This is to certify that the
dissertation entitled

**The Academic And Social Impact Of Cultural Intersection On
African American Male Middle School Students**

presented by

Telly Savalas Brannon

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Doctor Of Philosophy	degree in	K-12 Educational Administration

Christopher Dunbar Jr

Major Professor's Signature

July 25, 2005

Date

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
SEP. 2 0 2007		

THE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF CULTURAL INTERSECTION ON
AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

Telly Savalas Brannon

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Educational Administration

2005

ABSTRACT

THE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF CULTURAL INTERSECTION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

Telly Savalas Brannon

The academic and social impact of cultural intersection on African American male middle school students was investigated. Interviews with and observations of eight students as well eleven staff members were analyzed. The results indicated that an intersection between the dominant culture and the subordinate culture had a negative impact on the academic and social experiences of the students in this study. Recommendations include ongoing professional development and realigning of the curriculum.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A disproportionate number of African American males are being suspended and expelled from the public school system. Most recent data from the Department of Education indicates that while African American children only represent 17% of public school enrollment nationally, they constitute 32% of out-of-school suspensions. Caucasian American students who make up 63% of public school enrollment represent only 50% of the suspensions and 50% of the expulsions. According to a publication of The National Coalition of Advocates for Students, a 1998 Michigan study, shows that African Americans comprise 40% of the student body in the districts surveyed but represent 64% of expulsions. Expulsion of African American students occurs at twice the rate of their enrollment in many districts. The vast majority of those are males (National Coalition, 1998). The National Coalition also states that at the national level, school discipline data reported bi-annually to the federal Office for Civil Rights showed that male minority students are far more likely to be targets of school discipline.

As a result, schools are now realizing that the consequences of discipline disparities based on race can

1

prevent the educational success of the African American race (Schwartz,2001). An unawareness of African American social styles, denigration of African American traditions, and persistent negative and fear-inducing media images of African Americans have long characterized the society of the United States. Thus, as products of this society, educators may project negative attitudes toward African American male students and avoid rather than mentor them (McCadden, 1998). African American male students often manage the anxiety caused by the negative attitudes of educators by being resistant to cultural norms or even dropping out of school, thereby confirming for schools the legitimacy of their low expectations for the students (Mahiri,1996). African American male students feel disrespect from the teachers and, therefore, respond to what they perceive as unfairness by resisting authority and failing grades (Towns, 2002).

Statement of Problem

School culture is defined as the historically transmitted patterns of meaning that include the norms, values, beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, traditions, and myths understood by members of the school community (Stolp and Smith, 1994). However, the problem is that the historically transmitted patterns of meaning often exclude the values,

beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, and traditions of some members of the school community. Many times the members who are excluded are African American males. The members of the school community who fit into the norms are part of the dominant school culture and often times these students are Caucasian Americans. In this case, those students who are often excluded are a part of the subordinate school culture.

According to Dr. David Cole and Dr. L. Chubbuck (2002), dominant school culture consists of the cultural group whose characteristics, values, norms, and viewpoints are considered the norm because of the power and the influence held by members of that group. Institutional structure has been created and developed to support this cultural group's dominance. They also state that part of what maintains this dominance is the sub ordinance of other cultural groups.

Subordinate school culture consists of any other groups who are not members of the dominant group and whose values and viewpoints are judged as inferior or inadequate (Cole and Chubbuck, 2002). In many school settings African American males are considered as inferior individuals with inadequate values and viewpoints.

Cultural intersection is when the dominant culture whose characteristics, values, norms, and viewpoints are considered the norm comes into contact with the subordinate culture whose values and viewpoints are judged as inferior or inadequate.

Providing African American male students with an effective public school education has proven to be a nearly intractable problem on all grade levels. African American males are apt to feel alienated from rather than engaged in the education process (Hrabowski, Maton, & Greif, 1998). Educational and psychological research repeatedly has shown that students labeled as coming from disadvantaged United States minority groups such as African American, Native American, and Hispanic American tend to attain poorer academic outcomes than do white or Asian students. Included among these poorer outcomes are lower grades in school (Demo and Parker, 1987;Simmons, Brown, Bush, and Blyth, 1978), lower standardized test scores (Reyes and Stanic,1988), and higher dropout rates (American Council On Education, 1990).

Rather than serve as a vehicle to promote liberation, public schools in some instances have become structured support systems assuring social, political, cultural, and economic inequality for African American male students

4

(Hopkins, 1997). The review of literature leads to this research question: *How does the intersection of the dominant school culture and the subordinate school culture impact the academic and social experiences of African American male middle school students?*

This question was used to develop a list of narrower questions that were intended to form interview protocols used to gather an understanding of this situation. Interview responses were combined with observations and reviewing the literature. The list was as follows:

- To what did African American males ascribe their middle school experience?

- Did outside influences impact the performance of these young men in school?

- How did the lack of relationship building between these young men and staff members impact their academic and social experiences?

- Did racism contribute to the academic and social experiences of these young men?

- What impact did labeling caused by cultural unawareness have on the experiences of these young men?

- What defense mechanisms did these young men utilize to combat their experiences?

- Is change possible in this particular school setting?

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to garner an understanding of perceptions held by African American male middle school students about their academic and social experiences as a part of a subordinate culture. The study provided a vehicle for some African American male students to share their school experiences in an effort to better understand their behavior and attitudes about schooling.

Theory

Critical race theory is the conceptual lens that I used to form my conceptual framework. Critical race theory challenges the dominant discourse on race and racism as it relates to education by examining how educational theory and practice are used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups (Bell, 1993; Crenshaw, 1995). According to Solórzano and Yosso (2001), a critical race theory of education has at least five themes that form its basic perspectives, research methods, and pedagogy. As a critical race theorist, I utilized four of the five themes. The four themes that I utilized were the centrality and

6

intersectionality of race and racism, the challenge to

dominant ideology, commitment to social justice, and

centrality of experiential knowledge.

The first theme is the centrality and

intersectionality of race and racism. A critical race

theorist of education recognizes the central role racism

has played in the structuring of schools and schooling

practices and the intersecting with other forms of

subordination (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). As a critical

race theorist, I looked at curricular practices such as

teacher expectations, materials utilized to deliver the

curriculum, and methods of delivery to determine if they

have historically been used to subordinate African American

male students.

The second theme is the challenge to dominant

ideology. Critical race theory critiques the inequalities

of society by examining the educational system to see how

it is influenced by society. Critical race theory allowed

the examination of the dominant social and cultural

assumptions regarding culture and intelligence and language

and capability to reveal the self interest, power, and

privilege of a dominant group that is camouflaged through

traditional claims of objectivity and meritocracy

(Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

The third theme is the commitment to social justice.
A critical race framework is committed to social justice
and offers a libratory or transformative response to
racial, gender, and class oppression (Matsuda, 1991).
Through the use of critical race theory, suggestions were
offered that will help to address the issues of racism and
injustice that were found in the school setting and used to
disempower African American male students.

Theme four is the centrality of experiential
knowledge. Critical race theory recognizes that the
experiential knowledge of women and men of color is
legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding,
analyzing, practicing, and teaching about racial
subordination (Calmore, 1992). Just as issues of
experience, culture, and identity are not the subjects of
explicit legal reasoning (Caldwell, 1995), lived
experiences by students of color are generally
marginalized, if not silenced from educational discourse
(Solórzano & Yosso 2001). Critical race theory allowed a
focus on the strength of the life experiences students
brought to the classroom by using narratives, scenarios,
and biographies (Bell, 1987; Delgado, 1996; Olivas, 1990).

Critical Race Theory is linked to the development of
African American thought in the post Civil Rights Era

(Tate, 1996). Derrick Bell(1993), M. Matsuda(1991), Robert Delgado(1995) and K.W.Crenshaw(1995) challenged the philosophical traditional position of the colorblind approach to social justice. According to Delgado (1995), both Bell and Freeman were deeply concerned with the slow progress of racial reform in the United States. Bell (1993) said that whites would promote racial advances for blacks only when they also promote white self-interest. This causes persons of color to speak from an experience framed by racism. Delgado (as cited by Tate, 1996) argues that the stories of persons of color come from a different frame of reference and, therefore, give them a voice that is different from that of the dominant culture and deserves to be heard. Critical race theorists believe that in order to appreciate the perspective of a contributor, the voice of that particular contributor must be understood During this study critical race theory is used as a means to help African American males tell their stories from their own cultural perspective and not from the perspective of the dominant culture.

Crenshaw (1988) identifies two distinct properties in anti-discrimination law as expansive and restrictive properties. Expansive properties stress equality as an outcome relying on the courts to eliminate the effects of

9

racism. Restrictive properties treat equality as a process and have as a focus the prevention of any future wrongdoing. Crenshaw also argues that both the expansive and the restrictive properties coexist in the anti-discrimination laws. Crenshaw argues the failure of the restrictive property to address or correct the racial injustices of the past simply perpetuates the status quo. Based on Crenshaw's arguments, Tate(1996) concluded that the restrictive interpretation of anti- discrimination laws inhibited African American students.

According to Gibson (1986)

> Critical race theorists in education have three things in common. They begin from a concern to map the inequalities and injustices of education. Next, they claim to trace those inequalities and injustices to their source, showing the educational processes and structures by which they are maintained. Finally, they seek or propose remedies for those injustices.

Critical race theory allowed me to go into the middle school setting and look for possible inequalities and injustices that African American male students encountered. It also allowed me to empower the students by providing a vehicle for them to tell their stories about their middle school experience and to commit to proposing remedies for the injustices. As a critical race theorist I offer

suggestions to make school a place where all children have
an equal opportunity to learn and succeed.

Role of Researcher

I serve as the assistant principal at the school site
where this problem was researched. The research was
carried out after the students knew my job. The principal
of the school agreed to handle all discipline situations
that occurred during the time of this study and allowed me
the opportunity to function as an interviewer. During this
study, I learned from and with the students and staff
members who participated in this research and according to
Glesne (1997) that is a key role of the researcher. I chose
this middle school because it is my place of employment and
these students made up the minority population figuratively
and numerically.

Selection of Site and Participants

The Location of Wichitaw Middle School

Wichitaw Middle School is located on the West side of
the city of Wichitaw. The middle school is in the middle
of the community. Located directly across the street from
the middle school is the administrative central office for
Wichitaw Community Schools. This is where the offices of
the superintendent the assistant superintendent, the
director of curriculum and the director of special

educations services are located. One block west of the middle school is Wichitaw High School. There is a grass field that separates the middle school from the high school with a paved walkway that connects the two.

Two blocks south of the middle school is one of the four elementary schools. There is a football field and a track that separates this elementary school from Wichitaw Middle School.

One block east of the elementary school there are several medical complexes that consist of oral surgeons, pediatricians, chiropractors, and other medical professions. The fire department and the police department are also located in the same vicinity of these medical complexes. By traveling one mile southeast of these complexes, you reach the shopping district of Wichitaw.

The shopping district of Wichitaw consists of several shopping plazas and a shopping mall. There are also several restaurants located in the shopping district. The shopping plazas and restaurants are surrounded by apartment complexes and housing developments. Most of the apartment complexes consist of families whose socioeconomic status is lower to middle class. The housing developments in the area are very expensive because of their location. The majority of the housing developments consist of higher

middle class to upper class two-parent households. A

combination of the lower socioeconomic class, the middle

socioeconomic class, and the upper socioeconomic class make

up the student body of Wichitaw Middle School.

The Student Body of Wichitaw Middle School

The site for the research is comprised of seventh and

eighth grades. The student population is five hundred

seventy students. There are two hundred eighty seventh

graders and two hundred ninety eighth graders. These

students range from the ages of twelve to fourteen. Out of

these five hundred seventy students two hundred eighty five

of them are males. One hundred sixty one of these males are

Caucasian American. Twenty- seven of these young men are

Hispanic American. Eleven of these males are American

Indian and eighty-six of these two hundred eighty five

students are African American males. Twenty-six of the

African American males have a grade point average below

2.0. This means that 33% of these students fall below

average academically. When compared to their Caucasian

American male counterparts this is extremely high because

only 19% of these Caucasian American male students fall

below average academically.

Fifteen years ago the elementary schools, the

intermediate school, the middle school and the high school

13

began to accept school of choice students. School of
choice allowed students to come to any school in the
district when they live outside of the school district.
Approximately twenty percent of the Wichitaw Middle School
student body consists of school of choice students. Prior
to this study, several African American parents indicated
they had chosen to send their sons to this middle school
believing it would provide a better education than that of
other middle schools in the surrounding areas.

These parents found the experience for their sons less
than they had envisioned. Parents discovered their sons did
not receive a fair and unbiased education and in many cases
were being forced into failure because the teachers did not
know how to deal with these students. By this I mean that
there were cultural incongruencies. The teachers who were a
part of the dominant culture were not trained how to
implement the cultural values, beliefs and practices of
students these students into their daily teaching
practices.

Selection of Student Participants

An advertisement letter to participate in this study
was given to every African American male student in this
Michigan school. The letter asked for volunteers who might
be interested in participating in this study and, if

interested notify me immediately. Only the first eight

students to reply would be allowed to participate. After

the eight students replied, fifteen other students replied

as well. Those fifteen students who replied after the

first eight, were notified that eight students replied

before them. A letter was given to the first eight

respondents explaining the purpose of this study and also

relating his right as a participant. Consent forms were

sent to the parents informing them of the study and asking

written permission for their son to participate. Parents

were also notified that their son's confidentiality would

be protected and anonymity would be preserved. The parents

and their son's were made aware that participation in this

study was voluntary and that they could freely choose to

stop participation at any time.

Selection of Staff Participants

I also interviewed and observed a total of eleven

staff members of the middle school. All thirty staff

members in the building were given an advertisement letter

that described the purpose of this study and asked for

volunteers to be interviewed and observed. The staff

members were notified that only the first twelve staff

members who responded by the end of the week would be able

to participate in the study. By the end of the week,

eleven staff members responded. These staff members were given consent forms that made them aware that their anonymity would be honored and that all information shared would be kept confidential.

Descriptions of Student Participants

Chad

Chad is a thirteen year old eighth grade student about five feet eight inches tall. He had a medium body build with a tan skin complexion and black hair that he kept cut low. Chad thought of himself as a ladies man. He always wanted to be around the females. His hobbies were hanging out with his friends and playing basketball. He has been in the Wichitaw District for two years and both of his years have been at the middle school. He has a cumulative grade point average of 1.85

Richard

Richard is a fourteen year old eighth grade student who stands about five feet two inches tall. He skin complexion is very dark and he is stocky. He wears his hair in corn row braids. Richard likes hanging out with his boys and chilling. He does not like to participate in any sports, but he likes watching them on television. He has been in the Wichitaw District for seven years. He came to the Wichitaw District in fourth grade. He failed fourth

grade at Wichitaw Intermediate School and he failed eighth grade last year. This is his third year at the middle school. Richard has a cumulative grade point average of 1.49.

Jamon

Jamon is a fourteen year old eighth grade student who stands about five feet five inches tall. He has dark brown skin and a muscular build with a low haircut that he likes to keep tied up with a doo- rag. Jamon likes to run track and listen to rap music. He has been in the Wichitaw school district for five years. Jamon failed second grade at his old school in Georgia. When he and his family moved to Michigan, he was already a year behind. His overall grade point average is 2.3.

Don

Don is a thirteen year old eighth grader. Don is a very small structured young man. He stands about four feet eleven inches tall. He has a very light skin color and he likes to wear his hair picked out in an Afro. He also likes to wear baggy clothes. His hobbies are watching his little brother and playing basketball. He has been in the Wichitaw School District for eight years. This is his second year at Wichitaw Middle School. He does not like the

way he is treated by his teachers so he refuses to apply
himself academically. He has an overall grade point
average of 1.0.

Jamal

Jamal is an eighth grade student who just turned
fourteen at the beginning of this school year. He is a
very thin and slender young man. He stands about six feet
tall and skin complexion is light brown. He has his hair in
dread locks. His hobbies are listening to Reggae music and
boxing. He has been in the Wichitaw School District for
eight years. This is his second year at the middle school.
He has an overall grade point average of 1.25.

Andre

Andre is a twelve year old eight grader. He has a
deep brown skin complexion and he likes to wear his hair
cut very low. He is about five feet two inches tall and he
is always smiling. He has been in the Wichitaw for five
years. Prior to moving to Michigan Andre and his family
lived in North Carolina. While they were in North Carolina
Andre was able to skip second grade because he was so
smart. That is why he is only twelve years old in eighth
grade. His hobbies are talking on the phone with girls and
writing rap music. He has an overall grade point average
of 2.63.

Eli

Eli is a thirteen year old eighth grader. He stands about four feet nine inches tall. He is a very heavy set young man. He has a light brown skin complexion and he wears his hair in a curly afro. This is Eli's first year in The Wichitaw School District. He transferred to Wichitaw Middle School from another school in Chicago Illinois because his father got a new job in the area. Eli's hobbies are playing baseball and hanging out with his friends on the weekend. He said that his experience at Wichitaw Middle School has been okay, but some of the teachers are rude and disrespectful. Eli has an overall grade point average of 3.0.

Omar

Omar is a twelve year old seventh grader. His has a very skinny body frame. He is also very tall. Omar is about six feet two inches tall. He has a very dark skin tone and he likes to shave all the hair from his head. His hobbies are playing basketball and talking to females on the phone. He has been in the Wichitaw School District for seven years. Omar has an overall grade point average of 2.0.

Descriptions of Staff Participants

Mrs. Hankins

Mrs. Hankins is an African American female science teacher.

She is about four feet three inches tall and her hair is black with blonde highlights. She has been a teacher for over twenty years. She has been teaching at Wichitaw Middle School for ten years. Her hobbies are working with young people and dancing. She participated in this study because she thinks that our public school system is failing our young African American males. She thinks that there is a need to share this data in order to assist these young men in becoming productive citizens

Mrs. Light

Mrs. Light is an Asian American Language Arts teacher. She is about five feet tall with long black hair. She has been a teacher for ten years. Six of the ten years has been on the high school level. She has been working at Wichitaw Middle School for four years. Her hobbies are reading books and hanging out with friends. She does not accept students failing. She believes that students only fail if you let them. She participated in the study because she felt that as educators, it is our job to close the academic and social gap between African American males and their

peers. She believes that this study will help to remove the
biases that many teachers have.

Mrs. Night

Mrs. Night is a Caucasian American Social Studies
teacher who has worked at Wichitaw Middle School for twenty
years. She stands about five feet tall and has short blond
hair with a few streaks of gray. Her hobbies are knitting
and spending time with family. She participated in this
study because she felt that she does not have anything to
hide and if anything, she can learn something from the
study.

Mr. Wilkes

Mr. Wilkes is an African American physical education
teacher. He has been work at Wichitaw Middle School for
eight years. He stands about six feet two inches tall and
he wears his hair cut close to his head. His hobbies are
teaching Tae-Kwon-Do and being a positive role model for
the African American male students. He participated in the
study because he said that he cares about all kids and he
wants to see African American males receive the same
educational opportunities as their peers. He also said
that his son is an African American male who will be coming
to the middle school real soon, so he wants to help shed

some light on this topic and work to come up with some
solutions.

Mrs. Grimes

Mrs. Grimes is an African American social worker at
Wichitaw Middle School. She is about four feet six inches
tall with black hair. She has been at the middle school for
five years. This is her first year as a social worker.
Prior to being social worker, she served as a guidance
counselor. However, this was not her first profession.
Prior to getting into education, she was a corrections
office at a state prison. Her hobbies are going to church
and traveling. She participated in the study because there
is a growing concern regarding the impact of cultural
intersection on African American adolescents. She thinks
that it is crucial that educators are made aware of its
negative impact so that changes can be made.

Mrs. Oliver

Mrs. Oliver is and African American special
education teacher at Wichitaw Middle School. She is about
five feet ten inches tall with short curly black hair.
This is her first year teaching. She enjoys working with
special education students because she had a younger
brother who was a special education student and she had to
help her mother take care of him. Her hobbies are listening

to jazz and spending time with her family. She
participated in the study because she thinks that sensitive
issues such as racism and labeling need to be put on the
table and discussed.

Mr. Finch

Mr. Finch is a Caucasian American social studies
teacher. He has been working at Wichitaw Middle School for
fifteen years. He has been in education for twenty years.
Prior to working at the middle school, he worked as a
special education teacher at the intermediate school. He
is about five feet three inches tall and he has long gray
hair. His hobbies are watching movies and learning
history. He participated in the study because he thinks
that these African American young men have much promise but
with many impediments to that promise. He wants to join in
the effort to assist these young men to be successful.

Mrs. Wallace

Mrs. Wallace is a Caucasian American Language Arts
teacher. She is about five feet tall with long blond hair.
She has been working at Wichitaw Middle School for six
years. Prior to working at the middle school, she worked
at Wichitaw High school for two years. Her hobbies are
shopping and going to athletic events. She participated in

the study just because she thought that it would be cool to
have her thoughts recorded and her actions observed.

Mrs. Shine

Mrs. Shine is a Caucasian American Language Arts
teacher who has been working at Wichitaw Middle School for
thirty five years. She is about five feet six inches tall
with long black hair patched with gray. She is eligible to
retire from teaching but she refuses to do so because she
loves teaching. She always sacrifices her free time such
as planning to work with students who need extra help. Her
hobbies are working with at risk students and organizing
school wide performances such as talent shows. She
participated in the study because during her thirty five
year experience, there has not been any real effort made to
find out why the African American young men are not
succeeding at Wichitaw Middle School. She wants to
contribute to finding solutions to the academic and social
problems that these young men are experiencing.

Mrs.Stokely

Mrs. Stokely is a Caucasian American World History
teacher. She has been teaching at Wichitaw Middle School
for twelve years. Prior to teaching at the middle school
she was an airline pilot for her own private company. She
is about five feet eleven inches tall with short white

hair. Her hobbies are collecting model planes and spending time with her husband. She participated in the study because she thinks that these young men have some problems and she does not have a clue what the solutions to these problems are.

Mr. Sheets

Mr. Sheets is a Hispanic American mathematics teacher at Wichitaw Middle School. He has been teaching at this middle school for twenty-five years. Mr. Sheets is about four feet ten inches tall with short brown hair. His hobbies are playing basketball and play station. He participated in this study because he thinks that he is a pretty good teacher and he wants to find out why these young men just can't seem to flourish academically in his class.

Procedures

Some of the student interviews were conducted in a private office at the middle school away from other persons in the building. The purpose of this was to ensure the anonymity of the persons who participated. Interviews took place during the students' study hall periods, elective courses, and lunches. Times were selected so students did not miss instructional time in their core classes.

With the consent of the parents, some student interviews were held away from school at a site agreed upon by the student and myself. The purpose of holding interviews away from the research site was to give the students an opportunity to more freely share the information away from the school setting.

Interviews with staff members took place at the middle school in a private office away from other people in the building as well. The interviews were conducted over a six to eight week period and lasted between forty to forty five minutes. The number of times I met with each interviewee depended on the fluency of the respondent. Follow up interviews to verify accuracy did occur.

Interviews were audio taped so I could give the participants my undivided attention while they were sharing their experiences. This also provided time to observe verbal and nonverbal cues that had an impact on the procedures such as the body language and the change of voice tone.

Parents of the students were made aware that their son's would be audio taped before they agreed to allow their son to participate. Each participant was asked for his permission to audiotape his interviews. The confidentiality of the participants was guaranteed, and the

names of the participants are changed to help ensure
anonymity.

Each student participant was initially asked the same
set of questions. A set of identical questions was also
developed to ask each staff member. The questions are
listed below.

Initial Questions Asked to Students

- What is the name you would like to be called during
  this study?

- How old are you?

- What are your hobbies?

- How long have you been in this school district?

- What grade are you in?

- Are you a school of choice student?

- What type of relationship do you have with your
  peers?

- What type of relationship do you have with your
  teachers?

- What type grades are you receiving?

- Have you suffered consequences from a discipline
  problem?

- If you have suffered consequences, how did you feel
  about consequences?

- What do you want to get from this middle school?

- Do you think that you are getting this?

Initial Questions Asked to Staff

- What name would you like to be called during this study

- How long have you worked at this school?

- Has the ethnic makeup of the school changed from then until now?

- How would describe the present culture of the school?

- Has the culture changed during your time here as an employee?

- Do all the ethnic cultures in the school work together?

- Do you think that racism is a problem at this school?

- Describe your ideal student?

- Why do kids fail?

- How do you get kids to succeed?

Data Analysis

Data analysis contains three linked sub processes: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Field notes,

interviews, tapes and other data were used to formulate

data summaries, to code, to find themes, and to cluster to

help condense the information. Huberman and Miles (1994)

also define data display as an organized, compressed

assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing

and/or action taking. The data was displayed in a way that

allowed the researcher to look at it in a reduced manner,

so he could better understand its meaning.

The first step in the data analysis was to go through

the interview transcripts and search for common themes in

the respondents answers. After those common themes were

found, the responses of the participants were transferred

to color coded index cards that were color coded according

to the theme.

After coding the interview transcripts, the researcher

proceeded to go through the field notes and search for the

same themes that were found from the interview transcripts.

The field notes were then placed on index cards that were

color coded according to the themes. The results of the

data were also shared with the respondents before the

displayed information was interpreted, verified, and taken

through the conclusion drawing process. This gave the

respondents an opportunity to look at their responses and

determine whether or not it was accurate.

Establishing Trustworthiness

According to Glesne (1998), the credibility of findings and interpretations depends upon careful attention to establishing trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe prolonged engagement and persistent observation as critical in attending to credibility. Prolonged engagement provides scope and persistent observation provides depth. The researcher spent eight hours a day for eight weeks at the research site building sound relationships with the respondents to build trustworthiness. Spending time with the participants, made them feel comfortable enough to the point that they did not feel it was necessary to behave in a certain way and answer questions in a way that they thought the researcher wanted to hear.

The researcher also remained aware of his own biases and subjectivity while sharing the interpretive process with the respondents. The interview transcripts were shared with the respondents. Sharing the interpretive process with the respondents allowed the respondents to verify that the researcher had reflected their perspectives.

Limitations

Limitations are consistent with the always partial state of knowing in social research, and elucidating your limitations help readers know how they should read and

interpret your work (Glesne, 1998). One limitation of the study was the generalization of the findings. This study took place at one particular site. The information gathered from one site may not be representativeof other middle school settings in this city or state.

Another limitation of my study is the sample of students that were chosen for the study. An assumption cannot be made that the information received from these participants is representative of all the African American male students at this particular site or at other middle school settings. Eight African American males is only a small sample of the African American male student population.

Although not the case for this study, another limitation could be that the researcher is the administrator where the study was carried out. This could have caused some students not to participate in the study. It could have also caused those who participated not to be as forthcoming.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

School Systems Nurturing or Hindering?

Each school and school system reflects an institutional culture that is represented by a set of beliefs, values, policies, and practices that support and nurture students, families, and educators toward high performance or create insurmountable barriers to success (Grant & Ladson Billings, 1997).

In many cases school systems create barriers. In fact providing African American males with an effective public school education has proven to be a nearly intractable problem. Many times, these students are apt to feel alienated from rather than engaged in the education process. Some do indeed express their discontent through antisocial behavior (Hrebowski, Maton, & Graff, 1998). These African American students believe they are triply disadvantaged: "unjustly accused, unfairly silenced, and unnecessarily punished" (Sheets & Gay, 1996). According to Gordan, Piana & Keleher (2000) African Americans are in fact far more likely than whites to be suspended.

Lack of Diversity and Multicultural Knowledge

The society in which we live has negative perceptions about African American social styles and traditions because of a lack of awareness. Many educators have been trained by this society and therefore project negative attitudes about African American students. Teachers may try to control black males more tightly than whites when issuing disciplinary consequences, believing that they are not sufficiently disciplined at home (McCadden, 1998). When schools engage in these types of practices, they are not tapping into the knowledge, cognitive abilities, or culture and values of African American students. When schools fail to utilize the knowledge and the cultural values of these young men, many African American students misbehave. Research done by Fremon and Hamilton (1997) shows the bad conduct of a white male student is likely to be excused as a one-time slip while an African American male who similarly misbehaves is labeled as a perpetual troublemaker and is severely punished. This is perceived by many African American male students as racism.

Disciplinary Intervention

Many African American males want to be successful in school, but racism limits their ability to accelerate at

the same pace and to the same level as their white

counterparts. This causes the African American male

student to manage his anxiety by being resistant to

cultural norms or even dropping out of school, thereby

confirming for schools the legitimacy of their low

expectations for students (Mahiri, 1998).

Often times, the African American male's resistance to

cultural norms is perceived as undisciplined behavior.

This causes these students to receive excessive punishment.

Further, arbitrary and excessive consequences for minor

offenses can develop in all students a sense of

powerlessness, dependence on authority, and anger that

leads to further misbehavior (Gathercoal, 1998).

Considering the reasons for the perceived misbehavior

is also important in making decisions about the method of

disciplinary intervention. Many of these "undesired

behaviors" stem from racial differences between the

teachers and the students. Teachers exemplify a sense of

respect for the student when they show a willingness to

consider the reasons behind the perceived misbehaviors.

Exemplifying this respect can uncover information about a

problem the school might help solve, such as the need for

educational support, assistance in securing food and

shelter, relief from victimization through bullying, and

counseling for trauma, depression, and family difficulties (Gathercoal, 1998).

Perceived inappropriate behavior from African American males may be reflected in several ways such as an African American student speaking out loudly in class. Teachers may see this as an interruption. However, the African American student may be trying to show interest. Some may argue to get a point across. The students may argue to misbehave; they may argue because they want to participate. Some teachers consider this behavior as disrespectful and move directly to disciplinary action. Students may engage in certain challenging behaviors common to the African American male adolescent community not because they want to disrupt the classroom but because they want to demonstrate their rebellion against what they consider a teacher's "power tripping." Power tripping means the teacher is abusing her privilege to issue consequences. Some African American male students rebel because they consider the lessons irrelevant, racist or too simplistic or because their perception is that teachers believe them incapable of achievement (Dandy, 1990; Sheets & Gay, 1996).

In the area of education, discipline should be something that is utilized to help students realize there are consequences for inappropriate actions. Discipline

should help students commit themselves to changing the inappropriate behavior. The disciplinary measure should model good behavior, not retribution and humiliation, and students should have some control over its nature. Students can help determine discipline policies in general, but specific punishments should be customized (Gathercoal, 1998; Gottfredson, 1990).

Many factors should be taken into consideration when trying to decide upon the punishment for a given misbehavior, such as consideration of the infraction, the student's self-esteem as well as the academic and personal development needs. The punishment decided upon should also involve restitution and an apology. For example, a student who writes on the bathroom wall should be helped to understand why it is important and necessary to clean the writing off the bathroom wall. However, to Gathercoal (1998) a student should be able to do so when it would not interfere with a school activity, nor be seen by other students. This could cause the student to feel humiliated and as a result lead to even further rebellion.

Classroom Instruction and Learning Environment Differences

Despite being located in economically poor neighborhoods and communities, some schools do exceptionally well in educating students (Waxman & Huang

36

1997). To gain the level of results that we are seeking

for African American male students educational leaders must

be prepared to "create a web of support around children and

their families" (Houston, 2001). Educators who want to

make a difference for African American male students can

not just dedicate their time and expertise, but they must

commit their heart and soul as well.

In order for schools to create an environment where

African American males can increase their level of academic

success as well as decrease the number of discipline

problems, the culture and structure of the school must be

designed to nurture such an environment. The culture and

structure of schools must encompass a foundation of respect

for diversity, and high academic goals and standards for

students of all cultural backgrounds. Educational leaders

must become collaborators and believers that all persons

involved in the educational process are stakeholders.

In Urbana, Illinois, at Martin Luther King Jr.

Elementary School, a group of African American teachers and

staff members came together to develop approaches that

would help their school's African American male students

experience more academic success and fewer discipline

problems. The program they came up with was a combination

of the fourth and fifth grade curriculum and the SETCLAE

curriculum. SETCLAE stands for Self Esteem Through Culture Leads To Academic Excellence. The SETCLAE curriculum focused on contributions of African American authors, scientists, and mathematicians more frequently than did the traditional curriculum.

African American male students could better relate to SETCLAE curriculum. Their ability to relate to this curriculum caused an increased level of self-confidence and leadership. As more of the students developed confidence in themselves and took on leadership roles, their level of dedication to academic success increased, and the dedication continued throughout middle school and high school. As they began to perform better academically, the behavior problems they had experienced in the past disappeared.

The results of this program show that when African American male students experience a classroom environment that is attuned to their individual needs they are more successful academically and socially. A teacher does not need to be the same ethnicity as his or her students, but teachers who share the cultural and ethnic background of students can provide insights that might not otherwise be understood (Delpit, 1995). Gloria Ladson Billings (1994) argues for changes in our teacher preparation process to

help teachers understand the central role of culture and to structure time to observe culturally relevant teaching.

Intended and Unintended Lessons

According to Dr. Kumoshiro (2003) contradictions abound in education. Teaching involves both intended and unintended lessons, and it is often in the unintended, hidden lessons that racism, sexism and other "isms" find life. Learning involves both a desire for and a resistance to knowledge, and it is often our resistance to uncomfortable ideas that keeps our eyes closed to "isms". Dr. Kumoshiro also refers to oppression as a social dynamic in which certain ways of being in this world, including certain ways of identifying or being identified, are normalized or privileged, while other ways are disadvantaged or marginalized.

Much of the time teachers, including some African Americans, are a part of the dominant culture, which means they are normalized and privileged. African American male students are members of the subordinate culture and therefore are disadvantaged and marginalized. From this same background, teachers are a part of the dominant culture, their teaching styles and techniques mirror the dominant culture. Teachers who have been socialized by the dominant culture are not reaching diverse populations that

make up most schools today. Bennet (1986) believes that to

the extent that teachers teach using the same methods they

learned, and to the extent that culture shapes learning

style, students who share a teacher's ethnic background

will be favored in class. Bennett also warns that ignoring

the effects of culture and learning style affects all

students:

> If classroom expectations are limited by our own
> cultural orientations, we impede successful
> learners guided by another cultural orientation.
> If we only teach according to the ways we
> ourselves learn best, we are also likely to
> thwart successful learners
> who may share our cultural background but whose
> learning styles deviate from our own.

Primary cultural differences result from cultural

developments before members of a given population come in

contact with American or Western white middle class

culture. In contrast to primary cultural discontinuities,

secondary discontinuities develop after members of two

populations have been in contact or after members of a

given population have begun to participate in an

institution, such as the school system, controlled by

another group (Ogbu, 1982).

African American male students have not chosen to be

placed in a setting that causes them to fall into a

subordinate culture. According to Edwin D. Bell (2003),

caste-like minorities such as African Americans, Mexican

Americans, Native Americans, and Puerto Ricans have been

permanently and involuntarily incorporated into their

societies. They have little or no political power and are

economically subordinate. Their disproportionate

representation in menial jobs is used to argue that low

status is appropriate. Persons labeled as caste like

minorities are characterized by disproportionate and

persistent school failure.

Ogbu (1983) argued that school plays an important role

in an economy, and school attempts to fulfill this crucial

role in three ways:

> The three ways are teaching children
> beliefs, values, and attitudes which support the
> economic system; teaching them skills and
> competencies required to make the system work; and
> credentialing them to enter the work force. During
> their education children develop appropriate
> cognitive maps or shared knowledge of how the
> economic and status-mobility systems work.

However, due to structured inequality, unequal power

relationships permit the dominant group to control minority

access to education and jobs. African American males tend

to see most of their problems in terms of systematic

discrimination. As a result of this discrimination, many

African American males do not believe their efforts will be

good enough to achieve the objectives created by persons

from the dominant culture. They also believe that when they are able to achieve the objectives they will not receive an appropriate award. Many African American males believe that should they manage to excel in school, despite the obstacles, racism will limit their ability to reap the advantages available to white achievers. So they manage their anxiety by being resistant to cultural norms or even dropping out thereby confirming for schools the legitimacy of their low expectations for the African American students (Mahiri, 1996).

Stereotypes of the Subordinate Culture

Many times the dominant culture brings with it stereotypes of the subordinate culture. Steele's 1997 theory of stereotype threat identifies negative stereotypes as a culprit in the academic underperformance of students of color. African American males fall into the category of students of color, which means they suffer from increased anxiety. While these African American males suffer increased anxiety, they tend to fall into a self-protection mode that causes them to devalue or reduce their identification with academics. The aversion is used to decrease the anxiety that is induced by this stereotyping. It also serves as a shield that allows these African American males to lose interest in that domain.

The dominant culture also tends to lump disadvantaged minority students together; however, Ogbu (1997) argued that not all minority groups are the same. Ogbu separates minorities into two groups, those who reside in a country or society voluntarily, and those who have been subjugated into a country or society against their own free will. African American males are examples of those who have been subjugated into a country or society against their own free will. When African American males fall into the subordinate group involuntarily much of the time, they have social or collective identities that are in opposition to the social and collective identities of the dominant group. African American males tend to see education as a system controlled by the enemy that is currently oppressing them and that has oppressed their ancestors in the past. For them school is seen as an inappropriate aspect of what they deem proper African American identity (Fordham and Ogbu, 1986). This causes African American male students in particular to value those things in society that are in opposition to what European Americans, who are a part of the dominant culture, value as being appropriate for themselves. Ogbu labeled this type of oppositional behavior as cultural inversion. According to Ogbu, cultural inversion is a defense mechanism used by African

43

American males to help them cope with subordination. This defense mechanism is going to continue to be used because there are fewer incentives for African Americans to give them up as long as they feel subjugated and oppressed.

Oppression of Sub-Ordinance

African American male students also have to deal with not being accepted and rewarded in the same way as white students are accepted and rewarded that causes them to consciously or unconsciously see learning at school as a process in which they are misplaced and is not an asset to their social identity, sense of security, and self- worth. According to Majors and Billson (1992), African American males adopt a cool pose that is a ritualized approach to masculinity that allows them to cope with and survive in an environment of social oppression and racism found within schools in the United States. The cool pose is adopted as another way to deal with the oppression of being placed in a subordinate group. African American males project behaviors of emotionless, fearlessness, and aloofness to counter the inner pain caused by the damaged pride, poor self-concept, and fragile social confidence. Majors and Billson depict African American males as victims of their own coping strategies. Members of the dominant culture see the cool pose as flamboyant behavior, which leads to a

consequence in a school setting. Consequences are issued because African American male students utilizing the cool pose as a defense mechanism do not fit into what the dominant culture sees as an ideal student who is disciplined and motivated to learn. The coping strategies that African American male students use are oppositional to academics.

As a result of these consequences, many African American male students can be found wandering the halls of public schools, alienated from the educational process searching for their American dream (Bailey and Paisley, 2003). Very few African American male students are in upper level and gifted academic classes. However, they many times overpopulate remedial classes. They outnumber white males on suspension and expulsion lists (Bailey, 1996). Many African American males walk away from their education, their hopes, and their dreams they were wandering the halls looking for because they do not see the educational and social systems as places for them to achieve. Many African American males see these two systems as institutions that collectively label them without giving them the opportunity to realize their potential as individuals (Narine, 1992).

According to Gloria Ladson Billings (2000), there is a generalized perception that African American culture is not a useful rubric for addressing the needs of African learners, thus African American learners are often treated as if they are corruptions of white culture, participating in an oppositional, counter productive culture(Ogbu,1987). Schools and teachers of the dominant culture see their job as removing the culture of African Americans from them and replacing it with the dominant culture because they see the language, prior knowledge, and values of African American students as subordinate.

One Best Way

Gloria Ladson Billings(2000) states that the emphasis on a one best system (Tyack, 1974)emerges from the nineteenth century Americanization model that was assigned to merge all students, regardless of ethnic and cultural origins, into one ideal American model (Olneck, 1995). The problem is that this process only looked at immigrant and cultural groups from Europe. African Americans were not seen as a group that was capable of being educated, and therefore, they were not a part of the mainstream educational discourse. According to King (1994), the creation of racial hierarchy with white and black as polar opposites has positioned all people in American society and

reified whiteness in ways that suggest that the closer one is able to align oneself to whiteness, the more socially and culturally acceptable one is perceived to be.

This created a sense of white supremacy in society and in schools. Allen (1994) argued that this white supremacy labeled African Americans as genetically inferior and not fully human. This is why the expectations for educating African American males were, and still is, low. As a part of the subordinate culture, African American male students are being told systematically and on a consistent basis that they are inferior to those who fit into the dominant culture, and they are incapable of high academic achievement. After being told they are inferior and incapable of achieving high academic achievement, they begin to internalize what they have been told, and their performance in school mirrors the low expectations that have been set for them.

Another problem encountered by African American male students is they are often taught by teachers who would rather not teach them (Grant, 1989; Haberman, 1989). One of the main reasons that teachers in the dominant culture do not want to teach African American males is because they have not been prepared by their institutions to effectively teach African American male students. Most teachers report

that their pre-service preparation did little or nothing to prepare them for today's diverse classrooms (Ladson Billings, 1994). The lack of preparation causes teachers to apply the same remedies to all students. This causes a major problem because according to Boykin (1985) what may be valued in African culture differs from what may be valued in schools, and applying the same remedy may actually increase the educational disparities experienced by African American males.

According to Dunbar (1999), many educated researchers have documented over the years both the overt and subtle ways poor and minority students are deprived of full participation in the academic culture of schools. In fact, many African American male students are placed in alternative schools because their behavior is seen as inappropriate to fit into the dominant culture of mainstream schools, and are labeled as being incapable of functioning in the dominant school culture. When students are labeled, they acquire special identities in which learners are reduced from a whole individual to a tainted discounted one (Goffman, 1963). Darling Hammond (1990) said students who are labeled rarely get an opportunity to talk about things they like, what they know, or what they would like to know. They also miss out on reading books in which

they see their own reality reflected. This means African

American male students who are placed into these

alternative programs are not actively involved in their

learning.

Cultural Conflict Theory

According to Ogbu (1978), two variants of the

culture conflict theory both argue that black children fail

to do well in school because they grow up in a culture that

is different from the mainstream culture. Black children

acquire values, attitudes, and learning styles within their

culture that are different from and in conflict with those

required for success in the public schools and in wider

society. Cultural conflict theorists feel that the language

style and other cultural features of blacks are valid and

respectable. This develops pride in blacks and helps them

to better achieve in schools (Baratz and Baratz, 1970;

Dillard, 1972). Although this idea has shown some growth

within the last thirty years, there are still many

obstacles because many people do not feel a need to

identify African Americans as an important class of people

who are in need of a distinctive pedagogy.

Theory of Culturally Relevant Teaching

The theory of culturally relevant teaching serves the

purpose of getting people from all cultural backgrounds to

recognize and understand society's racial hierarchy. "There is a hierarchy of positions, with upper-class White males at the top and lower-class males and females of color at the bottom" (Scheurich, 1993). Our world and our schools operate under a covert "culture of power" (Delpit, 1988) with the powerful people belonging to the white race. Those who do not belong to the culture of power acknowledge its existence, but those who do belong tend to deny their own privileged status. This is a form of racism because racism is not only defined by mean spirited attacks on non-whites, but also by ". . .non-action and tacit acceptance of the privilege and advantages whites receive, and this is perhaps the most insidious form of racism (Ladson Billings, 1996). White people have established all rules, codes of conduct, language, behaviors, and people of color are always evaluated in terms of these societal rules. "This means that success in institutions-schools, workplaces, and so on is predicated upon acquisition of the culture of those who are in power" (Delpit, 1988).

How School Came to Fail African American Students

Historically schools were created to serve the needs of white males, and the culture of schools has not changed much throughout history to include other cultures. When African Americans were allowed to go to schools, they were

required to go to separate schools from whites, and the conditions were different. Many times African Americans attended school in old buildings, with used materials and supplies, and were not given the same financial support as white schools. This was school desegregation.

School desegregation has ". . .yet to demonstrate a sustained effort to provide quality education for African-Americans. Despite modest gains in standardized test scores, the performance of African Americans in public schools, even those from relatively high-income stable families, remains behind that of whites from similar homes" (Ladson-Billings, 1994,). When African American students fail to learn in the same way as white students, school wide policies are developed to help them become more like the status quo. According to Ogbu (1978), since the second half of the 1960's this theory of cultural deprivation has been very influential in generating compensatory education programs, including programs in early childhood education such as Head Start.

Compensatory Education

Compensatory Education is a movement where the goal is to ". . . redeem the children from the influences of their home environments by resocializing them to develop those skills necessary for success in public schools. . ." (Ogbu,

1978). These programs are implemented during the preschool

years because educators feel that this is a good age to

undo the damage done by the students' home life so that the

students will not fall into unwanted patterns.

The most well-known program that falls under

compensatory education is Head Start. The objective of

Head Start is to help children of poverty develop

cognitively, so they can do as well as their middle class

peers. Studies have indicated that some groups of children

show an ability to keep up with their white peers in the

early grades, but this tapers off as they move up in grade

level. Most success does not last beyond the third grade

level (Miller, 1967; Passow, 1971). Many theorists believe

that it is due to the underlying assumptions of the model:

black children are unable to succeed in school because they

are not properly trained at home in the same way as Head

Start attempts to train them (Goldberg, 1971; Stanley,

1973).

Ogbu (1978) said:

> I reject these explanations and contend that
> Compensatory education programs, both preventative
> and remedial, fail to produce significant
> improvement in the school performance of black
> children because the theoretical assumptions upon
> which they are based are wrong. Although lower-
> class blacks probably come to school with preschool
> training and cognitive and other skills that differ
> from those of their white middle class peers, the

difference does not arise from the fact
that there is some deficit in black development
because of cultural deprivation. It arises from the respective
positions of Blacks and whites in the American
caste system which require that the two races
develop different patterns of child training and
different types of cognitive and motivational
skills. These differences were until recently
reinforced by the education system itself.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

STRATEGY FOR INQUIRY

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matters. Qualitative research is used in this study because it allows me to study the African American male students in their natural settings, and attempts to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that these students brought to them (Denzin & Lincoln 1994).

This method also involves the studied use of and the collection of a variety of empirical materials that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in the lives of individuals. This method is used to describe the routine and problematic moments and meanings in the lives of these students by getting closer to them and forming a good rapport that allowed me to get a better grasp on their perspective through detailed interviews and observations.

Qualitative research allows the researcher to emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry and to seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Experiences uncovered of the everyday social world of these
African American male middle school students are reflective
of the intersection of the dominant school culture and the
subordinate school culture.

Critical Ethnography

Critical ethnography was also used in this research.
According to Quantz (1992), critical ethnographers focus on
how knowledge is both powerful and political, and by
focusing on groups marginal to the dominant culture,
researchers attempt to understand and describe the
experiences, consciousness, and cultural context of people
living in asymmetrical power relations. It is a way to
discover, describe, analyze, and open to scrutiny otherwise
hidden agendas, power centers, and assumptions that
inhibit, repress, and constrain African American male
students (Thomas, 1993). Critical ethnography was a useful
tool in this research.

Thomas (1993) further states that critical
ethnographers seek to do more than understand and describe;
they want to transform unequal power relations. Critical
ethnographers study culture to change it. The term
critical refers to the detecting and unmasking of beliefs
and practices that limit human freedom, justice, and
democracy (R. Usher, 1996). Further, critical

ethnographers assert that while values enter into all research, they work to make their values explicit. They see research as a political act because it not only relies on value systems but challenges value systems.

Critical ethnographers often question and investigate ways in which lived experience may be distorted by false consciousness and ideology (Schwandt,1990). Critical ethnographers analyze the problems of structural causes in order to make the investigation an educational endeavor. Once the structural causes, such as the discipline code and the curriculum makeup have been analyzed, it then becomes a process of collective action aimed at social change (Glesne, 1998).

Horkheimer (1972) put it succinctly when he argued that critical theory and research are never satisfied with merely increasing knowledge. After increasing knowledge, action must be taken to move towards a change in the social environment.

The focus of this research is on African American males as a group that is part of the subordinate culture and marginal to the dominant school culture and attempted to describe the experiences, consciousness, and cultural context while they participated in asymmetrical power relations. Uncovered are

some of the issues that have been hidden as well as some of
the assumptions that inhibited, repressed, and constrained
African American male students academically and socially.

Narratives and Short Stories

Narratives have been implemented into the study
allowing the presentation of perspectives of students and
staff members from interview conversations.

"Narratives are the primary way through which humans
organize their experiences into temporally meaningful
episodes" (Polkinghorne as cited in Richardson 1990).

"Narratives display the goals and intentions of human
actors; makes individuals, cultures, societies and
historical epochs comprehensible as wholes; humanizes time,
allows us to contemplate the effects of our actions and to
alter the directions of our lives" (Richardson, 1990).

The short story was used effectively. According to
Glesne (1997) the ethnographic short story allows the
researcher to combine his own imagination with ethnographic
insights to tell good stories. Drawing upon literary
techniques, such as flashback, characterization, dialogue,
internal monologue and action helped to create ethnographic
short stories which gave a voice to those who have been
silent and marginalized.

Participant Observation

Participant observation was incorporated into this study. According to Howard Becker and Blanche Geer (1983), the term participant observation covers several kinds of research activity. The researcher may be a member of the group he or she studies; he or she may pose as a member of the group, though in fact he or she is not; or he or she may join the group in the role of one who is there to observe.

In general, the participant observer gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organization that is being studied (Becker and Geer, 1983). Becker and Geer also said a participant observer also watches the people who are being studied to see what situations they ordinarily meet and how they behave in them.

It has been argued that in a sense all social research is a form of participant observation because we cannot study the social world without being part of it (Hammersly & Atkinson, 1983). Further they define participant observation as observations carried out when the researcher is playing an established participant role in the scene studied. The four types of participant observation are the complete observer, the observer as participant, the

participant as observer, and the complete participant (Gold, 1958; Junker, 1960).

Using the role of complete observer allowed observation of the students as well as the staff in their natural setting.

According to Junker (1960), natural state means people carry out their daily activities without altering their behavior because they know they are being observed. During my time as a complete observer, I did not interact with the students or the staff. The lack of interaction allowed me to get a more realistic view of how the intersection of the two cultures impacts the academic and social experiences of the students.

Interviewing

Qualitative interviewing is based in conversation (Kvale,1996) with the emphasis on researchers asking questions and listening and respondents answering (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Interviewed were staff members, some of whom are a part of the dominant school culture, and some who chose not to be, as well as African American male students who fall into the subordinate school culture. These interviews helped me in acquiring first hand information pertaining to their narratives.

According to Glesne (1998), interviewing is getting words to fly. In fact, she uses comparison and contrast to show how an interviewer is similar to and different from a human baseball pitcher. As an interviewer you pitch questions at your respondents with the intent of making words fly. However, the difference is that a human pitcher does not throw pitches they want batters to hit and interviewers pitch out questions that they want the respondents to hit. In this study questions were formulated that allowed the respondents to answer in a way that hit homeruns and provided information that was transmuted into data. A grand tour question is the question that all the other sub questions stem from. The grand tour question for the staff members was: *How would you describe the school culture and climate?* The grand tour question for the students was: *How would you describe your middle school experience?*

Individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with both staff members and students to help get a better understanding of how they see their experiences in this particular middle school. While conducting these interviews, a style of "interested listening" was used that rewarded the respondent's participation but that did not evaluate their responses (Converse & Schuman, 1974).

Lofland (1971), points out that open-ended ethnographic interviewing and participant observation go hand in hand. Open ended questions were used during these face to face interviews because it would inhibit any assumptions about what staff members or students revealed, and according to Malinowski, (1989) unstructured questions assist in "understanding the complex behavior of members of a society without imposing any priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry".

CHAPTER 4

NARRATIVES FROM THE FIELD

Nobody Knows The Trouble I See

From my observations and interviews, I discovered that
the young men in this study come to school with problems of
which many teachers are unaware. This lack of awareness
creates a conflict between teachers and these students.
Mrs. Light an Asian American fourth year teacher of
Language Arts recognized that unawareness regarding the
personal problems of the student seriously affects that
student's academic and social growth. She stated:

> Many of these African American males feel like
> loners. They come to school to get away from
> their problems and the teachers tend to add to
> their problems. The teachers have expectations
> from a time period that these students can't even
> begin to fathom. I don't think that some of our
> teachers stop and think about the lives that some
> of our kids come from. In fact,wonder if some of
> our teachers stop and think at all. As teachers,
> we have to take the life of the students
> into consideration. As a staff, we must become
> more aware of the problems that these young men
> experience outside of school or they will
> continue to fail academically and socially.

Although Mrs. Light realized this problem, other
teachers did not. Mrs. Night for example a Caucasian
American teacher of Social Studies with twenty years of
experience in middle school, caused a conflict between
herself and Chad. Chad a thirteen year old African

American male student had problems at home that he brought with him to school.

On the day Chad brought his problems to her classroom, Mrs. Night responded to the problem by ordering: "Chad get up or get out." She stood over Chad eyebrows raised, nostrils flared, and finger extended towards his face. Chad slowly raised his head, saliva raunning down his chin.

He asked" What I do? I ain't even do nothing; it ain't no fair."

Mrs. Night replied, "Exactly. You have not done anything but sleep. In fact, since you want to talk back, you can get out."

Chad sucked his teeth and walked out the door. I walked out behind Chad and this began the following conversation.

Mr. B: "What is going on, is everything all right?"

Chad: "Man, she didn't have to disrespect me like that. I am tired. She don't know what I had to go through last night."

Mr. B: "Do you want to talk about what happened last night?"

Chad: "I ont care"

Mr.B: "So tell me, what happened?"

Chad: "I ain't get no sleep last night cause my mom put me out."

Mr. B: "Why did she put you out?"

Chad: "Cause we was arguing about me not having no shoes for school, and I told her that if I lived with my daddy, I bet he would get me a pair. She told me my daddy didn't do shit for me in thirteen years. That is pretty much all my life. I said Yeah! Right. Then she said, You know what. Get out of my house and go live witcho sorry ass daddy then. She put me out for real and locked the door. I was walking around all night with no where to go. I ain't know where my daddy live at. I walked around for bout six hours. It was freezing, too. I finally walked to my homie's house, and he let me in. His mom was at work, so that's why he let me in. I ain't get no sleep. My mom let me back in the next morning, so I could get ready for school. Then I had to walk to school. Man! Shoot I'm tired."

Mr.B: "All right Chad. Go to my office and get some sleep. I'll wake you up and give you a pass to your next class".

Chad: "Ahight, preeshate it, Mr. B."

Outside Problems Impact Inside Perfomance

The incident between Mrs. Night and Chad is an indication of problems some of these children bring to school. Another example involves Richard who is another participant in this study. Richard is a fourteen year old African American male student who has failed his grade twice twice. This particular incident took place in the classroom of another Caucasian American female teacher who sent Richard to the office for disciplinary actions. As the researcher, I spoke with Richard to see what was the cause of his problem.

Mr. B: "Why are you in the office?"

Richard: "Cause Mrs. Nichols put me out of class."

Mr. B: "Why did she put you out of class?"

Richard: "Cause, she said I wasn't doing my work, and she wasn't gonna have me stopping other people from learning. Don't nobody be paying her no attention noway. She boring."

Mr. B: "Why weren't you working?"

Richard: Man! You know I gotta go to court right?"

Mr.B: "What you gotta go to court for?"

Richard: "Stealing."

Mr.B: "What are you doing stealing?"

Richard: "I was hungry, so I took me some chips, and I saw these tite earrings, so I took them too."

Mr.B: "Why did you take the earrings?"

Richard: "Cause all my friends had some, and I wanted some too."

Mr. B: "So you were trying to fit in and be like your friends?"

Richard: "Yeah, pretty much."

Mr. B: "Where were you?"

Richard: "I was at Meijer."

Mr.B: "Why didn't you just ask your mom or dad for some money?"

Richard: "Man, my daddy ain't got no money. I ain't saw that Dude in a minute. And my momma don't got no job. So that mean I ain't got no money. I can't get what ain't there. So that's why I stole the chips and the earrings."

Mr.B: "When do you go to court?"

Richard: "I go to court on, I think it's the twenty fourth of January.

Mr.B: "Are you scared Richard?"

Richard: "Yeah, I'm scared, I might get taken from my mom. My dad don't want me, and I'll probably go to juvee. See that's the real reason why I ain't do no work in Mrs. Nichol's class."

As the researcher, I was able to build a rapport with Richard that caused Richard to feel comfortable sharing this personal information with me. Richard made me aware of why he was not focused on his work. It is very difficult to focus on completing a task, whether academic or social, when you are going through a life altering situation that creates fear. The way for teachers to become aware of the outside problems these young men bring to school is through relationship building. This leads into Mr. Wilkes perspective on the lack of relationship building, and the problems it causes for these African American young men.

Mr. Wilkes Perspective on the Lack of Relationship Building

Mr. Wilkes is an African American teacher of physical education who has worked at this middle school for eight years. He thinks the lack of understanding and lack of relationship building on the part of Caucasian American staff members add to student failure both academically and socially. He stated:

> Man these white teachers around here don't have a
> Clue what these young men have to go through and
> they could care less. The lack of awareness has
> been here for years. They have not had to go
> through what these young men have had to go
> through, and they don't seem to care enough to
> find out what they have gone through which
> impacts them in school. It is like they are
> privileged. I work with them everyday and I see

their actions and reactions. Instead of building
relationships, they build barriers. For example,
I witnessed an African American male student
being yelled at for coming to class without all
of his materials. The student tried to explain
that when father got paid, he would have the rest
of his materials. The teacher completely tuned
this statement out and responded by saying,"If
you come to my class again without your
materials, you will be kicked out." I witnessed a
Caucasian American student come to this same
class without all of his materials and he was
warned about it and then provided with the
materials. In my eyes, excuse my language, but
this is some racist shit and racism is definitely
a barrier which has to be removed.

Mr. Wilkes statement about racism as a barrier raises
an issue concerning racism and its definition and how it
serves as a barrier from the perspective of the staff
members.

What Is Racism

Helen Neville (2000) states that racism thus has been
viewed as an ideology or expression of racialism (ie,
belief in inherent superiority and inferiority of groups of
people based on racial classification) and racial animus
(ie, hatred, hostile feelings) by individuals, groups of
people, or society in general.

"Racism is a complex and multifaceted social system.
Traditional psychological conceptualizations of racism have
centered on a set of ideas or beliefs that are regarded as

having the potential to lead individuals to develop

prejudice"(Bonilla Silva, 1996).

The School Staffs' Perspectives on Racism

Mrs. Grimes

When asked, five out of the six teachers in this study

agreed that racism was a problem at the middle school.

Mrs. Grimes is the first teacher who acknowledged the

presence of racism.   She is an African American female

social worker at the middle school, and she believes that

racism has definitely caused problems for these African

American males.   She states that:

> Racism definitely exists at the middle school. It
> stems from the dominant group having privileges
> that others don't have. The African American
> males definitely don't have those privileges.
> Privileges are opportunities to do things that
> other people may not have an opportunity to do.
> For example, Caucasian American students can hang
> out in the halls and talk between classes and not
> get stopped. However, when a group of African
> American male students congregate in the halls
> between classes, they are separated and told
> to move on to class. The cultures are mixed, and
> the dominant culture does not understand the
> minority culture, and they never even get the
> desire to get the information that will make them
> aware of some cultural behaviors exhibited by
> these young men. You can't help but have racism
> in a situation like that because kids are going
> to be singled out because of their differences.

Mrs. Oliver

Observing students being singled out and at times wrongly accused is why Mrs. Oliver's perspective on racism at the middle school nearly mirrors the perspective of Mrs. Grimes. Mrs. Oliver is a first year African American female teaching special education. She has witnessed several acts of racism towards these young black men take place. She stated:

> I thought that special education students were discriminated against,but the young black men in this building definitely experience racism. For example, I witnessed one occasion where two sets of male students were playing around pushing each other in the hall. One set of the students were Caucasian American and the other set was African American. Before, I had chance to speak to both sets of students, the guidance counselor who is Caucasian American rushed right by the two Caucasian American males and went directly to the African American males to issue consequences. At that moment it appeared to me at that moment that the young black men had been singled out and that the young white men had special privileges. In fact, I am starting to see this happen on a regular basis by the same staff members. It happens so often that I am not even sure that they realize that this form of racism exist.

Many times, people don't realize that this form of racism exists and subsequently deny that it occurs. Mrs. Light spoke about the denial on the part of these staff members when she shared her perspective on racism.

Mrs.Light

Mrs. Light the fourth year language arts teacher acknowledged the fact that racism definitely exists in the middle school and that those people who display racism claim that racism does not exist. She stated:

> The Caucasian American female teachers in the building feel comfortable sharing their feelings with me because although I am Asian American both my adopted parents are white, so they consider me as one of them. When I brought up the topic of racism experienced by the African American male students, they said that they did not see racism as a problem in the middle school. In fact, they felt that the problems that these young men encounter in school, they bring upon themselves, and race has nothing to do with their middle school experience.

Mr.Finch

Although Mrs. Light said that the Caucasian American female teachers shared how they felt that racism is not a problem, it appears from Mr. Finch's response to the question "*Is racism a problem at the middle school?*" that he agrees with his Caucasian American female coworkers. He stated:

> Racism is not much of a problem at this school
> . Now I guess racism is something that is to some extent defined by the person who is being discriminated against. So as an old white guy, I may be the wrong guy to ask. At the same time, I feel like I am fairly sensitive to a lot of this stuff, and I have spent a whole lot of time with the black kids at this school. I guess my overall observation is that the interplay that takes place is based more on the personality of the kid than on race. Now, on the part of the

staff, there are probably some staff who have\
more difficulties than others putting themselves
in the place of kids from a black family because
they are
unaware of the cultural values and practices of
these kids, and they don't want to become aware
. If that is considered as racism, or maybe the
ground work on which racism might grow, there may
be a little bit of it. But again, if I had to
place the problems in order in this building from
top to bottom, I would probably not place racism
at the top.

People who deny that racism exists and then shift the

blame to those persons who are experiencing the racism are

condoning a more disguised form of racism which brings me

to the next topic of color blind racial attitudes. Mr.

Finch's comment that the problem is the student and not his

race suggests an attitude of color blindness. This

attitude is held by many despite the appearance that these

African American young men are being singled out.

Color Blind Racial Attitudes That Lead To Persistent

Negative Stereotyping

Helen Neville (2000) states that color blind racial

attitudes are rooted in the structure of society. People

who adopt a color blind racial attitude deny that racism

actually exists, and they believe race does not play a

meaningful role in lived experiences of people. As a

result, a more modern "laissez faire racism" has taken

shape. This new form of racism is characterized by

persistent negative stereotyping, a tendency to blame minorities themselves for racial disparities, and resistance to meaningful efforts to ameliorate problematic social conditions and institutions (Bobo, Kliegel, & Smith 1997).

The first characteristic of a color blind racial attitude that leads to laissez faire racism is persistent negative stereotyping. During this study, I witnessed persistent negative stereotyping take place when I overheard a discussion by four Caucasian American teachers about black children.

Teacher 1:"Boy, those black kids just can't keep their mouths closed. It seems like no matter where I am, they are always the loudest."

Teaher 2: "Yeah, I agree. They always have to be talking, and they always have to have the final word. It is the males more so than the females."

Teacher 3: "Yeah, if they would just keep their mouths closed, the hallways would be much quieter."

Teacher 4: Laughingly, "How about if we just get rid of them all, then we would not have any problems."

During this conversation not only had these young men been stereotyped as loud, but they had also been stereotyped as troublemakers. These teachers did not know

I was listening, and when I walked around the corner to make my presence known, they immediately changed the subject. Why do teachers make such negative comments about students? It is because they are unaware of cultural differences.

An observed cultural difference was the way this particular group of African American males chose to show interest in class activities. The body language and tone of voice of these young men changed when they wanted to participate in classroom activities. These students showed interest by speaking out loudly in class, squirming around, sucking their teeth, and frowning up their faces. Teachers saw this type of behavior as an interruption. The young men not only spoke out loudly, but they even argued to get their point across during classroom discussions. Teachers in this study considered this behavior as disrespectful and moved directly to disciplinary action. In this study, the young men engaged in this type behavior because they viewed the teachers response as an abuse of power. According to Dandy (1990), Sheets and Gay (1996), this challenging behavior is common to the African American male adolescent community not because they want to cause problems but because they want to demonstrate their rebellion against the teacher's "power tripping."

This leads to another cultural difference that was observed during this study pertaining to disciplinary action. Teachers see disciplining these young men in front of their peers as a form of retribution that will teach the students involved how to behave. However, the young men that I observed and interviewed during this study see this type of discipline as a form of humiliation. Gathercoal (1998) stated that when disciplining students, the students self-esteem and personal development needs should be taken into consideration, and it should not interfere with a school activity or be witnessed by other students. This only causes the African American male to feel humiliated and as a result leads to more rebellion.

Another observed cultural difference pertains to the materials that have to be learned by the students and how they have to be learned. In this study, the young men seemed to be very interested when they could relate the classroom activity to their life experiences and to their individual learning style such as learning through music and learning by performing. However, during my observations, these types of activities were not taking place. Teachers that I observed did not implement the language, prior knowledge, values, and learning styles of these young African American men into their lessons.

Teachers utilized the same remedies and methods with all students, and according to Boykin (1985), this only increases the educational disparities experienced by these young men because what the young men value differs from what is valued in schools by the dominant culture.

This cultural intersection without cultural awareness leads to other problems for these young men, such as being labeled unreachable, loud, and trouble makers.

When the dominant culture intersects with the subordinate culture, there is a lack of reciprocal agreement and the cultural values and beliefs of the dominant culture do not coincide with the cultural values and beliefs of the subordinate culture. The lack of coincidence causes labeling to occur.

Labels Caused By Cultural Intersection

Teachers Perspectives

Mrs. Light

This leads to my next topic of discussion labels resulting from incongruence with cultural intersection. Mrs. Light said that she thinks it is hard not to have labeling take place when there is cultural intersection without providing the requisite awareness to members of the dominant culture. Cultural intersection is when the dominant culture whose characteristics, values and

viewpoints are considered the norm comes into contact with

the subordinate culture whose values, characteristics, and

viewpoints are considered inadequate.

Mrs. Light also shared stories with me about African

American young men who had received labels from staff

members at the middle school. Mrs. Light stated:

> Anytime you have two cultures that intersect you
> are always going to have labeling. In this
> situation, the African American males are the
> ones who get the labels. For example, I have
> not had in my classes Darius Mulliken, a
> fourteen year old African American male eighth
> grader, but I know who he is because I
> have heard teachers talk and say that he is a
> difficult child, so he has been labeled already.
> But giving him that chance to show that he is
> capable of behaving and doing his work, and
> being nice to him in the hallway, you know,
> lends me to have a relationship with him right
> now.

Mrs. Light's comments and my observations suggest that

it has been accepted as culturally appropriate by the

dominant culture to stereotype African American males as

aggressive and insubordinate. This allows them to control

the black males more strictly than their peers. According

to McCadden (1998), schools that allow these practices to

take place are permitting the formation of relationships

between staff members that are not healthy for the young

men because they are not tapping into the knowledge,

cognitive abilities, or cultural values of them.

Relationships That Lead To Labeling

One of the keys to removing cultural unawareness caused by cultural intersection is by forming relationships which, in turn, will help to remove the labels that have been placed on these young men. In forming these relationships teachers help create a web of support around them. According to Delpit (1995), a teacher does not have to have the same cultural and ethnic background as the student, but they need to form relationships with these students. Teachers and students form relationships by sharing cultural and ethnic background information that has the potential to provide insight into teaching that might not otherwise be understood. Unfortunately during my observations, I discovered that some of the teachers in this study were unwilling to form relationships with these African American young men.

For example, I witnessed Chad, a student in this study, ask Mrs. Night, his social studies teacher if he could meet with her after class to discuss how he felt about her disciplining him in front of his peers. She responded by saying she did not have to discuss it. She told Chad that he brought it upon himself and that if it happened again, she would handle it the same way. However,

Mrs. Night did meet with a Caucasian American student after class to discuss a discipline issue.

Another indicator that the teachers I observed in this study may not be willing to encourage relationships with African American young men was their unwillingness to provide these young men with extra academic assistance during school or after school when it was requested. However I witnessed several other Caucasian American students request extra academic assistance and they were allowed to stay after class and after school to receive this assistance.

Instead of forming relationships with these young men, teachers in this study form relationships with each other to discuss the "negative" actions of these African American males and these discussions transfer preconceived biases from one teacher to another. This is not good for these African American young men because many of them do mature and change, but once they receive a label, it is like a permanent marker over their heads.

Jamon's Permanent Marker

For example, Jamon, is a fourteen year old eighth grade African American male who participated in this study. During my observation of Jamon in his Language Arts class, several students were making inappropriate noises as though

79

they were "passing gas" while the teacher Mrs. Wallace wrote the daily assignment on the board. Mrs. Wallace is a Caucasian American female teacher who has been teaching Language Arts for six years. She turned around using a loud tone voice and said "Jamon! Get out! and I am calling the principal on you as well." Jamon responded by asking her why he had to get out of the room. Mrs. Wallace told him was behaving inappropriately. In this particular situation, it was not Jamon who made the noise that interrupted the class. I had been observing Jamon's behavior, and he was sitting quietly waiting for Mrs. Wallace. As the observer, I did not want to comment about her false accusation. Jamon exited the room and said, "Man! This some bull." A few minutes later, the principal arrived and Mrs. Wallace exited the room to talk with Jamon and the principal.

After this class ended, it was Mrs. Wallace's planning period. I remained in the classroom during the planning period to converse with Mrs. Wallace about Jamon's behavior.

Mr. B: "Has Jamon been a behavior problem in your class in the past?"

Mrs. Wallace: "No, not really in my class, but his other teachers say that he is always in the middle of some disruption."

Mr. B: "How were you able to determine that Jamon was the student making inappropriate noises?"

Mrs. Wallace: "As I stated earlier, he is known for being a disruption in his classes, and when I turned around, he just looked guilty."

Mr. B: "What made Jamon look guilty?"

Mrs. Wallace: "Like I said, I know Jamon and when I turned around, his facial expression alone told me that he did it."

Mr. B: "Well, thanks for you time and I will talk to you again soon."

Although I was aware that Jamon did not make the disruptive noises, as the researcher, I could not mention this to Mrs. Wallace. I did not want to ruin my chances of observing her class as well as interviewing her in the future for this study. However, from this situation it is clear that Jamon was not given a fair chance.

A fair chance is not something that should be earned; it should be given. However, from the observations and the interviews, it seemed that these young men have not been

given a fair chance and had been labeled whether fair or not. The labels have caused them to become frustrated with their middle school experience. The students willingly shared the disappointments of their middle school experience.

Student Stories on The Frustration of Being Labeled

Jamon was sitting in the hall after the principal left and Mrs. Wallace had returned to the classroom. When she returned to the classroom, I went out to talk to Jamon for five minutes about how this particular situation made him feel and I then returned to Mrs. Wallace's class. During our five minute conversation, Jamon said that all he wants to get from middle school is a good education. However, it is hard for him to even get a middle school education. He stated:

> All I want to do is get an education and do what
> I got to do to make it through the school year
> But sometimes it gets awful hard. I spend more
> time in the hallway than I do in my classes
> Teachers always put me out for no reason. You
> know, last year I got into some trouble, but
> this year I been tryin hard to stay out of
> trouble, but some of these teachers just
> won't give me a chance. Like I didn't even do
> nothing. Other kids made them noises, and Mrs.
> Wallace just gone single me out. Why she single
> me out and call the principal on me? And den when
> he got dare, she gone say some "We know how acted
> last year, and he is coming back this year acting
> the same way." How she know? I can come back and
> act totally different from last year." They
> don't seem to notice that I have changed.

I think change is noticeable. It may take time before it is noticeable. Some people refuse to acknowledge change, especially if acknowledging change means that they have to admit making an incorrect assessment of another individual. It creates frustration for the student when it seems teachers are unwilling to acknowledge change.

Chad's Excerpt

Chad, a thirteen year old eighth grade student, has been labeled as a trouble maker, and he voiced his opinion about the unfairness he experiences because teachers are unwilling to acknowledge the fact that he can change. He stated:

> That's why I didn't want to come to this school because I don't like the teachers here and the way they do stuff. It ain't fair. Like if you slip up and do one thing, you pretty much done. They label you and like they always look for you when something bad happens, whether you do it or not. Teacher's always seem to go by what they have heard from other teachers. They don't even try and get to know you for themselves and give you the opportunity to show that you have changed.

Don's Excerpt

Don has a story that is a mirror image of Jamon's and Chad's story. He too has been labeled as a trouble maker, and it follows him from teacher to teacher. Don is a

thirteen year old African American male who is in his

second year at the middle school. He did not want to remain

at this school, and he made it known.

> Man, Mr. B. I wanted to leave this school last
> year because I did not think I was being treated
> fairly by my teachers. I had a teacher who
> really didn't like me and he told me, that
> anything I do he was going to make sure he put me
> out of his classroom. He kicked me out a whole
> bunch of times too. He kicked me out for
> talking; he kicked me out for asking my team mate
> what to do instead of asking him. Errybody else
> was talking, so I talked too; plus I didn't feel
> like getting up. I even got kicked out for doing
> a handshake with somebody. Every time he put me
> out, he called me a trouble maker. Just because
> of that, all my other teachers started saying,
> "Oh he's a troublemaker." Why should I do my work
> when nobody ever listens to my side of the story?

My observations and interviews helped me to determine

that when the dominant school culture intersected with the

culture of the African American males in this study, there

was not a change in the cultural practices that created an

environment that allowed these students to grow

academically and socially. Houston (2001) stated that a

change in the structure of the school must occur when the

dominant culture and the subordinate culture intersect in

order to create an environment structured to encompass a

foundation of respect for academic and social diversity.

Such an environment will help all students to grow

academically and socially. The lack of this type of

environment caused these African American males to become

frustrated. The frustration of the three African American

male middle school students above is obvious from their

statements. They feel that they are not given a fair

chance and that the only other option that they have is to

formulate a defense mechanism, an option used by these

students and other African American males.

Defense Mechanisms

When individuals believe that they have constantly

been mistreated they manage their anxiety by resisting

cultural norms and formulating defense mechanisms

(Mahiri,1996). Defense mechanisms in this study are

methods utilized by these African American young men to

express their cultural frustrations stemming from cultural

intersection. The defense mechanisms observed in this

study being utilized are academic failure and adopting the

cool pose.

Academic Failure

Academic failure is a way for African American males

to show that they do not value and agree with the

educational practices and beliefs of the dominant culture

(Ogbu,2003). Failing academically is a way for the African

American males in this study to demonstrate their

opposition to what the dominant culture values as being

appropriate. During this study, several young men were observed mentally detaching themselves academically and socially from the ideas and practices of the dominant culture.

They saw academic work as part of the ideas and practices of the dominant culture, so they detach themselves from that as well. This detachment from the academic work results in their academic failure. Most people see academic failure as a bad thing. However, cultural domination has resulted in these males viewing academic failure as a way of rebelling.

According to Fordham and Ogbu (1986), in their study African American students took on this behavior because of the fear of acting white. The fear of acting white is when African students refuse to accept what they perceive as the attempt by white people to define white ways as the right ways to talk and behave and black ways as the wrong ways. It is also when the peers of African American students perceive their behavior as acting white when they do homework, listen in class, and listen to certain kinds of music (Haynes,1985). The African Americans in this study refuse to accept this because they believe it would be detrimental to their collective racial identity and solidarity (Fordham and Ogbu,1986). Below are excerpts

from interviews with three African American male students who have chosen to utilize academic failure as a defense mechanism.

Free of Myself

Jamal is a fourteen year old African American eighth grader at Wichitaw Middle School. He is looked up to by other African American young men at the school, and he refuses to allow the teachers to change what he believes in. According to Jamal, before he allows the dominant culture to change who he is, what he believes in, and how he learns, he will continue to fail. Jamal stated:

> I want to be free of myself. I want to be able to come to school and dress the way that I do without being called a thug. I want to be able to talk the way that I talk and not have people tell me my English is not appropriate. If I want to express what I have learned academically through drawing a picture or saying a rap, then I should be able to do that. These teachers always trying to tell me how I should be in school. Let me be me. The things that they say I got to be, I ain't feelin it. They trying to change who I am into who they want me to be. Yeah, I talk back to teachers because they expect me to learn the way the white kids learn and be interested in the things that the white kids are interested in. They need to teach me for me and until they do, I will continue to fail my classes.

Although there were other African American kids who were actively engaged in this school work, Jamal is demonstrating the frustrations of his middle school

experience like many of the other African American males in

this study by refusing to utilize white impositions, such

as the curriculum and the language, because white Americans

have used both to label African Americans as inferior

throughout history (Ogbu,2003).

Just As I Am

Richard is also a fourteen year old eighth grade

middle school student. Richard also rebelled by failing

academically. He stated:

> Yeah, I talk back to the teachers, and I come to
> class unprepared because they won't accept me for
> who I am. They always telling me that I need to
> behave more like the successful students in the
> class. They say stuff like "If you develop good
> study habits like your classmates who get A's,
> you'll be a much better student". There are only
> four blacks in the class and none of us got A's.
> So you know they trying to get us to be more like
> the white kids. The stuff is straight boring, and
> I don't think the teachers should come at me the
> way that they do. Like when I go into the
> classroom, I get off to a bad start just because
> of how they be talking to me. They act like they
> got an attitude or something. It's like they want
> me to be perfect the way that they see perfect.
> They see perfect as coming to class, opening the
> book, and listening to what they teach, and then
> acing the test. I can't get down with that.
> That's not how I learn. I learn by acting things
> out, by building stuff, you know by getting
> physically involved. I am a hands on type
> person. Note taking from long speeches is not my
> thing. They should be able to teach me for me and
> until they do that, I ain't doing nothing but
> tuning them out.

I Don't Want To Be Around You

Don who was introduced earlier in the study, would rather keep his pride and refuse to work before he allows himself to be mistreated by his teachers. He shared his thoughts with me by stating:

> Man, they don't like me because of the color of my skin, cause I'm darker than them. The teachers, I don't like them cause they mean, they never liked me. I mean I don't know why they so mean. They just showed up the first day, and they were just mean. I mean they show a personality that you don't want to be around unless you are a good white kid. The teachers always treat them good. You know what, I ain't white and they definitely don't see me as good. So what that mean? That mean I ain't doing no work for them.

Although these young men are choosing not to do any work, their interest is not in academic failure. Their interest is in preserving their pride, dignity, and respect. In order for these young men to preserve these things, they look for ways to help them adapt to environmental conditions and neutralize stress. They look for ways to help them remain cool when they are marginalized. This leads to my next topic of adopting the cool pose as a defense mechanism.

Adopting The Cool Pose

Although many of the young men in the study utilized academic failure as a defense mechanism, several of them

also adopted the cool pose as a defense mechanism. According to Majors and Billson (1992), cool pose is a distinctive coping mechanism that serves to counter the problems that black males encounter on a daily basis. During this study it was noted that when the dominant school culture intersected with the subordinate school culture, the young men in the study encountered problems on a daily basis. The problems resulted in their masking their true feelings of self-doubt, insecurity, and inner turmoil by acting calm and fearless while experiencing blocked opportunities. Blocked opportunities in this case means that a sense of supremacy has been created in this school by the dominant culture that labels these young men as inferior (Allen,1994). The young men in this study rarely got an opportunity to talk about things they like, what they know, or what they would like to know because it was not implemented into the curriculum. They are not actively involved in their learning (Darling Hammons,1990). Below are excerpts from an observation and interviews that demonstrate these African American young men utilizing the cool pose as a defense mechanism.

Andre's Cool Pose

Andre is one of two African American students in Mrs. Stokely's American History class. She is Caucasian

American and has been teaching American History at this school for twelve years. Andre, an African American, is an eighth grader in this class of twenty one students.

Mrs. Stokely had been teaching a unit on the Declaration of Independence and this day was test day. Mrs. Stokely issued out short answer questions as a form of assessment. Andre asked Mrs. Stokely if she would allow him to write his short answer in the form of a rap. She replied by saying, "Absolutely not! This is a classroom, not a rap studio. I did not rap it to you when I taught it." The Caucasian American students laughed at the statement made by Mrs. Stokely.

During an earlier interview with Andre, he shared with me that he really enjoyed rap music and that rapping was his method of learning. However, he did not respond negatively to the statement made by Mrs. Stokely or to the laughter of his classmates. Andre remained well ordered in the face of this disruptive situation.

I met with Andre right after Mrs. Stokely's class to congratulate him for responding in such an appropriate manner. I also asked Andre how he was able to remain so calm. Andre's response is in the excerpt below.

Andre's Response

You know what, Mr. B.? After a while, you get used to being dissed and you learn to defend yourself by remaining cool. This happens on a regular basis. Yeah, I was upset, and my feelings were hurt. But I could not let them see that. I had to remain cool, calm, and collected. I could not let them see that my pride was hurt and that my dignity was taken. I could not let her know that she made me feel like I was less of a person whose opinion did not have to be respected.

Eli's Response

Eli was the other African American male in Mrs. Stokely's class during the incident involving Mrs. Stokely and Andre. He is a thirteen year old, and this is his first year at Wichitaw Middle School. After my conversation with Andre, Eli came up to me and shared his unhappiness about the way Mrs. Stokely responded to Andre. He also said that he and Andre are treated unfairly on a regular basis. When I asked Eli for an example of his being treated unfairly, he stated:

> I got so many, I don't know which one to choose. Okay, now I remember. It was the end of January and Black History Month was approaching. I asked Mrs. Stokely if we were going to discuss Black History, and she responded by saying "I am not going to spend my twenty eight days discussing Black History. You guys are going to get time on the intercom every morning to discuss a famous black person. Isn't that enough? We give you a yard, and you are not happy; you want to take a mile." But when Jenny, the little white girl, asked her about Saint Patrick's Day, she was all excited. She said that she was Irish and that she was planning to teach an entire unit on Saint

Patrick's Day. Now, you know that hurt, and it had me heated, but I just smiled and kept my cool. I could not let her know that she took my pride. I could not let her know that she made me feel like me and the history of my people were not important and good enough to be recognized. And you know what? She probably feels more comfortable teaching about Saint Patrick's Day because that is a part of her.

Many times teachers who are a part of the dominant culture do not feel comfortable teaching African American male students because they have not been prepared by their institutions to effectively teach these students according to the cultural values of the students. They only feel comfortable teaching what they have been taught (Ladson Billings,1994).

Eli's statement about Mrs. Stokely feeling comfortable teaching what is a part of her learning and background brings me to the next topic, the conflict of learned predispositions. During this study it was noted that when the cultural intersection occurred at Wichitaw Middle School, the teachers who were a part of the dominant culture implemented their personal values and experiences into what they taught and how they disciplined the young men.

Learned Predispositions

Reginald M. Clark (1983), states that teachers always bring their personal values and experiences with them to

work. They come from home and earlier school experiences to their jobs with a set of learned predispositions about what real knowledge is, and about what promising students should already know, and how they should behave. The biases of teachers caused problems for the African American male students in this study. The students in the study rarely exemplified social and academic behavior that was closely aligned with the expectations of the teachers.

Teachers spend the majority of their positive time focusing on the students whose academic and social behavior closely aligned with their own and that of the schools expectations. Below is an excerpt from an observation that demonstrated conflict caused by learned predispositions of teachers who are a part of the dominant culture.

Observation of Mr. Sheets and Omar

During this study Mr. Sheets seventh grade classroom was observed several times. Mr. Sheets a Hispanic American teaching seventh grade math, has been employed Wichitaw Middle School for over twenty five years. Omar is a twelve year old African American male seventh grader. This day Mr. Sheets was teaching the class how to find the area and perimeter of squares and rectangles and how this related to multiplication.

Mr. Sheets believed that being able to do mental multiplication without counting on your fingers was a necessary strategy. Mr. Sheets notified Omar that mental multiplication was a necessity, and Omar responded in a way that Mr. Sheets saw as unacceptable. Below is the excerpt from this situation.

Mr. Sheets: "Omar, please tell me that you are not counting on your fingers to find the area of these shapes."

Omar: "Yeah, I'm counting on my fingers."

Mr. Sheets: "Why are you counting on your fingers?"

Omar: "Because I ain't that good at my time tables."

Mr. Sheets: "This is geometry, and if you don't know how to multiply without counting on your fingers, you should not even be in this class. It is going to be very hard for you to pass this class if you don't know how to multiply."

As I observed this situation, I saw the problem as Mr. Sheets insulting the learning style of Omar in front of the class. Mr. Sheets appeared to be trying to force Omar into utilizing a learning style that was a part of the status quo. According to Ogbu (1978), this is cultural deprivation, and schools must stop enforcing policies that force students to become more like the status quo.

After Mr. Sheets told Omar that it was going to be difficult for him to pass this class, he walked away from Omar's seat and began to praise other students in the class who were not having difficulty solving the problems. As Mr. Sheets rotated around the classroom, Omar raised his hand. After five minutes, Mr. Sheets had not acknowledged Omar's raised hand. As a result of this, Omar became frustrated.

Omar: "Mr. Sheets, Man, I know you see my hand. I got a question about this math problem!"

Mr. Sheets: "Apparently you don't know how to multiply or act in a respectable manner."

Omar: "What you mean?"

Mr. Sheets: "I mean in this class, you wait to be acknowledged and blurting out is not going to get you recognized any faster."

Omar: "Man that ain't right!"

Mr. Sheets: "Well, you better get used to it because that is the way most of us do things around here, and if you want to make it out of this class and out of this school, then you better get use to it."

Mr. Sheet's behavior and his comments caused me to formulate another question to staff members. The question was, "Why are the teachers allowed to behave in a way that

degrades the academic and social values of these African American young men?" Below are excerpts from the response of two African American staff members.

Mr. Wilkes the African American physical teacher responded by saying:

> It has been happening for years, and the "big wigs", such as the superintendents and the principals, have not been stepping up to the plate to make the necessary changes, such as diversity training and consequences for those teachers who don't want to receive the information. But they are a part of the dominant culture too. Nobody wants to test the waters. Everybody wants to keep the dominant group happy. They want everybody to be just like them. If you walk like them, talk like them, and take on their cultural values, then you are okay with them. If you don't, then you are an outcast. A lot of the African American males won't do these things, so teachers are allowed to treat them like they are not important.

Mrs. Grimes the African American social worker stated:

> Most of the teachers around here have been programmed by the same system, the system that promotes dominance. They have been trained that there is one way that works the best and, if you think differently, you are not treated fairly. It seems like it is a tradition for the district to hire people who are going to promote the ideas and beliefs of the dominant culture.

The common theme that emerged from these interview excerpts was that tradition allowed teachers to degrade the academic and social values of the young men. This leads to my final topic of discussion: tradition blocks change.

Tradition Blocks Change

Tradition is defined as the handing down of information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth that promotes cultural continuity in social attitudes and institutional instruction (Webster's Dictionary). Cultural intersection brings traditions with it. In this particular study, the traditions are the cultural practices of the dominant school culture. One cultural practice was the persistent effort by teachers to force these students in submission to the ideas, values, and beliefs of the dominant culture. Another cultural practice observed during this study was the evaluation process utilized by the dominant culture to evaluate the young men. The young men were evaluated based on the codes of conduct, the language, and the behavioral practices that were established by the beliefs and practices of the dominant culture. They were trying to merge all students, regardless of ethnic and cultural origins, into one ideal model (Olneck, 1974). When the young men refused to participate in this merging, they were labeled as incapable. According to the staff members who were interviewed, although cultural intersection has resulted in a change in the cultural makeup of the school, the traditions of the dominant culture has not provided a vehicle for changes to

take place that promotes the academic and social growth of the African American young men.   Below are excerpts from the staff interviews.

Mrs. Shine

Mrs. Shine, a Caucasian American teacher of Language Arts has been teaching at Wichitaw Middle School for thirty five years.   She has witnessed the cultural incongruencies that has resulted from the traditions of the dominant culture.   She stated:

> Wichitaw Middle School has been integrated for twenty five years now. When I first started teaching at Wichitaw Middle School, we did not have any African American students. We did have some white children who were quite poor, and we had white children who were wealthy, but for the most part, they all had the same cultural values and beliefs. Their cultural values and beliefs were also very closely aligned with the values and beliefs of the staff members. This made it very easy for teachers to communicate with the students and teach them the school curriculum. There were also very few discipline problems. There was set way of doing things. It was like a tradition. However, about my eleventh year of working there, the cultural makeup of the school began to change. This is when cultural intersection started at Wichitaw Middle. African American students came with their own set of cultural values, expectations, and beliefs. These cultural values, expectations, and beliefs are different from those found in the dominant culture.

The students in this study do have a different set of cultural values, expectations, and beliefs.   They value their self, their identity.   They do not believe that they

have to learn the same way that the students in the

dominant culture learn in order to be successful. The

young men do not believe that they have to walk like, talk

like, or think like the persons who make up the dominant

culture. They value their historical backgrounds and their

cultural identity and are willing to rebel against the

dominant culture in order to gain recognition. They

believe that all cultures are unique and should be

recognized as such.

This caused problems for the African American students

at the middle school because the teachers who were a part

of the dominant culture have not changed their traditional

way of doing things, and although many years have passed,

the traditions remained the same. The dominant culture

believes that their job is to do just that: dominate. They

hold a perception that the cultural values and beliefs of

the young men are not useful in addressing the academic and

social needs of these young men. They see their job as

making the young men more like them. Gloria Ladson

Billings (2000) states that this is a problem because it

creates a generalized perception that the culture of these

young men is not a useful rubric for addressing their needs

as learners. As a result, these young men are treated like

they are corruptions of the dominant culture (Ogbu, 1987).

Mrs. Hankins

This leads to the excerpt from the interview with Mrs.
Hankins. Mrs. Hankins is an African American teacher of
science at Wichitaw Middle School. She has been working at
Wichitaw Middle School for ten years. She also realized
that the traditional practices of the dominant culture have
hindered the academic and social growth of the African
American male students. She stated:

> Mr. B., many of the teachers who are here now,
> were here before African American young men were
> allowed to come to this school. Although the
> cultural makeup of this school has changed, the
> practices and beliefs of these teachers have
> remained the same. They have not been properly
> equipped to deal with this cultural intersection.
> They see their job as filtering their culture
> into these young men while removing the cultural
> values and beliefs of these young men. And, oh,
> yes, we have had several new teachers to come
> into the building, but they are mentored by these
> teachers who instill the values and practices of
> the dominant into them. This causes the dominant
> to remain dominant and the African American males
> to remain in a state of subordination.

This topic of discussion and the other themes that
were presented in this chapter demonstrated that cultural
intersection indeed has a negative impact on the academic
and social experiences of the African American young men.
These African American young men were forced into academic
and social subordination by persons who were a part of the
dominant culture.

The Impact Of The Study On Me As The Researcher

This research topic had an impact on me as an administrator and as an African American male. During this study, it was very difficult for me witness the experiences of these African American young men without interceding on their behalf. When I witnessed the young men get falsely accused of disrupting the classroom setting, as an administrator, I wanted to speak up and say the young men were not involved in the disruption. However, I could not do so because as a researcher, I had to realize what my role is at the exact moment the incident is occurring. During these occurrences I was not an administrator, I was the researcher taking on the role of complete observer.

As a complete observer, my role was to observe what was taking place in these settings. It was not my role to discipline teachers or students because while taking on the role of complete observer to discipline teachers or students would have been unethical. Not only would my role make it unethical, but also I had notified teachers and students that during the study I would not be taking on the role of administrator. Because I became a student during this study, whose only focus was to learn about the

experiences of these young men, the principal had agreed to handle any problems of discipline that might occur.

Although during this study I did not deal with the issues of discipline, the academic issues, the social issues, and the issues of discipline that were unveiled during this study opened my eyes as an administrator. These revelations caused me to realize that as an administrator in the district, I need to hold accountable both myself and others in the school to work toward the mission of the school district. That mission of the school district is to educate and prepare each student to achieve her or his academic best, to develop character, to become a life long learner, and to contribute as a citizen of our global society. Throughout the study, I felt that the burden of making change happen rested upon my shoulders and that if I did not bring these issues to the attention of others, I would only be if not adding to the problem, certainly doing nothing towards solving the problem. Part of my role as an administrator is to lead the staff towards achieving the mission of the district. Now with more knowledge about the issues and problems that cultural intersection cause to happen, I can not just bring them to the attention of other persons who are a part of this

school; I have to become actively engaged in the process of change by sharing my knowledge as an administrator and as a leader, by helping to provide solutions for these problems.

This study also caused me to realize that as an African American male administrator it is not only my job to serve as an administrator but also as a teacher. It is my job to share my cultural beliefs, values, and expectations with all persons who are a part of the middle schools as well as to open up venues to allow them to share theirs as well. From this study, I found that I am obligated to move the school towards a respect for diversity because a respect of diversity is essential for intercultural harmony and growth. Intercultural harmony is essential in enriching the Wichitaw Middle School community and in tearing down the barriers created by cultural intersection.

Lessons learned from these findings, recommendations for improving the educational experiences of African American young men, and possibilities for future research with this particular population or similar populations will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

REVIEW OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study was to learn about the academic and social experiences of African American males at Wichitaw Middle School by garnering an understanding of perceptions that they held as a part of the subordinate culture. A further aim was to discover, describe, and analyze the hidden assumptions that inhibited, repressed, and constrained African American male students.

The research question that promoted the framework of this study was: *How does the intersection of the dominant school culture and the subordinate school culture impact the academic and social experiences of African American male middle school students?*

While carrying out this study, several things were learned about the experience of being an African American male student in the subordinate culture. Most of the research findings from this study were found to be consistent with prior research. However, there were also some findings that were unexplored that will contribute to future research. First is a discussion regarding findings that are congruent with the literature.

Lessons Congruent With Literature

Teaching What Has Been Learned

According to Bennet (1986), teachers teach using the same methods they learned, and culture shapes learning style which means that students who share a teacher's ethnic background will be favored in class. Bennet also states that if classroom expectations are limited by our own cultural orientations, we impede successful learners guided by another cultural orientation. During this research, it was found that African American young men rarely shared the same academic and social values as the teachers who were included in the dominant culture. Teachers were unaware of the cultural orientations of these young men. This cultural unawareness created a social and academic gap between the dominant culture and the subordinate culture.

This cultural gap contributed to the academic and social withdrawal that the young men experienced by their formation of defense mechanisms.

Defense Mechanisms

Steele (1997) wrote that African American male students suffer increased anxiety because of their inability to fit in with the dominant culture. While these

African American males suffer increased anxiety, they tend to fall into a self-protection mode, causing them to devalue or reduce their identification with academics.

The findings of this study demonstrate how increased anxiety causes African American males to develop defense mechanisms. I observed African American male students at Wichitaw Middle School detach themselves from the academic practices and procedures because they saw it as a means to maintain their self identity and cultural pride.

According to Majors and Billson (1992), African American males adopt a cool pose that is a ritualized approach to masculinity allowing them to cope with and survive in an environment of social oppression and racism found within schools in the United States. The observations and interviews in this study were consistent with this research. Not only did African American males detach themselves academically, but they also learned how to remain cool and portray a sense of fearlessness even when they experienced inner-turmoil and self doubt resulting from cultural intersection. Cultural intersection also contributed to labeling these young men that further contributed to their lack of academic and social growth.

Labels Caused By Cultural Intersection

Many times members of the dominant culture bring with them stereotypes of the subordinate culture. Steele's 1997 theory of stereotype threat identifies negative stereotypes as a key contributing factor in the academic under performance of students of color. In this study, research factors indicated these students tried to break away from the cultural and academic restraints placed upon them because of stereotypes. However, it was difficult for them to break away because school staff members were unwilling to form the necessary relationships to make this happen.

Unwillingness To Form Relationships

According to Houston (2001), African American male students cannot reach their maximum potential if they are not provided with a web of support. To form this web, teachers must be willing to form relationships with these students. This study revealed teachers who participate in the practices of the dominant culture were more willing to form relationships with each other and less likely to form relationships with the African American male students. For example, the teachers would not talk with the students to learn what interests and dislikes they had, and the teachers would not give these students extra academic help when it was requested. The teachers lack of enthusiasm to

form relationships with these young men presents academic and social challenges for the young men. However, school staff members have not been challenged regarding their unwillingness to embrace change. The unwillingness of staff members to embrace change, hindered the existence of intercultural harmony.

A Lesson Learned From This Study Not In The Literature

A lesson learned from this study, but not discussed in the review of literature, was the lack of intercultural harmony presented problems for the African American young men. Intercultural Harmony is when the members of the dominant culture and the members of the subordinate culture embrace each others values, practices, and beliefs. An example of intercultural harmony is when teachers teach to the cultural and individual learning styles of the students. (Gay,1988). There is a problem with intercultural harmony at Wichitaw Middle School because cultural differences influence the expectations that teachers hold for their students. Students who do not fit into the dominant culture are treated differently. (Sanders and Wiseman,1990)

According to Klugman and Greenberg (1991), in many schools settings across the United States, interethnic and intercultural tensions create major obstactles that prevent

improvements in student achievement, social behavior, and attitudes. These obstacles can be removed with the proper adjustments on the part of the schools and the individuals who make up the schools.

Suggestions For Improvement

Removing Factors That Promote Intolerance

The first step in working towards intercultural harmony is removing the factors that promote intolerance. According to Thomas A. Parham (1999), there are four character traits that support intolerance: the feeling of superiority, the feeling of inferiority, the meshing of ignorance and blindness, and the fear of loss. School staff members who believe they are a part of the dominant culture can not continue to believe that their way is the only way and that their social and academic values are better than the academic and social values of others. School staff members have to be more willing to understand what they perceive as the academic and social shortcomings of these young men are in fact cultural differences. If the unwillingness to understand continues, this will further promote an attitude of inequality and false self affirmation.

The sense of false self affirmation contributes to the set of existing problems. Parham (1999), states that

ignorance is our ability and refusal to learn new ideas, and blindness is our inability to see beyond our current perspective to a larger view. He is not speaking of physical blindness. He is speaking of intellectual blindness. The scales must be removed from the intellectual eyes of staff members and once the scales have been removed, they must expand their minds and hearts to reach out to the young men who have been forced into a subordinate culture. This can take place through ongoing professional development.

Parham (1999) stated that the fear of loss also should be removed. When school personnel degrade the young men by words and actions, they fear whether consciously or not, loss of their privilege, position, and power. By recognizing that support and acceptance of the young African American men for who they are and by helping them to develop their maximum potential and to grow as individuals, it does not endanger the dominant group; it not only empowers both groups, but ultimately helps to create a stronger society. According to Parham (1999), the denial of the rights of others and the denial of others self affirmation and self determination rob us of our own

comfort of not only who we want to be but also of what they

want to be. Parham (1990) also stated:

> If you disrespect a persons humanity they will rise in
> anger, if you disregard a persons needs, they will
> rise in rebellion, if you perpetrate your evil and
> wickedness on a person, they will rise in retaliation.

How can the factors that promote intolerance be

removed, and how can these problems be prevented? A

serious effort should be made toward providing ongoing

training in multicultural diversity. The training can not

just take place at Wichitaw Middle School, it must take

place on all levels. The training has to be inclusive of

all people who have an impact on the education of children.

This includes state boards of education, school boards,

administrative staff, teaching staff, parents, and

students.

Ongoing Professional Development

Research shows that brief and superficial training may

increase knowledge, but has little or no effect on

attitudes or behavior(Bennet, Niggle, and Stage, 1989).

The school is a primary source for the learning of

information and as such school districts should initiate

this learning process and provide ongoing and needed

professional development pertaining to multicultural

education. School personnel must be held accountable for participating in this ongoing professional development. The professional development cannot be a single event, it must be ongoing. Personnel cannot be allowed to participate in a single professional development and consider themselves as competent in the area of multicultural education. If this is allowed to take place, then this would only be placing a bandage made for a cut on an open wound that needs to go through a surgical procedure.

Wichitaw Middle School has participated in abbreviated unsystematic professional development. Abbreviated unsystematic professional development will not change the attitudes and practices of the dominant culture. Grottkau and Nickolai-Mays (1989) stated:

> Abbreviated, unsystematic inservice programs offered to teachers which provide limited exposure to the wide array of problems these educators must faces in the pluralistic classroom setting may contribute minimally, if at all to changes in attitudes toward minority groups. Short term interventions may even be detrimental to the preservation of a respect for human diversity.

In order to close the academic and social gap between African American males and their peers, there has to be in depth sustained multicultural training. Grottkau and Nickolai-Mays (1989) stated:

Exposure over time to multicultural education experiences does contribute to a statistically significant difference in overall levels of bias, as well as levels of bias toward specific minority populations. Any intervention geared toward the enhancement of intergroup relationships, must not be contrived or arbitrary but rather controlled and sustained if positive attitudes toward African American males students are to be achieved.

However, research indicates that teachers frequently do not translate their positive attitudes toward multicultural education and enjoyment of multicultural education classes into actual delivery of multicultural activities in their classrooms (Merrick,1988). In order for accurate knowledge about diverse cultures and positive attitudes toward them to lead to the provision of true multi-cultural education in the classroom, considerable skill development is needed, and this calls for intensive training (Cotton,1992).

Genova and Walberg's large-scale correlational study of successful social integration in schools identifies the following skills and behaviors that should be emphasized in professional development training that will enable teachers to foster harmonious relationships among their culturally diverse students. The first skill that should be emphasized is becoming a positive staff role model. Staff members must become involved in visible and healthy

interracial/ethnic relationships. The second skill that should be emphasized is becoming a staff member that supports integration. Staff members must be taught to openly express opinions in favor of integration and not segregation. Another skill that should be emphasized is multicultural exposure. Staff members must be taught to expose themselves and students to activities that present a factual accounting of the contributions of various cultures, as well as similarities and differences among cultural groups. Intercultural fairness should also be emphasized. Staff members should be trained to make all students feel that different racial/ethnic groups are treated equally and fairly by school personnel.

Research has also identified numerous teacher behaviors that impact intercultural relationships. According to Aviram (1987), effective teachers of culturally diverse classes reflect on their own values, stereotypes, and prejudices and how these might be affecting their interaction with children and parents, and they engage in staff development activities which can expose and reduce biases and increase skill in working with diverse populations.

According to Kathleen Cotton (1990), the intercultural knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of teachers have powerful effects on the quality of intercultural relations in schools and classrooms. Part of the procedure would be to have teachers first recognize who they are. According to Pinderhughes (1989), educators must have an awareness and understanding of their own cultural background to be culturally sensitive to students of a different culture. They must also understand how their combined cultural values provide a counseling world view that shapes how they observe, assess, define, and approach client problems. Potential misunderstandings and miscommunications increase when worldviews between counselor and client diverge and may lead to premature termination of counseling services (Dana, 1993)

Becoming Culturally Sensitive

Larke (1990) states:

> Studies have shown that a high correlation exists among educators' sensitivity which includes attitudes, beliefs and behaviors toward students of other cultures, knowledge   and application of cultural awareness information, and minority students' successful academic performance. Effective teachers in diverse settings have been found to exhibit high levels of cultural sensitivity which is exhibited by the modified curriculum and instructional designs they

incorporate to ensure that all students achieve excellence and equity.

Staff members of the middle school should become culturally sensitive, and not continue to hide behind their own cultural values and backgrounds. When they seek an awareness of their own culture and their own cultural values, they should see the differences between themselves and the young men in how they observe, assess, and define these young men and their learning potential. Teachers must recognize the differences between their cultural and the views of the African American male students; the recognition of these differences must result in adjustments in intervention strategies, assessment strategies and a change in the learning environment.

According to Kathleen Cotton (1991) some examples of instructional and management strategies necessary to remove the academic and social problems experienced by African American male students are having the students to work in cooperative learning groups that are culturally diverse where they can share their cultural similarities and differences, conduct ungraded multicultural learning activities that are student selected, and teach students social skills related to getting along well together.

Cotton (1991) also stated that successful teachers provide accurate information about cultural groups through straightforward discussions of race, ethnicity, and other cultural differences. The teachers at Wichitaw Middle School must teach about cross-cultural similarities and differences. They must also learn general information about the students religious backgrounds, customs, traditions, holidays, festivals, and practices so they can incorporate this information into learning experiences of them.

The teachers must also create learning environments that are learning style friendly. According to Cotton (2005), teachers must arrange their classrooms for movement and active learning, interact one to one with each child at least once daily, communicate affection for and closeness with students through verbal and nonverbal means such as humor, soliciting student opinions, eye contact and smiling and have classrooms reflect the ethnic heritage and background of all the children in the classroom.

These adjustments will result in a mutual understanding and a good rapport between the school staff and these young men. Further, the adjustments will allow

the staff members to develop a good rapport with each other and with the families of these young men.

Family Involvement

It is important that families of these young men become more involved in the educational process. The lack of good rapport between staff members and the families of these young men increases the odds of academic and social failure. Many of these parents do not want to come to the school because they see it as the school's job to educate their sons. In these situations, teachers must be willing to both stimulate and support this group of students and encourage the interest of parents. According to Bruno (1994), once parents feel the staff members are supportive of their sons, parents learn ways to help their children, and those who have had negative school experiences could come to perceive the school as a bastion of hope for their children. When the staff realizes that parents support their children's education, they will begin to treat students differently. For example, they will make sure that the students are getting the necessary information to be successful academically. Building rapport between staff and families is basic in breaking down the defense mechanisms formed by parents and students.

Dauber and Epstein (1989),stated that many of the
parents are haunted by the ghosts of their own educational
and social experiences. They want to see their sons
succeed, but they do not know how to assist in this
success. Parents are uncomfortable in returning to a place
where they may have experienced failure. They do not know
how they can support their children and the teacher. Fear
is false evidence appearing real. It is imperative that the
school be willing to remove the fear and engage parent
involvement. Wichitaw Middle School must demonstrate an
interest in and a respect for the family's culture when
interacting with parents. Research has shown that when
parents are involved in their child's education, promote a
positive learning environment at home, and have positive
academic expectations, there is a significant impact on
student achievement (Henderson, 1987).

According to the North Carolina Department of Public
Instruction, schools must also create goals for parent
involvement such as creating a climate conducive to
involving parents and families in their children's
education, making sure teachers and administrators
understand the importance of a positive school climate in
relation to family involvement, providing staff development

for teachers and administrators to foster a consistent approach for creating a positive school climate, making family members feel welcomed in the school by letting them know they are valued and supported in their efforts to become more involved, providing opportunities for parents to learn how to become more involved in their child's learning experiences, and including parents in school governance and activities.

Wichitaw Middle School has to make the school family friendly. An example of a way to make the school family friendly is establishing a parent center within the school, where parents can come during school hours. The purpose of the parent center would be to keep all parents connected to what is going on in the school and with their child. The school also has to offer frequent communication that is user friendly to all parents. The frequent communication also has to take on a variety of forms such as newsletters, e-mails, phone calls, and through a school website. Another way to make the school family friendly is by providing after school programs involving parents and community organizations such as family literacy. Organizing school wide social activities for staff members and families such as cookouts, athletic events, and game nights is also

important. During these school wide social activities,
there must be a time for intercultural sharing where each
culture shares information about their beliefs, values, and
expectations.

Curriculum Adjustment

Another way to impact student achievement is by
adjusting the curriculum and the methods used to deliver
the curriculum. It should consist of components that are
of interest to all students. These African American male
middle school students should be able to relate their
life's experiences to what they are learning and to hear
about the positive actions of other Africans and African
Americans throughout history. An African proverb states
that "A man without the knowledge of where he has been
knows not where he is nor where he is going." The
curriculum should be a means of giving all students a
knowledge of growth for all. The hidden curriculum of the
dominant culture transmits values and social skills (Mac
and Ghaill, 1988). The values and social skills of the
dominant culture are in direct conflict with the values and
social skills of these young men. The conflict may be
removed by creating a curriculum that is, according to

Barbara Sizemore (1979) multicultural, multimodal, multisensory, multidimensional and multilingual.

For the curricula to be multicultural, it should be reshaped to include the cultural values and beliefs of all students who make up the student population. These young men need to have true stories included in the curricula that will include them in history as a liberated proud people and not as an oppressed people. There needs to be physical evidence that the school is working towards creating a multicultural environment. For example, there should be school wide assemblies where all cultures get to share their values, beliefs, and practices, the hallways of the school should display posters and artwork from all cultural backgrounds, the makeup of the staff should be more reflective of the makeup of the student body, and the curricula should include materials that are reflective of the entire school population such as textbooks and materials pertaining to all ethnic backgrounds. Merely having students from many different ethnic backgrounds is not enough to call the school a multicultural setting. There should be overt multicultural values that include the beliefs and practices of all students specifically books,

audiovisual resources, and links to diverse groups of community representatives.

Within the multicultural curriculum should be multi sensory and multimodal approaches for delivering the curriculum. Teachers should be willing to meet the students where they are and to teach to an individualized learning style. There is no one way that is the right way. If African American males learn through singing, rapping, drawing, and other methods, then the teacher has the responsibility to tap into these styles of learning and tailor some of their methods of teaching and evaluating to these styles. To make learning a meaningful experience all students, all senses need to be incorporated into the learning strategies. The African American young men need to be used as resources. They are valuable resources in letting teachers know when they are learning and when they are not learning, when they feel included and when they feel excluded. Just as a good parent rushes to the cry of their children, teachers must be able to hear the verbal and silent cries of these young men, so they can provide educational comfort. According to Dr. Freya Rivers (1998), experiences allow children to make an event meaningful, and by using their own sensory resources, students remember the

parts that are relevant to their reality. Experiences

allow them to grow, develop, and build references for

contrasts and comparisons of knowledge. A multidimensional

curriculum is a holistic curriculum that reaches the body,

the soul, and the mind. Dr. Rivers (1998) stated it best

by saying:

> Students must learn values, discipline, morals,
> attitudes, beliefs, aspirations, ethics, and
> dreams. Education is not just academics, it is
> holistic. It must encompass self understanding,
> actualization, responsibility, and creativity and
> commitment, citizenship and consciousness,
> adaptability, initiative, stability and
> foresight. Only when humans have succeeded in
> holistic development will humans become humane.
> Students do not obtain these skills by osmosis,
> they must be taught. Yet, the cry from teachers
> is that there is not enough time to teach the
> regular curriculum without adding more. However,
> these principles are taught through modeling. An
> old belief and saying in the African American
> community is "an idle mind is the devil's
> workshop." When a child is busy and engaged, in
> enjoyable activities, there is less time for
> trouble. Organized activities and development of
> talent are just a few ways to develop the soul
> which breathes life into people as humaneness.

For these African American males to develop

holistically, it is imperative that all persons with whom

they come into contact and particularly those charged with

the responsibility to teach them, be willing to teach these

young men through modeling. Through modeling, we can meet

every need of these young men on Maslow's Hierarchy of

Human Needs. When they come into the school setting looking for a means to survive physiologically and emotionally, we can not continue to push them away. The school should provide them with a safe learning environment where they do not have to form defense mechanisms to survive. Providing these students with a safe learning environment makes them feel that they belong. When they feel they belong, they should develop high self esteem that allows them to have respect for themselves. By respecting themselves first, they will respect others, and in turn, respect for others will cause the behavior to be reciprocated. This mutual respect will help these young men to expand their potential as productive citizens in a global society.

Ways To Implement Suggestions At Wichitaw Middle School

According to Diane Pollard (1989), educators can employ several strategic, motivational and confrontational means to change racist behavior. The administrators of Wichitaw Middle School must compile a clear statement of expectations regarding racism. Any time these expectations are violated by any staff member or student in the building, consequences must be issued. The consequences that are to be issued, must be pre established and

understood by all persons involved with the school.

Administrators must also respond to respond to racial

incidents in a fair and open minded manner. Whenever

corrections are made regarding a racial issue, it is

important that the corrections are not utilized as a form

of embarrassment, but as a form of remediation.

The administrators of Wichitaw Middle School must also

realize that they can not prevent racism by themselves. It

has to be a joint effort. According to Beswick (1990)

administrators must gain the support of parents, student

advisory boards, and key minority leaders in the community.

Together, they must develop teacher workshops, assemblies,

and arbitration of racial incidents.

Not only do the administrators need to gain the

support of parents, student advisory boards and key

minority leaders in the community, but they also must hire

enough minority staff members so the staff makeup is

reflective of the student body makeup. This balance also

provides a more diverse population of role models for

African American male students and other minority students.

According to Kofi Lomotey (1989) administrators of

Wichitaw Middle School must communicate to teachers that

all students can learn, focus on programs helping marginal

students, broaden the base of recognized achievement by praising nontraditional work, and honor satisfactory work that represents an all out effort by minority students.

Administrators should communicate with teachers, but they should also work towards shaping the culture of the school. Administrators shape the culture of the school through three key processes. The first step is to read the culture to get an understanding of the culture's historical source as well as analyzing current norms and values. The second step is to assess the culture to determine which elements of the culture support the school's core purposes and the mission, and which hinder achieving valued ends. The final step is actively shape the culture by reinforcing positive aspects and working to transform negative aspects of the culture (Peterson and Deal, 2002).

The findings of this study helped to get an understanding of the culture's historical source as well aided in analyzing the current norms and values. The administrators must determine which norms and values support learning for all students and which cause a decline in energy, motivation and commitment by all students and staff members, community members and parents. The norms and values that cause a decline in energy, motivation and

commitment, must be changed. The negative issues must be addressed directly by the administrators. Peterson and Deal (2002), also said that examples of success must counteract stories of failure and those who try and sabotage staff learning must be impeded, and negative stories of professional development must be replaced with concrete positive results.

Suggestions For Future Research

According to Scheper-Hughes (1992) a good ethnographic researcher accepts that his or her understandings will always be only partial and will open doors for others to walk through and to further the research. A critical step is for institutions of higher learning to better prepare their teachers to work in a diverse society. Basic class work and research should build a strong foundation for the development of university classes designed to foster awareness of cultural differences. Although the emphasis has been on holistic teaching and learning of each student, the educational world has overlooked an integral aspect of learning: the diversity of culture. Institutions of higher learning should consider monitoring multicultural education and its importance in preparing teachers to educate students from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Sleeter(1990),recommends providing more opportunities to raise the cultural sensitivity of pre-service teachers through long term, in depth multicultural education, and developing a field base to multicultural education courses and methods courses to provide an opportunity for working with culturally diverse students through fieldtrips, classroom observations, and telecommunications systems between the university and school classrooms.

The American Jewish Committee (1989) recommends raising the sensitivity levels of university professors through required seminars, seeking early field and student teaching sites that are cognizant of diversity and working to promote intercultural harmony, providing instruction to enable teachers to understand students culturally based and individual learning styles and to match appropriate teaching styles to them, providing instruction in methods teachers can use to develop interpersonal awareness and empathy among diverse learners in their classrooms, requiring training in multicultural education for both administrators and teachers, and establishing resource centers for multi-cultural materials as well as publicizing and promoting the use of these materials.

This would assist public school and private schools in bridging the academic and social gap between African American students and their peers because multicultural training leads to the development of attitudes and skills needed to work successfully with culturally diverse groups (Burstein,1989).

Larke (1990)states:

> Teacher educators must recognize and respond to this concern by providing more than one isolated course because one course is insufficient to change the attitudes and behaviors of pre-service teachers to appreciate, accept, and respect the diversity of students facing them in future classrooms.

Future research should develop mentoring programs that link culturally diverse students with educators doing their student teaching. The purpose of such programs would be geared to make future educators more sensitive to the needs and concerns of students whose cultural beliefs and practices are different from their own. Such programs must be supported by state boards of education, school boards, politicians, administrators, educators, community members, parents and students. With a joint effort to support such programs, society will move one step closer to removing cultural boundaries placed in school settings through cultural intersection.

Future research should also look at the role that schools can play in combating racism, by preserving ethnic identity in the context of racial integration. Racism is a developed set of attitudes that include antagonism based on the supposed superiority of one group or on the supposed inferiority of another group, premised solely on skin color or race(Beswick,1990). Charles Glenn (1989), stated that it is unnecessary to force a choice between integration of schools and the preservation of ethnic identity. Programs should be offered that encourage African Americans and other minorities to choose fields of math, science, and computer technology.

Glenn (1989), also believes that a misunderstanding about the meaning of ethnicity and culture accounts for the reluctance of some educators to risk tampering with ethnic heritage. Ethnicity has to do with generational heritage and history. Culture is the ideas, customs, and art of a peoples living present. Breswick (1990), stated that multicultural education must distinguish between culture and ethnicity if it is to preserve minorities' ethnic identities while freeing them to participate fully in shaping the culture of society, and multicultural education

provides some excellent measures to root out prejudice and to foster appreciation for racial and ethnic differences.

Another topic that should be researched in the future is what different cultural groups perceive as appropriate family involvement. Many times, the perceptions of those parents whose children are a part of the dominant culture differs from the perceptions of those parents whose children are a part of the dominant culture. McCollom (1996), suggests that educators in the United States tend to believe that parents should intervene in their children's learning, while immigrant parents often come from cultures where the proper role of a concerned parent is not to intervene in the school's business or question the teacher's practices and expertise. A better understanding of the perceptions would support the development of culturally relevant and appropriate outreach and involvement strategies that would help nurture a multicultural school setting.

APPENDIX

Translation Of Slang Terms And Dialect

1) Ain't- am not

2) ont-do not

3) witcho-with your

4) bout-about

5) homies- a real close friend

6) gone-going to

7) gotta-have to

8) tite-really nice, well liked

9) juvee- juvenile delinquent home

10) ahight-alright

11) preeshate-appreciate

12) scuse-excuse

13) trippin-exemplifying a behavior not agreed upon

14) den-then

15) dare-there

16) errbody-everyone

17) I ain't feelin it-saying that one disagrees

18) not my thing-saying that one does not practice that particular activity or behavior

19) dissed-put down or made fun of

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, T. (1994) The invention of the white race. London:
    Ver 50.

American Jewish Committee. (1989). Educating the newest
    Americans: Report of the task force on new immigrants
    and American education. New York: American Jewish
    Committee/Columbia University Institute for Urban and
    Minority Education, (ED 314 542).

Aviram,O. (1987). The impact of school as a social system
    on the formation of student intergroup attitudes and
    behavior. Journal of Educational Equity and Leadership
    7/2:92-108.

Bailey, D.F. (Fall 1996). Project: Gentlemen on the move.
    Combating the poor social and academic performances of
    African American male youth. Paper presented at the
    14th annual World Conference of Invitational Education,
    Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Bailey D.F and Paisley P.O..(1996). Developing and
    nurturing excellence in adolescent African American
    males.

Baratz, S. & Baratz, J.C. (1970). Early childhood
    intervention: The social science base of institutional
    racism. Harvard Educational Review, 40. 29-50.

Becker, H. & Geer B. (1983). Participant observation: The
    analysis of qualitative research. Chicago, IL:
    University of Chicago Press.

Bell,D. (1987). And we will not be saved: The elusive quest
    for racial injustice. New York: Basic Books.

Bell, D.A. (1993). Remembrance of racism past: the Civil
    Rights Decline. In H.M. & E. Jones Racism in America.
    Madison: University Of Wisconsin Press.

Bell, D. (2003). Minority Status and Schooling. New York:
    Basic Books.

Bennet,C.; Niggle, T.; and Stage, F. (March 1989) Preservice multicultural teacher education: Predictors of student readiness. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Sanfrancisco, CA (ED 308 161).

Bennet,E. (1986). Culture and style in Pat Burke Guild and Stephen Garger (Eds.), Marching to a different drummer.Alexandria,VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Publications.

Beswick, R., (1990). Racism in America's Schools. Eric Digest Series, Number EA 49.

Bobo,L. & Kluegel, J.R. & Smith, R.A. (1997). Laissez Faire racism: The crystallization of a kinder, gentler, antilock ideology. In S.A. Tuch & J.K. Martin (Eds.), Racial attitudes in the 1990's. Continuity and change (pp.15-44). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Bonilla, S.E., (1996). Rethinking racism toward a structural interpretation. American Sociological Review, 62, 465-480.

Boykin, A., W: and Tom, F. (1985). Black child socialization: A conceptual framework. In H. McAdoo and J McAdoo, Black children: Social educational and parental environments. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Bruno, K., Joyner E., Haynes, N.M., Conner, J.P., and Maholmes ,V. (1994). Parent involvement and school improvement. School development program research monograph. New Haven, CT: Yale Child Study Center.

Burstein, N.D.(1989). Preparing teachers to work with culturally diverse students: A teacher education model. Journal of Teacher Education 40/5: 9-16.

Caldwell, P. (1995). A hair piece: Perspectives on the intersection of race and gender. In R. Degaldo, Critical race theory: The Cutting Edge (pp. 267-277). Philadelphia PA: Temple University Press.

Calmore, J. (1992). Critical race theory, Archie Shepp, and fire music. <u>Southern California Law Review,</u> 65, 2129-2231.

Clark, M. Reginald. (1983). <u>Family life and school achievment. Why poor black children fail or succeed.</u> Chicago Illinois: The University of Chicago Press.

Dr. D.Cole and Dr.L.Chubbuck, (2002). <u>Culture and schooling. Inquiry into contemporary education.</u> New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications.

Converse, J.M. & Schuman, H. (1974). <u>Conversations at random: Survey research as interviewees see it.</u> New York: John Wiley.

Cotton, K. (1992<u>). Developing empathy in children and youth. Close-up #13.</u> Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Cotton, K. (1991). <u>Educating urban minority youth: Research findings. Topical synthesis #4.</u> Portland Oregon: Northwest Regional Education Laboratory.

Cotton, K. (1990).<u>Expectations and student outcomes. Close -up #7.</u> Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Crenshaw, K.W. (1988). Race, reform, retrenchment instruction and legitimation in anti discrimination law. <u>Harvard Law Review 101.</u> 1331-1387.

Crenshaw, K.W. et al (1995). Introduction In K. Crenshaw, N. Gatondo, G. Peller, and K. Thomas (Eds.) *Critical race theory: The key writings that formed the movement.* New York Press.

Dana, R. H., (1993). <u>Multicultural assessment perspectives for professional psychology.</u> Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Dandy, E.B.. (1990). <u>Sensitizing teachers to cultural differences: An african-american perspective.</u> Paper presented at the National Dropout Prevention Conference, Nashville.

Darling Hammond L. (1990b). Achieving our goals: Superficial or structural reforms. Phi Delta Kappan, 72(4), 286-295.

Delgado, R. (1996), The coming race war? And other apocalyptic tales of america after affirmative action and welfare. New York: New York University Press.

Delgado, R. (1996). The Rodrigo chronicles: Conversations about America and race. New York: New York University Press.

Delpit, L. (1995). Other peoples children: Cultural conflict in the classroom. New York: The New Press.

Delpit, L. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other peoples children. Harvard Educational Review, 58 (3), 286-298.

Demo, D. H., and Parker, K.D. (1987). Academic achievement and self esteem among African American and White college students. Journal of Psychology, 127(4),345-355.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln Y. (1994). Handbook Of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks California: Sage Publication.

Dillard, A. (1982). Living by fiction. New York: Harper and Row.

Dillard, J.L. (1972). Black English: Its history and usage in the United States. New York: Random House.

Dunbar Jr., Chris. (1999). African American males participation:Promising inclusion, practicing exclusion. Theory into practice, Volume 38, Number4.

Epstein, J.L. and Dauber, S.L. (1989). Evaluation of students knowledge and attitudes in the teachers involve parents in school work (TIPS) social studies and art program. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Center For Research on Elementary and Middle Schools.

Fordham, S., and Ogbu J. (1986). African Americans school success: Coping with the burden of "acting white." Urban Review, 18. 176-206.

Fremon, C.,& Hamilton, S.R. (1997, April). Are schools failing black boys? <u>Parenting,</u> p.116-132.

Gaston, J. (1986). The deconstruction of the young Black male: The impact Of popular culture and organized sports. <u>Journal Of Black Studies 16.</u> 369-84.

Gathercoal.F. (1998). <u>Judicious discipline.</u> In R.E. Butchart & B. McEwan (Eds.), *Classroom discipline in American schools: Problems and possibilities for democratic education* (pp.197-216). Albany: State of New York Press.

Gay, G. (1988). Designing relevant curricula for diverse learners. <u>Education and Urban Society 20/4:</u> 327-340.w

Gibson, R. (1986). <u>Critical theory and function.</u> London: Hodden and Stoughton.

Glenn,C.L. (June 1989). Just schools for minority children. <u>Phi Delta Kappan 70,10:</u>777-79. EJ 390 508.

Glesne, Corrine. (1998). Becoming qualitative researchers. New York: Longman Publishing.

Goffman, E. (1963). <u>Stigma: Notes of the management of special identity.</u> Englewood, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Gottfredson, D.C. (1990). Developing <u>effective organizations to reduce school disorder.</u> In O.C. Moles (Ed.), *Student discipline strategies: Research and practice* (pp. 47-62). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Gold, R. (1958). Roles In Sociological Field Observations. <u>Social Forces.</u> 36, 217-223. London: Sage Publishing.

Goldberg, M.L. (1971). <u>Socio-Psychological issues in the education of the disadvantaged.</u> In A. H. Passov (Ed.), *Urban Education In The 1970's* pp. 61-93. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gordan, R., Della Piana,L.,& Keleher, T. (2000 March).<u>Facing the consequences: An examination of racial discrimination in U.S. public schools.</u> Oakland: Applied Research Center.

Grant, CA. (1989). Urban teachers: Their new colleagues and curriculum. Phi Delta Kappan, 70. 764-770.

Grant, C.A. and Ladson-Billings, G.(1997).(Eds.) Dictionary of multicultural education. Phoenix, Arizona: Onyx Press.

Grant, C.A.: and Sleeter, C.E. (1985). The literature on multicultural education: Review and Analysis, Educational Review, 37, 97-118.

Grottkau, B.J., and Nickolai-Mays, S. (1989). An empirical analysis of a multicultural education paradigm for pre-service teachers. Educational Research Quarterly 13/4:27-33.

Haberman, M. (1989). More minority teachers. Phi Delta Kappan, 70, 771-776.

Hammersly, M. & P. Alkinson. (1983). Ethnography: principles in practice. New York: Tavistock.

Haskins,J., Benson, K., (1999). Bound For American. The Forced Migration Of Africans To The New World. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books.

Haynes, R.L. (1985). Minority strategies for success. Unpublished manuscript. Department of Anthrology: University Of California, Berkeley.

Henderson, A. T. (1987). The evidence continues to grow: Parent involvement in education. Columbus, Maryland: National Committee For Citizens In Education.

Hilliard, A., Payton, S. Lucretia, and Williams, L. (1989). Infusion of African American content in the school curriculum. Gainesville Florida: Makare Publishing.

Hopkins, R. (1997). Educating Black males: Critical lessons in schooling, community and power. New York: University of New York Publishing.

Houston, B. (2001). Who Will Educate The Educators? Philosophy Of Education Yearbook.

Hrabowski, F.A., III, Maston, K.I., and Greif, G.L. (1998). Beating the odds: Raising academically successful African American males. New York: Oxford University Press.

Junker, B.(1960). Fieldwork. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.

King, J.E. (1994). Rethinking the Black/White Duality of our time. Paper presented at the Visiting Minority Scholars lecture series: Wisconsin Center For Educational Research, Madison.

Klugman, J., and Greenberg, B.(1991). Program helps identify,resolve problems in multicultural high schools. NASSP Bulletin 75/539: 96-102.

Kumashiro, K. (2003). Definition of ant: Oppressive education. New York: Routledge Farmer Publications.

Ladson-Billings, Gloria. (1994). The dream keepers: Successful teachers of African American children. San Francisco: Jassey-Bass.

Ladson-Billing, Gloria. (1996). Your blues ain't like mine. Keeping issues of race and racism on the multicultural agenda. Theory into practice, 35 (4), 248-255.

Ladson-Billings, Gloria. (2000). Fighting for our lives. Preparing teachers to teach African American students. Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. 51, No.3. May/June 206-214.

Lamotey, K. (December,1989). Cultural diversity in the school:Implications for principals. NASSP Bulletin73,521:81-8.

Larke, P.J. (1990). Cultural diversity awareness inventory: Assesising the sensitivity of pre-service teachers. Action in Teacher Education 12/3: 23-30.

Lazos, Vargas, S.L. (1998). Deconstructing homo(genous) Americans: The White ethnic immigrant narrative and its exclusionary effect. Tulane Law Review, 72, 1493-1596.

Lee, E. (1985). Letters to Marcia: A teacher's guide to antiracist education. Toronto, Ontario: Cross-Cultural Communication Centre.

Lincoln & Guba. (1995). Naturalistic inquiry. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Lofland, J., (1971). Analyzing social settings. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Mac and Ghaill, M. (1988). Young gifted and black. Milton Keyes: Open University Press.

Mahiri, J. (1998). Shooting for excellence: African American and youth culture in a new century school. In R.E. Butchart and B McEwan, Classroom discipline in American schools: Problems and Possibilities for Democratic educating. (217-36). Albany State: University of New York Press.

Majors, R., and Billson, M. (1992). Cool pose: The dilemmas of black manhood in America. New York: Lexington Books.

Malinowski, B. (1989). A diary in the strict sense of the term. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Matsuda, M. (1991). Voices of America: Accent anti discrimination law, and a jurisprudence for the last reconstruction. Yale Law Journal, 100 1329-1407.

McCadden, B.M. (1998). Why is Michael always getting timed out? Race, class and disciplining other people's children. In R.E. Butchart, & B. McEwan (Eds.), Classroom discipline in American schools: Problems and possibilities for democratic education, (pp.109-134). Albany: State University of New York Press.

McCollum, P. (1996). Obstacles to immigrant parent participation in schools. IDRA Newsletter,XXIII (10).

Merrick, R.M. (April 1988). Multicultural Education: A step toward pluralism. South Bend, IN: Indiana University at South Bend, (ED 302 451).

Miles, M.B. & Huberman A.M.(1994). Qualitative data
    analysis. An expanded Source Book (2nd ed.) Newberry
    Park CA: Sage.

Miller, H.L. (1967). Education for the disadvantaged. New
    York: Free Press.

Minorities in Higher Education. Washington D.C.
    Author.(1990). American Council on Education: Office
    of Minority Concerns.

Narine, M.L. (1992). Single sex, single race public
    schools:A solution to the problems plaguing the black
    community? East Lansing MI: National Center for
    Research on Teacher Learning.

National Coalition Of Advocates For Students November
    (1998).

National Commission on Chapter 1. (1992).

Neville, H.A. (2000). Construction and initial validation
    of the color blind racial attitudes scale (COBRAS).
    The Journal Of Counseling Psychology, 47, 59-70.

Ogbu, J. (1978). Minority education and caste: The American
    system in cross cultural perspective. New York:
    Academic Press.

Ogbu, J.U. (1982). Cultural discontinuities and
    schooling. Anthropology and Education Quarterly; 13
    (4), 290-307.

Ogbu, J.U. (1983). Minority status and schooling in plural
    societies. Comparative Education Review, 27(2), 168-
    190.

Ogbu, J. (1987). Variability in minority school
    performance: A problem in search of an explanation.
    Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 18, 312-334.

Ogbu, J.U. (1997). Understanding the school performance of
    urban African Americans: Some essential background
    knowledge. In H. Walburg, O Reyes, and R. Wiessberg,
    Children and youth: Interdisciplinary perspectives
    (pp 190-222). London: Sage.

Ogbu, J.U. (2003). Black American students in an affluent Suburb: A study of academic disengagement. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: Mahwah, New Jersey.

Olivas, M. (1990). The chronicles: My grandfather's stories and immigration law: The slave traders chronicles as racial history. Saint Louis University Law Journal. 34, 425-441.

Olneck, M. (1995). Immigrants and education. In J. Banks and C.M. Bank, Handbook of research on multicultural education (pp 310-327). New York: Macmillan.

Osborne, J.W. (2001). Unraveling underachievement among African American boys from an identification with academics perspective. Journal of Negro Education Vol. 68, N. 4.

Parham, T.A. (1999). Afterword: Beyond intolerance, bridging the gap between imposition and acceptance. In Ponterato, J.G., Casas, J.M., Suzuki, L.A., Alexander C.M. Handbook Of Multi Cultural Counseling (2001) 2nd Edition.

Passov, A.H. (1971). Urban education in the 1970's. New York: Teachers College Press.

Peterson, K.D.& Deal, T.E. (2002). Shaping Culture Fieldbook. Sanfrancisco:Jossey Bass.

Pettigraw, T. (1964). A profile of the Negro American. Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand.

Pinderhughes, E. (1989). Understanding race, ethnicity, and power. New York: Free Press.

Pollard, D.S. (October 1989). Reducing the impact of racism on students. Educational Leadership 47,2: 73-5. EJ 397 749.

Quantz, R. (1992). On critical ethnography. In The Handbook Of Qualitative Research In Education. San Diego CA: Academic Press.

Reed-Danahay, D. (Ed.). (1997). Auto ethnography: Rewriting the self and the social. New York: Berg.

Richardson, L. (1990). Writing strategies: Reaching diverse
    Audiences: Newbury audiences. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Rivers, Freya. (1998). Heshima To hotep: African centered
    steps to educational excellence. Lansing, MI: Sankofa
    Shule Publishing.

Reyes, L.H. and Stanic, GM. (1988). Race, sex,
    socioeconomic status, and mathematics. Journal for
    Research in Mathematics Education 19, 26-43.

Rubin, H., & I. Rubin. (1995). Qualitative interviewing:
    The art of hearing data. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.
    Sanders, J.A., and Wiseman, R.L.(1990). The effects of
    verbal and non verbal teacher immediacy on perceived
    cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning in the
    multicultural classroom. Communication Education 39/4,
    341-353.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1992). Death without weeping. The
    violence of everyday in Brazil. Berkley: University of
    California Press.

Scheurich, J.J. (1993). Toward a White discourse on White
    reason. Educational Researcher, 22 (8) 5-10.

Schwandt, T. (1990).Paths to inquiry in the social
    disciplines: scientific, constructivist, and critical
    theory methodologies. In the paradigm dialogue. Edited
    by E. Cuba 258-276 Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Schwartz, W. (2001). School practices for equitable
    discipline of African American students. ERIC
    Clearinghouse on Urban Education: New York, New York.

Sheets, R. H., & Gay, G. (1996, May). Student perceptions
    of disciplinary conflict in ethnically diverse
    classrooms. NASSP Bulletin, 80 (580), 84-94.

Simmons, R.G., Brown, L., Bush, DM., and Blyth D.A.,
    (1978). Self esteem and achievement of Black and
    White adolescents, Social problems. (26) 86-96.

Sizemore, Barbara (1985). Pitfalls and promises of
    effective schools research. Journal of Negro Education
    54. 269-288.

Sleeter, C.E. (1990). Staff development for desegregated schooling. Phi Delta Kappan 72/1: 133-140.

Stanley, J.C. (1973). Compensatory education for children ages 2 to 8: Recent studies of educational intervention. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Steele, C. (1997). A threat in the air: How stereotypes shape intellectual identity and performance. American Psychology, 52, 613-629.

Stolp, Stephen, and Stuart C. Smith. (1994). School culture and climate: The role of the leader. OSSC Bulletin Eugene Oregon School Study Council.

Tate,W.F. (1996). Critical race theory. Review of Research In Education, 22, 201-247. Washington University: Washington University Press.

Thomas, J. (1993). Doing critical ethnography. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Tyack, D. (1974). The one best system: A history of American urban education. Cambridge; MA: Harvard University Press.

Usher, R. (1996). A critique of neglected epistemological assumptions of educational research. In *Understanding educational research,* edited by D. Scott and R. Usher, 9-32 New York: R Rutledge.

Washington, R. (1976). Toward a theory of ethnicity and social competence. University Of Wisconsin Press: Milwaukee, WI.

Waxman, H. & Huang, S. (1997). Classroom instruction and learning environment differences between effective and ineffective urban elementary schools for African American students: Urban Education 32.

Wang, M.C. (1986). Educational segregation: A Civil Rights concern. Paper presented at the conference on school segregation. School District Of Philadelphia: Philadelphia, PA.