

Two boys, one roof, one left in school by eric frazier

Literature



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The article entitled Two Boys. One Roof. One Left in School written by Eric Frazier and published in the Charlotte Observer proffers the dilemma of black males struggling to graduate from high school in the North Carolina area.

The story of two boys, Juwon Lewis and Danquirs Franklin, best friends since childhood, depicted the struggle by manifesting a shared life with interconnecting but diversely intimidating factors that ultimately led to different paths. Their story continues to plague boys of their familial and community background: mothers with drug problems, fathers who were absent in their lives, and schools which did not support nor acknowledged their predicaments. In this regard, this essay aims to present the issues that evolved between Juwon and Danquirs, as representative of the racial gender, with the ultimate goal of suggesting possible ways to address the dilemma. Frazier discussed Juwon and Danquirs' struggles in a manner-of-fact approach, as if the boys' experiences are expected for their race and gender. The author clearly established similarity in their childhood experiences, to wit: " they staggered through the same early challenges. Mothers hobbled by crime and drugs. Fathers who stepped back instead of up. Schools where they felt like misfits" (Frazier, par. 7). Further, they both have grandmothers who they adored and proved to be one of the distinguishing factors that were instrumental in changing the direction of their lives.

Juwon's grandmother, Pealie Mae Lewis, died while serving sentence in prison due to health reasons. Coupled with confounding academic difficulties, lack of guidance from a family member, and bad peer company, Juwon's path turned to worse. Frazier stated that " in September 2008, several months after arriving at Midwood, Juwon got busted for disorderly <https://assignbuster.com/two-boys-one-roof-one-left-in-school-by-eric-frazier/>

conduct and resisting a police officer. The following February, police arrested him on charges of carrying a concealed weapon, marijuana possession, resisting an officer and loitering for drug activity” (Frazier, par. 70).

On the other hand, Danquirs had a more optimistic perspective due to his grandmother’s direct guidance and the genuine and determined assistance from his English teacher, Emily White. In addition, the healing of his mother from addiction helped in establishing a more stable family relationship which drastically improved Danquirs’ studies and outlook in life.

Frazier attributed the success of Danquir to a stronger grandmother figure who led him to strive harder and taught him that “ life might not always be fair, but hope is always worth holding onto. The other lost his grandmother, and perhaps much more” (Frazier, par. 111).

Although Frazier depicted the facts of the dropout battle among black males, the story of Juwon and Danquirs could possibly be more of an exception than the rule. It is a fact that family problems and a guiding figure affect children’s drop out rates. However, these are not the only factors. There are a multitude of reasons for high school drop outs. These range from personal concerns, family issues, transportation problems, and even work-related reasons.

Furger (1) has identified several reasons why high school students opt to leave school without earning their high school diploma, to wit: “(1) dropping out is the culmination of years of academic hurdles, missteps, and wrong turns; (2) it is a response to conflicting life pressures -- the need to help support their family financially or the demands of caring for siblings or their own child; (3) students become bored and see no connection between academic life and " real" life; (4) young people feel disconnected from their

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peers and from teachers and other adults at school; and (5) schools and communities have too few resources to meet the complex emotional and academic needs of their most vulnerable youth.” By being aware of these reasons, parents, teachers, school administrators, the local community and the nation, as a whole, should look for appropriate measures to ensure that all high school students graduate from the program.

It is eminent to stress that there are more benefits that would be derived from seeking ways and means to ensue students stay in school until graduation than to allow them to drop out. To increase the number of students who graduate from high school, the nation’s secondary schools must be dramatically improved (Alliance, 2). In addition, the schools’ curricula should be reviewed and evaluated to consider student’s diverse orientation and educational capacities. Their curricula should also be updated to reflect real-world challenges. The programs should also be presented in such a way that students would perceive them as relevant and interesting. Finally, support from parents, teachers and school administrators could never be overemphasized. Sometimes, students are just looking for the right advice, at the right time, at the right place.

The story of Juwon and Danquirs is one among the many black male students who yearn for guidance and genuine concern and assistance. The family’s support was indeed instrumental in ensuring Danquir’s success. However, since this has been a persistent problem that pervades the society, it is a quandary as to why, despite the availability of courses of action, this issue remains unresolved. Researches have already identified the concepts, problems, nature, causes, and even solutions to drop outs, especially of black males. The people who are responsible for addressing these issues

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have already been identified. These are the same people who would definitely benefit from the solutions enumerated herein. As Edwards and Schmidt concluded, “ now we have an obligation to take action”. The time is now.

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