could enhance the readability.

2) A discussion section is needed. How do findings relate to current literature? What did we learn? This could be outlined in a discussion section

3) How did the authors attend to quality, rigor, trustworthiness?

4) I also invite the authors to consider sharing about their own positionality.