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JOURNAL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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The editors of *Journal of Education and Social Justice* invite submission of original manuscripts which contains essential information on education and social justice. All manuscripts must be carefully edited before submission. Article submissions should not exceed 25 to 30 pages doubles-paced 8.5" by 11" manuscript pages (roughly 6,500 to 7800 words), in a 12-point font and with one-inch margins. The manuscript must be typed utilizing Microsoft Word. Submissions should include one e-mailed copy. Authors should include a separate cover page with their names, titles, institutions, mailing address, daytime phone numbers(s), fax number(s), e-mail addresses, and a brief biographical sketch. Every effort should be made to ensure that, except for the cover sheet, the manuscript contains no clues to the authors' identity. The manuscript must be accompanied by a cover letter containing the name, address, and phone number of a contact author, as well as a statement that the manuscript is not under consideration elsewhere. The editors request that all text pages be numbered. The page length includes the "Footnotes" section (for substantive additions to the text which should be included at the end of the paper) and the "References" section (where full citations amplify the abbreviated in-text references for books or periodicals, e.g., alphabetized by author's name). References should include the most recent publications on your research topic. For writing and editorial style, authors must follow guidelines in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)*. The editors reserve the right to make minor changes for the sake of clarity. Manuscripts should be sent to Editor at ashesmail@aol.com.

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Editor's Remarks

Welcome!

It is with great pride and a sense of accomplishment that Duplichain University presents the spring issue of *The Journal of Education and Social Justice*. Articles that are part of this academic journal provide current research-based information. This information is the result of researchers, educators, criminal justice professionals, and individuals who are eager and determined to contribute to the knowledge base for various disciplines.

Duplichain University is a graduate distant learning university whose motto is *Transcending Dreams into Reality*. At this institution academic rigor is provided in a nurturing, supportive, encouraging and intellectually stimulating environment. DU recognizes the need for a refereed journal that focuses on social justice and education.

Unfortunately, there exists a population of professionals who are experiencing difficulty in having papers published in refereed journals. The major mission of this journal is to create an awareness of the societal inequities that are occurring on a national and international level. There are many scholars across this nation who are doing outstanding work on topics related to education and social justice. Many discriminatory factors are involved in the denial of papers addressing issues of societal ills. The leaders at Duplichain University are committed to publishing the work of those unsung heroes who are investigating issues of social concerns. Their research may serve as major solutions to social problems on the state, regional, national and international levels.

Researchers nationwide are invited to submit articles for publishing in this refereed journal. The purpose of this journal is to create opportunities for issues to be addressed, for enrichment programs to be documented, and to improve the quality of social justice and education in this country. The vision for this journal is that it will become a tool in creating a forum for researchers to receive and share relevant research information that will propel justice for all.

Rose Duhon-Sells, PhD
Founder & Co-Editor of Refereed Journal,
The Journal of Education and Social Justice
Founder and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs,
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ACKNOWLEDGING CHILDREN OF TRAUMATIC EXPOSURE: IT'S TIME FOR CHANGE

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Rosalind Duplechain
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Abstract: This study used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the impact of traumatic exposure, such as violence, on the school achievement of children. With two sub-samples of urban elementary (grades 2-5) children, the impact of violence exposure on three variables was examined (i.e., mental health behaviors, performance-related behaviors, and standardized achievement). Model results for Year I (n= 127) suggested that children who are exposed to violence underachieved in reading at the end of that school year. Model results for Year II (n=146) suggested that children who were exposed to violence in Year I demonstrated more delinquent behaviors and underachieved in reading by the end of the subsequent school year. Relevance of these findings is discussed for schools and for future research.

It is amazing how often we know about things but never take the time to connect the dots. For example, did you know that when a person experiences a violent event, he hs been exposed to a traumatic event? According to DSM-IV-TR, *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder* (4th ed., text rev.; DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000), the types of events noted above are traumatic because they pose a serious threat to one's physical and/or psychological well being. Whether the experience with these types of events has been firsthand (i.e., personal experience) or second-hand (knowledge that a significant other has had such an experience), these events meet the criteria of a traumatic event.

Also, did you know that this year our nation will commemorate the tenth anniversary of September 11th? Moreover, did you know that since 1992 to 2010 (February 5th) there have been some 46 school shootings in the United States? Furthermore, did you know that US children of all ages have been exposed to the trauma of violence—serious violent events such as witnessing or experiencing shootings, stabbings, or muggings or seeing a dead body? For example, US children, adolescents (Mazza and Reynolds, 1999), ages eleven, thirteen, and fifteen in Connecticut (Maran and Cohen, 1992), eleven year olds in California (Bender, 2003), ten to nineteen-year olds from Illinois (Uehara, Chalmers, Jenkins, and Shakoor, 1996), nine to twelve year-olds in Louisiana (Osofsky, Weivers, Hann, and Fick, 1993), six to ten-year olds in Washington, D.C. (Richters and Martinez, 1993), under six years old in Boston (Taylor, Zuckerman, Harik, and Groves, 1994).

Similarly, Kilpatrick and Saunders (1997) estimated that approximately 4 million adolescents have been victims of a serious physical assault and 9 million have witnessed serious violence during their lifetimes.

So, if violence exposure is a traumatic event and children of various ages, including under six years of age, are having these experiences, what does this mean for schools? What implications do these realities have on achievement and behavior? What dots do schools and teachers need to connect? What models of traumatic exposure can researchers provide schools and educators to help with this connection of dots? Without such connections, we risk delayed identification of and assistance for children who are exposed to the trauma of

violence. Such a delay could thereby make the possibility of intervention more difficult and allows for the development of secondary and tertiary problems (Kauffman, 1999).

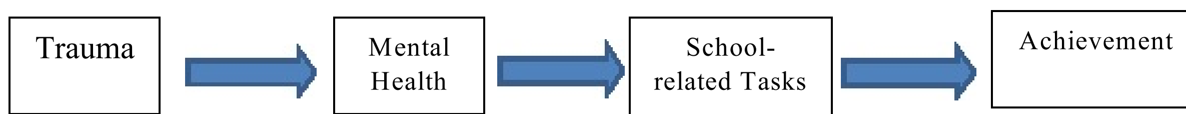
Objectives of Study

The objective of this study is two-fold. We want to inform school personnel at all levels and researchers of childhood trauma researchers of the impact that traumatic exposure, such as violence, has on the school achievement of children. We also want to encourage school personnel and researchers to take action on behalf of children who are exposed to traumatic events.

Proposed Causal Model

To this end, a psycho-educational model of traumatic exposure was proposed for testing. The proposed psycho-educational model of this study is supported by a number of studies found in the research that has explored the relationship between traumatic exposure and school achievement (Lipschitz, Rasmusson, Anyan, Cromwell, Southwick, 2000; Delaney-Black, Covington, Ondersma, Nordstrom-Klee, Templiln, Ager, Janisse, and Sokol, 2002; Duplechain, Reigner, and Packard, 2008; Hurt, Malmud, Brodsky, and Giannetta, 2001; Henrich, Schwab-Stone, Fanti, Jones, and Ruchkin, 2004). This model links a pattern of temporal sequences, which are thought to explain the relationship of traumatic exposure and school achievement. Specifically, this model hypothesizes that a child's exposure to trauma influences his/her mental health, which in turn impacts one's ability to perform school-related tasks (i.e., on-task and to orally participation) in classroom and which ultimately has an adverse effect on one's ability to achieve in school.

Figure 1. Proposed Causal Model



The variables included in the causal model manifest a balanced representation between that which the psychological literature has already provided (Trauma affects mental functioning) and that which the educational field awaits (Does trauma impede achievement? If so, how and what role can educators play to assist these children and minimize educational effects?).

Trauma of Violence Exposure on Mental Health

Mental health behaviors are included in this model because there is ample clinical and empirical evidence that traumatic exposure and mental health are related. Clinicians as far back as Freud and researchers as current as this review have linked psychic trauma to mental functioning. Specifically, traumatic exposure has been shown to lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD; Cooley-Quille, Boyd, Frantz, and Walsh, 2001), depression (Einbender and Friedrich, 1989; Shanok et al., 1989), to aggression (Einbender and Friedrich, 1989; Dyson, 1990), to delinquency (Dyson, 1990; Pynoos and Eth, 1984; Wordarski, Kurtz, Gaudin, and Howing, 1990), to somatic complaints (Einbender and Friedrich, 1989; Pynoos and Eth, 1984), to anxiety (Pynoos and Eth, 1984; Salzinger, Kaplan, Pelcovitz, Samit, and Krieger, 1984), and to withdrawal (Dyson, 1990; Hoffman-Plotkin and Twentyman, 1984; Pynoos and Eth, 1984).

Mental health and school-related tasks

Moreover, mental health is included in this model because there are some studies which are suggestive of a relationship between mental health behaviors and school-related tasks (Shanok et al., 1989) and between mental health behaviors and school achievement (Dyson, 1990; Pynoos, Fredrick, Nader, Arroyo, Steinberg, Eth, Nunez, and Fairbanks, 1987; Shanok et al., 1989). For example, Shanok and her colleagues (1989) concluded that "early emotional neglect and subsequent depression had clearly diverted energy from appropriate developmental tasks" (i.e., school-related tasks such as writing, making pictures, dictating sentences, etc.).

Trauma of violence exposure on school-related tasks

Pynoos and his colleagues (1987) studied the effects of a sniper attack on school-aged children and found that 25% of the students reported that continued thoughts of the attack interfered with their learning. Similarly, Dyson (1990) studied the effects of violence exposure on two, African-American, eighth grade students and concluded that mental health behavioral problems (i.e., aggression, hostility, defiance, withdrawal) had "markedly interfered with his [Student Two's] productivity" (p.21).

School-related tasks on achievement

The school-related tasks of on-task behavior and oral participation are included in this model because there is empirical evidence which suggests their relevance. Namely, there is evidence that school-related tasks are distinct from achievement and there is evidence that the school-related tasks of on-task and oral participation are predictive of academic achievement.

For example, Shanok and her colleagues (1989) suggest a distinction between school-related tasks (being on-task and participating) and the ultimate task of school (learning/ achieving). School-related tasks were described as "practice writing," making books, dictating sentences, and making pictures (sometimes over a period of weeks). However, "catch[ing] up" with performance level of peers and "learning" imply achievement.

Also, the school-related tasks described by Shanok and her colleagues (1989), writing, making books, dictating sentences and making pictures, are all behaviors that are performed by students and in a preschool setting. Shanok and her colleagues (1989) observed these behaviors in one student who had been traumatically exposed and interpreted them as indicative of future school success (She was beginning "to catch up with her peers" – p.83).

In addition, Friedrich, Einbender and Luecke (1983) studied the relationship of physical abuse to on-task behavior (performance-related behavior). The researchers' reported rationale for this exploration was that this behavior was "necessary for successful completion of school work" (p.314). Friedrich and his colleagues (1983) hypothesized that the abused children would exhibit less on-task behavior than the control. However, their hypothesis was not supported. Be that as it may, their inquiry and hypothesis are suggestive of a relationship and warrant more systematic investigation.

Moreover, one traditional tenet in education has always been that performance-related behaviors, such as on-task and oral academic participation (i.e., academic volunteering, calling out, being called upon) have a positive correlation with achievement. For example, on-task behavior was been found to significantly impact school achievement in a study conducted by Stallings and her colleagues (Stallings, Johnson, and Goodman, 1985). The sample included low income students from kindergarten through the fourth grade. Data on attention span, engaged rates, and grade levels were collected and analyzed to determine which of these has the greatest impact on achievement. Observations of each

student in reading and mathematics classes were conducted using the Time Off Task observation instrument. The Stanford Achievement Test or the California Achievement Test was used to assess student achievement. Among the results reported, those students with higher engagement rates (on-task behavior) scored higher on the achievement tests than did students with lower engagement rates. Similar conclusions have been reported by other studies (Guida, Ludlow, and Wilson, 1985; Johnson and Butts, 1983; Limbrick, 1992; Seifert and Beck, 1983; Sindelar, 1984).

Similarly, oral academic participation has been shown to have a positive relationship with achievement. For example, Finn and Cox (1992) studied the classroom participation and nonparticipation of fourth graders (n=1388). Teacher rated students as active participators, passive participators, or non-participators. Results indicated the participators scored higher on achievement measures. Similar conclusions have been reported by other studies (Loranger and Picard, 1981; Morine-Dershimer, Galluzzo, and Fagal, 1980).

Finally, performance-related behaviors, specifically on-task and oral academic participation, are included in this model because of their potential to direct teacher efforts at helping their traumatically exposed students. If these behaviors are found to significantly contribute to the relationship between trauma and achievement, then these, and possibly similar behaviors, may prove to be helpful in minimizing any negative educational effects of trauma. That is, these behaviors may provide a future direction for any needed educational interventions.

School achievement

School achievement is the ultimate dependent variable of this model because there is a "strong relationship between successful adult adjustment and school success in our culture" (Brassard and Gelardo, 1987). Furthermore, school achievement is included because it is the major criterion for which educators are held accountable. For example, currently in Chicago, Illinois, public schools are subject to closure and their administrators and educators may be fired on the basis of student achievement. In addition, most of the schools in the United States, students receive annual pass/fail evaluations based on school achievement. Lastly, students in the United States are typically assigned to special classes and services, paid for by its citizens and mandated by its laws, based on situations related to their school achievement.

Trauma, mental health, school-related tasks, and achievement

Shanok and her colleagues (1989) in addition to providing the conclusion that trauma adversely impacts mental health and developmental tasks, they also, through their descriptions of Tania, suggest a causal model that is completely expressed in the proposed model: trauma (emotional neglect), mental health behavior (depression), school-related tasks (writing, making books, dictating sentences, etc.), and school achievement ("catch up with peers", learning). A similar finding, connecting traumatic exposure to depression and disruptive behavior and ultimately to poor academic achievement (Schwartz and Gorman, 2003).

Operational Definition of Terms

According to the DSM-IV (1994), a trauma is an event that is a serious, threat to one's physical or psychological well-being. Examples of a trauma include: a "serious threat or harm" to one's self, to one's child, close relatives, or friends, "sudden destruction" to one's home or community, "seeing" someone "who has recently been, or is being, seriously injured or killed" due to an accident or violence.

For the purposes of the proposed study, traumatic events will be limited to five events

which may be characterized as exposure to violence (single or multiple) of significant others (see Table 2). These items have been taken from a Social Stress Measure developed by Tolan, Miller, and Thomas, 1988).

Mental health is the "state of being well mentally, characterized by soundness of thought and outlook, adaptability to one's environment, and balanced behavior" (The World Book Dictionary, 1994). In this study, the *Child Behavior Checklist-Teacher Report Form* (CBCL-TRF; Achenbach and Edelbrock, 1986) was used standardized descriptions to obtain ratings of each student's mental health as viewed by their classroom teacher. Specifically, mental health was measured by teacher ratings of aggression, delinquency, social problems, and thought problems.

Operational definitions of these mental health behaviors are consistent with Achenbach (1991) subscales. Achenbach (1991) defines thought problems using the following criteria: "cannot get mind off certain thoughts; deliberately harms self; fears certain animals, situations, places; hears things, repeats act; sees things; strange behavior; strange ideas" (p. 49). Social problems are defined as "acts young, clings, lonely, cries, not get along, unloved, out to get, worthless, get hurt, teased, not liked, clumsy, prefers young" (p. 49). Delinquent behaviors include: "doesn't seem to feel guilty after misbehaving, hangs around with bad company, lying or cheating, prefers older company, steals, swears, tardy to school or class, truant, uses alcohol or drugs" (p. 50). Aggression includes behaviors such as: "argues, defiant, brags, mean, demands attention, destroys own things, destroys property belonging to others, disobedient at school, disturbs other people, jealous, fights, talks out, attacks others, disrupts, screams, shows off, explosive temper, stubborn, mood change, talks much, teases, threatens" (p. 50).

School-related behaviors, for the purposes of the proposed study, are those student behaviors which have been shown to predict school performance and which can be influenced by a teacher's behavior. Specifically, these performance-related school behaviors were the on-task and the oral academic participation. These terms are defined in accordance with the definitions established by the MACS project. According to MACS, on-task behavior is when the target student shows overt motor/gestural or vocal/verbal behavior that is related to the completion of the assigned task. Oral academic participation is when the target student is observed volunteering, calling out, being called on, or engaging in an academic interaction during instructional time.

In this study, school achievement was measured using the percentile scores on the Reading and Math subscales of any one of three standardized tests: Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), the California Achievement Tests, or La Prueba de Riverside en Espanol.

In summation, there is some evidence which suggests a psycho-educational chain of consequences for traumatic exposure: trauma causes mental health problems; these problems hinder one's ability to engage in performance-related behaviors; and one's inability to perform school tasks impedes one's ability to achieve in school. To test the validity of this proposed model, this study used the statistical approach of Structural equation modeling (SEM) and the LISREL 8 (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993) computer program.

Together these allowed for the generation of models through the use of a tentative initial model (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993). The goal of such an inquiry is to find a model that is both statistically and substantively sound. For the purposes of this study, a model that is "substantively sound" will be any model in which violence is linked to any school-related behavior that teachers could target, such as on-task behavior, classroom participation, and academic achievement, in an effort to minimize the adverse influence of traumatic exposure in the lives of their students.

Thus, if this hypothesized chain of events holds true then it will describe children using educational criteria thereby providing educators with a way to identify children. Also, if this model holds true, then it will suggest school-related behaviors that educators can target in their attempts to assist children who are exposed to traumatic events. This information will be consistent with their concerns, goals, and expertise. Otherwise, we risk the likelihood of identifying children who are exposed to trauma when the effects of the exposure have become more complex. We may further risk misdiagnosing and negatively labeling children who are exposed to trauma (Bell and Jenkins, 1991), without regard to the possibility that a traumatic exposure may hinder school achievement (Eckenrode, Laird, and Doris, 1993; Einbender and Friedrich, 1989; Salzinger et al., 1984).

METHODS

This study was a secondary analysis of an extensive data set provided by the Metropolitan Area Child Study (MACS) and all participants, measures, and assessment procedures used in this study were those employed by MACS. The MACS project is a large scale, longitudinal study whose purpose was to promote the development of social skills as a way of curbing youth violence (Guerra, Eron, Huesmann, Tolan and Van Acker, 1990).

PARTICIPANTS

The initial participants in this study were 880 elementary school students ranging in age from six to thirteen and drawn from eight inner-city schools located in a mid-western city of the United States. Two sub-samples were taken from this initial population.

The first sub-sample consisted of 127 participants who had Year I data for all four variables required by the proposed model: traumatic exposure, mental health behaviors, performance-related behaviors, and achievement. The second sub-sample consisted of 146 participants who had Year I trauma data and Year II data for mental health behaviors, performance related behaviors, and achievement see Table 1).

INSTRUMENTS

Instruments included *Trauma of Violence Exposure Checklist* (self-report on traumatic exposure, *Child Behavior Checklist: Teacher Report Form* (teacher ratings of mental health behaviors), and standardized achievement data.

Table 1. Demographic Data of Sub-Samples 1 and 2

	Sub-sample 1	**Sub-sample 2**
N=	**127**	**146**
Exposure		
None	13%	18%
At least one	87%	82%
Gender		
Females	36%	39%
Males	64%	61%
Ethnicity		
African	33%	29%
Americans	20%	38%
Caucasians	46%	32%
Hispanics	1%	1%
Other		
Grade	39%	29%
2	31%	36%
3	0%	0%
4	31%	35%
5		
SES	36%	31%
Low	17%	9%
Middle	14%	45%
High	33%	15%
Missing		

TRAUMA OF VIOLENCE EXPOSURE CHECKLIST

The Trauma of Violence Exposure Checklist was used to measure exposure to violent events. This scale was taken from the Social Stress measure, a self-report questionnaire (Tolan, Miller, and Thomas, 1988). The Social

Stress measure consists of 15 items divided into 5 subscales (i.e., circumscribed events, daily hassles, violence, transitions, and school problems). Embedded within those 15 items were seven that meet the criteria as indices of traumatic events (i.e., serious threat to a child's well being). These seven items fall under two theoretical categories: 1) loss of a significant other (single or multiple losses due to death of a family member, another close relative or friend) and 2) exposure to violence (i.e., witnessing violence, knowledge of someone who was victimized, behavioral change prompted by fear of violence). Thus, for the purposes of this study, the five items of violence exposure were grouped to form the Trauma of Violence Exposure Checklist (see Table 2).

Table 2. Traumatic Exposure Scale

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following questions by circling "YES" or "NO".	
1.) During the last year, has someone else you know, other than a member of your family, gotten beaten, attacked or really hurt by others?	YES/NO
2.) During the last year, have you seen anyone beaten, shot or really hurt by someone?	YES/NO
3.) During the last year, have you seen or been around people shooting guns?	YES/NO
4.) During the last year, have you been afraid to go outside and play, or have your parents made you stay inside because of gangs or drugs in your neighborhood?	YES/NO
5.) During the last year, have you had to hide someplace because of shootings in your neighborhood?	YES/NO

Face validity of the Trauma of Violence Exposure Checklist, a low inference checklist. Children's scores for the Trauma of Violence Exposure Checklist are a sum of the number of yes responses to items. While the number an type of items make traditional estimates of internal consistency inappropriate, reliability of responses was supported by standardizing procedures for administration, offering administration in Spanish for Spanish-speaking students, and using "low-inference" items (i.e., during the last year have you been around people shooting guns?).

Child Behavior Checklist: Teacher Report Form

The second measure used in this study was the *Child Behavior Checklist* (CBCL-TRF) that measures mental health-related behaviors (Achenbach and Edelbrock, 1986). The CBCL-TRF describes the social/emotional development of children and adolescents. This measure contains a list of 119 items describing seven conditions: 1) withdrawal, 2) somatic complaints, 3) anxiety/depression, 4) social problems, 5) thought problems, 6) delinquent behavior, and 7) aggressive behavior. Estimates of reliability are .89 (test-retest) and .57 (inter-rater reliabilities between teachers and classroom aids; Elliott and Busse, 1992). Finally, concurrent validity with the *Conners Revised Teacher Rating Scales* is .85 (Elliott and Busse, 1992). For the purposes of this study, mental health was measured by teacher ratings of aggression (CBCAGG), delinquency (CBCDEL), social problems (CBCSOC), and thought problems (CBCTHO).

Standardized Academic Achievement

One of three standardized tests was used to measure achievement. The percentile scores of the math and the reading subscales obtained from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), the California Achievement Tests (CAT), or La Prueba de Riverside en Espanol (La Prueba) were used in this measurement. The La Prueba is a standardized achievement test that is given to native Spanish speaking children. All three instruments are valid and reliable measures of academic skills (Raju, 1992; Airasian, 1989; Chicago Public Schools, 1998).

Naturalistic Observation

This study also included the naturalistic observations conducted by MACS personnel. Behavioral observers were extensively trained by the MACS project. These observers

reported 100 percent accuracy of definitions, 95 percent accuracy of written examples, and 85 percent inter-rater reliability for more than three consecutive sessions with no individual code falling below an 80 percent agreement among raters. Agreement was established for both duration and frequency of the responses prior to data collection

Two specific variables were of interest to the current study: on-task behavior and classroom participation behavior. On-task behavior is defined as any overt motor behavior, vocal/ verbal behavior, or gesture that is related to the completion of the assigned task, and participation behavior is defined as volunteering to answer questions, calling out, and being called upon. These behaviors are of interest because on-task behavior and participation behavior are positively correlated with school achievement (Finn and Cox, 1992; Stallings, Johnson, and Goodman, 1985; Guida, Ludlow, and Wilson, 1985). However, the relationship between these school-related behaviors and school achievement, while somewhat explored in the literature, has not been well explored among populations of traumatically exposed children.

Data Collection Procedures

Traumatic exposure data for both samples were collected in the spring of Year I. The Traumatic Exposure Scale was administered in the child's classroom by a team. All members of this team were extensively trained in the administration of this measure. In Spanish-speaking classrooms, the team always included a bilingual (Spanish and English) member. While one member of this team read each question aloud, the other team members served as monitors who assisted individual students. For those children who spoke only Spanish, this measure was read aloud by the bilingual member while the other team members served as monitors who cued the bilingual reader to students who required individual assistance. Participants completed the scale by indicating whether or not they had experienced any of the traumatic events included on the scale during the past year. By summing the total number of "yes" responses, each child received a total score for the violence items.

The primary classroom teacher for each participant completed the *Teacher Report Form (TRF)* of the *CBCL.* These teachers considered a list of statements that described behaviors and were asked to rate each description as it applied to each participant "now or within the past two months" using a 3-point Likert rating (1 = not true; 2 = somewhat or sometimes true; 3 = very true or often true). Teachers were given a small monetary award for completing each *CBCL-TRF* assessment.

Collection of the naturalistic data occurred during the Spring of the 1992-93 school term. Each child was observed for two 20-minute sessions during a variety of school activities (i.e., within the classroom, during lunch, during recess, etc.) to gather a range of student behaviors. All of these behaviors were coded and assigned a specific key on the keyboards of pre-programmed laptop computers. These computers were programmed for real-time, multiple entry data collection (Repp, Harman, Felce, Van Acker, and Karsh, 1989; Van Acker, Bush, and Grant, 1992). Thus, these computers were capable of calculating the total frequency, the starting, ending and duration times as well as the percentage of the total session time for coded behaviors.

Behavioral observers were extensively trained by the MACS project. Observers reported 100 percent accuracy of definitions, 95 percent accuracy of written examples, and 85 percent inter-rater reliability for more than three consecutive sessions with no individual code falling below an 80 percent agreement among raters. Agreement was established for both duration and frequency of the responses prior to data collection.

Achievement tests were administered, according to standardized procedures.

Data Analysis

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was the statistical approach used to test the relationships among all four variables: violence exposure, mental heath behaviors, performance-related behaviors, and achievement. The LISREL 8 (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993) computer program was used in conducting this analysis.

Maximum likelihood (ML) was the estimation method that was used in all LISREL analyses and the chi-square (x^2) and Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) are the absolute indices that were used to determine the overall fit of all models in this study. Square-root transformations were not performed on behavioral data because extremes in behavioral scores were anticipated and explored for any potential relationship that they might have with traumatic exposure.

According to the LISREL manual (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993), generating models based on a tentative initial model is an acceptable use of SEM. The goal of such an inquiry is to find a model that not only fits the data well from a statistical point of view but also has substantive meaning. For the purposes of this study, a model of "substantive meaning" will be any model in which violence is linked to any school-related behavior that teachers could target, such as on-task behavior, classroom participation, and academic achievement, in an effort to minimize the adverse influence of traumatic exposure in the lives of their students.

Five steps were taken in order to determine if a model with the proposed variables could both statistically and substantively describe the sample of students in this study. First, a model was defined as suggested by relevant literature and by variables of interest. Second, the correlations, standard deviations, and means of the variables in the proposed model were inputted into the LISREL program, the relationships among the variables were described as LISREL equations, and the program was run. Third, statistical results of the proposed model were examined and any relationships (paths) that were not statistically significant (t-value $<\pm 1.96$), were removed, creating an alternative model which was then re-run, or re-estimated, using the LISREL program (A. Conway, personal communications, March 31, 1997 and April 7, 1997). Fourth, results of the alternative model were examined for statistical criteria of fit. If this model was found to be statistically representative of the sample, then this model was examined further for substantive meaning. Fifth, only models with both statistical and substantive meaning were retained.

Results of Study

Traumatic Exposure Scale

The scale included five items related to violence exposure. The violence exposure scores ranged from 0-3, no exposure, moderate exposure, and high exposure respectively. For Year I's data, the mean was 2.28 and the standard deviation was 0.68 and the. For Year II, the mean was 2.10 and the standard deviation was 0.68.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrices

For each of the variables within the proposed model, a summary of the means, standard deviations, ranges, skew and kurtosis are presented for Year I and for Year II (see Table 3). In addition, correlation among the variables within the proposed model was also explored. Results of Year I and Year II are presented in Table 4.

Year I Results

In an effort to generate a model that was both statistical and substantively meaningful, ten models were tested in this analysis. Of these models, only one, Model 10 proved to be both statistically and substantively meaningful. More specifically, the overall chi-square value is not significant $x^2(4, N=127)=0.83$, $p>.05$, both goodness-of-fit indices are appropriately very high (AGFI=0.99; GFI=1.00), and the

root mean square residual is appropriately very low (0.04). In addition, confidence values of RMSEA are within the limits suggested by Browne and Cudeck (1993) and the p-value for this test of close fit (RMSEA) is 0.97. Together, these indicators-of-fit suggest that there is very little discrepancy between the population and the precision of the fit measure.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Year I and Year II

	Mean	Range	Skew	Kurtosis
Violence				
Year I	2.2	1-3	-.43	-.85
Year II	2.1	1-3	-.13	-.84
CBCTHO				
Year I	.9	0-14	3.72	19.78
Year II	.9	0-12	3.08	9.65
CBCSOC				
Year I	2.4	0-21	2.41	7.33
Year II	2.4	0-18	2.16	5.05
CBCDEL				
Year I	1.9	0-14	1.89	4.83
Year II	2.0	0-12	1.30	1.58
CBCAGG				
Year I	10.5	0-47	1.38	1.30
Year II	9.9	0-41	1.10	.29
ON-TASK				
Year I	776.6	162-1128	-.84	-.24
Year II	743.2	0-1198	-.65	-.09
PARTICIPATION				
Year I	2.8	0-17	1.73	3.28
Year II	1.8	0-12	1.66	2.76
MATH				
Year I	45.4	1-99	.06	-1.09
Year II	52.0	1-99	-.03	-1.06
READ				
Year I	37.0	1-99	.58	-.74
Year II	45.7	1-99	.19	-.97

Note. Violence = Violence Exposure; CBCTHO = Thought problems; CBCSOC = Social problems; CBCDEL = Delinquency; CBCAGG = Aggression; ON-TASK = On-task behavior; PARTICIPATION = Classroom participation; MATH = Mathematics achievement; and READ = Reading achievement.
SKEW ³ 2 = highly non-normal; KURTOSIS ³ 7 = highly non-normal.
n=127 (Year I); n=145 (Year II)

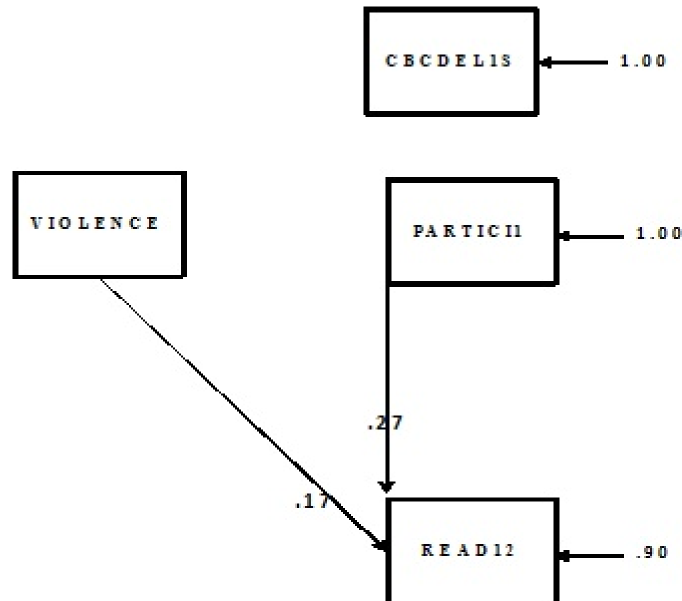
Table 4. Correlation Matrices for Year I and Year II

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1) Violence									
Year I	1.00								
Year II	1.00								
2) CBCTHO									
Year I	.03	1.00							
Year II	.11	1.00							
3) CBCSOC									
Year I	-.03	.75*	1.00						
Year II	-.02	.71*	1.00						
4) CBCDEL									
Year I	.06	.70*	.69*	1.00					
Year II	.16*	.38*	.36*	1.00					
5) CBCAGG									
Year I	-.00	.64*	.65*	.72*	1.00				
Year II	-.07	.47*	.50*	.74*	1.00				
6) ON-TASK									
Year I	-.12	-.08	-.14	-.12	-.18*	1.00			
Year II	-.01	.01	-.13	-.05	-.10	1.00			
7) PARTICIPATION									
Year I	.01	.04	-.00	.02	.03	.32*	1.00		
Year II	.00	-.08	-.08	-.09	.06	.22*	1.00		
8) MATH									
Year I	-.15	-.10	-.05	-.06	.05	.19*	.18*	1.00	
Year II	.03	-.06	-.15*	-.14	-.00	.03	.02	1.00	
9) READ									
Year I	-.16	-.04	-.03	-.02	-.06	.27*	.26*	.56*	1.00
Year II	-.00	-.06	-.04	-.24*	-.01	.05	.09	.70*	1.00
SD									
Year I	.68	1.84	3.42	2.45	10.70	246.60	3.39	26.73	26.56
Year II	.6	2.1	3.5	2.3	10.5	274.8	2.4	27.2	26.1

Note. Violence = Violence Exposure; CBCTHO = Thought problems; CBCSOC = Social problems; CBCDEL = Delinquency; CBCAGG = Aggression; ON-TASK = On-task behavior; PARTICIPATION = Classroom participation; MATH = Mathematics achievement; and READ = Reading achievement.
n=127 (Year I); n=145 (Year II). * $p < .05$

The standardized path estimates of Model 10 indicate the relative strength and direction of the causal relationships (see Figure 1). These path values indicated that a student's classroom participation (i.e., volunteering, calling out, or being called upon) had a significantly positive relationship with his/her reading scores (g= 0.27). In addition, and more important to this inquiry, violence exposure had a significant, negative relationship with reading achievement scores (b= -0.17). These findings suggest that, in Year I, the children in this sample scored lower in reading for either one of two reasons: 1) either they did not participate in class and/or 2) they were exposed to violence. For this data set, no other significant relationship involving any other variable was indicated by the results of this model.

Figure 2. Model 10: Year I's Results



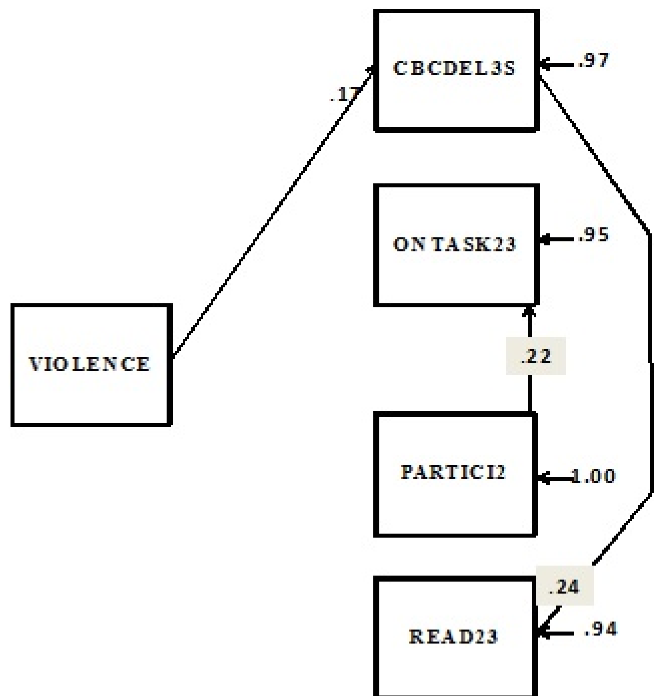
Note. Violence = Violence Exposure; CBCDEL1S = Delinquency; ON-TASK12 = On-task behavior; PARTICI12 = Classroom participation; and READ12 = Reading achievement.

YEAR II RESULTS

Ten models were tested for both statistical and substantive meaning in this analysis. Of these models, only one, Model 8 proved to be both statistically and substantively meaningful. More specifically, the overall chi-square value is not significant, x^2(7, N=145)=2.61, p>.05, both goodness-of-fit indices are appropriately very high (AGFI=0.98; GFI=0.99), and the root mean square residual is appropriately low (.04). In addition, the confidence intervals of RMSEA are within the limits suggested by Browne and Cudeck (1993), and the p-value for the test of close fit (RMSEA < .05) is .97. Together, these indicators of fit suggest that there is very little discrepancy between the population and the precision of the fit measure itself.

In Figure 2, the standardized path estimates of Model 8 suggest that violence exposure has a significant, positive relationship with delinquency (g = .17) and delinquency has a significant, negative relationship with reading achievement (b = -.24). Additionally, classroom participation behavior has a significant, positive relationship with on-task behavior (b = .22). The former finding suggests that violence exposure is associated with increased delinquent behaviors, which in turn are associated with lower reading achievement. The latter finding suggests that the more a student participated in class the more he/she was on-task. (Remember: classroom participation by students does not always coincide with on-task behavior). No other significant relationships were suggested by the results of this model.

Figure 2. Model 8: Year II's Results



Note. Violence = Violence Exposure; CBCDEL3S = Delinquency; ON-TASK23 = On-task behavior; PARTICI23 = Classroom participation; and READ23 = Reading achievement.

Relevance of Study

The results of this study strongly suggest that the presence of violence has a direct and negative impact on a child's reading achievement in Year I and an indirect and negative impact on reading achievement that is mediated through delinquent behavior in Year II. These findings have relevance for schools and for future research.

Relevance for Schools

The educational importance of this study lies in its ability to compel school personnel to acknowledge and to prepare for children who have been exposed to the trauma of violence. Schools and school personnel must ask themselves what they can do, what role can they play in the lives of traumatically exposed children. To this end, the author would like to pose the following as starting points: 1) periodic screening of all students for their exposure to traumatic events and 2) education of teachers, students, and families in order to raise awareness and promote an attitudinal change: traumatic exposure impacts student achievement; trauma is a school concern as well as a counseling concern.

Because the findings of Year I suggests an adverse effect on reading achievement and not on mental health (i.e., delinquency), schools should and must play a role in intervening in the lives of traumatically exposed children; we have a vested interest in identifying and assisting traumatically exposed children. Periodically screening school children can help to accomplish this end and is consistent with the suggestion posed by Shakoor and Chalmers (1991). They believe that screening helps with early identification of at-risk children and facilitates early intervention. To this end, there are several instruments that school counselors can use to screen their students for violence exposure. While these instruments continue to

need refinement, they are designed specifically for use with children and/or adolescents.

For young children, see:

Richters and Martinez, 1990 – *Things I have Seen and Heard*

Pynoos and Eth (1986)

For youth in general, see:

Bell, Taylor-Crawford, Jenkins, and Chalmers (1988)

Gladstein and Slater (1988)

For adolescents, see:

Hausman, Spivak, Prothrow-Stith, and Roeber (1992)

Richters and Saltzman (1990) – *Survey of Community Violence* (SCV)

Other surveys that can prompt information on other forms of trauma are: *Social Readjustment Ratings Questionnaire* (Coddington, 1972); *Children's Depression Rating Scale-Revised* (Poznanski, Freeman, and Mokros, 1985). School counselors who use these surveys will need to distinguish serious threats from everyday stressors because serious threats are not the same as everyday stressors nor do they both yield adverse effects on achievement (Terr, 1990).

Once students are identified, then schools can work to distinguish students: those students who may not be achieving because they were exposed to a traumatic event from those who may not be achieving because they may be in need of special services. This distinction could then be used to assist students by referring them for appropriate services. Otherwise, we risk misdiagnosing traumatically exposed students as students in need of special education services (Bell and Jenkins, 1991) and never attending to the root of the achievement problem itself (i.e., the traumatic event).

Screening students could also lead to various educational experiences directed towards students, teachers, and families. For example, results of screening for traumatic events can help to identify the most common forms of trauma that are present in a particular school. Then school personnel could be assigned to assist students, teachers, and parents by educating everyone about these forms of trauma, the possible impact that traumatic exposure has on student achievement and school experiences, and some appropriate ways of coping with these traumas.

These educational opportunities, in anticipation of an adverse impact of traumatic exposure on reading achievement, should also include professional development experiences that ensure that every classroom teacher has a strong and varied repertoire of reading strategies that take into account the impact of trauma. Trauma research demonstrates that trauma research has shown that children exposed to trauma tend to have a difficult time concentrating on their school work (Pynoos et al, 1987), that the energy needed for school tasks is diverted to suppressing a traumatic experience (Conte and Schuerman, 1987), and that children who are exposed to traumatic events are anxious, fearful, and avoidant (DSM-IV-TR, 2004). Teaching strategies that may help are those that allow expression (biblio-therapy, journaling), active involvement (Reader's Theatre, acting out important parts of a story), and proceduralization of reading skills that are associated with reading comprehension (i.e., finding the main idea, the ideas of who, what, when, and where, etc).

Relevance for Future Research

When comparing the findings of Year I to those of Year II, a clear and simple observation can be made: the consequences of exposure to violence get increasingly complicated from Year I to Year II. Year I contains a single adverse consequence (lower reading achievement) whereas Year II takes on a double adverse consequence (delinquent behavior and lower reading achievement). This suggests

two possibilities. One is that given the focus of schools, the place where these data were gathered, adverse mental health behaviors may go unnoticed unless they are extreme. However, it is also possible that mental health problems, such as delinquency, are not the first indicators of the problems associated with violence. Perhaps, mental health problems may be secondary effects while academic problems may be primary effects of traumatic exposure in school-aged children. In either case it is clear that violence impacts reading achievement and that schools can and need to play a critical role in identifying and assisting children exposed to violence.

To this end, future research is needed either to validate the findings of this study or to establish a more appropriate model. If there are behaviors that negatively affect reading achievement or if low reading achievement is an early indicator of trauma then teachers can be trained to identify needy students, to refer them, and to plan for them academically, to act on behalf of traumatically exposed children within their areas of concern, goals, and expertise. To accomplish this, however, researchers need to change from a solely mental health model that explains trauma to a model that is teacher-friendly. Without this change, the good we seek to do by way of research may prove to be nothing more than good seeds falling upon unprepared ground.

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TEACHING OUTSIDE ONE'S COMFORT ZONE: HELPING DIVERSE MILLENNIALS SUCCEED

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Abstract: This paper discusses some ways educators may utilize their knowledge of generational characteristics and differences to enhance their teaching and inter-generational relationships with Millennials. It cautions against over- generalizing the popularly accepted generational characteristics to diverse students; it suggests that, like any other category of social classification, generational difference should be considered within the larger context of social diversity, including race, class, and gender, and geographical region. This paper critically discusses specific strategies that educators, who are working outside their comfort zones, can employ to increase the effectiveness of the educational experiences they facilitate for diverse millennial students.

INTRODUCTION

College campuses, like the pre-Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (pre-K-12) arenas, are rapidly becoming more diverse, especially in terms of students, who represent "nearly every ethnic background and ethnic background in the world"; students of color constituting approximately 40 percent of public K-12 school students, (U.S. Department of Education, 2005: p.16). Many educators, community members, mass media pundits, and politicians are discussing, researching, and even bemoaning the multicultural states of the education system. A growing number of educators have discussed the need for educating teachers to develop the cultural awareness that is needed to success fully teach diverse students to achieve their academic goals. (Kunjufu, (2002), Sleeter and Grant (2009), Pitre (2011), Banks, (2008) Mlaren (2007), Freire (2010)). Because of the pivotal role teachers play in student success, proponents of multicultural education focus mostly on key systems of social stratification, especially race, class, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, linguistic difference, and geographical location, with more scholars now recognizing the impact of the intersecting diversity categories on education, (See for example: Anderson (1995), Hill Collins (2000) hooks (1984) Weber (2010), Sleeter and Grant (1999), Ornstein and Levine (2008)).

Another important dimension of diversity, generational difference, which encompasses both age and cultural dimensions, has received sporadic attention, depending on the perceived differences between the generations. College campuses are home to at least four generations, with the majority of students belonging to Generation Y, also known as the Millennials, and faculty, staff and administrators largely belonging to the older Generations, namely, X, Baby Boomers, and GIs or Traditionalists, (Oblinger, 2003). Members of one generation are born within roughly the same twenty or so year period; they have common and distinct characteristics and world view, which can be attributed to the social, cultural, financial, technological, and political environments at play during those formative years as young

people develop core personalities, (Howe and Strauss, 2000.) Inter-generational differences have been observed as an essential diversity area for higher education practitioners to pay attention to. (Borges, Manuel, Elam, and Jones, 2010; Srauss and Howe, 2000).

PURPOSE

This paper discusses some ways educators may utilize their knowledge of generational characteristics and differences to enhance their teaching and intergenerational relationships with Millennials. It cautions against overgeneralizing the popularly accepted generational characteristics to diverse students; it suggests that, like any other category of social classification, generational difference should be considered within the larger context of social diversity, including race, class, and gender, and geographical region. This paper critically discusses specific strategies that educators, who are working outside their comfort zones, can employ to increase the effectiveness of the educational experiences they facilitate for diverse Millennial students.

GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY

Generational diversity cannot be treated as an exclusive dimension; it should be examined in close connection with and within the context of the other systems of social stratification, including, but not limited to the ones mentioned above. Additionally, because people are constantly evolving, generational age categories are not absolute. As Neil Howe's organization, Life Course Associates writes: "People never "belong" to an age bracket. Rather, they belong to a generation that happens to be passing through an age bracket— a generation with its own memories, language, habits, beliefs, and life lessons," (http://www. lifecourse.com/mi/ insight/ phases. html). Therefore, in using "generation" as a category of difference, educators should be cautious not to over- generalize or use the "mainstream" conceptions of generational characteristics to determine their interactions with all students.

Generational diversity has to be considered within the context of the other major social stratification systems prevalent in society. For example, given the effects of segregation and other separatist policies such as Apartheid in pre-independent South Africa, the experiences and worldviews of age-mates of different races living within the same country can be quite different. Even though they might share memories of certain nationally significant events in common, their perceptions of those events may lead to different worldviews altogether. In countries where income and digital divides are wider, discrepancies to access to timely and accurate news may cause different groups to view the same event quite differently. For instance, although the current Millennials in South Africa 'witnessed' the 1994 Independence from the Apartheid regime, the feelings and attitudes of most white Afrikaner Millennials may be different from those of their black counterparts; the former might have viewed independence as the defeat of their racial superiority, while the later are likely to have viewed the same event as either victory for all or as ushering liberation and equality for the previously oppressed majority. Similarly, the civil rights victories in the United States, including the 1954 Brown v Board victory for equal educational access, might be viewed differently by same-age people of different races and political persuasions. Such differing perceptions can bring about different outlooks among people of the same age "generation."

As educators use generational differences to inform their pedagogy, they need to keep in mind both the intergenerational and intragenerational diversity. Blanketed categorizations of all students as the same technologically savvy Millennials may lead to the maintenance of the status quo, where the norm is based on white, middle class, Euro-centric

views, which leaves many minority groups, including females, working class Caucasian, African American, Latino, Asian, Native American, and international students behind. It is essential to keep in mind that Millennials who come from African American, southern, working class backgrounds are likely to have significant different experiences from their white, northern, middle class college mates, regardless of whether they all like rap or loud music, for instance. Similarly, female Millennials in urban schools are likely to have different experiences from their counterparts in rural schools. Moreover, students' experiences are also affected by the affluence, histories, and cultures of their institutions; therefore, students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), majority public institutions, elite, private colleges or Ivy League and top twenty institutions, for instance, may have different college experiences that would warrant faculty to take into consideration in their efforts to provide their specific students with the most beneficial educational experiences. Consequently, when discussing the widely accepted generational categorizations, educators ought to keep other social factors of differentiation in mind.

College Generational Profile

Today's schools and college campuses are largely populated by members of at least three generations, with the majority of faculty being members, staff, and administrators belonging to what are commonly known as the Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X, while most students belong to Generation Y, also known as the Millennial generation. The median age of public school teachers is 44 years (US Department of Education 2005 p 18). Their students' ages are typically between six and seventeen. In the postsecondary sector, the average age instructor is 48 years, (http://chronicle.com/article/Economy-Slows-Colleges/123636/). While the number of adult and continuing education students is increasing, almost 60 percent of college students are below the age of 23 and 17.3% are between ages 24 and 29. Therefore, about 77% of college students can be categorized as Millennials (http://chronicle. com/article/Who-Are-the-Undergraduates-/123916/ 12/12/2010. The multigenerational nature of colleges poses both challenges and opportunities for teaching and learning, (Baily, 2007). It should be noted that these descriptions are not exclusive or absolute; students, faculty, administrators, and staff are found across all generations. With all these generations interacting in the educational arena, it is important to continually examine ways of helping educators enhance the development and maintenance of mutually respectful and appreciative relationships with each other..

Overview of Generational Characteristics

Members of one generation typically share some major characteristics, especially in the areas of work ethic, motives, cognitive styles, and personality. Their experiences are shaped—albeit to varying degrees—by the shared, influential, historical, social, economic, and technological developments, prevalent during their early years. In and effort to help educators more fully appreciate the four generations, general characteristics of the four generations are summarized below.

The Silent Generation

Colleges host quite a diminishing, but, significant number of members of the Silent Generation, also known as Traditionalists; most of them are professors emeritus, staff, or administrators. However, because of the national retirement age ranges, this generation is the least represented in on both K-12 and college and campuses. According to Life-Course Associates, between 1925 and 1942, and during the Great Depression, the Silent Generation was born. They "grew up as the seen-but-not-heard" children, when risk aver-

sion and "conformity seemed a sure ticket to success," (http://www.lifecourse.com/mi/in sight/the-generational-constellation.html). Gender and racial inequalities were prevalent. Perhaps the later led to the evolution of the sixties, when this generation, also known as Traditionalists, "became America's leading civil rights activists, rock n' rollers, antiwar leaders, feminists, public interests lawyers and mentors for [Boomer Generation] firebrands," http://www.lifecourse.com/mi/insight/the-generational-constellation.html. As politicians, they called for inclusion and fairness. Martin Luther King, Collin Powell, Maya Angelou, Elvis Pressley, Ted Kennedy are examples of popular American Traditionalists. Their conventionalism and civic engagement, and love for social justice are characteristics that may be useful in mentoring the Millennials. Due to the scarcity of technological development during most of their early years, Traditionalists are the least technologically savvy of the four generations found in colleges. Being mostly on their way out, many may not be motivated to learn new educational technologies; thus they may find the technology—related demands of the academy rather frustrating.

The Baby Boomer Generation

Roughly between 1943 and 1960 came the generation commonly known as the Baby Boomers, who "grew up as indulged youth during the post World War II era of community-spirited progress," (LifeCourse Associates http://www.lifecourse.com/mi/insight/the-generational-constellation.html.) Unlike their institutionally and civically focused parents, Baby Boomers were individualistic, perfectionists, who were rebellious, risk-taking, and not very academically focused, as it was during their times when SAT scores began to decline. Their politics were rather divisive; George Bush, Bill and Hillary Clinton, bell hooks, Cornel West, Patricia Hill Collins, Michael Eric Dyson, Michael Jackson, Bill Gates, and Alice Walker. Women fought for equality in the workplace as they strove to crash the "glass ceiling." Boomers "developed very close individual relationships with their children, to the point of hovering," (LifeCourse Associates, http://www.lifecourse.com/mi/ in sight/the-generational-constellation.html. Due to the unfavorable economic climate prevailing during a significant period of their lives, most Boomers are staying longer in the workplace than they had anticipated; therefore, they are inclined to be more open to learning new skills, including technology, than the Traditionalists.

However, staying comfortable and within their comfort zones, both Boomers and their Traditionalist colleagues have a strong preference for traditional lecture formats and tend to be skeptical of the rigor and worth of technologically enhanced education. Some of them, also mostly tenured, full or associate professors, or top administrators, can hardly navigate the Internet, are uncomfortable using E-mail, and do not even attempt utilizing course management systems such as Blackboard, WebCT, D2L, MOODLE or Sakai, for their classes (http://chronicle.com/ article/Professors-Use-of/123682/; Junco & Mastrodicasa, 2007). Given the number of working years left for a significant number of them, it is advisable that they get some basic training in using course management systems in order for them to stay current with the Millennials who will continue to fill their classrooms till most retire. Further, because together with Generation X, they form the largest contingent of college faculty, staff, and administrators, it is only fair to the students for this group to learn more about the generation of students they have to educate.

Generation X

The second largest group of college faculty members belongs to Generation X, those born roughly between 1961 and 1981. Members of

Generation X are generally perceived as self-centered, self-driven, independent, entrepreneurial, multicultural, and pragmatic. Being largely skeptical, Gen Xers neither trust nor like authority and rigid rules, (Lancaster and

Stillman, 2003). They are quite different from the Millennials, who value rules and structure, as well as respect authority. Members of this generation include, Stephen Colbert, Michelle Obama, Jay Z, and Michelle Rhee. This generation is the more technologically adept than the other two generations of faculty, staff and administrators; because of the relatively long years they still face in the workplace, the majority of them are open to learning more ways of enhancing their technological skills. However, as highly independent individuals, they might face challenges as they attempt to accommodate the Millennials' parental dependency and high needs for peer connectedness and nurturing, for example.

These three older generations of educators have one major goal in common; they have to effectively interact with the Millennials they are employed to teach. Therefore, even if they are quite different in some regards, they need to sharpen their intergenerational communication skills, given the pivotal role of effective interpersonal communication in teaching. In order for Baby Boomers and Generations X educators to improve their success as they work outside their comfort zones, they need to pay attention to the general characteristics of millennial students.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TODAY'S COLLEGE STUDENTS (GENERATION Y/MILLENNIALS)

Most traditional college students belong to the generation commonly known as the Millennial Generation or Generation Y, those born between roughly between 1981 and 1999. The exactness of the years they were born is not as important as the fact that they were born in the same general historical epoch, and generally share many historical, technological, and social aspects. Generation Yers are considered to be close to their parents and peers, achievement-oriented, and technologically inclined. The extent to which these characteristics apply vary in from one social group to another, and generational theory, like most other social theories, should only be used as a guide. Consequently, as educators consider generational characteristics, they should keep in mind other diversity factors that might lead certain students behave in very different ways from their peers.

Millennials are known for their close relationships with, and reliance on their parents or guardians. According to Kane (2009), approximately seventy–five million members of this generation are being raised at the most child-centric time in recent history in the United States. Strauss and Howe (2000) describe this generation as the "most cared-for generation in American history," (p. 76). Their parents generally provide them abundant support, in accordance to their socio-economic statuses and other life circumstances; this support may be in the form of emotional, social, financial, technological, or educational support. It is not uncommon to hear parents (mostly Generation X) say that they have to rush home to help their adult college students complete class projects or assignments. Moreover, many would agree that this generation of college students is

largely being reared by the contingent of parents infamously known as the 'helicopter parents'; these parents operate as if they are "on call" for their children, as they are readily available to intervene for their children, irrespective of whether they have been invited to help or not. Educational institutions are notorious for their particular disdain of such parents, whom they accuse of interfering in their professional activities and spoiling their children so much that they hinder them from timely developing into mature students who can operate independently of their parents. As Thielfoldt, & Scheef, (2004), observe, the abundant attention showered to the by their parents is probably responsible for their elevated self-confidence, which sometimes makes them look and act arrogantly. However, because they value their parents and embrace

their teachings and social values, Millennials are more inclined to be conventional. They work well in structured environments, with defined rules and regulations, which makes it easier for educators to work with this less rebellious group of students. Therefore, educators need to keep this need for parental support and guidance as well as a positive acceptance of structure and authority in mind as they interact with Generation Y students.

There is general consensus among educators that current students use technology more than the preceding generations. Research shows that this generation is generally characterized by technological dexterity, an increased social networking, and a familiarity with multiple media, the World Wide Web, and digital technologies (Strauss and Howe (2000); Boggs and Szabo, 2011; Bell, 2010). Generation Y was born and has grown up during perhaps the greatest technological advancements of all times; especially as regards abundant computer and television access, electronic and mobile phone communication, instant messaging, internet publishing (eg. U-Tube) and social networking (e.g. Facebook, My Space, and Twitter). Some members of this generation include, Mark Zuckerberg. A world without computers is unimaginable to the majority of US students, regardless of their own personal situations as regards computer ownership and affordability. This may be help explain why this group is generally considered as technologically inclined, peer- and friend-oriented and influenced, and collaborative, (Straus and Howe, 2000; and Twenge, 2006.)

Millennials also have different motivations from their parental generation, Generation X, in addition to other differences. Reporting on their empirical study of medical students, Borges, Manuel, Elam and Jones, write: "our study findings may substantiate the contentions of population theorists that, compared with previous generations, Millennials have greater needs to belong to social groups and to share with others, stronger team instincts and tighter peer bonds, and greater needs to achieve and succeed" (p. 574). Generation Yers, a significant number of whom have a Facebook or MY Space page, cherish friendships and seem to be strongly influenced by the opinions of their peers. Combining such needs for social affiliation and the achievement drive could result in what has been described as one of the greatest generations ever, and a generation of heroes, (Strauss and Howe, 2000.)

Like any social group, Millennials are not a homogeneous group, with minority groups constituting 40%, while immigrants comprise 20% of the generation, (Baggott, p.30.) Their experiences and characteristics tend to differ along the lines of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, geographical region, national origin, mental and physical ability, intellectual classification, familial situation, and technological access. There are many students who do not enjoy the positive and / or abundant parental attention that has been observed of many of the middle class Millennials observed and studied by many educators. Similarly, there is a significant number that do not have the access to technology that Millennials are generally assumed to have. These may include students who come from working class and poor backgrounds, and cannot afford computers, mobile phones or I Pads; those raised in working class one-parent families— where the parent is too busy juggling multiple jobs to even attend school meetings or take them to public libraries during the pre-college period; students who come from abusive homes— where the parental figures exhibit negative, authoritarian, and other abusive tend

encies; and, those students who have to work to augment household incomes or to survive. Intra-group differences exist within each generation; therefore, each of the general characteristics mentioned here should be considered only as a guide, and not a definitive factor.

Strategies for the Inter-generationally Competent Educator

Students need educational experiences that enable them to become valued, equal, and responsible members of society. Any teacher charged with teaching students outside his or her culture therefore, ". . . not only has to help students acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for effective citizenry, but must also to develop a cultural awareness that permits such fulfillment (Neil, 2005). It is widely accepted that educators' skills, dispositions, and knowledge play a major role in students' success. Especially where students have different cultural backgrounds from those of their teachers, positive cultural competencies are crucial to learning and achievement. The converse is true; teachers' cultural limitations and incompetence, together with the lack of skills to work with, and unfavorable attitudes toward students outside their own cultures, including outside their generations, may be largely responsible for the poor academic achievement that educators, politicians, and the general public lament so much. It is even more so for those teachers who perceive difference as deficiency operate from a "deficiency orientation," who view students from different cultures, as lacking those characteristics, knowledge, and aptitudes that are needed for success in what the mainstream academic culture, (Sleeter &Grant 2009). Such views are not conducive to the learning of all students, especially those from different racial, gender, religious, linguistic, sexual orientation, and generations. Therefore, because the majority of college students belong to a generation that is different from that of the majority of faculty, it is imperative that, in their quest to enhance student achievement, educators familiarize themselves with the overall culture of Generation Y students.

McAllister cautions against radically changing proven best practices in our effort to fully embrace the Millennials. She writes: "While pedagogues can certainly make the learning process more in line with generational characteristics, not all of their traits are conducive to learning, (p15). Therefore, educators should feel comfortable helping students mitigate some of their generational behaviors for the sake of maximizing learning outcomes. The section below critically discuses some of the common Millennial characteristics may inform educators as they plan significant experiences for the students. The characteristics examined are: their familiarity with technology, peer-orientation, the ability to multitask, their needs for nurturing and structure as well as how their high confidence levels affect their educational experiences.

Technological Inclinations and Applications to Learning

Millennials are widely considered the most technologically familiar of all the generations, having been born at a very technologically fertile period. In a survey of faculty use of technology conducted with 4,600 faculty members at 50 colleges and universities, the 2009 Faculty Survey of Student Engagement found that 20% admitted never using course management systems such as Blackboard or Desire 2 Learn (D2L), while over 70% said they never used technology for the following: "Plagiarism detection" (e.g. Turnitin); (79%) Collaborative Editing Software (e.g. Wikis and Google Docs); (84%) Blogs; or Video games, simulations, or virtual worlds (e.g Ayiti, EleMental, Second Life, Civilization, etc), among other uses. http://chronicle.com/ article/ Professors-Use-of/123682/ July 25, 2010.

Consequently, differing attitudes and aptitudes toward educational technology are among the most contentious of differences that exist among the Millennials and their older generation educators. According to the US Department of Education:

> While technology in schools has become common, several related challenges have presented themselves. These challenges include providing adequate training to teachers on how to effectively integrate technology into the

> curriculum and ensuring that benefits of educational technology are available to students of all socioeconomic backgrounds." (2005 p. 17)

The most obvious challenge is the one identified by the US Department of Education in the statement above—training teachers to effectively utilize technology to enhance students' learning. Some teachers are resistant to learning 'new and ever-changing technologies', mainly because they think that by the time they have mastered one skill, the technological application may have become defunct, and it would be time for them to learn something new. They also believe that having taught successfully for many years without using new technological enhancements, there is no valid reason for them to change. Others may feel that if the students were not so technologically inclined, teachers would not have to be "bothered" with the requirements to learn new technology, including simple educational tools such as Blackboard or even E-mail, in some cases. Therefore, such anxieties, fears and misgivings about technology can create tensions between teachers and their technologically savvy students.

As mentioned earlier, the Millennials are also commonly referred to as the Tech Generation because of their easiness with technology; they also earn this nickname because of what many in their teachers' and parents' generations consider excessive use of mostly electronic devices. Needless to say, most of these students do not believe that they are being excessive in their use of mobile phones, Blackberries, I Phones, I Pods, I Pads, video games, laptops, and other electronic gadgets. Therefore, when politely cautioned on the subject, depending on their inclinations and relationships some might get defensive or even offensive in their responses. Some do not believe they should have to take a break from social networking, simply because they are in some instructor's class! After all, they argue, they are great multi-taskers and can learn while surfing the net or texting. Consequently, teachers might find it hard to successfully educate them about appropriateness of using their technological devices, especially for personal, non-educational purposes, in class, for instance.

The challenges above notwithstanding, there are significant students and schools that do not have adequate access to technology, mainly because of their socioeconomic statuses. Students in undeserved rural and urban areas, most of whom are minority students, do not have easy access to technology; some cannot even afford mobile phones, which a significant number of their peers take for granted. Consequently, faculty need to be careful not to overestimate and generalize their students' levels of familiarity and adeptness with technological applications, including the ability to effectively search for information on the Internet, to operate E-mail, and to navigate educational resources such as Blackboard or Desire 2 Learn (D2L).

Similarly, faculty should not assume that all students have access to laptops or computers at home. It might behoove faculty to offer or arrange basic training for those technological applications they most use in their classes; this is especially essential for those teaching diverse and minority students or those teaching at non-elite schools, where the overwhelming majority receive need-based financial aid, and are negatively affected by the digital divide. It is also essential to realize that while many students use Information Communication Technology (ICT) for communication, leisure, and other social activities, a good number of them find it difficult to transfer those skills to educational technology. In their discussion of using media literacy, to teach Millennials reading and writing, Considine, Horton, Moorman (2009) observed: "Their extensive use of ICT often creates a false sense of competency, as well as the misperception among many adults that contemporary youth

are "media savvy." Hands on is not the same as heads on, (p. 172). In our classes, with predominantly working class, southern, African American students, the majority of which are technology enhanced, many students initially complain about being asked to use basic educational technology resources such as Blackboard, MOODLE or D2L, in their classes. Many say that they have never had to use so much technology for learning before; they also admit that and that it is a very difficult leap to make from social networking to submitting assignments and viewing instructor feedback in Turnitin! Therefore, educational technology training might be well received if it is offered to all students, as a component of the early semester classes; in an effort to minimize the complaints from those who are tech savvy, trainers could allow students to peer-tutor each other or to gain points for the experience. Students should also be helped to understand that they cannot know everything that is there to be known about technology, or any other topic; educators need to help Generation Y students develop a stronger willingness to learn.

Rewards are especially important to this generation, given that many of them believe they should earn something for their effort. Strauss and Howe (2000) argue that Millennials are externally motivated. This might appear a contradiction, given the amount of community service in which this generation generally engages. Close scrutiny of this service may indicate that a significant amount might be motivated by external rewards such as class credit, social recognition, resume boosting, future career intentions, and networking. Moreover, such thinking seems to support some observations about the possible effects of being brought up by Generation X parents. Strauss and Howe (2000) argue that given their upbringing by generally very hard-working parents, Millennials are very focused on building their resumes early and getting a head start on preparing for their careers.

Peer-Orientation and Collaboration

Millennials are typically team-oriented, work well in groups, prefer collaborative activities to individual endeavors. They generally enjoy well defined group assignments and projects, which many generally execute better than they do individual assignments. Along these lines, Borges, et.al. (2010) write: "Faculty members may motivate their Millennial students to learn by using group activities where they can apply course content and learn by doing, providing students with relationship-building opportunities in the classroom or online that contribute to collaboration and teamwork," (p. 274). Therefore, faculty and students are generally well-served by such assignments as they help students develop those social-technological skills that they already have for educational purposes. Further, group assignments need to be structured as monitored for maximum effectiveness. Wilson and Gerber (2008) suggest that while faculty ought to provide students opportunities to work in small teams, they should be vigilant in training students to work ethically, and they "must protect conscientious students from both free-loaders and enthusiastic but simply incompetent team members," (p. 34). Having said that, faculty should guard against assuming that all students will enjoy or benefit from working in a groups; they should balance group with individual assignments so that the course assessments are carefully distributed.

Multi-tasking and Learning Effectiveness

They're good multi-taskers, not only are they able to simultaneously text, talk, surf the net, listen to music and do their homework, they can also juggle sports, school, and social interests, (McAlister, A.(2009); Strauss and Howe, 2000). This agility can help students work on several assignments within the same period. This makes it more beneficial for faculty to give them information about all course

assignments at the beginning of the semester. In an effort to avoid overwhelming them and to help them budget their time effectively, faculty may consider breaking longer writing or project—based assignments into smaller tasks, with specific timelines to turn in drafts for formative evaluation and feedback. While multitasking may present advantages for the learner, it is also worth noting that studies show that multitasking may have negative effects on learning, especially on long term memory, and may slow down the learning process, (McAlister, 2009). Therefore, educators need to help their students understand that technology use in the classroom or during study should be generally limited to that which supports the learning task at hand. While this might seem to be "common sense" to their older generation teachers, Millennials need to be taught the art of maximizing learning time and activities, including using their multitasking skills to enhance learning.

Need for Nurturing and Mentoring

Millennials, regardless of their intellectual abilities and self confidence levels, generally value mentoring, nurturing, and personal attention. Just as they value very strong relationships with their parents whom they look to for extensive support and nurturing, Millennials desire good relationships with their teachers, (Oblinger, 2003). They expect their teachers and advisors to mentor them - both in their academic and personal endeavors. For many, mentoring and nurturing help make them feel more welcome and valued, as well as more connected to their teachers, which is likely to yield positive results for them. While their grandparents'generation of educators—the Baby Boomers—are more inclined to provide nurturing to them, these expectations do not always match up with the characteristics of their highly independent, Gen Xers, who respect strict boundaries, and are less inclined to nurture students who are not their own offspring. Nevertheless, educators could benefit from engaging in genuine dialogue about their reservations, and seeking to understand the nurturing needs of Millennials. Faculty self-disclosure may result in students developing more empathy with those teachers who do not feel comfortable providing students non-academic or non-course related mentoring. Further, frank conversations will also help educators identify those students whose cultural, religious, or familial upbringing does not support the formation of close relationships with adults to whom they are not related. In other words, educators should be careful not to assume that all students need mentoring and closeness from their teachers. Considering the Millennials' needs for mentoring and nurturing within the contexts of other dimensions of diversity may help empower educators boost their rapport with this generation of students, while simultaneously helping the students increase their overall educational experiences.

Need for Structure and Curriculum Clarity

Millennials learn better if faculty members provide clear objectives, explain relevance of lessons to the expected student outcomes, and provide details for assignment completion, and weekly schedules. Borges, et.al., (2010) found, "Achievement-oriented Millennial students . . . also expect that faculty clearly specify educational goals and desired learning outcomes, (274). This may be based on their formative, public school educational experiences, which were characterized by having their teachers post learning outcomes for each module, give frequent tests, use pacing guides, and provide syllabi copies on the first day of class to students and sometime to parents, too, (Wilson and Gerber, 2008). These authors also found that "college students do not function well in courses with loosely organized, schematic syllabi" (p.32.) Generation Y students need to know the exact objective of each class and how each lesson relates to the assignments and tests; they generally learn with the end goal

(course grades) in mind and, unlike their older generation teachers, they do not generally appreciate 'learning for learning's sake.' Therefore, course syllabi have to be explicit and detailed especially as regards what, when, and how, assignments should be completed, and how much weight they carry in the final grading scheme, (Wilson and Gerber, 2008).

Similarly, assessment and feedback should be very explicit and transparent. Borges et.al. (2010) argue that Millennials "may express a strong need for feedback to monitor their progress and accomplishment," (p. 274.) Using electronic grade centers such as those found in Blackboard or D2L provide easier ways for faculty to share their feedback with students. Additionally, to cater to both their need for caring adults and for feedback, faculty should provide Millenials with what Fink (2003), in his discussion of significant learning experiences calls 'FIDeLity': i.e. feedback that is 'frequent, immediate, discriminating feedback that is] done lovingly" Fink (p. 95.) Showing that faculty care for their progress is essential for developing positive relationships with students; this seems to give credence to the popularly cited expression, "No one cares what you know until they know that you care"[1] and its other variations. Providing Millennials ongoing feedback on drafts, class participation, and other components of the learning experience will help them improve their performance.

The challenge for faculty is to achieve this level of detail without producing 'lengthy' syllabi, given their general lack of strong affinity to reading long pieces. Wilson and Gerber, (2008) suggest that instructors deliberately *over-estimate* the desire of students for clarity—and resist the temptation to regard those students as somehow deficient in character for the fervency of such a desire," (p. 32.) Faculty may decide to provide periodic, detailed weekly schedules, samples, rubrics, grading schemes, especially via technological vehicles such as email or Blackboard/ MOODLE/D2L, and others. Because of the Millennials need for structure, predictability, and strict guidelines, it might be necessary to highlight a clause to the effect that syllabus details will be provided every so often via a specified vehicle. Therefore, structure, explicitness, consistency, and full transparency help this busy, overworked, and highly achievement-oriented generation of students understand what is required of them so that they may plan effectively, both mentally and emotionally, as well as manage their time accordingly, (Strauss and Howe, 2000; Wilson and Gerber, 2008.)

Overconfidence and its Influence on Research and Writing

One of the more pervasive characteristics of Millennials is that they are very self-confident. These students are very sure of themselves and they believe their voices should be heard, and their opinions should carry a significant amount of weight. They are "self assured go-getters" (Wilson and Gerber, p. 31.) who can sometimes appear "cocky", Thielfoldt, & Scheef, (2004). This over-confidence may lead some students to believe that their personal opinions constitute facts, and that their personal experiences are more valid than proven best practices and academic research and theory. Perhaps also because of their strong love for their parents, Millennials also believe that their own personal sources of information, e.g. parents, pastors, mentors, blogs, and popular media, are the only ones they should consult, even for academic writing. Moreover, their over-exposure and reliance on technology might be partially responsible for their insistence that they earn grades by merely voicing their unsubstantiated personal opinions and non-academic sources in "research

papers." Therefore, they may argue against most faculty's insistence on students reading and conducting research for course assignments. We suggest that educators demonstrate that they value students' opinions by providing them opportunities for reflective and commentary type of assignments; blogs and discussion boards provide good opportunities for such activities. Additionally, faculty need to systematically help students reach a healthy balance of supporting their personal opinions with research in their academic writing. Moreover, students should also be trained to differentiate between opinion-based and research-based papers; faculty can achieve this by developing diverse assignments that allow students to engage in both forms of writing.

In order to train them for sophisticated critical thinking and literacies, faculty should also make deliberate efforts to help their students understand the value of the opinions of others, especially those that differ or contradict theirs. This step will help teachers infuse diversity training in their lessons, but will help them transition into lessons about the significance of well-researched expert opinions that are based on rigorous research. Such teaching will be even more beneficial if faculty intentionally teach students anti-plagiarism skills and other important issues about academic honesty. Gerber and Wilson (2008 suggest that faculty "engage students in a significant, course-long conversation on the ethical dimensions of taking a college course," (p.32.) Capitalizing on the high self-confidence levels of Millennials, educators can provide genuine, credit earning opportunities for students to engage in opinion sharing as well as those that train them the rigor required in academic writing.

Conclusion

Generational differences call for a new paradigm of teacher education. Traditional, pre-service, and in-service teacher education programs ought to systematically infuse the important components of inter-generational competency into their diversity courses and programs. Just as they would do in relation to other diversity factors, teachers need to develop deeper insights into the general characteristics of Millennials, including, their preferred learning styles, skills' strengths, their inter-personal communication styles, work ethics, and habits, and their general worldview, (Boggs and Szabo, 2011). Such multi-generational competencies call for the development of instructional strategies that bring about transformational, inclusive learning that can empower students to become more successful in their educational endeavors, (Freire, 2010; Banks, 1997; Sleeter and Grant, 1999; Anderson, 1988). Therefore, schools need to fully utilize their entire intellectual capital, including their students' "knowledge, skills, capabilities, competencies . . . practices, and routines," (Hargreaves, 2003 p. 7) in order to transform the experiences of their students and effectiveness of the educators.

At the center of all the reforms that should take place in both pre-and in-service education are mutual respect, appreciation for generational differences, strengths, challenges, and world-views. Good relationships between students and teachers are a good predictor of academic success; conversely, poor relationships between teachers and students are among the most significant contributors to the poor academic outcomes faced by many schools. Therefore, teachers who understand their students are better positioned to help them maximize their talents, competencies, skills and work ethic for academic achievement, (Oblinger, 2003, MaAlister, 2009.) Consequently, it is essential that educators continue to strive to develop the healthy rapport that exudes the positivity needed to help students learn, and turn schools into welcoming, socially just, environments for all, (Baily, 2009; Freire, 2010). Successful multi-generational education requires faculty to embrace diversity and help their students do

the same, developing a willingness to learn about and from the younger generation and to correct misconceptions and stereotypes about different social groups. As Paulo Freire says, education can either be used to train students for conformity and status quo maintenance, or it can be used as a liberatory practice that leads to freedom, creativity, and transformation for social justice. Teaching students for twenty-first century challenges requires educators to continually re-evaluate their pedagogy to help them better meet the needs of their millennial student. Contextualized generational theory offers an additional framework for examining ways of helping different generations of educators and students enhance their teaching and learning experiences.

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The Roles of Family Structure, Family Interactions and Gender on African American Delinquency

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Abstract: Using survey data obtained from African American high school students in New Orleans in 1999, we examine how family structure and interaction, and gender impact delinquency. In particular, we investigate the contributions of family relationships, "broken homes," extended family, and gender to delinquency for African Americans. Statistical analyses such as Principal Components Analysis, Analysis of Variance, T-Tests, Correlations and Regression are performed to determine whether or not these factors contribute to delinquency, and if do they do, to what extent.

Introduction

Previous studies have of delinquency have examined the influence of a variety factors. Several studies posit that the family is a source of delinquency; parental absence, poor quality of parent-child interaction; large family size, and birth order have been argued to increase delinquency (Rosenbaum, 1989). Deprivation is argued to occur when a child loses a parent, whether through death or divorce (Rankin, 1983). Broken homes, where only one original biological parent resides, are argued by some researchers as positively contributing to delinquency (Monaham, 1957; Wattenberg and Saunders, 1954). Other scholars such as Canter (1982), Hennessey, Richards, and Berk (1978), and Rosen and Nelson (1982) disagree. Likewise, findings regarding which gender is more likely to be delinquent and motivations for delinquency are contradictory (Dornbush, Carlsmith, Bushwall, Ritter, Leiderman, Hastrof, and Goss, 1985; Goldstein, 1984; Gove and Crutchfield, 1982; Kandel, Simcha-Fagin, and Davies, 1986; Needle, Su, and Doherty, 1990; Morris, 1964; Monahan, 1957; Chilton and Markel, 1972; Cockburn and Maclay, 1965; and Datesman and Scarpelli, 1975).

Using data obtained from a survey administered to African American high school students in New Orleans in 1999, this study examines how family structure and interaction, and gender impact delinquency. More specifically, the associations between family relationships, "broken homes," presence of extended family, gender and delinquency for African American children are examined. A variety of statistical analyses (including Principal components analysis, Analysis of Variance, T-Tests, correlations and Regression) are performed to determine whether or not these factors contribute to delinquency, and if do they do, to what extent. In the paragraphs below, we review theories and findings from previous studies that are relevant to this study.

Literature Review

One useful theory in understanding why some, but not all, children engage in delinquent behavior is Social Control theory. The theory argues that when constraints on behavior are absent or weak, children are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior. The earliest constraints or controls that children normally

encounter in life come from their parents. These constraints are communicated from parents to children when a bond or attachment has been developed between parent and child. When attachment is weak or absent, children are free to engage in whatever behavior they choose (Goode, 2012).

As children age, they encounter social institutions such as schools and peer groups which also exert influence on the child's behavior. However, as Developmental Pathways theory indicates, the pathway to delinquent behavior begins early, often in the preschool years, with hyperactivity, aggressive behavior, and sullenness. If strong, positive, reinforcing attachments and controls are still lacking in an individual's life, the types of delinquent behaviors will escalate as indicated by Authority Conflict theory. By the time a child reaches their early teens, they have graduated from disobedience, lying, and minor aggression to fighting, vandalism, and theft (Schmalleger, 2009). Since they did not learn appropriate behaviors or obtain controls from others earlier in life, it is difficult for these teens to master self control (Self Control theory). They lack a point of reference to judge their actions in new situations (Goode, 2012).

Social Control, Developmental Pathways, Authority conflict, and Self-control theories are some possible explanations for why some children engage in delinquent behavior. Findings from several studies of factors contributing to delinquency, including broken homes, family relationships, extended families, and gender, are examined below.

Broken Homes and Delinquency

Bates (1998) finds that parents from single-parent households report experiencing more misbehavior from their children than two parent households. Among two parent households, more misbehavior by children is experienced than among two biological parent households. Single parent households also experienced a higher level of conflict than two parent households, especially in single mother households (Bates, 1998).

Gove and Crutchfield (1982) and Johnson (1986) suggest that parents in broken homes are less able to control their children than those parents from intact households. Other research has shown that only certain types of delinquent behavior are exhibited by those children from broken homes (Austin, 1978; Canter, 1982; Nye, 1958; Rankin, 1983). Wallace and Bachman (1991) argue that intact families deter adolescent drug use. Flewelling and Bauman (1990) find family structure as an important predictor for risky behaviors. Children from broken homes had higher rates of drug abuse and sexual intercourse (after controlling for age, race, sex, and parental education) than children from intact homes.

Wells and Rankin (1991) conducted a meta-analysis of the impact of broken homes on delinquency. They find a stable, consistent pattern over time: delinquency is 10 to 15 percent higher for children from broken homes than for children from intact homes. These findings are similar by gender and race/ethnicity. However, African Americans and other racial/ethnic minorities experience higher rates of single parent households than other groups and reside in poor urban areas where unemployment and single-parenthood are common (Wilson, 1987).

According to the US Census Bureau, the phenomenon of single-parenthood is on the rise. Over 60 percent of African American families are headed by one parent, typically a mother (Nicholas-Casebolt, 1988). At least one-third of all families are headed by one parent. Neverdon-Merritt (1996) reports that many of these families have incomes below the poverty line; these economic pressures produce higher risks of child maladjustment and delinquency. Socialization for sex-role identity is problematic for sons in female-headed households, because of the absence of male to teach the child proper male behavior and self-

esteem. Others such as Moynihan (1965) and Wacquant and Wilson (1989) argue that the deterioration of American society lies in the deterioration of African American families, hit hard by unemployment, low incomes, social disruption, and racism.

The revised Juvenile Justice Act of 1974 states that an increased emphasis on strengthening families experiencing delinquency, parental involvement in treatment and alternative disposition programs, and supporting parental self-help groups would reduce the number of delinquents entering the juvenile justice system (Juvenile Justice Act, 1993). This means less involvement by individuals under age 18 with the police, courts, and corrections (Neverdon-Merritt, 1996). In 1974, one-half of all arrests were juveniles; an increasing percentage of violent crimes were being committed by juveniles; the juvenile justice system was already overloaded with cases; existing program could not adequately respond to young drug addicts; and efforts to reduce delinquency were uncoordinated (Juvenile Justice Act, 1993). These problems still remain in today's society, decades later.

Family Relations And Delinquency

LaGrange and White (1985) argue the family influences are keys to preventing delinquency. Families where children are strongly attached to parents and experience a high degree of parental love are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior. Emotional support is expressed by parents to children through feedback. Positive reinforcements lead to stronger attachments to parents.

Hirschi (1969) argues the internalization of social norms lies in the attachments one forms with others. Wiatrowski, Griswold, and Roberts (1981) state that the family is an important source for learning socially acceptable behavior. Children with strong attachments to parents learn from them the norms and have lower levels of delinquency than children with weak attachments. Needle et al. (1988) find family instability, weak cohesion, and poor quality relationships to be associated with drug use among adolescents. Rhodes and Jason (1990) find that among ninth graders, those with weak parental relationships, weak parental support and encouragement, and other family problems had higher rates of drug use than other youths. Webb et al. (1991) in their study of seventh graders find that students who initially abstained from alcohol abuse were more likely to be users 15 months later if they had poor relations with parents and rejected their authority.

Other studies of parental supervision find that it negatively affects delinquency (Greenwood, 1992; Jang and Smith, 1997; Junger and Marshall, 1997). Similar research finds that this relationship between parental supervision and delinquency will vary according to how the concept of supervision is measured, though (Broidy, 1995; Wells and Rankin, 1988). Nye (1958) and Hirschi (1969) propose one measure of supervision is direct supervision, or amount of time spent in a parent's presence. The more time a child spends in direct supervision, then a child has less opportunity to become involved in situations that can lead to delinquency (Hirschi, 1969). When a child is outside of the sphere of direct control, it is much harder to prevent quick acts of delinquency (Kierkus, 1997).

However, when children have strong attachments to parents, they are less likely to engage in delinquent activity, even outside of direct supervision. Children are concerned that delinquent behavior would be a source of embarrassment, inconvenience, or disappointment for their parents (Hirschi, 1969; Nye, 1958). Intimacy of communication between children and their parents is also identified by Hirschi (1969) as important for preventing delinquency. Children who frequently express their emotions and thoughts to parents may feel their parents' presence, even though the parents may not physically be with their children. Kierkus (1997) points out that this matters only if

children really care about what their parents think about their conduct.

Extended Families And Delinquency

Reports from the US Census show that number and percentage of children residing with a grandparent has increased dramatically. Approximately 4 million or 6 percent children under age 18 resided in a grandparent's home. Of these children, approximately 46 percent are African American (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging, 1999). Fuller-Thomson, Minkler, and Driver (1997) find that African American grandparents had an 83 percent higher chance of raising their grandchildren than grandparents of other racial backgrounds. A significant number of these caregiver grandparents are over age 65 (Kleiner and Hertzog, 1998). Grandparents raising grand-children face a variety of challenges, including their own health declines, limited incomes, lack of family support services, access to adequate health care, and access to affordable housing (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging, 1999).

Research on the relationship between extended families and delinquency has produced mixed results. Solomon and Marx (1995) find that children raised by grandparents tend to be healthier than those raised by single parent and step parent families. Bell and Garner (1996) argue that children placed in the care of grandparents, whom they know, are less likely to experience trauma than children placed with strangers in foster home care. However, Shore and Hayslip (1994) find increased behavioral problems associated with children in the care of grandparents. It is unclear, though, whether this is the product of grandparents' raising children or children placed in grandparents' care during family conflict.

Gender and Delinquency

Tatum (1996) research shows that a dispro-portionate amount of criminal activity is perpetrated by young, African American males. National arrest statistics show that over one third of arrests for serious crimes were comprised of African American males under age eighteen years. Yet, this demographic group accounted for only a small percentage of the US population (Flanagan and Maguire, 1989). Hindeland et. al (1981), based on respondent self-reports, find that 50 percent of African American males compared to 30 percent of African American females say they have been picked up by police. Comparing these self-reports to actual police reports on arrests and convictions (Farrington, 1996), most boys that had been convicted admitted it and those that had not been convicted did not claim it (West and Farrington, 1977). Elliot (1986) found that African American boys are less likely to admit convictions than white boys, suggesting an under-reporting of crime.

Jang (1992) proposes two explanations for why gender differences appear in delinquency rates. First, an individual's characteristics influence the type and pattern of his or her social interactions. Second, social relations with others influence an individual's behavior. The social interactions with whom an individual encounters occurs within many spheres, including the family, school, and peer groups. Fewer gender differences in delinquency were found, however, among African American youth than white youth (Jang, 1992).

Hypotheses

Based upon the literature reviewed above, the following four null hypotheses are tested.

1. difference exists in delinquency involve-ment between children of broken homes and intact homes.
2. difference exists in delinquency involve-ment between children with poor family relationships and children with good family relationships.

3. difference exists between in delinquency involvement between children without extended families in the community and children with extended families in the community.
4. difference exists in delinquency involvement between male and female children.

DATA AND METHODS

This study examines the relationship between family relationships, "broken homes," extended family, gender and delinquency for African American children. The data were obtained from a survey administered to African American students in predominately African American classes within mostly African American junior and senior high schools in the New Orleans area in 1999. Prior to administering the questionnaires, approval from the school officials and parents of the students were obtained. A total of 843 cases (325 males and 518 females) were produced for analysis.

The questionnaire used was based upon an instrument previously used by Ma (1996) in *Family Relationship, Broken Homes, Acculturation and Chinese American Delinquency*. The dependent variable in the study is delinquency. Delinquency is measured by a series of items on the questionnaire, including: How many times have you disobeyed your parents? How many times have you damaged school property or other people's property on purpose? How many times have you carried a gun? How many times have you used drugs such as cocaine?

How many times have you physically hurt someone badly? For this study, delinquent activities are measured in terms of General Delinquency (overall amount of delinquency), Status Offenses (activities considered offenses because of respondent's age, such as truancy or alcohol/cigarette use), Minor Offenses (such as vandalism or weapons possession), and Major Offenses (activities such as robbery or assault).

Independent variables used in the study are measures of family relationships, home status (broken versus intact), extended families, and gender. Family Relationships are measured through fifteen items in the questionnaire. These items include questions about emotional attachment to a person's mother and father, parental supervision of after-school activities, parental knowledge about one's friends, participation in family activities, parental expectations about grades and future educational achievement, respondent's respect and willingness to care for parents, and respondent's obedience to parental directives.

Principal Components Analysis, with Orthogonal rotation, was used to create five distinct family relationship scales. The scales produced measure (1) respondent's involvement in the family and the family's involvement in the life of the respondent; (2) affection for parents and parental devotion to respondent; (3) educational values of the parents and the respondent; (4) respondent's obedience to parents; and (5) respondent's respect and care for parents.

Home Status (broken versus intact) is measured by a questionnaire item that asks with whom is the respondent living now. The response choices are father and mother, father only, mother only, grandparents, or other. Extended family is measured by a questionnaire item that asks the respondent if any relatives, such as a grandparent, aunt, or uncle live with him/her in the home. Gender is measured as the respondent's biological sex (male or female).

Analysis of Variance tests are performed to see if the average amount of delinquency varies according to family relationships, broken (versus intact) home, extended family, and gender. Correlation analysis is produced to detect if multi-collinearity between independent variables is present. Regression analyses are used to determine the net influence each independent variable has on delinquency in general and by type of delinquency.

RESULTS

Tables 1a through 1c present the results of the ANOVA analyses. Table 1a displays the relationship between delinquency and home status. Home status affects the average level of minor and major offenses. Statistically significant higher rates of delinquency occur, on average, for respondents from broken homes than for those from intact homes. Differences in general delinquency and status offenses by home status are statistically insignificant.

Table 1a. Mean Delinquency Level by Home Status

Delinquency	Home status	Mean	N	F
General	Intact	52.34	244	
	Broken	57.26	599	2.706
Status offenses	Intact	21.81	244	
	Broken	22.97	599	0.604
Minor offenses	Intact	16.71	244	
	Broken	19.05	599	4.383*
Major offenses	Intact	13.81	244	
	Broken	15.23	599	4.622*

** p<.01 * p<.05

Table 1b displays the results for the relationship between extended family and delinquency. Statistically significant differences in general delinquency and major offenses are produced when the presence (versus absence) of extended family is considered. On average, respondents from homes where extended family are present have lower rates of delinquency than those from homes without extended family.

Table 1b. Mean Delinquency Levels by Presence/Absence of Extended Family

Delinquency	**Extended family**	**Mean**	**N**	**F**
General	Present	51.23	210	
	Absent	57.37	633	3.851*
Status offenses	Present	21.40	210	
	Absent	23.00	633	1.123
Minor offenses	Present	17.32	210	
	Absent	18.73	633	1.424
Major offenses	Present	12.50	210	
	Absent	15.59	633	20.379**

** p <.01 *p<.05

Table 1c displays the results for the relationship between gender and delinquency. With the exception of status offenses, statistically sig nificant differences in delinquency levels exist between males and females. Delinquency levels are higher for males, on average, than for females.

Table 1c. Mean Delinquency Levels by Gender

Delinquency	Gender	Mean	N	F
General	Male	60.49	325	
	Female	52.91	518	7.462**
Status offenses	Male	24.05	325	
	Female	21.75	518	2.747
Minor offenses	Male	20.48	325	
	Female	17.05	518	10.98**
Major offenses	Male	15.95	325	
	Female	14.11	518	9.080**

** p<.01 * p<.05

Table 2 presents the results of the correlation analysis. Table 2 displays the associations between the measures of delinquency and the independent variables. The five measures of family relationships have statistically significant associations with the measures of delinquency. Involvement, affection, educational values, and devotion all negatively influence delinquency rates. Obedience has a weak, positive association with delinquency. Home status has a negative and mostly statistically insignificant (with the exception for status offenses) association with delinquency. Gender has a statistically significant, negative and weak association with delinquency.

The correlations between the independent variables are also examined (table not included). All of the correlations between the independent variables are weak and for the most part, statistically insignificant. This suggests that multi-collinearity should not pose a problem for the regression analyses. Among the statistically significant correlations, the associations between gender and affection, educational values, and devotion, are weak and positive; the association between home status and affection is weak and negative. Extended family as a variable has been excluded from the correlation analysis, due to the statistically insignificant results shown in Table 1c.

Table 2. Correlations between the measures of delinquency and family relationships, home status and gender

	General delinquency	Status offenses	Minor offenses	Major offenses
General delinquency	1.000			
Status offenses	0.927**	1.000		
Minor offenses	0.951**	0.796**	1.000	
Major offenses	0.820**	0.590**	0.815**	1.000
Involvement	-0.147**	-0.121**	-0.160**	-0.119**
Affection	-0.368**	-0.343**	-0.323**	-0.314**
Educational values	-0.193**	-0.108**	-0.207**	-0.264**
Obedience	0.135**	0.175**	0.165**	0.063**
Devotion	-0.077*	-0.042	-0.085*	-0.122**
Gender	-0.098**	-0.061	-0.122**	-0.114**
Home status	-0.052	-0.023*	-0.064	-0.063

** p<.01 * p<.05

Table 3 presents the results of the regression analysis. Only the significant associations between the measures of delinquency and the independent variables are reported. In the first column of Table 3, the results from regression the independent variables (except home status) on general delinquency levels are reported. Four of the five measures of family relationships and the gender variable have a negative impact on general delinquency.

Obedience has a positive impact on general delinquency. The largest impact is the relationship between affection and general delinquency; the smallest impact on general delinquency is produced by gender.

In the second column of Table 3, the effects of the independent variables on status offenses are displayed. (The effects for devotion and gender are excluded here, because their coefficients are statistically insignificant. The effect for home status is included here, because it does have a statistically significant impact on status offenses.) Affection, educational values, and involvement all have negative influences on status offenses. Obedience and home status positively affect status offending. Once again, affection has the largest impact on delinquency.

In the third column of Table 3, the effects of the independent variables (except home status) on minor offenses are displayed. All variables, except obedience, have a negative influence on minor offenses. Affection has the largest impact on minor offending; devotion has the smallest impact. In the fourth column of Table 3, the influences of the independent variables (except obedience and home status) on major offenses are displayed. All of the independent variables have negative impacts on major offenses. The largest effect is on major offenses is produced by affection, closely followed by educational values. The smallest effect on major offenses is produced by involvement (Penny, 2001).

Table 3. Regression Results: Impact of Family Relationships, Home Status and Gender on Delinquency

	General Delinquency	Status Offenses	Minor Offenses	Major Offenses
Independent Variables	B (Beta)	B (Beta)	B (Beta)	B (Beta)
Affection	-14.35**	-7.041**	-7.041**	-2.667**
	(-0.364)	(-0.358)	(-0.358)	(-0.309)
Education values	-7.55**	-2.190**	-2.991**	-2.259**
	(-0.193)	(-0.112)	(-0.203)	(-0.262)
Involvement	-5.69**	-2.447**	-2.342**	-1.020**
	(-0.145)	(-0.125)	(-0.159)	(-0.118)
Obedience	5.36**	3.443**	2.475**	—
	(0.137)	(0.176)	(0.168)	
Devotion	-2.79*	—	-1.214**	-1.033**
	(-0.071)		(-0.083)	(-0.120)
Gender	-5.20*	—	-2.883**	-1.432**
	(-0.064)		(-0.095)	(-0.081)
Home status	—	2.952*	—	—
		(0.068)		
Constant	64.560	27.845	17.109	17.109
R Square	.350	.426	.220	.205

** p<.01   * p<.05

Discussion

The findings of this study show that family relations (parental involvement in children's lives, parental affection towards children, emphasis on obtaining an education, and children's devotion to parents) consistently and significantly reduce delinquency (Tables 2 and 3). These results support the arguments made by social control theory and the findings of previous research. However, home status (broken versus intact home) only significantly impacted status offenses (not other offenses), in that children from broken homes engage in more acts such as truancy or substance abuse than children from intact homes (Table 3). These results contradict what much of the literature says about broken homes and delinquency. Perhaps it is not the broken home itself per se that contributes to delinquency, but what takes place within the broken home—such as the social relations within a home—that contributes to delinquency.

The results show extended families do not have a consistent, significant impact on delinquency. Only for major offenses do we see the presence of extended family reduces delinquent activities (Table 1b). These findings echo the mixed results uncovered by previous studies. In most cases, females exhibit lower rates of delinquency than males, for almost all types of delinquency. These results support the findings of previous studies.

Of all factors examined in this study, parental affection towards children seems to be the largest deterrent to delinquency. The magnitude of its effect is approximately twice the size of the effects that the other factors have on delinquency. This is especially pronounced when examining general delinquency rates and less serious offenses. These results echo the arguments of Hirschi (1969), in that intimate communication is an important deterrent to delinquency. For major offenses, it is only slightly larger than educational values (Table 3).

Conclusion

This study examined how family structure (broken versus intact homes and presence or absence of extended family), family interactions (affection, involvement, educational values, devotion), and gender impact delinquency among African American youth. The contributions of these factors to delinquency are examined using an additive model (each variable treated a separate, not contingent factor dependent upon other factors). Findings show that family relations or interactions are the biggest deterrent or contributor to delinquency.

Further exploration should be made into why, despite the abundance of literature showing that broken homes facilitate delinquency, that broken homes did not consistently appear in this study's results as an important factor. Perhaps the effects would be more consistent and pronounced if family structure's interaction with other variables, such as family relations or gender, are considered. Likewise, perhaps the presence of extended family would also appear to contribute more to preventing delinquency than it does in the current study.

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ADOLESCENT'S EXPOSURE TO RAP MUSIC: EXPLORING DEVELOPMENTAL PATHWAYS TO ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to explore the possible relationship between adolescent exposure to hip hop music and its effect on the development of antisocial behaviors as a result of the exposure. Results suggested that exposure to hip hop/rap music has main effect differences and significant interaction differences on the development of antisocial behaviors in adolescence. Specifically, this study identifies a statistical positive relationship between exposure to hip hop music and the development of antisocial behaviors in adolescents. However, many questions still need to be addressed if there is ever to be a full understanding of these developmental trajectories on adolescents. With the information from this study, it is hoped that those who work with adolescents will begin to use hip hop as a tool by which to relate to these young people and to include it in different forms of intervention applied to this population.

INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing interest among counselors and psychologists to better understand the effects of popular rap music on adolescents' developing pro-social skills (Brown, 2006). Rap music has become a vital part of youth culture, and its role in shaping youth behaviors stands at the center of major debates (U.S. Senate, 1999). Although it is well established that this genre of music is most popular among adolescents and young adults in the United States and throughout the world, very little is known about the attitudes and perceptions people have toward the controversial art form (Tyson, 2005).

Music occupies a significant place in adolescence. Researchers have examined why music is so important to adolescents and how adolescents actively use music to satisfy social, emotional and developmental needs. Music listening often represents their most popular and pleasurable activity (Arnett, 1995; Fitzgerald et al., 1995). This fascination for music in adolescence frequently leads to the formation of peer groups who share—as common denominator—preference for specific musical styles. This social phenomenon is encompassed in what is commonly referred to as musical subcultures that provide adolescents with an alternative cultural identity, values and convictions (Arnett, 1995). This powerful fascination for music, however, has raised numerous debates over potential deleterious effects of certain musical subcultures on adolescents' behavior (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2000).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to explore the possible relationship between adolescent exposure to hip hop music and its effect on the development of antisocial behaviors as a result of the exposure. The study hypothesized that (1) There is a relationship between adolescent's exposure to hip hop music and antisocial behavior; (2) Older students spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than younger students; (3) Male students spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than female students; (4) African American students spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than students from other ethnic groups; and (5) Students who reported grade point averages at or below 2.0 on a 4.0

scale will spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than students who reported higher grade point averages.

The Culture of Rap Music

Rap music has become a vital part of youth culture. The controversy came from the rap artists whose music conveyed messages and values that were considered antisocial. "Rap music, the street, and the peer group are often viewed by youth as viable alternatives to formal schooling" (Powell, 1991, 256-257). A possible reason for the appeal of the music of rap is that within the music, there are messages of expressions that deal with cultural identity in the forms of "the pleasures and problems of Black urban life in contemporary America" (Rose, 1994, p.2); these messages include individuals telling stories, or singing about things that African American youth see, understand, indulge in, and/or desire.

The relationship between exposure to media violence and aggression or antisocial behavior has been examined using laboratory experiments, field experiments, natural experiments, and longitudinal analyses based on correlational data. As a cultural movement, rap music manages to get billed as both a positive and negative influence on young people. On one hand, there are African American activists, artists, and entrepreneurs who seek to build a progressive political movement among young hip-hop fans and who have had modest success with voter registration efforts. On the other hand, there is no shortage of critics who denounce the negative portrayals of people of color, especially women, in hip-hop lyrics and videos (Rose, 1994).

Although there has been concern about the negative effects of music on human behavior throughout history, public interest in this issue rose sharply with the introduction of rock and roll music in the 1950s. Since those early days of rock and roll, many changes have taken place in music. The lyrics have become more explicit in their reference to sex, drugs and violence.

The potentially negative influence of rap music was found in some empirical studies. Russell (1997) summarized the literature by stressing that adolescents who preferred rap music and heavy metal were at higher risks of poor academic achievement, delinquency, antisocial behaviors and substance use, than other adolescents.

Ballard, Dodson & Bazzini (1999) assessed the effects lyrics had on a listener's behavior. The authors looked at many different genres of music and in conclusion they found evidence that support their hypothesis that lyrics seen as having antisocial themes are more likely to encourage the same pattern of behavior than lyrics of pro-social content, no matter what type of music is used. The authors reported that "antisocial lyrics were perceived to have the most detrimental impact on pro-social behavior when presented as heavy metal or rap lyrics" (Ballard, Dodson & Bazzini, 1999, p. 486).

Additionally, Robert, Dimsdale, East & Friedman (1998), examined the relationship between adolescent's emotional response to music and the risk taking behaviors of the same persons. The authors state that certain genres of music have been shown to have a relationship to "suicidal thoughts, self harm, substance abuse, and alienation from authority figures" (Roberts et. al., 1998, p. 51). Dangerous behaviors were correlated to an increasing emotional response to music; moreover, when observing fans of rock music, the authors stated that a "strong negative emotional response to music …was correlated with a history of greater risk behavior" (Roberts, Dimsdale, East, & Friedman, 1998, p. 50). Scheel & Westefeld (1999) hypothesized that fans of Heavy metal/ Rock music would have increased suicidal thoughts. The authors sought to examine the relationship between observation of music and risk factors of suicidal behavior. What they surmised was that due the adolescent's cognitive capacity, fans of this

music were more likely to contemplate suicide than those who were not listeners of the music. "Forty-two percent of . . .heavy metal fans reported occasionally/seriously thinking about killing themselves, compared with fifteen percent of the . . . nonfans" (Scheel & Westefeld, 1999, p. 259). These fans also proved to have significantly lower scores related to their reasons for living and ability to cope.

Social Learning Theory

Teenagers would not be able to critique groups relative to one another, nor would they be able to scale themselves to others within their own group. Critical analysis is crucial in determining how teenagers decipher what brand images they should accept or reject. Such analysis is the primary objective of Social Learning Theory (SLT) (Bandura, 1977). This school of thought theorizes that individuals either accept or reject images and thoughts by watching other groups engage in particular experiences and activities to see what results of those experiences (Bandura, 1977).

Many factors such as demographics, psychographics and geographic area can determine how intensely teenage groups will adhere to brand images. Teenagers living in more affluent areas have greater exposure to popular images and to the resources needed in obtaining items associated with a particular image. Oppositely, teenagers who attend schools in more rural areas may not be as influenced by popular images since such resources are not readily available in areas. Also, income levels shape how those teenagers perceive certain brand images. A teenager who grew up in a wealthier home with easier access to pop culture images (televisions, cable television, shopping malls, etc.) would be more likely to succumb to societal norms than teenagers who grew up in lower household incomes.

It has become virtually impossible to come up with a general learning theory orientation, because learning theory encompasses many theories, including some approaches that are clearly not theories at all. Modern social learning theorists have maintained a focus on learning, but expanded learning in two primary ways (Miller, 1983). First, they emphasized social behavior and the social context of behavior. They argued that learning theories based on animal research are inadequate to account for human behavior, which occurs, in a social milieu. Much of the socialization of children involves the shaping of behaviors directed toward people in their outer world. Thus, social learning theorists have expanded the context of learning theory by suggesting that social behaviors can be explained by principles of learning. Second, social learning theorists expanded the types of learning that may be explained. They saw the importance of observational learning: acquiring new skills, information, or altering old behaviors simply by watching other children and adults (Brewer & Wann, 1998; Couzijn, 1999; Honer, 1998; Shebilske, 1998).

Young people tend to imitate their learning experiences in the in the larger social world (Kane, 2000). Bandura (1977) states:

> Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action" (p22).

Bandura's contribution to human behavior reinforces parents' concerns about what their children see and hear. According to Bandura's research (1977), the likelihood that an individual will acquire an observed behavior is increased when the model performing the behavior is similar to or attractive to the viewer, the viewer identifies with the model, the context is realistic and the viewed behavior is followed by rewarding consequences.

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS

High school students (N= 127) from a Southern rural public school voluntarily participated in this study. The students ranged in age from 14-20. Of the population 66 (52%) were male and 61 (48%) were female. Ninety (70.9%) self-identified as African American, 35 (27.6%) as White and 2 (1.6%) as Latino/Latina. The study included 37 (29.1%) from 9th grade, 45 (35.4%) from 10th grade, 25 (19.7%) from 11th grade and 20 (15.7%) from 12th grade.

On average, those in the study reported an average of listening to music 12.6 hours per week. The average time spent viewing music on television was 10.9 hours per week.

INSTRUMENTS AND MEASUREMENT

The Adolescent Psychopathology Scale-Short Form™ (APS-SF) (Reynolds, 2000) is a multidimensional measure of psychopathology and personality characteristics derived from the Adolescent Psychopathology Scale (APS). It consists of 115 items in 12 clinical scales and 2 validity scales. The APS-SF Clinical scales include Conduct Disorder (CND), Major Depression (DEP), Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTS), Eating Disturbance (EAT), Academic Problems (ADP), Self-Concept (SCP), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (OPD), Generalized Anxiety Abuse Disorder (GAD), Substance Abuse Disorder (SUB), Suicide (SUI), Anger/Violence Proneness (AVP), and Interpersonal Problems (IPP). The APS-SF Validity scales include Defensiveness (DEF) and Consistency Response (CNR).

The APS-SF provides many benefits to therapists who work with adolescents. The instrument addresses issues regarding school safety by assessing excessive anger and propensity for violence toward others; is reliable and derived from the APS; requires only a third-grade reading level; is quick, takes only 15-20 minutes to administer; is ideal for school-based group settings (ages 12-19 years); and the scoring Program produces a Clinical Score Report that includes Critical Item endorsements.

The second instrument was a self-made demographic instrument where subjects self reported on their race or ethnicity, gender, age, grade point average, and grade level. The instrument also captured the number of hours spent listening to rap music and watching rap videos.

DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics that provided for a detailed description of the study population. Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) designs were used to determine the main and interaction effects of categorical variables on multiple dependent variables. Additionally, a Wilks' Lambda measure was applied to test whether there are differences between the means of identified groups of subjects on a combination of dependent variables.

RESULTS

The Adolescent Psychopathology Scale-Short Form (APS-SF) captured the antisocial behaviors. Students were placed into four categories: mild clinical range, moderate clinical range, severe clinical range and no score in range. On the Conduct Disorder Subscale, 18 (14.2%) were in the mild clinical range, 10 (7.9%) were in the moderate clinical range, 9 (7.1%) were in the severe range and 90 (70.9%) had no clinical score to report.

On the Academic Problems Subscale, 36 (28.3%) were in the mild clinical range, 8 (6.3%) were in the moderate clinical range, 2 (1.6%) were in the severe clinical range and 81 (63.8%) were had no clinical score to report. On the Substance Abuse Subscale, 13 (10.2%) were in the mild clinical range, 1 (.8%) was in moderate clinical range, 13 (10.2%) were in severe clinical range and 100 (78.7%) were had

no clinical score to report. On the Anger and Violence Proneness Subscale, 23 (18.1%) were in the mild clinical range, 9 (7.1%) were in the moderate clinical range, 4 (3.1%) were in the severe clinical range and 91 (71.7%) had no clinical score to report.

Music preference was also measured. Hip hop/rap music was most reported as most listened. Of those in the sample, 107 (84.3%) reported hip hop and rap as their music of choice, 6 (4.7%) reported Rock as their music of choice, 6 (4.7%) reported R&B, 4 (3.1%) reported Country/Western, 2 (1.6%) reported Alternative and 2 (1.6%) reported Pop.

Table 1. Test among Subjects with Regard to Age, Hours Viewed and Hours Spent Listening to Hip Hop and Rap Music

Source	df	F	p
Hours viewed x Conduct Disorder	3	3.215	.026
Hours Viewed x Academic Problems	3	2.692	.050
Age x Aggression/Proneness to Violence	3	2.751	.047
Hours listened x Age x Substance Use	5	3.509	.006

Note: Main effects were evaluated with $p \leq .05$.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant relationship between adolescent's exposure to hip hop music and antisocial behavior.

There was significant main effect difference for hours spent viewing hip hop music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for academic problems (ADP) *f* (7, 127) =2.692, *p*=.050). This finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .530. The finding seems to suggest that those students who viewed 11-15 hours of hip hop/rap music reported fewer academic problems than students who view 16-50 hours.

There was also significant main effect difference for hours viewed hip hop/rap music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for conduct disorder (CND) *f* (3, 127)=3.215, *p*=.026. The finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .735. The findings suggest that as hours spent viewing hip/hop and rap music increased so did the presentation of conduct disorder.

There was significant interaction between hours spent viewing hip hop music and hours spent listening to hip hop music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for substance usage (SUB) *f* (4, 127) =3.172, *p*=.016). This finding suggest that those who listened to hip hop/rap music between 16-50 hours and viewed hip hop and rap music between 6-10 hours presented more substance usage. This finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .777. The results of the analysis show significant difference and support H1.

Hypothesis 2: Older students who spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than younger students.

There was significant main effect difference for age with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for anger and violence proneness (AVP) *f* (3, 127)=2.751, *p*=.047) (See Table 1). The finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .719. This finding seems to suggest that those younger students presented more cases of anger and proneness to violence than older students.

The results of the analysis show significant difference, but rejects H2.

Hypothesis 3: Male students who spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than female students.

There was significant main effect difference for gender with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for substance abuse usage (SUB) f (1, 127)=11.424, p=.001). The finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .821. This finding seems to suggest that male student reported more problems with substance usage than female students. There was also a significant main effect difference was also found for gender with regard to oppositional defiant disorder (OPD) f (1, 127) =4.534, p=.036). This finding suggests that male students reported more problems with the antisocial behavior subscale for oppositional defiant behavior symptoms than female students.

There was significant interaction between hours spent listening hip hop music and gender with regard to substance usage (SUB) f(3, 127)=3.701, p=.014). These findings had a Wilks' Lambda value of .824. This finding suggests that male students who spent 11-15 hours listening to hip hop and rap music presented more substance abuse problems than females in that same group.

Results also revealed a significant interaction between hours spent viewing hip hop music and gender with regard to substance usage (SUB) f(3, 127)=5.147, p=.002). The finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .767. This finding suggests that male students who spent 11-15 hours viewing hip hop/rap music presented more substance abuse problems than female students in the same category. The results of the analysis show significance and support H3.

Hypothesis 4: African American students spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than students from other ethnic groups.

There was significant main effect difference for race with regard to antisocial behavior subscale for conduct disorder (CND) f (2, 127) =3.157, p=.047). The finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .829. The finding suggests that African American students presented more problems with conduct disorder than students from other ethnic backgrounds. There was also significant main effect difference for race with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for academic problems (ADP) f(2, 127)=4.603, p=.012). The finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .829. The finding suggests that African American students presented more academic problems than students from other ethnic backgrounds. Additionally there was a significant main effect difference for race and the antisocial behavior subscale for anger and violence proneness (AVP) f(2, 127)=6.444, p=.002). The finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .829. The finding suggests that African American students presented more problems with regard to anger and proneness to violence than students from other ethnic backgrounds.

Furthermore, there was significant interaction difference between hours spent viewing hip hop music and race with regard to anger and proneness to violence (AVP) f(3, 127)=2.908, p=.038). This finding had a Wilks' Lambda value of .813. This finding suggests that African American students who spent 11-15 hours viewing hip hop music presented the greater amount of anger and violence proneness. The results of the analysis support H4.

Hypothesis 5: Students who reported grade point averages at or below 2.0 will spend more time listening to hip hop music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than students with higher grade point averages.

There was significant interaction difference among hours spent viewing hip hop music, hours spent listening to hip hop/rap music and grade point average with regard to anger and proneness to violence (AVP) f(2, 127)=4.726, p=.011).This finding had a Wilks' Lambda

value of .769. This finding suggests that students with 2.0 grade point averages who spent 6-10 hours viewing music and 16-50 listening to music reported higher rates of anger and proneness to violence than students with higher grade point averages.

Discussion

The basis for this research is to build upon the limited amount of research on rap music and adolescents, and to explore the developmental pathways of antisocial behavior as a result to exposure. This exploratory research appears to be among the first of its kind. No such study in academic research reviewed existed prior to this. Therefore, there are no established instruments to measure the correlation with adolescent antisocial behavior and exposure to hip hop music.

The significant findings of this study may be summarized as follows: (a) main effect difference for hours spent viewing hip hop/rap music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for academic problems; (b) main effect difference for hours spent viewing hip hop/rap music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for conduct disorder; (c) main effect difference for age with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for anger and violence; (d) main effect difference for gender with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for substance abuse usage; (e) main effect difference for race with regard to antisocial behavior subscale conduct disorder; (f) interaction between hours spent viewing hip hop/rap music and hours spent listening to hip hop/rap music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for substance usage; (g) interaction difference between hours spent listening to hip hop/rap music and gender with regard to substance usage; (h) interaction between hours spent viewing hip hop/rap music gender with regard to substance usage; (i) interaction difference between hours spent viewing hip hop/rap music and race with regard to anger and proneness to violence; and (j) interaction difference among hours spent viewing hip hop/race music, hours spent listening to hip hop/rap music and grade point average with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for anger and proneness to violence.

The first hypothesis of this study explored the significant relationship between adolescent's exposure to hip hop music and antisocial behavior. There was a significant main effect difference for hours spent viewing hip hop music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for academic problems. The finding seems to suggest that those students who viewed 11-15 hours of hip hop/rap music reported fewer academic problems than students who view 16-50 hours. This finding is consistent with the literature. Previous research has suggested that poor grades and low reading ability and vocabulary are connected with too much media consumption (Zimmerman, Christakis & Meltzoff, 2007). The presentation of academic problems here can serve as a precursor for many other clinical diagnoses. The questions regarding academic problems on the Adolescent Psychopathology Scale-Short Form may lead to problems that have direct cause for academic problems like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). More clarity on this issue would be required as will further clinical intervention of subjects who present academic problems.

The second finding was significant main effect difference for hours viewed hip hop/rap music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for conduct disorder (CND). The findings suggest that as hours spent viewing hip/hop and rap music increased so did the presentation of conduct disorder. An accumulating body of scientific research spanning four decades supports the finding that exposure to violent media is causally related to subsequent expression of aggression in both short- and long-term time frames (e.g., Anderson & Bushman, 2002a; Berkowitz,

1993; Bushman & Anderson, 2001). There are several explanations for this finding. First, in men, listening to hip hop/rap music increases testosterone, aggressiveness and misogynistic reactions. Teenagers listening to hip hop/rap music have been found to have a more agitated life, aggressive and destructive behavior (Chen et al, 2006). Hip hop/rap music has by far a stronger effect because its lyrics are more suggestive.

The third finding was significant interaction between hours spent viewing hip hop music and hours spent listening to hip hop music with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for substance usage. This finding suggest that those who listened to hip hop/rap music between 16-50 hours and viewed hip hop and rap music between six to ten hours reported having more substance usage. Hip hip/rap music is one genre that, more than others, has been identified as glorifying and encouraging the use of alcohol, other substances and violence. According to Chen et al (2006), half of hip hop/rap songs mentioned alcohol, compared to 10 percent or less of other popular genres. They also found that nearly two-thirds of rap songs mentioned illicit drugs, compared with one-tenth of songs from other genres. Because of the limited sample size and the lack of clinical interaction, it is difficult to make causal inferences about the relationships between music listening and substance use. It is possible, however, that frequent exposure to hip hop/rap music significantly contributes to positive values toward substance use. Furthermore, it is possible that individuals who are often exposed to hip hop/rap music view substance use more positively prior to listening to this genre of music; thus, music listening, at most, reinforces these values.

The second hypothesis suggested that older students will spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than younger students. There was significant main effect difference for age with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for anger and violence proneness. This finding seems to suggest that younger students presented more cases of anger and proneness to violence than older students. The link between rap lyrics and violence is overvalued. The claim that violent lyrics cause violent behavior is neither convincing nor conclusive (United States Senate, 1999). Hip hop is a distinct form of art and expression, just as any other type of music. The violent lyrics made by rappers are a reflection of the violence that takes place in many urban American cities. It is simply unjust to blame rap music lyrics for social violence. Literature does not support a clear link between the development of anger and violence proneness and hip hop/rap music. In order to further this premise, more experimental examination will be needed.

Hypothesis 3 suggested that male students who spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than female students. Analysis found significant main effect difference for gender with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for substance abuse usage. This finding seems to suggest that male student reported more problems with substance usage than female students. Previous research has found that males are more likely to use, abuse, and be dependent on alcohol or illicit drugs than females (NSDUH, 2003). More conclusive research will be needed to support a causal relationship between exposure to hip hop/rap music and substance use to support the finding.

The second finding of this hypothesis was a significant main effect difference was for gender with regard to oppositional defiant disorder. This finding suggests that male students reported more problems with the antisocial behavior subscale for oppositional defiant behavior symptoms than female stu-

dents. In younger children oppositional defiant disorder has been found to be more common in boys than girls, but as they grow older, the rate is the same in males and females. Also of note, Bandura (1973) found that environmental influences such as peer pressure, can help to facilitate the oppositional behavior. In this vein, several factors must be understood. Specifically, when adolescents are engaging in increased conflict with their parents, they may seek to spend more of their discretionary time with peers, incorporating certain peer behavioral patters into their own lifestyle. The adolescents in the present investigation may spend more of their time with peers than family, at school or hanging out in the neighborhood. Thus, a causal relationship can not be supported with hip hop/rap music and this finding.

Hypothesis 4 suggested that African American students who spend more time listening to hip hop/rap music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than students from other ethnic groups. There was significant main effect difference for race with regard to antisocial behavior subscale for conduct disorder. The finding suggests that African American students presented more problems with conduct disorder than students from other ethnic backgrounds. African Americans are often viewed by other children, adults and social agencies as "bad" or delinquent, rather than mentally ill. African American youth are overrepresented in juvenile detention (Leiber, 2007). The fact that so many young African American youth are detained suggests that conduct disorder could potentially be present in these young people. If hip hop/rap music is to be the primary culprit, Bandura's social learning theory is very true.

There was also significant main effect difference for race with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for academic problems. The finding suggests that African American students presented more academic problems than students from other ethnic backgrounds. This study also found that African American students spent more time listening to hip hop/rap music than students from other ethnic groups. Because of this finding, arguments can be made that these students now process more information, more quickly. Thus, a new approach to meeting the individual learning style must be addressed in order to tackle academic problems. In this regard, the classroom setting needs to place less emphasis on the amount of material memorized and more weight on making connections, thinking through issues and solving problems. Educators must discard the notion that schools can teach everything every student will need to know to be successful in their field of choice. The performance statistics for African American students in public schools are alarming. Their suspension rates are twice that of European American students, and 20 percent of them are likely to drop out of school before graduation (Hum, 1993; Nielson, 1991). Educational researchers and practitioners repeatedly compare African American children to their European American counterparts and find them lower in achievement, IQ, creativity, reading, writing, and social and cultural. This deficiency approach to the education of African American students ignores the first tenet of a constructivist philosophy, which is to teach from the knowledge base of the learner (Henderson, 1996). Is it plausible to believe that rather than fault the students, the deficiency may lie within the system of education that refuses to adapt itself to differences among students.

Furthermore, there was a significant interaction difference between hours spent viewing hip hop music and race with regard to the antisocial behavior subscale for anger and proneness to violence. This finding suggests that African American students who spent eleven to fifteen hours viewing hip hop music presented the greater amount of anger and violence proneness. African American stu

dents represented the greatest percentage (71%) of the sample population. Previous literature has suggested a relationship to exposure and aggressive and violent behavior. Studies show that modern music lyrics have become increasingly explicit, particularly concerning sex, drugs, and violence against women (Elmer-Dewitt, 1993). Inadequate attention has been paid to the effect on children and adolescents of violent music lyrics. This finding is one of the best supports for Bandura's social learning theory. To the sounds of rap music, those men — mostly African American—brag about their firepower, sometimes in rhyming couplets. They also threaten their enemies in tirades laced with the "n-word" and occasionally insult the police. Sometimes they empty complete ammunition clips into the air. The Gangstas' videos visit the neighborhoods where that violence is brewing, sometimes illustrating the blight where residents live. At other times, there is no pretense at documentary realism. It is all scary, gun-toting posturing. From this, the listeners begin to imitate the behaviors they see and hear the hip hop and artists sing and rap about.

Hypothesis 5 suggested that students who reported grade point averages at or below 2.0 will spend more time listening to hip hop music and will have higher cases of antisocial behavior than students with higher grade point averages. There was significant interaction difference among hours spent viewing hip hop music, hours spent listening to hip hop/rap music and grade point average with regard to anger and proneness to violence. This finding suggests that students with 2.0 grade point averages who spent 6-10 hours viewing music and 16-50 listening to music reported higher rates of anger and proneness to violence than students with higher grade point averages. One could infer that students with the lower grade point averages do not have the cognitive ability to decipher reality from the music and videos that they are exposed to.

LIMITATIONS

The study's findings should be considered in light of several limitations. First, the sample was taken from a population in rural southeast Louisiana. Thus, all the results of this study are not generalizable to a larger adolescent population outside of the area. Future investigators should replicate this investigation with a considerably larger sample and in other geographical areas to confirm or refute the results. Moreover, the sample used for this research was limited to one public school. A larger study may yield a higher range of results. Significant limitations to the current study include limitations created by the nature of data collection. All measures were self-reported, and dependent on the willingness of participants to disclose the true levels.

Another limitation was that the researcher could not attach personal interpretation of the adolescents' responses. It was assumed that all of the participants understood the questions being asked. This may not have been true, and some participants very well could have answered without full knowledge of what was being asked. More research into understanding the developmental paths of early antisocial behavior is called for, and much effective treatment approaches for antisocial behavior in children and adolescents are encouraged.

In conclusion, this study identifies a statistical positive relationship between exposure to hip hop music and the development of antisocial behaviors in adolescents. However, many question still need to be addressed if there is ever to be a full understanding of these developmental trajectories on adolescents.

This is a significant topic that has not received research attention, but certainly needs further exploration. This further exploration requires that appropriate measures be designed to better search out the possible relationship in

question. A study that could determine if adolescents gained certain aspects of their identity, such as clothing styles, vernacular and slang, feelings about society and politics, and opinions about authority from Hip hop would help to determine the level of influence Hip hop has in the creation of an identity. Further, it is possible that a qualitative study is needed to establish a foundation for the exploration of a link between antisocial behavior and Hip hop music.

Implications for Educators

Many argue that violence is out of control and that the authorities are dealing with it badly. School systems are criticized for not dealing with violence in the classrooms and for permitting far too much bullying. Coordinated school system efforts can help divert most children from antisocial behavior, keeping them in school and out of the juvenile justice system. In every school, three types of students can be identified: typical students not at risk, students with an elevated risk, and students who have already developed antisocial behavior patterns. A three-tiered strategy of prevention and intervention is the most efficient way to head off potential problems and address existing ones.

School-wide primary prevention activities may include teaching conflict resolution, emotional literacy, and anger management skills on a school-wide basis. Such interventions have the potential not only to establish a positive school climate, but to divert students mildly at risk of antisocial behaviors. A majority of students who do not respond to primary prevention will respond to more individualized secondary prevention efforts, including behavioral or academic support, mentoring, and skill development. Secondary prevention strategies also include small-group social-skills lessons, behavioral contracting, specialized tutoring, remedial programs, counseling, and mentoring. Students with persistent patterns of antisocial behavior require more intensive interventions, and can benefit from intensive individualized services that involve families, community agency personnel, educators, administrators, and support staff.

The best that can be done for children and youth with behavioral problems is to keep them engaged in school, where educators can develop their skills, maintain a positive influence, and prevent involvement with disruptive groups during school hours.

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REPARATIONS DEBATED: THE IMPACT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN RACIAL IDENTITY

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Abstract: The debate over reparations has often been framed in a way to suggest that all African Americans are supportive of such policy. However, there is not an intra-racial consensus for reparations, and research has not identified the factors affecting these diverging views. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to explore whether African American racial identity, political, and demographic factors affect attitudes toward reparations. Using the 2005 Katrina, Race & Poverty Study data, the results suggest that African American racial identity was a strong predictor of attitude toward reparations. As a result, these findings certainly suggest that differences in how African Americans feel toward reparations will depend on their own attitudes and beliefs about being black.

INTRODUCTION

On July 29, 2008, the United States House of Representatives passed a measure apologizing for slavery. Following the lead of the House chamber, on June 18, 2009, the United States Senate, in a unanimous voice vote, apologized for "fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality and inhumanity of slavery, and the legal segregation of African Americans" (Concurrent Resolution 26). In explaining the Senate's actions, Senator Tom Harkin (D, Iowa) said, "It is important to have a collective response to a collective action" (Guelzo, 2009, pg. 1). While most concur with Harkin's assessment, some believe that the apology from the federal government did not go far enough—since "nothing in the Senate's resolution authorizes or supports any claim against the United States, or serves as a settlement of any claim against the United States" (Guelzo, 2009, pg. 1). Senator Brownback (R., Kansas), who co-sponsored the resolution, stated that the Senate's "disclaimer was necessary to win the support of Senators who feared the apology could be used by African Americans seeking reparations" (NPR, 2009). While it turned out that the "disclaimer" was necessary for passage, many African Americans were disappointed. Senator Roland Burris (D, Illinois) explained, "I want to go on record making sure that that disclaimer in no way would eliminate future actions that may be brought before this body that may deal with reparations (Guelzo, 2009, pg. 2). In a similar vein, Randall Robinson expressed, "an apology is meaningless without reparations payments to African Americans. Much is owed, and it is very quantifiable. It is owed as one would owe for any labor that one has not paid for, and until steps are taken in that direction we haven't accomplished anything" (Guelzo, 2009, pg. 1). Robinson's argument is that the apology from Congress is the first step toward reparations—a confession of wrong-doing should lead to payback to African Americans for wrong-doing.

While Robinson may not be the lone voice in favoring reparations, the debate over reparations has often been framed in a way to suggest that all African Americans are supportive of some form of financial pay-back from the federal government. However, there is not an intra-racial consensus for reparations. For example, the following polls illustrate the point:

- When asked in a CNN/USA Today/Gallop poll whether the government should make cash payments to slave descendants, 90% of white and 37% of black respondents answered "no" while 10% of white and

55% of black respondents answered "yes". (CNN.com/Law Center 2002).

- A national ABC news poll revealed that 67% of Whites believe Black people are discriminated against, yet in liberal New York City 62% of New Yorkers do not think Blacks are even owed an apology (Iuce, 2002 in Henry 2003). In the same city, 62% of Black support reparations, but only 22% of Whites agree (Iuce, 2002 in Henry 2003).
- An ABC News poll on June 18, 1997 asked, "Do you think the federal government should or should not pay money to Black Americans whose ancestors were slaves as compensation for that slavery?" Of 703 respondents (with an oversample of Blacks), 19% supported reparations, 77% did not, and 4% had no opinion. Among Whites, 10% supported reparations and 88% did not. Among Blacks, 65% supported reparations and 28% did not (Michelson Melissa R. 2002).

Clearly, there are divergent opinions regarding reparations among African Americans. While these differences exist, research has not explored whether African American racial identity could influence African Americans feelings toward reparations. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to explore whether African American racial identity, political, and demographic factors affect attitudes toward reparations. Using the 2005 Katrina, Race & Poverty Study data, the results suggest that African American racial identity was a strong predictor of attitude toward reparations; however, political and demographic measures were not significant. In the next section, I begin by highlighting the literature on reparations, and then, using the data, I present the findings and discuss the implications.

Reparations Debated

Reparations are compensations to remedy past wrongdoings; often they are used to redress past historical injustices. Reparations encompass four main features: 1) Reparations can take the form of a payment or cash in kind to large groups of claimants, 2) reparations redress social injustices that were once permissible and legal during the time when they were committed, 3) current law bars a compulsory remedy for the past wrong (by virtue of sovereign immunity, statues of limitations, or similar rules), and 4) payment is justified on backward-looking grounds of corrective justice, rather than forward-looking grounds such as the deterrence of future wrongdoing (Posner and Vermeule, 2003).

In the United States, reparations have been made to Indian tribes for land that was taken from them, Japanese Americans from their internment during World War II, and victims of the syphilis experiments who were denied treatment (Posner and Vermeule, 2003); however, reparations for slavery have been met with great controversy and debate spiraling into lengthy discourse over the matter. Discourse over reparations for slavery does not deny that slavery ever happened or that it was morally wrong; however, how to redress these past wrongs has been the central topic of controversy. "Very few contemporary U.S. citizens would deny that U.S. slaves deserved reparations for slavery. The debate over reparations for slavery focuses on whether present day African Americans are entitled to reparations and on whom would be obliged to settle this debt; not on whether slaves were the victims of a terrible injustice (McGary, 2003).

Thus, addressing the issue of reparations for slavery has launched a cornucopia of discourse

and debates over how to rectify the past wrongdoings of slavery (which were once legal) what form of compensation will constitute redress, identifying transgressors, identifying beneficiaries or recipients of reparations should they be established, and if present day blacks can collect reparations. All of these issues have become more complicated, of course, to ascertain over time. For these reasons, reparations for slavery have been met with great opposition whereas other reparation claims have not.

One of the foremost discussions on reparations for slavery is whether these past wrongdoings should be redressed today. Supporters believe that reparations for slavery would be a form of reconciliation that is necessary and a long overdue debt (McGary, 2003). Other supporters have claimed that "Every government since emancipation has unjustly prevented its black population from recovering from injuries originating in slavery and its conclusion is that every government since emancipation has a duty to bring its black population to the level of well-being had injustice never occurred" (Boxhill, 2003). However, those who oppose reparations for slavery can make the claim that when slavery was committed, there were not any laws against it, and therefore, it cannot be addressed in today's legal system. In essence, "arguments for reparations cannot be defended by legal arguments since under a just legal system one cannot be charged with crimes for actions that are considered crimes only after they have been committed, and thus reparations are based on moral convictions" (Zack, 2003). Other oppositionists claim that the cost of reparations are too large (Henry, 2003) and that reparations will only cause backlash that will result further segregation and racial tensions (Williams Juan 2002).

Another topic of debate related to reparations for slavery is what form of compensation will constitute redress. Scholarly discourse on reparations identifies three forms of reparations: "An official apology (or monument or holiday) accompanied by a tangible transfer, such as a cash payment or an affirmative action program, an official apology not accompanied by a tangible transfer, or a tangible transfer unaccompanied by an apology" (Posner and Vermeule, 2003). After more than 350 years since slavery was abolished, an official apology to African Americans for slavery and segregation was recently issued from Congress. Yet, the passage of this concurrent resolution in the Senate was approved with a certain stipulation —or disclaimer that protects the resolution itself from being used as evidence in claims against the United States for reparations. In this case, reparations include an element of monetary compensation, or restitution. Yet, even prior to this apology, normative discussions on reparations have been synonymous with monetary compensation. While some believe that a formal apology is sufficient for the past wrongdoings of slavery, others believe that an apology does not equal the debt that is owed for slavery.

Discourse on reparations also includes problems on identifying transgressors and beneficiaries. These difficulties present the most obvious claims against reparations. There are no slaveholders alive today who would be liable for slavery and who could take the responsibility for reparations; nor are there are any former slaves alive to collect reparations (Boxhill, 2003; Henry, 2003); nor is the government that allowed slavery to exist the same government today (Boxhill, 2003). By default, than, some would argue that no one alive today is responsible for slavery nor is there anyone alive today to collect reparations. And furthermore, trying to place responsibility on the descendents of former slave owners is complex. Not only is it difficult to identify the descendents of former slave owners, but "their collective assets are too small to make claims against them for black reparation worth the trouble" (Boxhill, 2003). Identifying descendants of slaves is also difficult. "The crimes

against U.S. slaves were crimes against people with no civil rights or even the minimal of social standing that would document their identity as persons—e.g., addresses, surnames, property ownership, and birth, death and marriage records—(Zack, 2003). Oppositions also include an argument that reparations are discriminatory. Since racial categories are social constructions (Zack, 2003), using these classifications (in the same sense for the reason they were constructed during slavery) to identify beneficiaries based on the color of one's skin, then these criteria would be discriminatory and further complicated since not all "blacks" are descendants of slaves (Zack, 2003). Yet, proponents for reparations argue that "Because the discourse about U.S. slaves is about our ideas of them, and about the use of those ideas, it is not literally true that we can have obligations to the slaves themselves. Still, the pre-theoretical intuition that after all these years, something can and should be done about the wrong of U.S. slavery is expressed by the claim that something is owed to the slaves, even if it cannot be paid to them directly. It is in that less-than-literal sense that we have obligations to U.S. slaves" (Zack, 2003). The discussion of identifying transgressors and beneficiaries leads to the next controversial topic when considering reparations for slavery – whether present day blacks can collect reparations.

Arguably, the most controversial topic included in the discourse on reparations for slavery is whether present day blacks should collect reparations. On the one hand, oppositionists believe reparations cannot and should not be paid to present day blacks for slavery since they personally were never slaves. In theory, reparations are for the injustices endured during slavery, but because there are no former slaves alive today, there are no rightful recipients to collect the compensation due to them. Yet, proponents rebut this claim by arguing that present day blacks are entitled to the debt that was owed to their ancestors (Boxhill, 2003; McCarthy, 2004; McGary, 2003). Supporters of reparations also argue that racial disparities that African Americans experience today such as inequities in income, housing, education, and employment are the lingering effects of slavery and its imprint on society that created segregation, racial discrimination, and centuries of social disadvantages (McCarthy, 2004; McGary, 2003; Posner and Vermeule 2003). Furthermore,

> Supporters of Black reparations believe that current disparities in income and wealth between Blacks and Whites in the United States are legacies of slavery and that without compensation for slavery, it is unreasonable to expect most Blacks to achieve economic success (Michelson, 2002).

Counter-rebuttals to this argument include evidence that not all blacks living in America today are the descendants of former slaves (McGary, 2003) nor are all blacks doomed to unsuccessful fates, for there are many successful African Americans (Henry, 2003). Opponents for reparations have also argued that there is not a proven causal association between slavery and the troubles that African Americans may experience today.

The discourse on reparations is controversial because of the difficulties and circumstances that would have to be addressed and determined. When it comes to reparations, a moral and ethical judgment is needed, which is not an equal form of scrutiny among individuals. Poll results not only demonstrate the conflicting opinions about reparations for slavery but also show there is disagreement among Whites and African Americans. For example, a 2006 MSNBC online poll asked its readers if they thought reparations for slavery was a good idea. Of 38,431 responses, 12% answered yes while 88% answered no (msnbc. msn.com, 2006). In the case of African Americans, "a poll conducted by the University of Chicago and Harvard University in October of 2000 found that roughly 53% of surveyed Blacks thought that the government should pay reparations" (Michelson, 2002). Can African

American racial identity explain the intra-racial differences in attitudes toward reparations among African Americans?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

African American racial identity (in its various conceptions) has been used in political science to study African American attitudes toward policy preferences and voter participation (Dawson 1994; Tate 1993). For example, with respect to policy preferences, Tate (1993) found a relationship between racial group identification and African Americans' opinions on affirmative action; Kinder and Winter (2001) found a correlation between racial group closeness and African American's support of social welfare programs; and White (2007) found explicit and implicit racial verbal cues activate racial thinking about policy issues—specifically, "explicit references to race most reliably elicited racial thinking by activating racial in-group identification" (pg. 1). Additionally, Dawson (1994) concluded that racial identity continues to be stronger than identities based on class, gender, religion, or any other social characteristics as appreciation of attitude toward a range of policy issues.

Research has also shown a relationship between African American racial identity and political interest and voter participation. Specifically, Tate (2003) found that "African American identification was significantly related to African American political interest and to voter participation in congressional elections; however, it was unrelated to political knowledge and to political efficacy" (pg. 142). Olsen (1970, pg, 688-92); Verba and Nie (1972, pg. 161) found African Americans with strong sense of racial identity or group consciousness participated at higher rate in politics. Dawson's (2001) findings in *Black Visions* reveal the impact African American racial identity (as measured by linked-fate) has on various ideological support. For example, he finds that believing one's fate is linked to that of the race is a strong predictor for economic nationalism (pg. 130), supportive of African American feminist orientations and ideology (pg. 157; 164), allowing more women to become members of the clergy (pg. 349), and warmth for lesbians (pg. 348).

While African American racial identity (in its various conceptions) has been used in political science to study African American attitudes toward policy (affirmative action) and voter participation, it has not been used to explore preference for reparations. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to explore whether African American racial identity, political, and demographic factors affect attitudes toward reparations. The expectation is that African American racial identity will have an influence on attitudes toward reparations.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The data used in the research is from the 2005 Katrina, Race & Poverty Study. The survey was conducted between October 28 and November 17, 2005. Once the respondents accessed the online survey, it took approximately 22 minutes to complete. To encourage participation, respondents were given "moderate incentive." The respondents were representative of the U.S. population and were randomly recruited using telephone. These surveys were based on a sampling frame, which includes both listed and unlisted telephone numbers. Households that did not have internet were provided with access to the Internet. Once an individual was recruited to the study, they were contacted by e-mail (instead of by phone or mail). According the researchers of the data,

> this permitted surveys to be fielded very quickly and economically. In addition, this approach reduced the burden placed on respondents, since e-mail notification was less obtrusive than telephone calls, and most respondents found answering Web questionnaires to be more interesting and engaging than being questioned by a telephone interviewer" (Dawson, 2005, pg. 8).

For detailed breakdown of the demographic variables included in this data set, see 2005 Katrina, Race & Poverty Study.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study is attitude toward reparations. For this measure, I created an additive index from responses to the following three questions: First, do you think the federal government should or should not pay money to African Americans whose ancestors were slaves as compensation for that slavery? Second, do you think the federal government should or should not pay money to African Americans as compensation for the system of anti-black violence and legal segregation known as "Jim Crow"? Third, do you think that reparations should or should not be paid to survivors and their descendants of large, violent, 20th century anti-black riots such as those that occurred in Tulsa Oklahoma and Rosewood Florida? The responses were either "Should" (coded as 1), "Should Not (coded as 2)", or "Don't Know (coded as 3)". Its scale reliability coefficient (alpha) was .78.

Independent Variables

The independent variables include three African American racial identity questions, gender, ideology, religion, household income, education, and age, as guided by prior research. The following were the three African American racial identity questions included in the study: First, do you think that what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life? "Yes" responses were coded as 1, and "No" responses were coded as 2. Second, blacks should have control over the economy in mostly black communities. "Strongly Agree" was coded as 1, "Somewhat Agree" was coded as 2, "Somewhat Disagree" was coded as 3, "Strongly Disagree" was coded as 4, and "Don't Know" was coded as 5. Third, do you think blacks should form their own political party? "Yes" was coded as 1, "No" was coded as 2, and "Don't Know" was coded as 3.

Previous discussion on African American racial identity has illustrated that scholars have conceptualized African American racial identity in a variety of ways, utilizing several different psychometric scales to tap the multiple dimensions of African American racial identity. One of the most prevalent ways African American racial identity has been conceptualized is through the notion of linked-fate. For example, linked-fate taps cognitive orientations toward in-groups, and assesses the essential nature of group identity. Several measures have been utilized to capture the idea of linked-fate and the most frequent way has been by asking the following question (which this study includes): "Do you think what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life?" The second and third African American racial identity questions used in this study is comparable to the questions that measure nationalistic subscale in the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI). The nationalist philosophy is characterized by a viewpoint that emphasizes the uniqueness of being of African descent. For example, two of the questions (which are queried in the MIBI) that resemble the questions asked in this study are: "black people must organize themselves into a separate Black political force," and "whenever possible, Blacks should buy from other Black businesses." For exact question wording and coding for demographic and political questions, see 2005 Katrina, Race & Poverty Study.

Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was utilized to identify whether African American racial identity questions, gender, ideology, religion, household income, education, and age affect attitude toward reparations.

RESULTS

DESCRIPTIVE

A total of 1,215 respondents are included in the 2005 Katrina, Race & Poverty dataset. However, since this research is interested in exploring African American's attitude toward reparations, I include only African Americans in the analysis. Thus, 487 African Americans (204 males and 283 females) are included in the analysis. Vast majority in the sample, ideologically, considered themselves "moderate or middle of the road" (233), while 108 identified with being somewhat "liberal" and 55 "very liberal". There were about 69 African Americans in the sample who considered themselves as being either "somewhat conservative" or "very conservative". With respect to income, respondents were just about equally distributed from less than $5,000 to $74, 999 categories. There were roughly 60 who identified themselves between the $75,000 to over $175,000 categories. However, most of those in the sample identified themselves above the $74,999 categories. In terms of religious affiliation, vast majority of those in the sample were Baptist (206), while a large set of respondents identified themselves as Protestant (53), Catholic (34), Pentecostal (25), other Christian (74), and no religious preferences (53). There were preferences for other religions, but these numbers were relatively small, compared to the religions I mentioned above. The age group of respondents varied; the largest segment fell between 25-34 age group (149), while rest were somewhat equally divided in the following groups: less than 18 (40), 18-24 (65), 35-44 (62), 45-54 (83), 55-64 (55), 65-74 (25), and 75 and over (8). In terms of education, respondents were equally divided among the following groups: less than high school (94), high school (116), some college (159), and bachelor's degree or higher (118).

As previously mentioned, three separate questions are utilized to measure African American racial identity. For the first question (Do you think that what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life?), 378 of the respondents indicated "yes", while 107 said "no". For the second African American racial identity measure (Blacks should have control over the economy in mostly black communities.), the responses fell along the following continuum: strongly agree (121), somewhat agree (167), somewhat disagree (90), strongly disagree (22), and don't know (84). Finally, respondents fell in the following categories for the last African American racial identity measure (Do you think blacks should form their own political party?): "yes" (96), "no" (229), and "don't know" (157).

MULTIPLE REGRESSION EFFECTS

Multiple regression analysis was utilized to identify whether African American racial identity questions, gender, ideology, religion, household income, education, and age affect attitude toward reparations. The results of the regression analysis reveal that together, these variable do significantly predict implicit preference (F (10, 456) = 8.65, p = .00, R Square = .16). Examination of the coefficients indicates that the following variables significantly predict attitude toward reparations: What happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life (B = .238, t = 3.50, p = .00), Blacks should have control over the economy in mostly black communities (B = .117, t = 5.53, p = .00), Blacks should form their own political party (B = .123, t = 3.09, p = .00), and ideology (B = .045, t = 2.05, p = .04). In other words, those who felt African Americans: were linked, should control the economy in their own communities, and form their own political party were more likely to be supportive of reparations. In addition, liberals were also more likely to support reparations. Gender, religion, household income, education,

and age were not significant on support for reparations.

Discussion

The general findings reveal that African American racial identity (along with political ideology) affects whether or not African Americans support reparations. Specifically, differences in how African Americans feel about reparations will depend on their personal beliefs and attitudes about being black. Essentially, African Americans with a stronger sense of racial identity, those who identify more with the "in-group" and the injustices endured by the "in-group," are more likely to support reparations.

The results of the study also reveal that demographic factors (e.g., age, religion, gender, education level, and household income) do not influence African American attitudes towards reparations. This finding comes as a surprise, since other studies indicate that demographic factors (i.e., income and education level) significantly impact African American attitudes towards policies that tries to correct previous injustices caused by the Unites State government—specifically affirmative action programs. Why would income be an influential factor on African American opinions on affirmative action but not reparations? It is possible that some African Americans perceive their low income as a result of the disadvantages they face in an unfair job market, which disproportionately favors Whites. They see affirmative action programs as simply leveling the playing field. On the other hand, reparations could be perceived as a government handout. This could explain why, in general, more African Americans support affirmative action than they do reparations. While affirmative action comes in form of equal opportunity programs, reparations come in the form of a check.

Why do some African Americans oppose reparations? It is possible that some African Americans are concerned about the potential backlash that could result from awarding African Americans reparations. Perhaps for some African Americans, it's a simple matter of cost-benefit analysis: the potential cost of receiving reparations, the implication it could have on the future of race relations, outweighs the actual benefit of receiving reparations. In light of this country's long history with heated race relations, it is not unreasonable to assume that many African Americans are ready to move forward, past the issue of race.

In attempting to explain present findings, it is necessary to consider the possibility that the pool of participants could be a limitation of the study. As previously mentioned, all of the participants came from the same geographic region, New Orleans, and they had all experienced a recent disaster, Hurricane Katrina; both of these factors, geographic location and situational context, have been shown to have implications on black racial identity. For example, Broman et al. (1988) found Southerners scored higher on an index measuring closeness to other blacks. Other studies such as Jaret and Reitzes (1999) found that changes in black identity are affected by racial composition of the local area. It is possible that these two factors could strengthen black identity. However, it is unlikely that respondents' attitudes towards reparations were subsequently altered. Still, it is worth mentioning as this is an area for possible improvement in future studies.

Indeed, the issue of reparations brings to the forefront the intra-group identity differences that exist among African Americans. African Americans who attribute a higher level of importance to their race are more likely to support reparations. While very little attention has been given to understanding why some African Americans oppose reparations, the results of this study indicate the need for further research in this area. Moreover, now that we know African American racial identity influences African American opinions toward

reparations, future research should investigate the influences of African American racial identity on other public policies, as well as its possible implications.

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Assessment of Urban Principal Leadership Skills By Campus Student Achievement

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Abstract: Because of the importance of developing highly skilled urban school leaders, statewide assessments of 248 urban Texas public school administrators were analyzed to determine how principal leadership skills varied by campus student achievement ratings. Important findings indicate differences exist between urban principal skill sets in relation to campus student academic achievement as measured by state accountability ratings. In particular, urban principals from schools with the highest student academic ratings appear to rely less on management skills, and more on collaborative leadership skills as compared to principals at urban schools with lower student achievement.

Introduction

If urban public schools are to succeed, one critical requirement is quality school leadership (Edmonds, 1979; Lesotte, 1992, 1991; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Reynolds, 1990). Twenty-five years of education research confirms that school leadership is second only to classroom instruction in influencing student achievement (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Furthermore, countries worldwide have recognized that as school administrator responsibilities continue to expand, a growing need for developing effective school leadership is a requisite (Olson, 2008). Consequently, it is essential to identify effective leadership skills for urban principals and determine the extent to which acting principals possess these skills. Targeting specific leadership skills related to student achievement might provide university principal preparation programs and public school district staff development programs with focused development of effective urban leaders. Ultimately, this emphasis could improve student achievement and school performance in urban schools.

Challenges of Urban Principals

Literature related to the urban principalship focuses on four challenges: low SES and high minority student population, inexperienced teachers, increasing numbers of dropouts, and loss of students to charter schools. Urban schools produce overwhelming challenges for public school principals: student enrollment is primarily minority and low-income (Dittman, 2004; Nevarez & Wood, 2007; Orfield & Chungmei, 2004; Porter & Soper, 2003; Talbert-Johnson, 2006); cumulative academic achievement is lower for minority and low-income students (Council of the Great City Schools, 2008), and dropout rates are higher (Laird, DeBell, Kienzl, & Chapman, 2007). Furthermore, diversity in urban schools is reflected in varying student languages, religions, customs, and traditions as well as social behavior patterns and attitudes (Ryan, 2003). In addition, urban public school students are taught by greater numbers of inexperienced and under-certified teachers in

schools that are more likely to be classified as underperforming (Cortney & Coble, 2005; Humphrey, Koppich, & Hough 2005; Marnie, 2002). Although recent demographic data suggests a growth in the number of women and minorities hired as principals in urban schools, veteran public school administrators (those with ten or more years of experience) are predominantly White and male ("The Changing Face of Principals", 2008; Tillman, 2003).

As if the complexity of administering diverse urban schools is not challenging enough, the national school choice movement adds disproportionate pressure on urban school administrators to maintain student enrollment in failing schools (May, 2007). Two thirds of the charter school student population comes from urban public schools (Jewell, 2007) and, in the nation's largest urban districts, the number of students who opted to enroll in charter schools tripled between 2002 and 2004 (Lewis, 2004). One unintended consequence of transfers from public to charter school is reduction in funding for failing urban schools at time when budgets are already stretched (Lasley & Binbirdge, 2001).

Because of the urgency to develop highly skilled urban school leaders, this study attempted to identify the leadership skills of currently practicing urban administrators and determine how those skills related to their campus' student academic achievement. Although a link between leadership skills and student achievement has been established (Edmonds, 1979; Leithwood, et al., 2004; Lesotte, 1992, 1991; Marzano et al., 2005; Reynolds, 1990), this study provides recent assessment of specific leadership skills of campus principals and compares these skills to state accountability measurement of student achievement across districts statewide in Texas.

Principal Effect on Student Achievement

Studies in the U.S. from the last forty years overwhelmingly support the premise that when schools have an effective principal, students are more likely to achieve academically (Cotton, 1995; Lesotte, 1992). A review of world-wide studies (Hallinger & Heck, 1996) found similar results. Furthermore, a definitive review of thirty years of research by Marzano, et al. (2005) established both a practical and statistical significance in the relationship between student achievement and the quality of school leadership.

Less formally, the importance of effective leadership is also recognized within the public school community, in spite of the difficulty in identifying and assessing the composite required skills. According to Rammer's (2007) findings, superintendents acknowledge the crucial role effective principals play in the development of schools even though they have no effective means of assessing those skills in potential administrative candidates. Likewise, Hallinger, Bickman, and Davis (1996) report that parents and teachers believe principals make a difference in the achievement of students and the learning environment.

Findings from these studies suggest that even when it is difficult to discern which skills are requisite to effective leadership, there is little doubt among researchers or stakeholders that effective leadership positively affects student achievement.

Principal Assessment

Research confirms that principal effectiveness is important, yet there is no consistent or formalized method for identifying the most highly skilled principals. As noted in

Rammer's (2007) study for example, superintendents' belief in the value of particular leadership characteristics does not guarantee their ability to correctly assess these skills in potential employees. Adding to the complexity of assessment, findings (Daresh, 2007) suggest that new principals do not consider critical instructional issues until they first become comfortable with managing a school, further hindering chances for academic improvement. Furthermore, new principals are likely to assess their own performance in terms of management skills rather than instructional leadership. Baxter (2008) posits this may result from university-based principal preparation programs that apply a business manager metaphor to public school administration rather than one of community leader and public servant. Anagnostopoulos and Rutlege (2007) observed that because urban schools are likely to face state and district sanctions for low performance, sanctions rather than best practice have become the focus of urban school administrators. Additional findings suggest that, in such an atmosphere, administrators are more likely to resort to the use of top-down managerial skills rather than collaborative instructional leadership skills. Fewer principals (from 15% to 5%) enter administration directly from the classroom, suggesting another disconnect from the skills of instructional leadership ("The Changing Face of Principals", 2008). Present circumstances and the convergence of these factors do little to guarantee quality leadership or stem urban school failure.

In spite of overwhelming evidence that principals have an essential role creating effective schools, measuring leadership ability has not been adequately formalized either by urban school districts or by urban administrators. The following study attempted to identify the relationship between current leadership skills of urban principals and campus student achievement as measured by current state accountability ratings. Demonstrating the mutuality of specific leadership skills and measurable academic achievement would also provide a basis for reflection and school reform.

METHOD

Every five years in Texas, principals are required to participate in a state-approved professional development performance assessment. Records from one such assessment, Principal Assessment of Student Success (PASS), provided the data for this study . One component of the PASS requires assessment of 14 leadership skills identified by Thompson (1993) and adopted by the National Policy Board of Educational Administration (NPBEA). PASS principal assessments from 2006 to 2008 determined which NPBEA skills predominated among Texas urban administrators in terms of student achievement as measured by the state of Texas public school accountability ratings Academically Acceptable (AA), Recognized (R) or Exemplary (E).

PASS data provided assessments from teams (two assessors per principal) as to the predominant NPBEA skills exhibited by each urban principal. PASS assessors were recruited among veteran campus and central office administrators, as well as from university educational leadership departments within the state of Texas. Sampled principals provided evidence of their job performance in a variety of ways (campus improvement plan, state accountability data, Adequate Yearly Progress phone interview, teacher performance data, and student performance data). Based on this evidence, assessors cooperatively identified each principal's NPBEA leadership strengths. The top five skills identified by assessors for all principals sampled were tallied and categorized in terms of student achievement as measured by campus accountability ratings (AA, R, or E).

Finally, to identify the link between the leadership skills of urban principals and

campus student achievement, 14 NPBEA skills identified by assessors were compared within student achievement categories as measured by Texas state campus accountability ratings (AA, R, or E).

PARTICIPANTS

PASS data accessed from principal evaluations conducted throughout the state of Texas from 2006 through 2008 yielded records of 248 urban school principals, representing 51.6 % (128) elementary, 20.2% (50) middle, and 28.2% (70) high school campuses. The 248 campuses of sampled principals were identified by Texas state accountability ratings (AA, R, E; see Table 1). It is important to note that principals from campuses rated Academically Unacceptable were not represented in the PASS data sampled; thus evaluation data for principals from Academically Unacceptable schools were not available for comparison.

Table 1. Frequency Counts and Percentages of Texas Accountability Ratings by Urban School Type (N=248)

	Academically Acceptable (AA)		Recognized (R)		Exemplary (E)		Total	
	Count %	Of Total %	Count %	Of Total %	Count %	Of Total %	Total Count	Table %
Urban Elementary Campuses	68 (39.3%)	27.4	48 (76.2%)	19.4	12 (100%)	4.8	128	51.6
Urban Middle School Campuses	39 (22.5%)	15.7	11 (17.5%)	4.4	0 (0%)	0	50	20.2
Urban High School Campuses	66 (38.2%)	26.6	4 (6.3%)	1.6	0 (0%)	0	70	28.2
Total	173 (100%)	69.8	63 (100%)	25.4	12 (100%)	4.8	248	100

Of the campuses represented, elementary schools received more Academically Acceptable (AA) ratings compared to middle school and high school and campuses with 39.3% (68), 22.5% (39), and 38.2% (66), respectively. Elementary campuses also led in Recognized (R) ratings 76.2% (48) compared to middle and high schools 11% (17.5) and 6.3% (4), respectively. In addition, only elementary schools were rated Exemplary (E) as compared to high schools and middle schools by 100% (12), 0%, and 0%, respectively. Unequal representation of schools at each instructional level (elementary, middle and high school) within each state accountability level (AA, R, E) may have affected interpretation of study findings. However, the dispersion of these data reflects the pattern of accountability ratings in Texas. Overall, urban campuses rated Academically Acceptable (AA) were associated with 173(69.8%) of sampled principals, the largest group, while urban campuses rated Recognized (R) and Exemplary (E) were associated with 63(25.4%) and 12(4.8%) sampled principals, respectively.

ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics were used to calculate assessor ratings by campus accountability rating. Chi-square cross tabulation tables computed to determine dependence/ independence by school accountability frequency counts per NPBEA skill rating were not statistically significant differences and, therefore not reported.

RESULTS

Teams of two PASS assessors cooperatively rated NPBEA skills for each principal based upon data from multiple data sources. A total of 672 ratings were produced by 244 assessor teams (see Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency Counts: Texas Accountability Ratings by Assessor Ratings of Principal NPBEA Skills (N= 244 teams)

NPBEA Domains	Skills	Academically Acceptable AA	Recognized (R)	Exemplary (E)	Total Ratings	Total By Domain
Functional	Leadership	86	28	3	117	322/672 (47.9%)
	Information Collection	51	13	4	68	
	Problem Analysis	15	18	2	25	
	Judgment	29	14	2	45	
	Organizational Oversight	50	16	1	67	
Programming	Instructional Management	32	11	1	44	197/672 (29.3%)
	Curriculum Design	17	10	1	28	
	Student Guidance & Development	49	17	4	70	
	Staff Development	11	3	0	14	
	Measurement & Evaluation	19	6	2	27	
	Resource Allocation	11	3	0	14	
Interpersonal	Sensitivity	67	26	7	97	153/672 (22.8%)
	Oral & Non-verbal Expression	29	12	4	45	
	Written Expression	8	2	1	11	

Note. /=divided by.

Leadership produced the largest frequency count from assessors (117) while the lowest frequency count was found for *Resource Allocation* (11), a difference of 106 counts. Skills in NPBEA's functional, programming, and interpersonal domains differed in frequency with 322/47.9%, 197/29.3%, and 153/22.8%, respectively. Functional domain skills netted greater totals than skills in the programming and interpersonal domains by 18.6% and 25.1%, respectively. Overall, within the functional domain, *Leadership (117)* received the largest count while the highest counts in the programming and interpersonal

domain were found for *Student Guidance and Development* (70) and *Sensitivity* (97).

The five NPBEA skills with highest frequencies by campus accountability level appear in Table 3. Although different in rank, all groups shared the skills of: *Leadership, Sensitivity*, and *Student Guidance and Development. Organizational Oversight* was common to the AA and R groups while *Information Collection* was common to the AA and E groups. Only two skills were unique to one group; *Judgment* was only noted among principals in the R group and *Oral Communication* was only noted among principals from E rated campuses (see Table 3).

Table 3. Most Frequent NPBEA Skills: Principal and Assessors Ratings by Texas Accountability Ratings

Academic Acceptable (AA)		Recognized (R)		Exemplary (E)	
Leadership	86	Leadership	28	Sensitivity	7
Sensitivity	67	Sensitivity	26	Student Guide/Dev	4
Inform/Collection	51	Student Guide/Dev	17	Oral Communication	4
Organize/Oversight	50	Organize/Oversight	16	Inform/Collection	4
Student Guide/Dev	49	Judgment	14	Leadership	3

= frequency count

DISCUSSION

Even though effective leadership positively impacts student achievement, discerning the requisite skills of effective leaders has proven more elusive (Cotton, 1995; Leithwood, et al., 2004; Lesotte, 1992; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Marzano et al., 2006). In this study, the NPBEA domain skill sets provides a context from which to compare PASS assessor ratings of urban principals in relation to their campus student achievement as measure by state accountability ratings. Each NPBEA domain (functional, programming, and interpersonal*)* reflects a particular skill set. Before the findings of this study can be adequately discussed, a deeper understanding of the nature of the NPBEA domain skill sets is necessary.

Functional domain skills (see Appendix B) comprise base-level management and organizational structure to supervise daily, routine campus business (e.g. to run the buses on time, schedule classes, or maintain order). Evidence of effectiveness is typically quantifiably measurable (e.g. attendance records, disciplinary referrals). Programming domain skills provide systemic campus leadership requiring a holistic perspective that incorporates but surpass functional domain skills. More complex and difficult to quantify, these skills enable principals to develop frameworks, design anticipated outcomes, implement ongoing supervision, set goals, and draw inferences. In contrast, interpersonal domain skills employ functional and programming domain skills, but are subject to individual perception, making measurement more difficult. For example, principals may perceive themselves to be sensitive while faculty members disagree. Nevertheless, these skills improve effective implementation of both functional and programming skills.

Overall, assessor ratings of AA campus principals centered on skills related to management (functional domain) rather than collaborative systemic leadership (programming domain). The top assessor rated skills of AA campus principals from highest to lowest were: *Leadership, Sensitivity, Information Collection, Organizational Oversight*, and *Student Guidance and Development*. Of these, three represent functional domain skills, while the other two represent programming and interpersonal domain skills.

Top assessor ratings of R campus principals from highest to lowest were: *Leadership, Sensitivity, Student Guidance and Development, Organizational Oversight,* and *Judgment*. Of these, three represent functional domain skills, while the other two represent programming and interpersonal domain skills. Of the 14 NPBEA skills measured, AA and R campus principals shared two functional domain skills (*Leadership* and *Organizational Oversight*) one programming domain skill (*Student Guidance and Development)* and one interpersonal domain skill (*Sensitivity).* Anagnostopoulos and Rutlege (2007) contend that looming state and district sanctions for low student achievement tend to adjust principals' focus on the sanctions rather than best practice. In addition, when faced with performance pressure, administrators are more likely to resort to top-down managerial skills rather than collaborative instructional leadership skills ("The Changing Face of Principals", 2008). Findings from this study appear to support these arguments insofar as principals at lower rated schools appear to rely on managerial skills of the functional domain. However, principals differed in two functional domain skills: *Information Collection* (AA) and *Judgment* (R). Interestingly, *Judgment* was noted exclusively for R campus principals. These findings suggest that student achievement may be linked to urban school leaders' ability to make quality data supported decisions. While urban principals at AA campuses appear to be skilled collectors of information, assessors found that principals at higher performing R campuses make quality decisions based on campus data (*Judgment*). This lends support to the truism that schools may be "data rich, but information poor." Professional development aimed at expanding skills of information collecting to include quality data-driven decision-making might, therefore, stimulate improved campus academic performance.

The most frequently noted assessor ratings for E campus principals from highest to lowest were: *Sensitivity, Student Guidance and Development, Oral Communication, Information Collection,* and *Leadership*. Of these, two skills represented both functional and interpersonal domain skills and one represented the programming domain. *Oral Communication* was found exclusively among E campus principals while other skills attributed to E campus leaders were also exhibited by AA or R campus counterparts.

Interpersonal skills like *Sensitivity* and *Oral Communication* improve effective implementation of both functional and programming skills, which may account for greater E campus student achievement, especially if leaders supervise faculty through more effective communication (e.g. providing clear instruction, guidance, training, and performance feedback). Most importantly, three of the five strengths of E campus principals fell within the programming and interpersonal domains in contrast to three functional domain strengths noted among AA and R campus leaders.

These findings support those of Baxter (2008), Daresh (2007), and Aragnostopoulos and Rutlege (2007) that quality school leadership appears to improve student academic performance. E campus principals in this study demonstrated a more systemic, collaborative leadership approach rather than that of AA and R campus leaders who focused on top-down management.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, leadership of urban principals with lower campus achievement often focuses on managerial skills of the functional domain. Conversely, it appears urban principals who demonstrate greater programming and interpersonal domain skills systemically address campus instructional needs by utilizing collaborative leadership. This finding suggests a need for professional development aimed at nurturing systemic practices among campus leaders. In addition,

clear communication (i.e. O*ral Expression)* appears to differentiate leaders at more highly rated campuses, indicating a need for systematic development of these skills among all school administrators. Finally, these findings establish the necessity of accurate principal assessment in any school reform.

Future studies might examine the influence of principal attributes (i.e. gender, pre-administrative educational experience, leadership experience) related to differences in campus student achievement levels. Furthermore, differentiation of principals' skills by campus level of instruction (i.e. elementary or secondary) might reveal effective leadership skills unique to student instructional level. Finally, skills in *Oral Communication,* exclusively found among urban principals at campuses with the highest student achievement, should be examined in greater depth. The degree to which oral communication skills account for student achievement and the degree to which they vary among campus leaders could provide guidance for improved leadership development.

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PREPARING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS TO TEACH AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS USING THE CULTURALLY RELEVANT PRE-SERVICE TEACHER INTERVENTION MODEL

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Abstract: African Americans experience varying disparities including racial discrimination and cultural discontinuities, which are manifested in public school classrooms. Hence these students struggle academically and are less likely to attend college. This study was designed to investigate the effectiveness a Culturally Relevant Pre-Service Teacher (CRPT) Intervention Model for pre-service teachers. Qualitative methods were used alongside the Cross Racial Identity Scale to respond the effectiveness of CRPT Intervention Sessions. Results indicated that pre-service teachers gained a more in-depth understanding of relationship between their identities within the context of their cultural experiences and all pre-service teachers applied some culturally relevant teaching strategies.

INTRODUCTION

The *Brown vs. the Board of Education* decision brought with it cultural discontinuities for African American students in public school systems because teachers were not prepared to teach them effectively. Still, today, educators struggle to implement instructional strategies and curricula designed to foster the academic success and prosperity of African American students. So, how can teacher education programs help failing African American students recover academically? Will integrating identity development and culturally relevant teaching theory in teacher education programs better prepare pre-service teachers to accommodate African American learners? This study attempted to provide answers to these questions with the implementation and evaluation of Culturally Relevant Pre-Service Teacher (CRPT) Intervention Sessions at a Historically Black Institution (HBI). These sessions were used to engage pre-service teachers in readings, discussions, and analysis of prominent identity development and culturally relevant teaching theorists. As an add-in, historical information about the African Diaspora was also infused.

This study was designed to examine how the CRPT Sessions might influence the identity development and culturally relevant teaching practices of five pre-service teachers. CRPT activities were developed to introduce pre-service teachers to Cross' (1991) theory of Black identity development, Ladson-Billings' (1994) theory of culturally relevant teaching theory, and historical content relative to the African Diaspora. Although many researchers have studied the relationship between teacher identity and teacher practices (Tolliver & Tisdell, 2002; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998) these studies have not applied Cross' theory to their research. This research is unique because it examines teacher identity using Cross' theory alongside culturally relevant teaching theory.

Review of Literature

Training teachers is a dynamic process and training them to meet the needs of all students provides a very unique challenge. Providing teachers with explicit and specific strategies appropriate for the diverse student population reflected in K-12 classrooms helps them to more effectively address learner differences. More specifically, national and state academic reports indicate that African American students score below all other racial groups in both math and science (NRC, 2008). For this reason, it is vitally important to prepare teachers to address this extremely critical phenomenon. Exposing teachers to the research conducted on teacher identity development and teacher practices, as well as, the use of culturally relevant teaching practices for African American students is most appropriate for accomplishing this task.

Identity Development Theory and CRPT Intervention Sessions

Much of the current research on identity develop is based on Erikson (1968) theory of identity development, which suggests that one's personal identity is developed as a result of psychological connections between childhood and adulthood. Several researchers have developed identity development based on the Erikson's work. For example, Helms (1990) developed stages for White identity development and Cross' (1971) developed stages for Black identity development. However, each of these models reflects a cultural context and is relative to the experiences of an individual.

Similar to Erikson, Giddens (2004) suggests that identity is made rather than inherited and it contains a reflexive process, indicating that identity changes as one reflects upon it. "We create, maintain and revise a set of biographical narratives—the story of who we are, and how we came to be where we are now" (Guantlett, 2004, p. 99). Identity is a fluid process, which cannot be completely changed but is subject to change when someone's biographical narratives are altered. More importantly, Rosenblum and Travis (2003) indicates that African American students are likely to develop identities that are negative, particularly, when notions of their culture are viewed from the world or community's perspective through an inferior and often stigmatized lens. This identity construction continually evolves into an adult identity construction. As a result, the ideas of Rosenblun and Travis's (2003) and Giddens' (2004) offer much to teacher education programs, particularly with respect to preparing them to counter the national and international oppression inflicted upon African Americans.

Teacher training provides a most appropriate venue to train teaches who are able to infuse content and pedagogy to counter these patterns of identity construction for African American children and tackle the academic challenges or disparities between African American students and other students of other races. Engaging pre-service teachers in research and discussions about the connections between identity development and teacher practices can provide a context for further understanding of diversity in the classroom and its impact on student learning. Several researchers (Sellers, Morgan, & Brown, 2001; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Tolliver, Tisdell, & Eq, 2002) have provided these understandings for us.

For example, Pittard's (2003) research provides insightful understandings useful for training teachers. Pittard stated that teacher education programs should provide time and space for pre-service teachers to discuss and develop identity. Pittard considers identity central to the process of becoming a teacher. Like Pittard, Danielwicz (2001) suggested that pre-service teachers should have the opportunity to explore identity construction over a period of time and encourages teacher education programs to develop curricula, field experiences, and pedagogy that encourage pre-

service teachers to begin to develop their teacher identity.

The Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS), based on Cross' (1971) model, was used in this research to measure identity development in the African American participants. Cross' (1991) Nigrescence Model of Black identity development was developed to measure African Americans' self-perceptions about their race. CRIS includes three phases and six stages of identity development. The Pre-Encounter phase includes the Assimilation (PA), Mis-education (PM), and Self-hatred (PSH) stages, and identifies African Americans who display attitudes of dislike toward their African American race and community. The Immersion-Emersion phase is the second phase and includes the Anti-White (IEAW) stage of development. Anti-White dispositions typically result from a racist event or some other incident of racial inequity and African Americans are grounded in an anti-White ideology rather than a pro-Black ideology. The final phase is Internalization, which includes the Afrocentricity (IA) and Multiculturalist Inclusive (IMCI) stages. This phase describes African Americans who have internalized being Black and who focus their attention on uplifting their community (Afrocentricity) or from a more global perspective, honor and attention of all cultures and communities (Multiculturalist).

Culturally Relevant Teaching Theory and CRPT Intervention Sessions

So what is culturally relevant teaching theory? Ladson-Billings is, perhaps, the most prominent contributor of researcher to this theory. Ladson-Billings' (1994) research on effective strategies for teaching African Americans has provided a foundation for much research on accommodating classroom diversity. She indicated that instruction for African American students should include practices, such as, offering notions of praise and camaraderie; integrating cultural literature; making direct connections with the history of the Diaspora; and integrating cross curricula components relevant to the culture and interests of the student.

However, culturally relevant teaching has been defined in varying ways and sometimes referred to as cultural congruent instruction or cultural responsiveness. For example, Ladson-Billings (1994) defines culturally relevant teaching as using the culture of students to " maintain it and to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture . . . to assist in the development of a "relevant black personality" that allows African American students to choose academic excellence yet still identify with African and African American culture" (p. 17). Cultural congruent instruction is defined as instruction which aligns to the cultural patterns of students, one that build routines and curriculum relative to the students language and culture to improve academic achievement (Ah-Nee Benham & Cooper, 2000; McCarty, 2003). Cultural responsiveness is defined as teaching to the strengths of diverse students and aligning the cultural knowledge and experiences of students to instructional practices (Gay, 2002).

Brown (2007) provides several frameworks appropriate for preparing culturally responsive teachers. According to Brown, Ladson-Billings' (2001) framework includes three propositions, including teachers who focus on individual student achievement, possess cultural competence, and have developed a sense of sociopolitical consciousness. Gay's (2002) framework includes five components, suggesting that teachers are knowledgeable of cultural diversity, apply culturally relevant curricula, build cultural learning communities, establish cross-cultural communications, and establish congruity in classroom instruction. Finally, Brown provides Villegas and Lucas' (2002) six characteristics of culturally responsive teachers, which include teachers who possess a sociocultural consciousness, embrace differences among students, understand their responsibility to bring forth changes in school

settings, understand how students learn, are familiar with the lives of the students they teach, and use this knowledge for instructional purposes.

Culturally relevant teaching theory is a component of CRPT Intervention Sessions, grounded primarily on the framework and examples provided by Ladson-Billings (1994). Effectively infusing culturally relevant teaching practices can help to reverse the process of stigmatized identity construction on African Americans who attend urban schools. Ladson-Billings (1995) stated that a major component of culturally relevant teaching is to have students develop a "broader sociopolitical consciousness that allows them to critique the cultural norms, values, morals, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities. If school is about preparing students for active citizenship, what better citizenship tool than the ability to critically analyze the society?" (p. 162). She insisted that culturally relevant teaching does not simply apply to the use of culturally grounded skills and abilities. Culturally relevant teaching practices should also include the use of strategies that promote critical thinking skills and encourage African American students to critically engage with others in the world. When teacher education programs infuse this sort of relevant content into their programs, pre-service teachers are prepared to facilitate an empowered identity in their African American students.

Researchers have challenged educators to look beyond mainstream curriculum and ideas of multiculturalism to adopt culturally relevant teaching practices to support African American students (Hale, 2001; Hilliard, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1994). For example, Allen & Boykin (1992) suggested that "the afrocultural experience fosters affect, harmonic interdependence, movement expressiveness, and communalism, while the mainstream experience nurtures logic over feelings, compartmentalization and separateness, movement compressiveness, and self-contained individualism" (p. 589). African Americans, generally, have these Afrocultural experiences, yet it is within the mainstream context that public school curricula are constructed. Teachers teach to these mainstream learning styles, mainstream language, and mainstream norms.

METHODOLOGY

Researchers (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, 2003) proposed the use of culturally relevant teaching practices to support these students in overcoming academic challenges. As a result, Culturally Relevant Pre-service Teacher (CRPT) Intervention Sessions were organized as an extension of the regular methods courses for pre-service teachers in an elementary education program. The CRPT sessions were grounded in a participatory action research approach, which was developed to conduct research specific to the concerns of marginalized and disenfranchised individuals (Creswell, 2003; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005), which includes African Americans. Case study methods (Wolcott, 1990) were used to collect data for this project. A case study approach to qualitative research provided "comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth information about each case of interest" (Patton, 2002, p. 447) for individual participant data and group data (Wolcott, 1990). Member checks were used to elicit participants' perspectives on their own identity development and use of culturally relevant teaching practices (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In addition, CRIS evaluation instrument was used to provide data on identity development.

PARTICIPANTS

The five African American, female participants were seniors enrolled in an elementary education program in a Historically Black College (HBC) and were selected using purposeful sampling. According to Patton (2002) purposeful sampling was used to reflect:

> the logic and power of purposeful sampling derive from the emphasis on in-depth understanding. This leads to selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of research. (p. 46)

Glense's (1999) interpretation of purposeful sampling offers a more specific understanding of sampling. This research project used a convenient, purposeful case sampling technique described by Glesne as a process to gain in-depth, information-rich data on participants who are readily accessible to the researcher.

Culturally Relevant Pre-Service Teacher (CRPT) Intervention Model

The naturalist approach refers to research that is "conducted in the native environment to see people and their behavior given all the real world incentives and constraints" (Fetterman, 1998, p. 31). The real world qualities embedded in the naturalist approach provided authentic data on the teaching strategies selected by the research participants (Fetterman, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Because pre-service teachers were placed in elementary school classrooms with mentor teachers to teach content based lessons, the authentic nature of the naturalist approach sufficiently accommodated the goals of this research. It provided opportunities to observe the behaviors of pre-service teachers in a real world instructional setting, the classroom.

Culturally Relevant Pre-service Teacher (CRPT) Intervention Sessions

During CRPT sessions, participants read, discussed, and analyzed the works and philosophies of Paulo Freire's *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1973), John Dewey's *Experience and Education* (1938), bell hooks' *Teaching to Transgress* (1994), Charles Christian's *Black Saga: The African American Experience* (1999), Gloria Ladson-Billing's (1994) and others' (e.g., Hale, 2001; Hilliard, 1990) ideas of culturally relevant teaching. Participants also participated in intense discussions on Cross' (1991) identity development theory. The CRPT discussions also included possible instructional implications that the ideas of these researchers might have on the educational experiences of African American children. The diagram below provides a visual interpretation of the varying components considered for the CRPT sessions.

These CRPT Intervention Sessions were a modification of the methods course requirements for the elementary education program. The traditional format of education methods courses is a sixteen-week semester on site at Ambe' Elementary School, an urban inner city school. During the first eight weeks of the semester, pre-service teachers are instructed in the theories and practices in elementary school reading, science, language arts, and social studies methods, facilitated by university faculty. For the second eight weeks, the pre-service teachers are each assigned to a mentor teacher for practicum experience in the elementary classroom. Pre-service teachers complete sixteen weeks of student teaching with the same mentor teacher.

For this project, the first eight weeks of courses adhered to the traditional structure of the methods courses and CRPT sessions began during the second eight weeks. The second eight weeks was Phase I of the project with Intervention Sessions scheduled for two hours each week. Phase II of the project began during the first eight weeks of the student teaching.

Data Collection Procedures

Qualitative data were collected using structured journal responses to ensure consistency in focus between the participant reflections. Group and individual cultural interviews were conducted to establish shared meaning among participants and to provide flexible boundaries to allow participants to interject important questions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). According to Patton (2002), the primary

purpose of observations is to collect observed data to describe activities and decipher meaning. For this study, two videotaped observations were completed in Phase I and two in Phase II for each participant. Each observation concluded with an audio taped debriefing session. The audio taped debriefing sessions were transcribed and provided qualitative data on pre-service teachers' interpretations of their challenges and triumphs with lesson implementation.

Field notes and member checks were used to document participant progress. According to Liamputtong & Ezzy (2005), field notes are used by researchers to put their experiences and observations into words. Field notes typically include descriptions, interpretations, and perceptions of research events. Field notes were recorded to describe, interpret, and record initial perceptions and reactions of the researcher after encounters with study participants. Member checks were used to elicit participants' perspectives on their own identity development and use of culturally relevant teaching practices (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The Cross (2000) CRIS instrument was used to collect identity data for all participants, "a scale designed to measure the theoretical constructs proposed in the most recent incarnation of nigrescence theory" (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002, p. 71).

Data Analysis

According to Patton (2002), establishing a substantive significance for the presentation of qualitative data findings and conclusions is vital in the analysis process. He asserted that:

> The qualitative analyst's effort at uncovering patterns, themes, and categories includes using both creative and critical faculties in making carefully considered judgments about what is really significant and meaningful in the data. Since qualitative analysts do not have statistical tests to tell them when an observation or pattern is significant, they must rely first on their own intelligence, experience, and judgment; second they should take seriously the responses of those who were studied or participated in the inquiry; and third, the researcher or evaluator should consider the responses and reactions of those who read and review the results. (p. 466)

Patton's (2002) process for the manual coding and identification of classifications and codes in qualitative data was used to uncover data themes. The primary purpose for manual coding of qualitative data is to identify the core content data from interviews, observations, and other forms of qualitative data. Multiple readings were conducted to uncover the common themes in the data (Patton, 2002).

In addition to the manual coding procedures identified by Patton (2002), Lawrence-Lightfoot's (1994) written picture concept was also applied to the writing of individual and group cases. Lawrence-Lightfoot's (1994) written pictures of the experiences of six African American middle class people engage her readers and bring them into the lives of her participants. She insisted that participant portraits are only generated when a researcher respects, advocates for, and admires her participants. The manual coding from qualitative data analysis were used to compose written pictures of pre-service teacher participants. Having spent extensive time sharing and discussing relevant theory, listening to the passionate and personal reflections of participants, manual analysis was most appropriate for developing written pictures or portraits of research participants.

CRIS data were analyzed according to the guidelines provided by Cross. Vandiver, Cross, Worrell and Fhagen-Smith (2002) conducted a study to validate the CRIS instrument as and determined that the 6 CRIS Subscales was supported by an exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. Additionally, correlates between "CRIS and the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998) , supported the convergent validity of the CRIS" (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002, p. 71).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

VALUE OF THE CRPT INTERVENTION SESSIONS

Pre-service teachers' perceptions of the value of CRPT Intervention Sessions were overwhelmingly positive as they consider them necessary inclusions into teacher education programs. The combination of readings from Friere and Cross helped participants to gain more in-depth understanding of their individual personal and social oppression and to discover how being oppressed helped to shape their identities. The data also indicated that pre-service teachers gained an understanding of the difference between multicultural education and culturally relevant teaching, which are conceptually and instructionally different.

Minorities typically experience some sort of oppression, including racial, sexual, and/or institutional all of which impede the social, economic, or academic progression. The CRPT Intervention Sessions helped to expose the African American pre-service teachers to the far-reaching realities of what it means to be oppressed. Participants shared a general understanding of their social oppression; however, these sessions helped participants to realize that oppressive dynamics are present within educational institutions, as well as within the context of economic and social capitals. These inferior notions that derive from oppression had, in part, encouraged these African American participants to view themselves through an inferior lens. This realization helped to foster the understanding of the relationship between their oppression and their identities, including the idea that this oppression was in some way imbedded into their current identity structures.

One function of the CRPT Sessions was to introduce participants, and have them explore the people, places, and events connected, to the history of the African Diaspora. This type of content is not typically included in PreK-16 curriculum, which means that like most African American people and people in general, participants were not knowledgeable about the many positive and innovative contributions African Americans have made to our society, which, ultimately, contributes to the identity development of the participants. The vignette below titled, *Empowered*, illustrates Chai's process with reconciling her new historical knowledge about the Diaspora with her culture, identity, and instructional strategies.

Empowered

> Exposure to African American history has helped to enhance my personal knowledge of culture. It has opened my mind to the excel - lence, intelligence, and strength that a people can possess. Many things that I have been reacquainted with existed in my subconscious. It has been very much appreciated that I have been stimulated to think about the importance of a person background. I know that I will have to be diligent in my own personal and intellectual development by reading and contextualizing, critically, all genres of information. We have a rich, spiritual, and beautiful culture, and I will continue to reflect on and include this heritage in my life and instruction. I will continue to use this knowledge to increase the self- esteem of myself and my students.

Although this vignette reflects the only reference to self-esteem made by Chai, she indicated that the exposure to culturally relevant and identity development theory helped to improve her self-esteem. Further, the sessions helped her begin to think about the sociocultural dynamic of learning. In appreciation of her own personal and academic development, while participating in the CRPT Intervention Sessions, she acquired a renewed appreciation for critical thinking and welcomed the opportunity to challenge researchers as a pathway to engage in lifelong learning.

Establishing the difference between multicultural education and culturally relevant teaching was also indicated by pre-service teachers as a valuable outcome of the CRPT Sessions. As we discussed and analyzed culturally relevant teaching practices, pre-

service teachers developed a distinctive concept that contrasted culturally relevant teaching with multicultural education. They began to speak of multicultural education as broad sweeping understanding or the acknowledgment of cultural diversity or of learning to be bicultural (Gay, 1994). On the other hand, culturally relevant teaching provided a more accurate, focused, and explicit approach to teaching or the use of curricula content and instructional strategies to accommodate the cultural norms of African American students (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Madhubuti & Madhubuti, 1994). Mariama's vignette, *Changing Perspective,* illustrates her personal discovery and interpretation of the multiculturalism opposed to cultural relevancy, leading to identity change.

Changing Perspective

> The methods intervention sessions created within me a hunger for new information. We were constantly being fed and information was always being reinforced through active participation. With consistent discussions about the literature composed by CRT theorists and how those ideas might be applied in individual classroom situations and I began to gain a different understanding of CRT. Prior to the intervention sessions, I had a different perspective of culturally relevant teaching. Throughout my studies I have learned about multicultural learning environments or creating a diverse setting but never culturally relevant teaching. This knowledge of CRT strategies of AA students is extremely vital and beneficial because it disputes the argument that this population is unable to be educated. The affects that the sessions have had on what and how I teach is that I feel validated in what I do in the classroom. I love movement, singing, and expressions of creativity. Having the knowledge of CRT increases my confidence and comfort level of applying these strategies. I am not reluctant to use this because research supports its appropriateness. It was unfortunate that the sessions had to end so soon, because I feel that there is more to learn and discuss.
>
> There are still some things that I am unsure of, but my ability to be an effective teacher is no longer one of them. My favorite singer has a line in her song, "Everybody knows that they lied, everybody know they perpetrated inside." I did not want to lie because if I couldn't face my feeling of inferiority, then how would I address and correct them. I made the promise that I would be 100% honest with myself even if it hurts.
>
> I realize that the most significant impact has not been on my personal development but on my professional development as a teacher. The sessions have forced me to look at the social institution of public education. They have also forced me to reshape my philosophy of education as well as my role as a teacher.

Much of Mariama's data indicated that she struggled with issues of confidence; however, one benefit she experienced from the CRPT Intervention Sessions was help in admitting this struggle and how it contributed to her apprehensions about teaching. The references she made to her favorite lyrics, "Everybody knows that they lied, everybody know that they perpetrate inside," appeared to have new meaning for her as she began to understand the value and importance of being honest about her confidence level. Her data indicated that the sessions were also able to help her with identifying this reality in order to begin building her confidence as a beginning teacher. Mariama's conceptual understanding of multicultural education and culturally relevant teaching practices were altered. Discovering that research supported her own notions of the relevance of movement, singing, and creative expression as a teacher of African American children appeared to help her validate her own beliefs of how to effectively teach and engage with her African American students.

Impact of CRPT Intervention Sessions on Pre-Service Teacher Identity

Pittard (2003) suggested that there is a direct connection between teacher identity and teacher practices and the data from this study suggested the same. In fact, when there was a shift in the identity development of pre-service teachers, there was a shift in how they conceptualize teaching and/or their instructional

strategies. According to the final CRIS surveys, all participants experienced some shift in their identity; however, identity shifts did not occur in any systematic or consistent way. Data from the final identity survey indicated three participants shifted to the IA stage—Chai who has a subscale average of 21.33 out of 35, Tecola with a subscale average of 27, and Mariama with a subscale average of 23. These averages indicated that Chai, Tecola, and Mariama viewed race from an Afrocentric perspective with the primary goal to build and enhance their communities. Two participants shifted to the IMCI stage— Michele and Ebony who have a subscale average of 29, suggesting they view race from a more inclusive perspective in which they consider all races of people as valuable and contributory to society.

To introduce Ebony, she is a self proclaimed "Army Brat" with very little experience in an urban community and with the African American population in general. Spindler and Spindler (1987) identified culture as a cumulative "product of human information processing as well as a template for it" (p. 66), which helps to place Ebony's noted challenges in context. Although Ebony's CRIS data suggested she placed in the IMCI phase, she indicated that she may not be absolutely certain about an obvious change in her identity; but her experience teaching in urban schools has helped her to at least begin to consider the relationship between culture and learning. She had begun to consider that the experiences of urban students require individualized instruction that is consistent with their urban cultural experiences. In the passage below Ebony shares her attempts to connect with her urban students based on their cumulative knowledge and her own identity development.

> I attempt to connect to [my students] personalities and their likes and dislikes. I bring in the musical element, or discuss the similarities in our lives, or try to appeal to what brings them pleasure. I think as I get to know them better, I can link this information to my lessons. This is where I believe my identity development has evolved somewhat. I am currently immersed in an entirely different culture than that in which I live, so it is a challenge to bring culturally relevant teaching to the classroom. As I continue to connect with my students, I continue to reflect how my identity has changed over the last several months. As I have said before, I do not believe it has changed much. I think the most significant development since I have attended the university and conducted my student teaching experience at Ambe' Elementary has been my exposure to the inner city.
>
> As a result of my growing up as a military dependent and growing up mostly on Army bases and in the suburbs, I think that I have absorbed many images and beliefs of the "dominant group." I do have the notion that I am an "American." Additionally, I see myself as an American or a black American, not an African American. This is because I feel "African American" is a label created by the dominant group. I am of the opinion that my beliefs have been influenced by my upbringing in the military and where I currently live. There was no surprise here. I do tend to follow the group, or assimilate, and mold to fit where I am dependent upon the situation and the environment. I do not believe I have severe self-hatred views. I do not hate myself. I relax my hair and as such there are some personal images involved in that. The results under "Afrocentricity" I believe can be somewhat misleading. I only recently even became aware of this term and am still not totally certain what "Afrocentricity" means. My answers under this stage were meant to be neutral because I do not think I feel strongly one way or another about it; however, my ratings give the appearance of being average rather than neutral.

Through the use of the member checks (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), Ebony was able to share her contradictions with the CRIS survey results with respect to her own perceptions of her identity development. Although she continually states her notions of the importance of multicultural education rather than culturally relevant teaching practices, what is most important is that she is fully involved in examining her own identity development.

Impact of CRPT Intervention Sessions on Pre-Service Teacher Use of

Culturally Relevant Teaching Practices

Ladson-Billings (1994) identified specific strategies that are effective for teaching African American students and data were analyzed using instructional indicators from Ladson-Billings' research those strategies. Pre-service teachers' use of culturally relevant teaching strategies adhered to Allen and Boykin's (1992) notions, as well as Ladson-Billings' (1994) because the teachers were able to infuse notions of praise and camaraderie into instruction, as well planned lessons that used cultural literature and positive cultural and self-images of African Americans so as to make connections to their African American student population.

The most interesting findings on integrating the CRPT Intervention Sessions are that only one participant infused issues related to sociopolitical critique, political expression, or community responsibility during one lesson and participants did not infuse concepts of the African Diaspora into their lessons. None of the pre-service teachers made direct connections to the historical social, academic, or political contributions made by Africans or African Americans, which suggests that they lack the relevant knowledge to address these elements of culturally relevant teaching. The lack of infusion of African Diaspora concepts in the classroom and the insufficient knowledge base of African Americans relative to the Diaspora is a consistent finding of this research. Yet, these concepts are crucial to effective application of culturally relevant teaching practices and the research suggests that intervention activities require modifications to reinforce these elements.

Merging Identity Development and Culturally Relevant Teaching Practices

Sellers, Morgan, and Brown's (2001) research makes direct connections to teacher identity and its effectiveness with teachers of African American students, which was true for the research participants. The individual merging processes of the participants was based on their current identities, which were situated in their informal cultural experiences. Pre-service teachers insisted that being aware of their own identity was central to their ability to infuse culturally relevant teaching practices. Such awareness helped them to enhance their understanding of the importance of being reflective teachers and being cognizant of what contributes to the construction of their identity. These understandings encouraged pre-service teachers to apply culturally relevant teaching practices to facilitate the identity development in their students using positive and relevant content and processes. Additionally, this awareness helped pre-service teachers to counter socially constructed ideas of inferiority and teach their students to do the same.

For example, Michele, a twenty-two year-old African American who was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, loved dancing and insists that learning should be engaging and active, consistent with her experiences with dancing. Her beginning and ending placement on Cross' Identity Scale was in the IMCI stage. Michele applied culturally relevant teaching practices consistent with her IMCI placement on Cross' scale of Black identity development. She planned lessons to encourage students to question mainstream ideas about race and equality, as well as lessons to accommodate the varying learning styles of her students. She planned lessons that included the use of visuals, varying technologies, and lessons that engaged her students in solving science and math problems with the use of instructional manipulatives. She consistently incorporated direct connections to her students' experiences as well appropriate and positive examples of African Americans. Teaching her students to be responsible for their own learning and community and helping them to realize education as a practice of freedom are also culturally relevant concepts that Michele indicated central to her merging process. Michele insists that being self-aware was her

first step in effectively applying culturally relevant teaching strategies. However, consistent with IMCI attitudes toward race, she is committed to teaching using culturally relevant strategies and to continuing to enhance her cultural awareness of herself and others so that she is a well-rounded teacher.

During the final phase of the intervention sessions, Michele offered this insight to illustrate her individual process for merging her identity development with her use of culturally relevant teaching practices.

We live in a society that promotes education as the means to success, but for African Americans it should be more than just a means to success. It must bridge the gap of all the lost history and education of our people. Through the stimulating conversation amongst my peers, I recognize a whole new Michele that is willing to challenge what people would like for her to know versus what she should know as a young African American college student. So I am accommodating to my students in that I encourage them to embrace their differences. In my identity development I realize that culture is a determining factor that affects the education of students because my teachers were not mindful of the cultural factors that affected my learning style. They [teachers] often associated it with bad behavior. As I teach, I am mindful of my students' environment, and I take that into consideration with my discipline strategies. The stories that I select for reading instruction are ones that embrace the African culture and relate to their experiences. I often try to make connections to students because those connections are what make learning exciting for them.

Although Michele, a New York City native, and Ebony, a self proclaimed Army Brat who had not prior experience in African American communities, identify themselves Multiculturalist, the context with which their identities were constructed resulted in different but appropriate teacher practices. Ebony's identity construction created within her the motivation to expose her students to experiences from a multicultural perspective. It appears that after her initial struggles with finding balance between her cultural identity and that of her students, reflected in the example below, she began to have success with infusing culturally relevant teaching practices.

> I am also enjoying exposing my students in the classroom to world music. I play selections by Putumayo Music, a music label that produces albums featuring music from different countries. At first, the children just listened to the songs during a brief "quiet time" after lunch. Over time, they began to sing along and stomp with the songs. One day, the entire class sang one of the songs quietly to the very end. It was like a mini-concert. Last week I began playing a different CD that allows them to follow directions and dance around. They always ask when they can do it again. I am tickled that they like the music and songs. It is fun to watch them play and dance.

Recognizing the challenge of building bridges and making connections to build rapport with her urban student population, during her last week of her student teaching experience, Ebony appeared to become a bit excited with her ability to apply culturally relevant teaching practices. Ebony made significant progress with finding a cultural balance and continuing to explore the notion of customizing her culturally relevant teaching practices. She shared her experience of "discovering a whole new world in the inner-city and what these students have experienced" as she realizes that all experiences, no matter what community we grow up in or what ethnic group to which they belong, share commonalities.

The data from this study revealed that this merging process was a very personal and individual one for pre-service teachers, yet the merging experiences of these teachers suggest several implications for integrating CRPT Intervention Sessions into teacher education programs. For example, teacher education programs must acknowledge that African Americans contend with many stereotypes and socially constructed ideas of academic inferiority that contribute to their identity

construction. As a result, teacher education programs must prepare a platform for pre-service teachers to critically examine how students in their programs have come to their current identities. In addition, applying CRPT Intervention Sessions requires a balance of theory that supports Pre K-12 students through the implementation of culturally relevant teaching practices and to help them understand themselves as teachers using identity development theory.

CONCLUSION

The inherent goal of teacher education programs is to prepare teachers who can effectively teach all students, and the implications for integrating the CRPT Intervention Model provide insight to support teacher education programs with this integration. It must be clearly understood that teachers who have an awareness of the multiple variables that impact the learning experiences of students, including oppression, race, and class, have the potential to drastically change their approaches to teaching and help to produce African American students who are academically competitive (Datum, 1992; hooks, 1994). In addition, when accurate and explicit content with regard to race, class, oppression, and the African Diaspora are infused into teacher education programs, teachers are better prepared to help African American students to counter notions of inequity.

A major lesson learned from the CRPT Intervention Sessions is the lack of general knowledge about the African Diaspora. Teachers, regardless of their race, who teach African American students, must possess sufficient knowledge about the accomplishments and social contributions of African and African American people. Without sufficient content knowledge about the Diaspora, classroom content will likely lack relevance for African American students. Teachers require this knowledge to help students construct identities that are grounded in pride and accomplishment rather than inferiority.

It is suggested that teacher education programs utilize the CRPT Intervention Model to help prepare pre-service teachers to accommodate African American students. This models can be infused as an integrated or intervention process to bring an awareness of identity to pre-service teachers and prepare them to infuse culturally relevant teaching practices. Additionally, considering that many African American teachers have attended public schools that are grounded in hegemonic content and practices, higher education institutions are strongly encouraged to consider how to provide educational experiences to counter hegemonic norms. Teachers will need to be prepared to think critically about themselves, more specifically, African American teachers need to understand their ability and responsibility to question, resist, challenge, and become active in changing political, social, and economic oppression. Minimally, teacher education programs must accept their responsibility to help in recovering the failing African American students by providing exposure to culturally relevant teaching practices for pre-service teachers.

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Relating Inner City Preschool Experience with Student Academic Achievement Using Third Grade Test Scores

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Abstract: This study examined the differences between students who participated in a one-year Early Start Preschool Program (ESPP), and students who did not participate in any preschool programs, in terms of their third grade end of year test scores in English and mathematics. The purpose of the study was to determine if participation in the preschool program was associated with better academic achievement in following years. The demographic configuration of the comparison group closely matched that of the ESPP group. The dependent variables were student scores from 2003 to 2005 on the state end-of-year in English and math tests for the third grade students. Based on an independent sample *t*-test, the study failed to find a significant correlation between participation in this preschool program and better academic achievement on the third grade tests although a moderate effect size was found for the ESPP participants on the 2003 English test.

Introduction

According to NIEER (2007), there were 801,902 children attending state funded preschools in this nation, with 38 state-funded programs in effect. Enrollment at the federal Head Start program was estimated at 733,414. Adding to this was the number of children attending private day care providers. Enrollment in a preschool program, however, does not automatically lead to success in schools. Whether children can succeed academically depended greatly on the quality of their experiences in early childhood (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003).

Effective Preschool Programs

According to Crosser (2005), student participation in a preschool program tended to increase their achievement in reading and mathematics. In addition, participation in a quality preschool program was associated with social and emotional gains. Cumming, Gorcycya, et. al., (2005) indicated that high quality preschool programs prepared children for kindergarten and led students to score better in reading and math throughout their school years.

Longitudinal studies have been reported for various preschool programs, including the High-Scope Perry Preschool program (Schweinhart, 2004) and the Chicago Child-Parent Centers (Reynolds, Miedel, & Mann, 2000), the Abecedarian Project (Barnett, 1998; Ramey & Ramey 1998), and the state-funded programs in Georgia (Henry et al., 2003) and Oklahoma (Gormley, & Gayer, 2003). The studies have shown that quality programs may be associated with a decrease in crime rates and a reduction in juvenile delinquency. Additional benefits for the participants of these programs included higher scores on standardized achievement tests, and improved high-school graduation rates.

One preschool program that has received extensive attention by researchers is the Head Start Program. A number of studies reported significantly better test scores for the participants of Head Start (e.g., Barnett, 2002; Luster & McAdoo, 1996; Schweinhart, 2004; Singh, 2003).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study investigated whether participation in an Early Start Preschool Program (ESPP) of an Mid-Sized City of the Mid-Atlantic Region (MCMAR) School District was associated with higher academic achievement of third grade students. The research question being addressed is: Is there a significant difference in third grade English and math scores in the years 2003, 2004 and 2005 on the state end-of-the-year tests between children who participated in the ESPP program and those who did not? A significant difference in student test scores could suggest that participation in the ESPP may be associated with better academic performance in later years.

METHODOLOGY

SUBJECTS OF STUDY

There were 7,198 third grade students in the MCMAR School District who took the state end-of-year test from 2003-2005. 114 of those students participated in the ESPP program. Among the 114 ESPP participants, 20 had Year 2003 test scores, 36 had Year 2004 test scores, and 58 had Year 2005 test scores. For each of the three groups with test scores, a comparison group was selected to match the demographic configurations of the ESPP group (The matching procedure is described below). The demographics of the ESPP groups and the comparison groups are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographics of the Subjects of Study in the ESPP and Comparison Groups

	ESPP Group			Comparison Group			Combined Group		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Ethnicity									
Caucasian	8	13	17	8	13	17	16	26	34
African American	10	20	40	10	20	40	10	40	80
Hispanic	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	4	0
Asian	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2
Gender									
Male	8	17	35	8	19	35	16	36	70
Female	12	19	23	12	17	23	24	36	46
Lunch Status									
Paid	8	9	15	8	9	15	16	18	30
Free	12	27	43	12	27	43	24	54	86
Total	20	36	58	20	36	58	40	72	116

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The Early Start Preschool Program (ESPP) is offered as a full day, free public program for four-year-old children in a Mid-sized City of the Mid-Atlantic Region (MCMAR) Schools in Virginia. The instructional program of ESPP was designed to improve student academic skills. A typical class has 18 children with a teacher and paraprofessional assigned to every room bringing the teacher-student ratio to an acceptable 9:1 ratio. Goals and standards of the Early Start Program are set forth in the established curriculum. Initial screening for admittance to the program is done and a literacy readiness inventory is taken in the first month of school using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening, a research based criterion referenced reading inventory (Curry School of Education, 2006).

According to MCMAR (2006), ESPP is a teacher-directed program that aligns with the school district's choice of a standardized comprehensive packaged curriculum. The curriculum is structured and scripted so teachers will say exactly what is written in the curriculum. Each day, a child is asked to write a statement on the easel and then the teacher writes it, "the adult way." It is a daily requirement for all classrooms. According to Frede and Ackerman (2007), a major advantage of this type of program is that all teachers are teaching the same thing and that the same requirements are established for all the children. This approach allows for continuity and consistency across the curriculum which lends itself to ease of program evaluation by administrators.

The curriculum features a specific focus on literacy. The Literacy Lesson is completed in a whole group setting and requires direct adherence to the curriculum. A thematic book is read, following the prescribed guidelines, and the children are required to answer specific questions from the curriculum. In a typical full day, six hour schedule, the large group and small group sessions take about one hour to finish. In addition to the two sessions exclusively devoted to literacy, there are two one-hour sessions of center-based activities that are imbedded with literacy and other academic skills. The progress of the ESPP participants is measured by using an on-the-run (OTR) assessment that measures 126 academic, social, physical, and emotional items throughout the school year.

Instrument of Study

The state standardized tests in English and Mathematics for the third grade were judged as valid. The State Education Department, through the Content Review Committee in cooperation with the Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement Company, took measures to ensure that test items on the third grade standardized test matched the test specifications (Virginia Department of Education, 2007). The Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 and the KR-20 were used to estimate the reliability of the end-of-the-year tests in this study. The reliability indices ranged from .80 to .92, suggesting the tests were very reliable (Virginia Department of Education).

Matching Procedure

The first step of the matching procedure was to determine the demographic configurations of the ESPP groups for the three years. This information was needed to provide the basis for the selection of the comparison groups, whose demographic configurations would match closely those of the ESPP groups. Table 2 provides a summary of the demographic configurations of the ESPP groups with test scores for Year 2003, 2004, and 2005.

The second step of the matching process was to determine the target population from which the students in the comparison groups were selected. Although over 7000 students from the district had test data for the three years, only 376 students had no formal or institutional preschool experience. Out of those students, 84 of them had Year 2003 test scores, 116 of them had Year 2004 test scores, and 176 had Year 2005 test scores. From each of the subgroups, a control group was randomly selected, with its size and demographic configurations matching those of the treatment groups as closely as possible. For instance, to select the two male Caucasian students with paid lunch for the comparison group with Year 2003 test scores, all male Caucasian students with paid lunch were identified from the 376 students. Altogether twelve students with such demographic configurations were identified. The twelve students with the matched demographics were then sorted by their randomly assigned identification numbers (provided by the school district). The first two male Caucasian students with paid lunch were then selected to be in the comparison group for Year 2003.

Table 2. Demographic Configurations of ESPP Participants with Test Scores for Year 2003, 2004, or 2005

	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	Asian
Male				
Paid lunch				
Year 2003	2	0	0	0
Year 2004	6	1	0	0
Year 2005	6	4	0	0
Free lunch				
Year 2003	0	5	0	1
Year 2004	1	9	1	1
Year 2005	4	20	0	1
Female				
Paid lunch				
Year 2003	5	0	0	1
Year 2004	2	0	0	0
Year 2005	3	2	0	0
Free lunch				
Year 2003	1	5	0	0
Year 2004	4	10	1	0
Year 2005	4	14	0	0

Due to the limited number of students and their demographic configurations in the target populations from which the students in the comparison groups were selected, the demographics of the students in the comparison groups were not 100% matched with those in the ESPP groups For instance, in the ESPP group with Year 2003 test scores (Table 2), there was one male Asian student with free lunch status. In the target population for the comparison group, no such student was identified. In order to match the comparison group as closely as possible with the ESPP group in size and demographics, the researchers decided to select one male Asian with paid lunch status to be in the comparison group. Altogether, there were two Asian students in the Year 2003 comparison group (Table 3) whose lunch status was adjusted, and two students (one Hispanic and one Asian) in the Year 2004 comparison group whose gender was adjusted. Other than that, the demographic configurations of the comparison group for 2003 and 2004 matched exactly those of the ESPP group. The demographics of the comparison and the ESPP groups for 2005 are completely matched.

Table 3. Demographics of Students in the Comparison Group with Test Scores for Year 2003, 2004, or 2005

	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	Asian
Male				
Paid lunch				
Year 2003	2	0	0	1
Year 2004	6	1	0	0
Year 2005	6	4	0	0
Free lunch				
Year 2003	0	5	0	0
Year 2004	1	9	0	0
Year 2005	4	20	0	1
Female				
Paid lunch				
Year 2003	5	0	0	0
Year 2004	2	0	0	0
Year 2005	3	2	0	0
Free lunch				
Year 2003	1	5	0	1
Year 2004	4	10	2	1
Year 2005	4	14	0	0

Procedures for Data Collection and Analyses

The data collected for the study were obtained through the MCMAR District Office. The information was available from student records configured from the electronic attendance reporting system managed by the district Technology Department. Permission to examine the records was also granted by the district office of Statistics and Accountability.

All participants of the study were identified through random numbers assigned by the MCMAR School District to ensure their confidentiality. Other identifiers such as socio-economic status, gender, and ethnicity, were retained in order to identify a comparison group with demographics similar to those in the ESPP group.

A matched design was used to select students in the comparison group, so that the demographics of the students in this group were closely matched with those of the students who participated in the ESPP program. The independent sample t tests were used to run the comparisons between the ESPP groups and the comparison groups in terms of their performance on the English and Mathematics tests. The Cohen's *d* statistic was also calculated for each test to examine the effect size of each comparison.

Results of Study

Results for Three Separate Years

A separate independent sample *t* test was conducted for each of the three years between the ESPP group and the comparison group with regard to English and Math test scores. The results of the independent t tests were summarized in Table 4. As the table shows, none of the tests yielded significant difference between the groups. In addition, Cohen's *d* as an index of the effect size was all small, ranging from -0.23 to 0.32.

RESULTS FOR THE COMBINED GROUPS

Because the results were similar across all three years, the groups were combined across the years to test the hypothesis. The combination of the groups would increase the sample size and thereby increase the power of the tests. When the data for the three years are combined, the independent sample *t* tests once again failed to yield statistical difference between the ESPP group and the comparison, both in terms of the English reading test scores and the mathematics scores (Table 4). In addition, the value of Cohen's *d* as an index for effect size was also small ($d = 0.10$ for the English scores and $d = -0.11$ for the mathematics scores). In other words, students who had experience with the ESPP Program did not enjoy any advantage in their test scores over the students who did not have any pre-school experience.

Table 4. Comparing Test Scores between ESPP Students and Students with No Formal Pre-Kindergarten Experience

	Comparison Group			ESPP Group			Cohen's	
	n	Mean	S.D.	n	Mean	S.D.	Difference	d
English Test Scores								
Year 2003	19	405.32	62.32	19	426.42	68.43	21.11	0.32
Year 2004	36	399.11	68.69	36	415.31	60.42	16.19	0.25
Year 2005	58	426.62	62.27	58	424.14	54.62	-2.48	-0.04
Combined	113	414.27	65.11	113	421.71	58.58	7.44	0.12
Math Test Scores								
Year 2003	20	471.30	72.54	20	452.15	95.51	-19.15	-0.23
Year 2004	36	460.33	72.78	36	457.25	88.67	-3.08	-0.04
Year 2005	58	455.24	68.52	58	451.93	71.55	-3.31	-0.05
Combined	114	459.67	70.20	114	453.65	80.98	-6.02	-0.08

RESULTS FOR THE NON-REPEATERS

Because the subjects of study included both grade repeaters and non-repeaters, the researchers went on to examine the distribution of repeaters and non-repeaters in both the ESPP groups and the comparison groups. The distribution is summarized in Table 5. The chi-square test was used to determine if there were any significant correlations between ESPP participation and grade repetition. None of the chi-square tests were statistically significant. In other words, the distribution of grade repeaters and non-repeaters was similar between the ESPP groups and the comparison groups.

Since the numbers of non-repeaters were sim ilar between each ESPP group and its comparison group, the researchers also conducted the independent sample *t* test for the non-repeaters only, for both the individual years and for all the years combined. The researchers also calculated the effect size for each *t* test. The results of the analyses were reported in Table 6. Again, none of the t tests found significant differences between the ESPP and comparison groups. Nevertheless, the effective size in the comparison of English test scores for 2003 reached a medium level (Cohen's $d = 0.54$), suggesting that the ESPP participants did considerably better on the Year 2003 English test than the students who had non pre-school experience.

Table 5. Distribution of Grade Repeaters and Non-repeaters in ESPP and Comparison Groups

	Comparison Group		ESPP Group	
	Non-repeaters	Repeaters	Non-repeaters	Repeaters
English				
Year 2003	15	4	14	5
Year 2004	24	12	23	13
Year 2005	46	12	42	16
Combined	85	28	79	34
Math				
Year 2003	16	4	15	5
Year 2004	24	12	23	13
Year 2005	46	12	42	16
Combined	86	28	80	34

Table 6. Comparing Test Scores between Non-repeaters who Participated in the ESPP Program and Non-repeaters with no Formal Pre-Kindergarten Experience

	Comparison Group			ESPP Group			Cohen's	
	n	Mean	S.D.	n	Mean	S.D.	Difference	d
English Test Scores								
Year 2003	15	406.13	68.04	14	440.71	60.87	34.58	0.54
Year 2004	24	423.54	51.69	23	416.70	68.94	-6.85	-0.11
Year 2005	46	432.48	64.99	42	430.29	54.36	-2.19	-0.04
Combined	85	425.31	62.13	79	428.13	59.84	2.87	0.12
Math Test Scores								
Year 2003	16	468.12	70.95	15	478.93	77.61	10.81	0.15
Year 2004	24	482.29	62.09	23	466.74	89.28	-15.55	-0.21
Year 2005	46	459.00	70.14	42	463.81	65.69	4.81	0.07
Combined	86	467.20	68.10	80	467.49	74.56	-0.29	0.00

Discussion and Implications

Overall, this study found that student participation in the ESPP program was not significantly associated with better academic achievement on state end of year tests, even though participants in the program were found to have a slightly better score on the English test for 2003. For a program that was primarily focused on literacy, it may be discouraging to find the lack of a strong correlation between program participation and better academic achievement in reading. One possible explanation is that the ESPP was not of high quality, as a high quality preschool program is often associated with better academic achievement (e.g., Gormley & Gayer, 2003; Henry et al. 2003; Reynolds, Miedel, & Mann, 2000; Schweinhart, 2004). It is also possible, though, that the effect of the preschool program had phased out by the third grade. Such "fade out" effect was suggested for the Head Start program in the literature (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Kafer, 2004).

Implications for Program Revision

The results of the study suggest that there needs to be some sort of modification of the current ESPP program. It seems that the curriculum in this public preschool program has high academic expectations. However, the use of direct instruction at such an early age may not be in the best interests of the students, and could harm students' long term academic achievement. In contrast, the majority of the high quality preschool programs reported in the literature used child-centered, play based activities rather than direct instruction (NIEER, 2007).

Limitations of Study

One limitation of the study was the relative small size of the samples for both the ESPP program and the comparison group. With an increased sample size, any potential difference between the two groups is more likely to be identified.

Related to the sample size, there is the issue that the two groups used in the study may not be completely comparable in terms of their demographic variables. Even if they are mostly matched in terms of their free lunch status, for instance, it is possible that children in the ESPP group were from poorer families than their counterparts in the comparison group. There are also other important variables that could have important impact on the students, such as family size and structure. It is possible that students in the ESPP group might be more likely to come from a single parent family.

Another limitation of the study is that it only looked at test data in the third grade. It would be important to look at student academic performance in the first grade, when the immediate effect of the preschool program can be measured. In terms of long term effect, maybe more grade levels need to be included. In addition, the combination of three years' data may also hide potential differences, because of possible differences across years. Unfortunately, due to the limited number of students for each year, such differences would be hard to detect.

Future Studies

Future studies are needed to determine how the children attending ESPP perform at other grade levels. The inclusion of additional grade levels would provide a more complete picture of the long term impact of the preschool program. It is possible for the long term effect of the program to manifest itself at later grade levels. In the MCMAR district, there are test scores available for Grade 3, 5, 8, and 11. It may be important to examine student performance in the middle school, which would constitute a verification of findings by others that the potential benefits of a preschool program may be totally absent by the six grade level (Herrnstein and Murray, 1994; Kafer, 2004).

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Preventing the Summer Academic Slide: Experiences for Urban Elementary Students in a Summer Enrichment Program

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Abstract: African American students comprise more than 64% of the dropouts among over-aged students in this region of the South. The Summer Enrichment program was developed to provide a model intervention program that supported African American students and bridge the summer months from the end of the spring semester to the beginning of the fall semester.

The program served approximately 150 elementary students from three urban elementary schools and provided academic and social experiences for these high-risk youth. The program was intended to assist in breaking the dropout cycle that dooms about half of these students to poverty and low paying jobs.

There is a logical link that connects academic performance to workplace opportunities and, thus, to success in later life. Students who lack basic skills or graduate with a marginal level of competence will not be competitive in today's job market. This problem is best addressed by providing both academic intervention and a broader view of career possibilities early in the lives of those students who exhibit high-risk characteristics. The longer a child is at risk, the less likely that the child will recover and become a highly competent high school graduate ready for college or for the workplace.

Introduction

The messages of inferiority about African Americans still permeate through society. The most obvious sign of this message is represented in urban schools where the majority of pupils in these settings continue to experience savage inequalities. Calabrese-Barton (2002) contends that, "minority students in urban poverty in the United States often have inequitable access to the kinds of teachers, resources, and opportunities necessary for academic success" (p. 2). These acts of neglect are a clear indication that the welfare of certain students is devalued in this society. Instead of receiving quality instruction and a good experience in school, these students come into contact with an educational environment that focuses on their perceived conduct, rather than the education itself.

Pitre and Cromartie (2010) describe the oppressive conditions these students face highlight

ing, "The environment is one that requires monitoring the child's every movement, which in turns makes school unnatural and drives large numbers of Black youth from the innate pursuit of knowledge" (p.15). These misperceptions lead to the chastisement of learners through embarrassment and degradation, shredding them of respect and dignity (Barton, 2002; Oakes, 1990; Polakow, 2000). Access to a quality education is denied based upon institutional structures that have been in place for centuries. These historical barriers have created an educational dilemma that provides middle and upper class White children with the best education while limiting non-White children to a substandard education. These educational systems have no equity.

It has been well documented that African American students on average score lower than their White counterparts on standardized tests and that African American students are disproportionately placed in special education. These two problems are major challenges that must be addressed by teachers, administrators, and African American families because too many African American students are participating in an educational system that is failing them (Johnson & Carter, 2007). The data indicate that this failure begins early in the elementary grades and by the time African American students enter the fourth grade an achievement gap between them and their White counterparts exists.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a common test taken by a sample of students in every state, reported that nationally only 32% of fourth grade African American students scored at the basic level and 12% scored at the proficient level in the area of reading (NAEP, 2007). Those numbers combine to a pass rate of around 44%. These figures suggest that nationally 56% of fourth grade African American children cannot read at grade level. (See Figure 1)

Even worse, African American children in the fourth grade in Alabama faired poorer on the national test because their pass rate is below that of African Americans nationally. In Alabama, only 30% of fourth grade African American students scored at the basic level and 13% scored at the proficient or advanced level. These numbers combine to a total passing rate of 43%, meaning that 57% of African American children in the fourth grade in Alabama cannot read at grade level. In comparison, their White counterparts in Alabama had a combined pass rate of 73% with 34% passing at the basic level and 39% passing at the proficient or advance level (NAEP, 2007). (See Figure 2 and Table 1)

In Alabama, the results on the mathematics portion of the NAEP test are not as horrific as in reading, however the numbers indicate that much work still needs to be done. According to the test results, 40% of African American students in the fourth grade passed at the basic level and 9% passed at the proficient or advanced level (NAEP, 2007). These numbers indicate that 51% of fourth grade African American students in Alabama cannot do math at grade level. In comparison, 47% and 32% of their White counterparts scored at the basic and proficient level respectively (NAEP, 2007). The same patterns of low achievement in both reading and math exist in middle and in high school for African American students. These indicators illuminate that there still exists a significant gap between White and non-White students, and between high poverty and non-poverty students. (See Table 2)

As is shown in the fourth grade science comparison, African American children in Alabama fared no better in science in 2005 than they did in math or reading. In actuality, African American children in Alabama were seven percentage points behind the national average for fourth grade African American children and 35 percentage points below the national average. (See Table 3)

Figure 1. 2007 NAEP National Grade 4 Reading

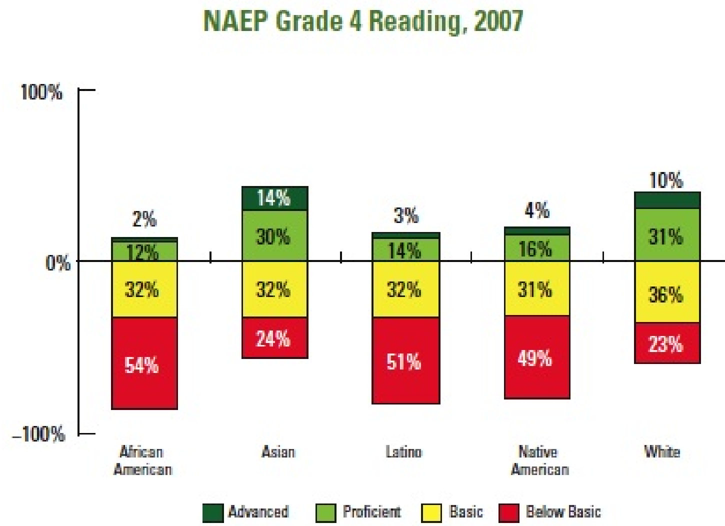


Figure 2. 2007 NAEP—Alabama Grade 4 Reading

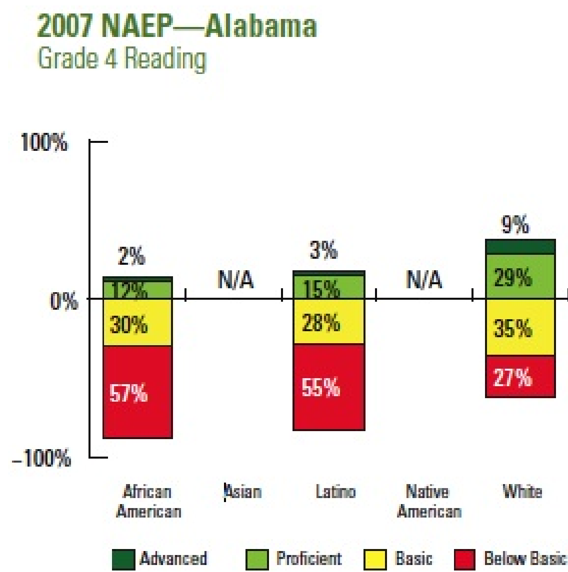


Table 1. Fourth grade reading comparison–National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Group	Below Basic	Basic Score	Proficient Score	Advanced Score	Pass Rate
African American – National Sample	54%	32%	12%	2%	46%
African American – Alabama	57%	30%	11%	2%	43%
White – Alabama	27%	34%	30%	9%	73%

Table 2. Fourth grade math comparison—National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Group	Below Basic	Basic Score	Proficient Score	Advanced Score	Pass Rate
African American – National	36%	49%	14%	1%	64%
African American - Alabama	50%	40%	9%	1%	50%
White – Alabama	17%	47%	32%	14%	80%

Table 3. Fourth grade science comparison—National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Group	Basic Score	Proficient Score	Pass Rate	Fail Rate
African American – Alabama	27%	4%	31%	69%
White – Alabama	45%	32%	77%	23%

Many times living in poverty can reduce the opportunities and advantages that education can provide even before a child attends school. Brown & Medway (2007) write:

> In this country the relationship between income, ethnicity and school achievement is moderated by a variety of complex factors that include the impact of poverty on access to health care, family ability to provide enriching educational environments at home, the demands on families of stressful working conditions associated with low income jobs, the physical environments and learning atmosphere of schools in poverty neighborhoods, the quality of teaching in those schools, and the support that students receive for high achievement from peers (p. 2).

These are but some of the challenges and obstacles that many urban African American students must over come if they are to have a chance at a decent future.

The Need

Many questions are raised as a result of poor African American achievement but one question in particular deserves particular attention. That question is: *Why does such a large achievement gap exist between African American pupils and their White counterparts*? There are many plausible theories (teacher preparation, teacher perception of students, students' perceptions of teachers, lack of resources, and more) that exist to explain why low achievement of African American students occurs and persists. One theory that has been put forth has to do with the idea of the cultural capital that students of color bring into the school environment as it relates to their teachers.

Cultural capital refers to the "ability to understand and practice the norms, discourse patterns, language styles, and language modes of the dominant culture. That is, given that the cultural forms of our society are dominated by white middle-class norms, behaviors, and language, individuals who lack the knowledge and skills associated with these norms and behaviors are misunderstanding that is occurring between many African American students and their predominantly White female teachers, or other individuals who manifest middle class behavior. The experiences of

countless urban African American children do not mirror or resemble the experiences of many of their middle class teachers, and this mismatch works to the detriment of both the teachers and pupils. It is as if the teachers and the students are communicating in a language that neither can understand and the result of that miscommunication is poor African American achievement.

Bourdieu (1977) asserts that within learning environments, usually controlled by those of the majority group, advantages are given to those students who possess those same characteristics. Those students (African American or White) who assimilate more readily into the dominant culture receive more attention and are recognized as being members of that select group with better intellectual capabilities than those students who lack their characteristics (Simpson, 2001). "Specifically, schools utilize particular linguistic patterns, authority structures, interaction dynamics, and course material, all of which are familiar to children from higher social statuses" (Simpson, 2001, p. 67). The experiences and the way a child is socialized and taught mirror the way that schools and classrooms are managed. These experiences, or ways of living of the child, are now transformed into cultural capital that gives the child access to resources that every child is not privy to (Bourdieu, 1977). This theory helps to partially explain why there exists an achievement gap between African American students and their White Counter parts. Many urban African American children and middle class teachers simply cannot relate to one another.

The Summer Enrichment Program

The messages of inferiority are very clear in the social structures that contribute to unequal distribution of resources that are currently in place. Through the lack of interest in the success of particular students, participants in this system can easily interpret their involvement in it as devalued because society does not fully invest the time and resources necessary for many non-White students to succeed in school and consequently in life.

To address this problem, a summer enrichment program was initiated by the local university and by the chapter of 100 Black Men of America for forth and fifth grade students from three urban elementary schools in Mobile. The program was designed to: a) develop a model intervention program that supports African American students and bridge the summer months from the end of the spring semester to the beginning of the fall semester; b) give pre-service teachers more field experience with students from urban communities and; c) encourage high school students to consider education as a career path.

The curriculum of the enrichment program focused mainly in the areas of science, math, and reading. The secondary science education professor from the local university served as the director of the project and a co-director was hired to assist in the implementation of the enrichment program. Eleven certified elementary teachers were also hired. Finally, a specialist from the Alabama Math Science Technology Initiative (AMSTI) was hired to develop and oversee the science curriculum that was taught over the span of the six-week program and a university math education professor oversaw the math curriculum. Four other university professors were also hired to teach art, science exploration, self-esteem, and character. In addition, twelve pre-service teachers, ten high school students, and eight college students from different universities were hired to assist in implementing the program.

The enrichment program was held Monday through Wednesday for six weeks with alternate Thursdays being reserved for educational field trips. The students were divided into four teams based on how they performed on a reading pre-test given by reading faculty from the university. Students' performance on the reading test ranged from low to very high and teams were arranged

accordingly. All teams had a core curriculum in reading, AMSTI math, and AMSTI science. In addition, students had the opportunity to engage in art, character education, and self-esteem with university professors, pre-service teachers, college students, and high school students.

Overview of Curriculum

Reading

The reading team was comprised of two reading professors, one local school reading coach, three elementary classroom teachers, and four pre-service teachers. The reading professors designed a two-day professional development program for the team teaching how to utilize the Qualitative Reading Inventory III (QRI-III), Standford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT) and the Read for Real by Zaner-Bloser program. The professional development consisted of an overview of the testing procedures and materials, the importance of meeting the needs of each student, the essential component of making the teaching program materials engaging and meaningful, as well as the logistics of the program. The reading coach was designated as the team leader, answering the daily questions of the other team members and reporting to the reading professors.

On Day One and Two of the program, the reading coach and three teachers, with the assistance of the pre-service students, administered the QRI-III wordlist in order to determine what level of the SDRT to administer. The team then administered the appropriate SDRT assessment to 56 students. The SDRT assessed phonetic analysis, vocabulary, and comprehension. This assessment was scored and students were grouped into four classes based on test results.

Students attended reading class for one hour each day. Instruction was tailored to the students' needs as determined by the initial assessment, then modified by daily instruction. The intervention program, Read for Real, was implemented with homogeneously grouped students. Teachers were continually encouraged to provide instruction to meet the needs of all students, while making the instruction meaningful. Pre-service teachers helped the classroom teachers provide instruction by working with small groups of students. University professors visited the classrooms and assisted in the teachers instructional planning.

At the conclusion of the six weeks, the SDRT assessment was administered for the posttest. The results indicate that the majority (29) of the students stayed within five points of their pretest score. There were some students who made a greater than five point gain (22), though some students also had a greater than five point decline in their posttest score.

Overall, these data suggest that though it is good for students to have ongoing instruction during the time that school is out, it is difficult to make significant gains in the short time period. Rather the focus should be on maintaining instructional levels during a time that there is typical decrease in levels. In some cases, gains can be expected. The decrease in scores may be attributed to lack of motivation or absences during the program.

AMSTI Curriculum Overview

The Alabama Math Science and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) project is a $33M state-funded program that provides teachers with: (1) initial summer training on the pedagogy of inquiry-based teaching and learning; (2) inquiry-based science instructional materials; and, (3) continuous professional development on site for elementary and middle school science teachers. The goal of the state-funded Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) science curriculum is to systemically improve math and science education in Alabama so that all K-8 students, regardless of race or socio-economic background, develop the skills necessary for access

to postsecondary studies or initial employment in the workforce.

AMSTI Math

The curriculum chosen by the AMSTI initiative was carefully selected from programs listed as promising or exemplary by the United States Department of Education. The Investigation series by Scott Foresman was the selected mathematics curricula for the elementary grades. Two of the four teachers employed for the summer camp had undergone the AMSTI professional development and were familiar with the curriculum and the principles of teaching promoted by AMSTI.

The curriculum serving as the basis for instruction for the summer camp was *Arrays and Shares* from the *Investigations in Number, Data, and Space* series. The Alabama Course of Study requires oral and written proficiency with basic multiplication facts through 9 X 9 in the third grade and it was noted before the summer program began that most of the children attending the camp had difficulty with multiplication. *Investigations,* developed through funding by the National Science Foundation, TERC, and Pearson Scott Foresman, is based on extensive research about learning and teaching mathematics. The curriculum was designed to be engaging while focusing on computational fluency and making sense of the mathematics being learned. Examples of the topics from *Arrays and Shares* were: area arrays for multiplication facts, multiples on 100's chart, card games with the array models, working with multiplication clusters, solving problems that required multiplication facts, and tying multiplication with division.

A final assessment of the mathematics emphasized during the summer session consisted of four questions. The first question (Q1A) related to computational fluency. As shown in Figure 3: Computational Fluency, the students did very well on the computation. The next three questions required reading, solving in multiple ways and explaining the solutions. The students did not score as well on these three questions as on the first strictly computational problem.

Two of the groups, teams 2 and 4, scored higher than the other teams. This phenomenon might be explained as two of the teachers had a better understanding of how to work with the curricula than the other two teachers.

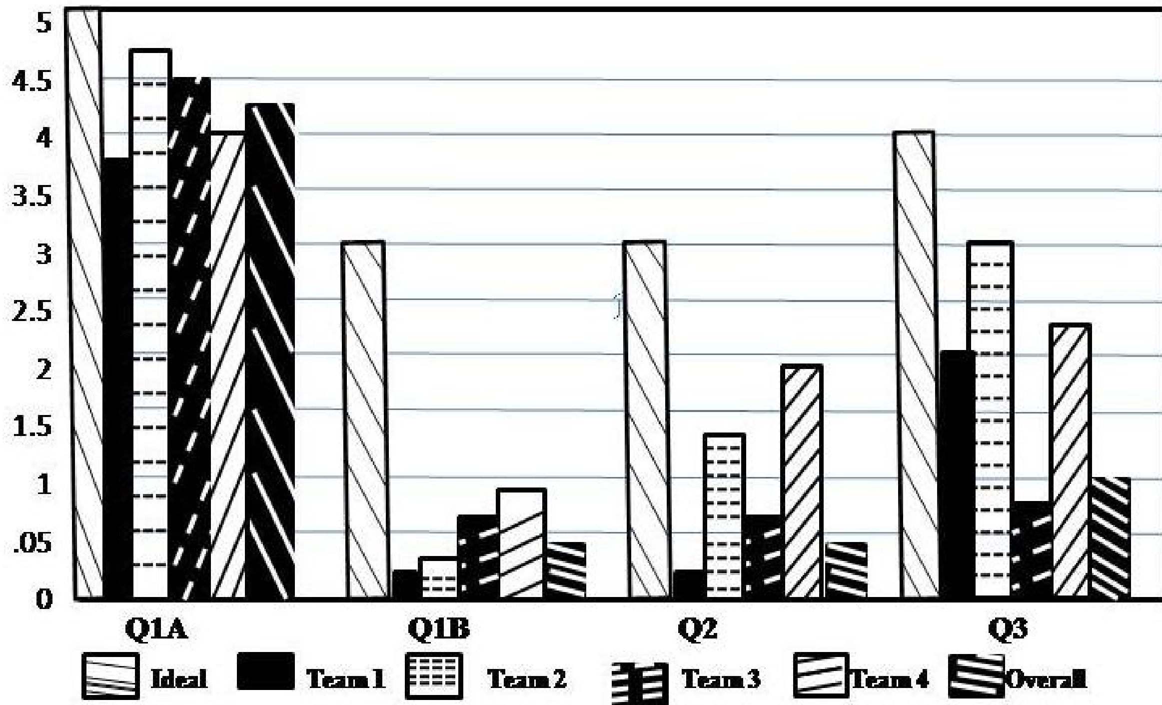
AMSTI Science

The science team was made up of an AMSTI science specialist, four elementary teachers (all AMSTI trained), four pre-service students, and four high school students. The lessons were developed using the AMSTI Motion and Design Module. All lessons were developed to teach all objectives for Course of Study Objective #4, which is the foundation of this module. Course of Study Objective #4 is listed as:

- Describe the effects of friction on moving objects.
- Identify momentum and inertia as properties of moving objects
- Identify ways to increase or decrease friction

The students were pretested on their prior knowledge of the course of study objectives taught in the Motion and Design module. Seventy-three students were pretested on the first day and other students who were enrolled in the program at a later date were not pretested. The free response and multiple-choice pretest consisted of a total of ten instructional questions. The results indicated that the majority of the students had no prior knowledge of the information covered in the course of study objectives.

Figure 3: Computational Fluency



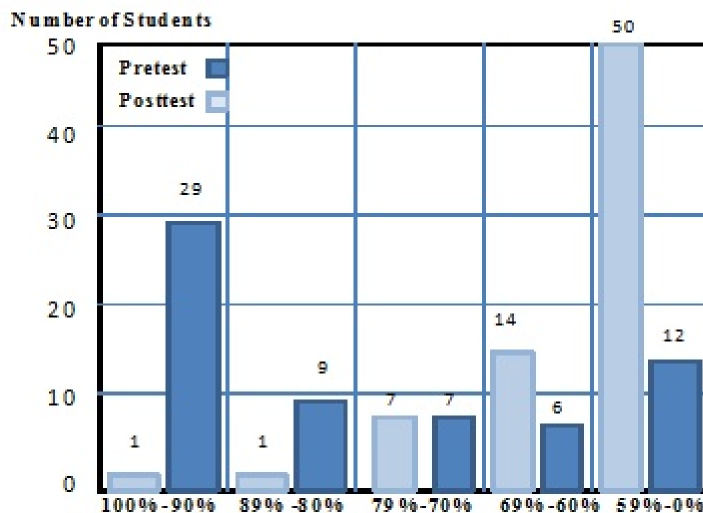
The students enjoyed the lessons and activities that complemented the motion and design module. The ending activity required students to design a blueprint and build their own vehicle. The vehicle had to be designed so that it was cost efficient and could travel a long distance. The students also had to individually display their information on a poster board using all steps of the scientific method. Prizes were awarded to first, second, and third place winners with the most cost efficient cars and the fastest cars.

A post-test was administered to all remaining students to evaluate how well the students mastered the Course Objective #4. The free response and multiple-choice test consisted of ten questions and the final results were positive. Sixty-three students were tested and their results are listed in Figure 4. Science Pre- and Post-test. In addition, many students remarked that they never knew science could be so much fun and that they were able to do things that they never imagined or had the opportunity to do before in an environment that was supportive, nonjudgmental, and engaging. It is important to note that the module was hands-on so that the theory behind what was being taught could be seen.

SCIENCE EXPLORATION

A variety of science activities were hands-on and utilized a constructivist theory of learning in working with a group of elementary students involved in a summer enrichment program. The goal was for the students to participate in appropriate science activities that were fun but also taught science content. Many of the activities were AMSTI based and all were based

Figure 4. Science Pre- and Post-test
Motion and Design Science Pretest and Posttest Results



on the Alabama Course of Study–Science (2005) content standards and process skills.

Weekly science activities that oriented students to a variety of science process skills were used in the science exploration course. The process skills are important because all scientists, regardless of their scientific discipline, use these skills. For example, students used a second grade AMSTI kit activity where they built roller coasters. Students had to design their coaster, test, analyze and revise, retest, and finally complete the design within a specified amount of time, while working as a group. The desired result was for the coasters to have a certain run time, number of loops, and number of curves. The designs moved students from the knowledge level of Bloom's taxonomy to the application and analysis levels. This was accomplished using hands-on techniques. The students investigated owl pellets in another activity. Open mindedness is one characteristic of scientists that we wanted to emulate and this activity tested the open mindedness of the students. These young students were 'grossed out' by the pellets at the beginning of the activity because they inferred the pellets were 'owl poop.' Once assured it was not poop, that it was safe, odorless, and interesting, they began to eagerly explore the pellets looking for various bones, feathers, and hair. Many students became so excited and fascinated with the pellets that they asked for an additional pellet to investigate. The activity peaked their curiosity and for that period of time they became scientists in the sense that they were observing and trying to identify the things they found in the owl pellets.

Although no formal data collection occurred about their views of science or whether they enjoyed/ learned science, the actions and interest shown by the students was more than enough to infer the program was successful. Students entered the classroom the first time with facial expressions of 'science is boring' but by the last session the students entered the classroom asking what they were going to do today. Students demonstrated an appreciation for the wonderment of science, participated in some content rich activities, and learned science.

Character Counts

The goal for the character education component of the Summer Math and Science Academy was to assist students in developing skills needed to positively contribute to their schools and communities. The character education component incorporated the Josephson Institute's Character Counts program. Char-

acter Counts utilized the Six Pillars to teach students ethical values. The Six Pillars were the foundation for the character education lessons, including: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

Participants were divided into homogenous groups of girls and boys. College and high school students were trained on the six pillars of character. These instructors assisted in facilitating the character education lessons for the homogenous student classes. Dividing the students and facilitators by gender encouraged genuine dialogue between the students and facilitators. Each lesson began with students learning a character quote from a famous African American. Students were shown pictures of famous African American persons and learned how each historical figure demonstrated good character and contributed to our society. This discussion formed the introduction for the lessons on the identified pillar of character.

In order to ensure the lessons were relevant and developmentally appropriate, students engaged in various hands-on activities to learn and practice the character traits. A variety of methods and materials were utilized for the lesson delivery to address the diverse learning styles of the students. Each lesson had components that supported academic skills related to writing, reading, history, and the creative arts. Students were given the opportunity practice the appropriate strategies and coping skills to address challenging issues they encounter on the daily basis.

Visual Arts Education

According to Howard Gardner (1994), art is the "communication of subjective knowledge," (p. 30) and because the arts involve communication between subjects, human beings must and have always been involved in the artistic process. Artistic expression demonstrates truths of diversity and multiple lenses for seeing and maneuvering with the world. "The language of the arts can help integrate a splintered academic world. It facilitates the connections and patterns that can be accomplished through the arts and provides the learner with a universal language. The educational value of the arts lies in the process rather than the product. The intent is not to train artists; but rather to, affirm the power of the arts as a learning tool and a vital force in human existences" (Gelineau, 2004, p. 17).

Because of the emphasis on today's high-stakes testing, art has often become a neglected subject. Research indicates that the teaching and integration of art increases academic performance and promotes engagement in other disciplines. Two of the main visual art activities in which students engaged included creating *Personality Profiles* (Baggett, 2007) using the art of collage, and the *Art and Science of Gyotaku* (Baggett & Shaw, 2008).

The study of fish anatomy and habitat through the ancient Japanese art of fish printing-Gyotaku- naturally exposes the elements and processes of art and was an affective and effective way to teach science to elementary students. Discussions from multiple disciplines including fish anatomy, habitat and nature studies, descriptive writing, elements of art, and history of printmaking were included in the process. Students explored authentic rubber fish replicas as they focused on the art element of color.

The fish habitat was designed on newsprint paper *before* and *after* printing. Students considered how they would visually represent the habitat components: air, water, food, and shelter. Art composition (arrangement) was considered as students decided what to do. They created the habitat with crayons, markers, and paints. This aspect of the project provided the opportunity to discuss the art element of space. Examples of overlapping to create the illusion of foreground, middle ground and background were emphasized, as images were being created and viewed during the fish nature study.

Due to the heightened level of excitement and motivation to participate in this visual, tactile/kinesthetic activity, facilitating Gyotaku required that effective classroom management practices and procedures be demonstrated by the experienced teachers and emulated by the pre-service teachers. Of the various behaviors observed, it was evident that the process of painting was a novelty for most and enjoyed by all: teachers as well as students. There were instances in which the teachers and students became so involved in the painting process that students expressed frustration in waiting their turn to paint and print. The student motivation to participate provided the pre-service teachers a ripe environment to explore the ways in which science and art can be integrated because science through art can provide stimulating potential for learning content, practicing observational skills, and expanding students' creativity.

Self Esteem

This component of the program incorporated cross-age mentoring with pre-service teachers and high school students leading activities and targeted increasing self-esteem through interactive, empowering activities that addressed several aspects of self-esteem. According to Golden (2001), the sources of self-esteem are emotions, physical attributes, work, relationships, and educational performance. By the time elementary school students reach the fourth and fifth grades, many of them have experienced successes and failures, positive and negative relationships with peers and adults, individual beliefs and others' beliefs of them. The activities created and selected identified how others perceived participants, how they perceived themselves, how they cope with negative behaviors from others, and how lack of self-esteem affects their lives. The mirror activity was one activity used to address evident opportunities in self-esteem development.

The Mirror activity focused on allowing the participants to describe themselves based on what they saw in the mirror. This activity was difficult for some participants because their view of themselves was very negative. In many cases family, peers, and society in general often exaggerate the imperfections of many students. During this activity, one male participant referred to himself as, "stupid," because many of his family members and peers referred to him as stupid. In addition, several female participants could not think of positive words to say about themselves while looking at their reflection in the mirror. Children have an idea of who they are (McEachron-Hirsch, 1993) and sometimes their idea about who they are is based on how they perceive others view them. The social scientist Charles Cooley believed that "other people are the mirror in which we see ourselves (Tatum, 1997, p. 18)" and this was very evident in many of the participants that took part in this activity.

The purpose of the self-esteem activities was to get students to understand that their environment and the people in those environments can either negatively or positively impact the way in which students view themselves. The overarching goal of the activities was to help the participants develop a positive sense of self and techniques to combat negative comments and behaviors that they may often times face. These activities provided validation for the participants and allowed them to see the best in themselves. Self-esteem is an important component to any program and is as essential to the development of a child as any academic subject.

Conclusion

The Summer Math and Science Academy was critical in starting the process of breaking the downward spiral for many of the students who participated in the summer enrichment program because unlike more affluent families many do not have access to summer resources

that build on schoolwork done during the previous academic year. Also unlike more affluent families, students in urban areas often are enrolled in schools that in many ways under-serve them.

The same problems that exist nationally in relation to African American student achievement mirror the problems that some African American students in Alabama. Low-test scores at all grade levels, high suspensions rates, and high drop out rates are illustrative of these problems. Large numbers of African American students are enrolled in schools where: a) teacher absenteeism is high; b) there is a shortage of certified math and science teachers and; c) the curriculum is not delivered adequately. Even in those schools where resources (materials, curriculum, and certified teachers) are adequate, many times the lack of family and community support and the limited exposure to career and life options can severely impede the choices available. A generation of students will be lost if programs are not developed to address the needs of these students. "The academic life of African American learners is significantly impacted by disproportionate realities that continue to yield incomplete school success" (Johnson & Carter, 2007, p.79).

The greatest probability of changing the negative educational trends that plague African American students rests within the school environment and requires an innovative plan of action if the trend is to be changed (Bailey and Paisley, 2004). If African American children are to have a chance to survive, an intervention must take place ***early and often*** within their educational careers because each year they are falling further behind. That intervention must start with providing pre-service teachers with authentic experiences within urban communities so that they can learn how to effectively educate African American children. Teachers have a major role in determining the destinies of all students and in particular students from urban communities. The job that teachers do will definitely affect African American students ability to compete within a global economy that requires a skilled and well-educated workforce (Lee, 2003).

The Summer Enrichment Project addressed the needs of the entire child. Several components made this project successful. These components included: a) community involvement was very present; b) African American role models mentoring and tutoring children; c) pre-service teachers gaining actual experience with African American students from urban areas and getting first hand experience with the science and math components of AMSTI; d) high school students gaining first hand experience with helping children and gaining exposure to the education profession; e) university faculty fully engaged in a program held in an inner city community and; f) the students being exposed to many things that are beyond their community.

The program addressed also several issues that exist with relation to African American students in urban elementary schools. Those issues were:

- Many low income students losing academic gains made over the school year due to inactivity during the summer months;
- Increasing the interest of African American students in math and science;
- Pre-service teachers not understanding or being able to relate to African American students from urban areas;
- Lack of African Americans entering into the education profession.

Each of these points were addressed during the summer enrichment program. Specifically, the summer enrichment program provided an academic, social, and career experience for African American students that resulted in stronger academic performance in science, math, reading, and art by the mere fact that they participated in the enrichment program.

Also pre-service teacher candidates gained an informal experience with students from the urban community that will assist them within their teacher education program and in their development as in-service teachers. And finally African American high school students were given the opportunity to have a six-week experience as a teacher/mentor to elementary students to encourage them to pursue teacher education as a career path.

No empirical data was collected during the enrichment program because the program was treated as a pilot program to establish a familiarity with the ability level of participants involved with the program. During the next three years the following research questions will be addressed as the program provides each participant with every available resource to help them achieve to their maximum capability:

- Research Question One: What is the effect of a summer school program on urban African American Students?
- Research Question Two: What is the impact of an urban tutoring experience on elementary teacher education candidates?
- Research Question Three:(a) What is the impact of an urban tutoring experience on African American high school aged tutors and (b) can that experience influence them to consider education as a career path?

Additionally, comparisons of the participants' academic achievement on the summer curriculum by using pre and post test data and the retention and attrition rate of the program will be evaluated as well.

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Impact of the Raising a Reader Program on Family Reading Behavior and Support of Children's Early Literacy

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Abstract: This paper offers early findings of positive changes related to family reading behaviors after implementation of the Raising A Reader program, an early literacy program that engages parents in "book cuddling" with their young children. While the Raising A Reader program has been implemented in over 2500 sites since 1999, little empirical data have been reported by independent researchers regarding the impact of the program on family reading behavior and support of children's early literacy. Initial findings in the present study indicate that a minimum of ten weeks of implementation makes significant differences in establishing reading routines in the home. In addition, significant increases in library visits by families following implementation of the Raising A Reader program were observed. Future directions for research are discussed, particularly specific assessments such as receptive vocabulary, observational behaviors, and sustainability issues.

Raising A Reader® (RAR) is an early literacy program that engages parents in "book cuddling" with their young children. The purpose of RAR is to encourage parents to read frequently to their young children so that children develop pre-literacy skills and a love of reading. The program is based on years of research that ties language (precursor to reading) to the critical time of brain development during the first five years of a child's life. Raising A Reader® is also intended for children from birth to five years old at home care and early education centers.

Raising A Reader® first began in California in 1999 and has reached more than 700,000 children through its affiliations. Raising A Reader currently serves 110,000 children through its 2500 affiliates (RARNO, 2010). In North Carolina, the RAR has reached 1280 children between the ages of three and five years through 89 child care centers in four counties through state-funded Smart Start grants awarded in 2008. The majority (94%) of the participating early childhood centers had a 3- or 4-Star State License. The North Carolina Star Rated License system is intended to give parents an indication of the quality of daycare centers. Facilities earn one to five stars based on staff education and program standards (Iruka & Maxwell, 2009).

This study, which began as a pilot program in Fayetteville, NC in 2007, explores the effects of the RAR program on parent reading behavior with children. We were awarded a grant from the United Way of Cumberland County, North Carolina. This project was independent from the pilot programs funded by North Carolina Smart Start. Our pilot project began in two early childhood education centers in the Fall of 2007. As part of the national RAR program, each center receives special bright red book bags and a set of high quality, interesting, multi-cultural books to rotate among the families; typically a child gets four new books to take home weekly. Each red bag includes an award winning video called *Read Aloud* for parents. The video describes how parents can read to their young children. The video also has a section describing how parents with limited literacy can still share books with their children.

The classrooms also receive bright red wall charts to track the circulation of the book bags. At the end of the program, every participating child receives a special blue library bag to keep and the local public libraries are encouraged to provide incentives such as bookmarks or stickers to children who come with their blue book bags. The purpose of the blue bags is to encourage families to visit the library and check out books from the library to continue to foster their love of reading. The ultimate goal of the RA R program is to change family reading behaviors.

SIGNIFICANCE

Although there are many anecdotal reports on the RAR program and external evaluations showing positive impacts on parent/child book sharing, there is little empirical data from independent researchers regarding the impact of the RAR program on family reading behaviors. This research offers early findings of positive changes related to family reading behaviors after implementation of the RAR program.

IMPORTANCE OF PARENT AND FAMILY ENVIRONMENT IN EARLY LITERACY

The premise of RAR is that early literacy development begins in the home with parents' taking an active part in their children's literacy development by reading aloud to their children. Most educators agree that families are children's first teachers and play a critical role in young children's literacy development. Literacy experts advocate that one of the best ways families can set the foundation for early success in school is by reading aloud to their children, establishing good reading behaviors, and fostering a love for reading (Trelease, 2001; Hill-Clark, 2005). According to Kuhl et al. (2003), babies only learned from live exposure to sounds rather than recorded video exposure. Results of Kuhl's study emphasize

the importance of social interaction in enhancing learning, speculating that the "joint attention" to named objects enhanced learning. The concept of "joint attention," also referred to as "shared visual attention," appears to be important for vocabulary development. Woodward's study (2003) demonstrated that children were able to identify more quickly objects that were initially labeled by an adult when the adult and child shared a visual attention at the object compared to objects that were labeled without shared visual attention. Other empirical studies on the connection of hearing words during reading support the importance of reading aloud (Stamm, 2005). Longitudinal studies of dyslexic readers demonstrate that the source of reading difficulty stems from deficits in auditory processing, specifically the inability to hear the small differences in speech sounds (Shaywitz & Shaywitz, 2005). Evidence suggests that reading to a child, within the first three years of life, provides the auditory stimulation that a child needs during a time when the brain is particularly sensitive to changes in sounds (Cited in Nelson, Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

Linguistically-rich home environments, namely, homes that have access to books and other print media, contribute more powerfully to the early development of critical early reading abilities. A longitudinal study by Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan (2002) revealed that a home with a literacy-rich environment had significantly positive effects on children's oral language knowledge, letter knowledge, phonological sensitivity, and word reading skills. Thus, book reading with parents affords the children opportunities to develop an awareness of the functions of print, an awareness of the structure of the written language, and acquisition of new vocabulary. As children become more aware of print in their environment, they begin to develop techniques for interpreting the visual signs and print in their environment.

Teale (2003) contends that success in reading depends not only on the act of story-book reading to children, but also on the parent-child

interactions during oral reading. The quality of the "talk" has a positive effect on young children. Adams (1990) found that parents who involve their children in stories, who actively ask questions and elaborate on word meanings, provide the greatest benefits. Dickinson and Temple (1998) stated: "Early interest in print might result from being in a home rich in print and conversations about it. . ." (p. 243). Other factors that have been found to predict a child's later literacy success include: the number of books in the home, library visits, and parents' print exposure (Senechal, Lefecvre, Hudson and Lawson 1996; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, and Hemphill 1991). Researchers have shown that the quantity of words had a direct impact on testable IQ (Hart & Risley, 1995). Hart and Risley (1995) demonstrated a direct correlation on the quantity of words spoken positively in the home with increase vocabulary and literacy skills.

McGee and Richgels (2004) analyzed various interactions of parents reading to very young children. They found that with infants and toddlers, parents seem to focus on gaining their children's attention and getting them involved. During these interactions, parents are not concerned about the story, because most books written for this age are a series of pictures. Parents do more cuddling, holding the child on their lap, letting the child hold and turn pages and use motivating strategies such as pointing and saying things like, "look here at the dog." They encourage children to point and tell what they see. Martin (1998) found that as children develop a sense of enjoyment, parents take on a more active role. Parents read the story, direct the child's attention to the characters and sequence of story, comment, and ask questions. While there is extensive research on the effects of the home environment on early literacy development (Edwards, 1991; Saracho, 1997; Storch & Whitehurst, 2001), families need ongoing support, training and information to help their children be successful. The RAR program makes a concerted effort to include family support and training in the program.

Despite lack of empirical evidence measuring the impact of RAR on increasing the frequency of sharing books in the home, an external evaluation of the program was conducted in 2003. The evaluation report revealed that families participating in RAR in the San Francisco area read more following RAR implementation. Results of Parent surveys revealed an increase in the percentage of parents reading to their children from 7% before implementation to 37% following implementation of the program (ASR, 2003).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the RAR program on family reading behavior with their young children at home and their visits to the library. Specifically, the following questions guided this study:

1. Do parents' reading habits with their children change as a result of the RAR program?
2. Do children enjoy reading with their parents more after being involved in RAR?
3. Do parents make more visits to the library after the RAR program?
4. Is there a change in the parents' willingness to and interest in learning about early literacy development?

In addition we were interested in reporting the teachers' observations about the RAR program, specifically:

1. What were the teachers' levels of enthusiasm?
2. Was there a change in the parent and child responses and interactions?

3. Did the teachers' involvement in RAR change their curriculum planning and pedagogy?
4. Was there a change in the teachers' communication with parents?

Method

Participants

The RAR program was implemented in two early childhood centers in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Participants in this study included 114 children ages two to five, 13 classrooms, and 28 teachers. Of the 114 children participating in the program, 42% were boys and 58% girls. Most of the children spoke English as their first language, 6% spoke Spanish, and 2% spoke another language. The ethnicities of the children were: 48% Caucasian/White, 25% African-American, 11% Hispanic, 8% Multi-ethnic, 6% Asian, and 2% Native American. The 28 participating teachers were all female with teaching experience that ranged from three to twenty-four years.

Design

Researchers chose the first center located at a community college because it serves as a teaching model and site for their early childhood education program. This center is a five star facility, the highest rating based on the North Carolina star rated license system. Approximately 30% of the families whose children attend the center receive subsidies. The second center, based on the family literacy model, was unique in that it received federal Even Start funds to support families' access to training and to create a literate home environment. This center, part of the public school system, worked with parents to earn their GED while childcare was provided for their preschool children on the same site.

Treatment

The RAR program was implemented over a 10-week period rather than the 24-week period recommended by RAR national headquarters. The length of the treatment was shortened because of the need for children to transition into other classrooms as they developed and grew older. The classroom teachers were given brightly-colored, red bags that included four high quality children books and a parent video illustrating the most effective techniques in reading aloud to children. Children were allowed to take their red bags home for three to four days with the intention that parents/guardians would read the books to their children. Each red bag, containing different book titles, was rotated within the classroom each week so that each child received a new set of books weekly. Teachers were encouraged to extend the readings and responses of the books with various classroom activities, such as use of drama, art, and puppetry.

At the start of the program parents completed a survey (Pre-test) that contained questions pertaining to the child's demographics, language spoken in the home, library visits, and reading routines in the home. Parents were not aware of the RAR program initially when completing the Pre-test. Once the surveys were collected, parents were invited to attend a kick-off celebration that included a presentation about the RAR program, research findings about the importance of parents reading aloud to children, and brain development. Parents were also provided refreshments and free childcare. After ten weeks of implementation, parents were requested to complete the same survey (Post-test). Twelve months following the implementation of the pilot program, a questionnaire was sent to a teacher focus group consisting of nine out of twenty-eight participating teachers prior to the second cycle

of implementation of RAR at the centers. Centers continue to implement the RAR program currently.

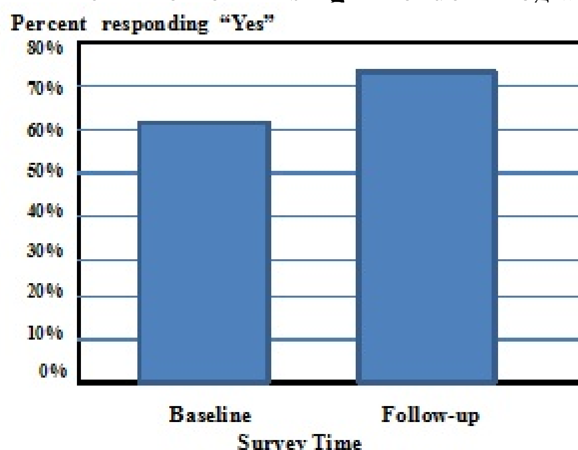
RESULTS

The initial sample size was 114 children; however, when analyzing the post-surveys, some parents did not complete the post-survey. In addition, parents did not answer all questions in the surveys. Therefore, only complete sets of pre- and post- surveys were included in the final analysis and each question had different sample sizes for the analysis. All results are based on pre-post surveys and analyzed using paired t-tests with significance set at $p<0.05$: The following questions were examined in our study:

1. Do parents' reading habits with their children change as a result of the RAR program?

Two questions related to reading habits were included in the survey. One question was, *Do you have a routine for looking at books with you child?* *and the second question asked, How many minutes do you or other people in your household usually spend with your child each time you look at books together?* Results are based on responses from pre- (before Raising a Reader implementation) and post- (after Raising a Reader implementation) surveys administered to parents. Based on responses from families of 112 children, there was a significant increase in developing a routine for looking at books with their child (61% to 74%). Data reflect percentages of parents responding yes to the question, "*Do you have a routine for looking at books with your child?*" (See Figure 1). Responses were analyzed using paired t-tests with significance set at $p<0.05$. However, the amount of time spent reading to the children did not increase significantly based on responses to the second question above.

Figure 1. Development of a Routine for Looking at Books Following Implementation of Raising a Reader Program



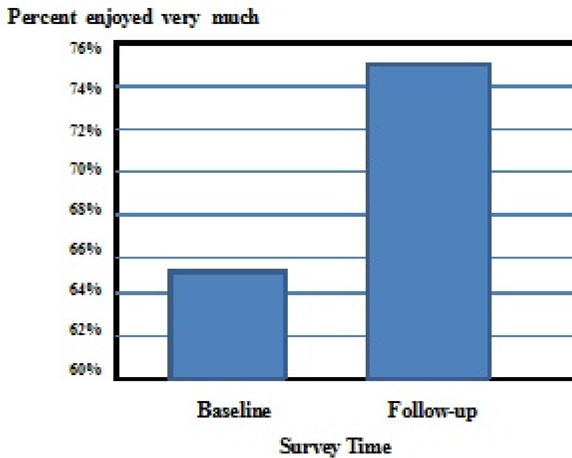
Development of a Routine for Looking at Books Following Implementation of Raising a Reader program. Based on responses from families of 112 children, there was a significant increase in developing a routine for looking at books with their child (61% to 74%). Data reflect percentages of parents responding yes to the question, "Do you have a routine for looking at books with your child?" Responses were analyzed using paired t-tests with significance set at $p<0.05$.

2. Do children enjoy reading with their parents more after being involved in RAR?

On the survey, one question related to enjoyment of reading asked, *In your opinion, how much does your child enjoy sharing books or stories with you or other people in your household?* The results of the pre/post parent surveys reveal that following implementation of the RAR program, there was a significant increase in children's enjoyment of the sharing of books in the household. The percentages for the pre/post survey responses demonstrate a significant improvement in a child's enjoyment of the sharing of books (65% to 75%) based on responses from families of 110 children (See Figure 2). The analysis was based on responses of "enjoyed very much" on a Likert scale.

Responses were analyzed using paired t-test with significance set at $p<0.05$.

Figure 2. Child's Enjoyment of Sharing Books in the Household

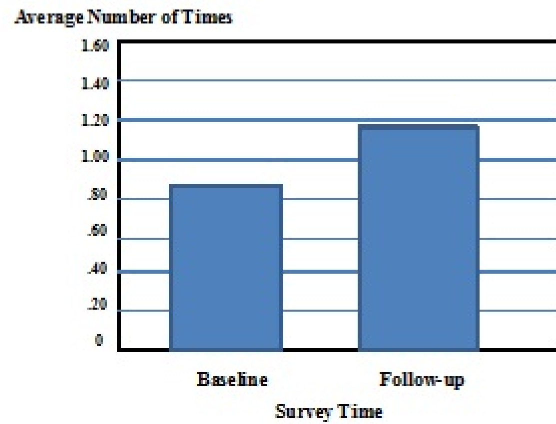


Following Implementation of Raising a Reader program. The percentages for the pre/post survey responses demonstrate a significant improvement in a child's enjoyment of the sharing of books (65% to 75%) based on responses from families of 110 children. The analysis was based on responses of "enjoyed very much" on a Likert scale. Responses were analyzed using paired t-tests with significance set at $p<0.05$.

3. Do parents make more visits to the library after the RAR program?

Two survey questions were related to library visits and the use of the library. One question asked, *In the past month, how many times did you visit the library with your child? The second question asked, Which of the following things do you or your child do at the library?* Several library activities were listed. There was a significant increase in the number of visits (0.89 to 1.15) to the public library following the implementation of the RAR program based on 96 respondents (See Figure 3).

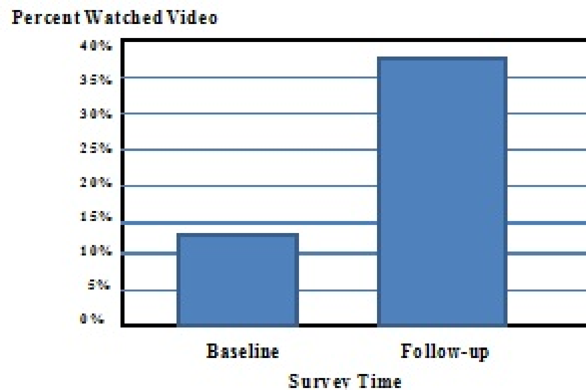
Figure 3. Number of Visits to the Library Following Implementation of Raising a Reader program



However, no significant changes in the participation of activities within the library i.e. browsing the stacks, interacting with library staff, playing in the children section, and attending story time activities sponsored by the library. Responses were analyzed using paired t-test with significance set at $p<0.05$. 4. Is there a change in the parents' willingness to and interest in learning about early literacy development?

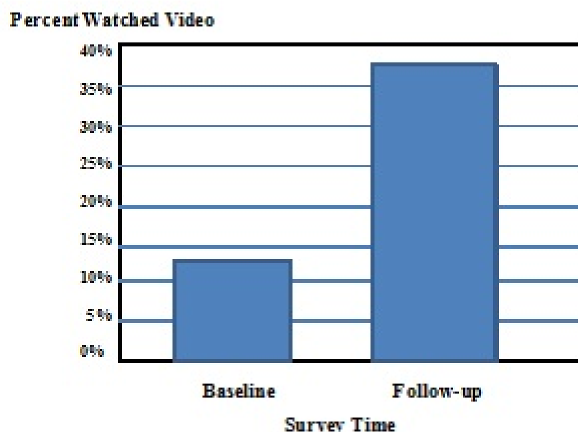
One question was related to parents' willingness to learn about the importance of sharing books with their children. The question asked, *In the past year, have you . . . watch a video about the importance of sharing books with your child, attended a parent education workshop about sharing books with your child, or neither?* There was a significant increase in the percentage of parents viewing instructional videos and participation in education workshops (14% to 38%) following the implementation of the RAR program (See Figures 4 and 5). Responses were analyzed using paired t-test with significance set at $p<0.05$.

Figure 4. Watching Videos about the Importance of Sharing Books with a Child



Following Implementation of Raising a Reader program. There was a significant increase in the percentage of parents viewing instructional videos (14% to 38%) following the implementation of the RAR program. Responses were analyzed using paired t-tests with significance set at $p<0.05$.

Figure 5. Attending Parent Education Workshops about the Importance of Sharing Books with a Child



Following Implementation of Raising a Reader program. Results are based on responses from pre- (before Raising a Reader implementation) and post- (after Raising a Reader implementation) surveys administered to parents. There was a significant increase in the percentage of parents participating in education workshops (14% to 38%) following the implementation of the RAR program. Responses were analyzed using paired t-tests with significance set at $p<0.05$.

In addition, we were interested in obtaining comments from participating teachers about RAR. The results of the focus group questions follow.

1. What were the teachers' levels of enthusiasm?

Teacher focus group questionnaires revealed that 100% of the participating teachers expressed a high level of enthusiasm at the onset and maintained this enthusiasm after twelve months of implementation of RAR.

2. Was there a change in the parent and child responses and interactions?

Based on the results from the focus group questionnaire 78% of the participating teachers revealed that the parents expressed a high level of enthusiasm at the onset and maintained this enthusiasm after twelve months of implementation of RAR.

In addition, 100% of the teachers revealed that the children expressed a high level of enthusiasm at the onset and maintained this enthusiasm after twelve months of implementation of RAR.

3. Did the teachers' involvement in RAR change their curriculum planning and pedagogy?

Benefits of RAR revealed positive changes to teachers curriculum planning and pedagogy. Comments from the teachers include:

> The overall program activity/ setup tend to help us as teachers to focus on teaching basic concepts, such as ABC's, feelings, or friendship, as well as repetition, phonics, and other literacy tools to prepare our children for reading.
>
> It has helped me to come up with more literacy activities in the classroom and I put up more displays about it.
>
> It has made me understand the importance of literacy in the classroom.

> This program has encouraged me in a way that reading together with your children is very important.

4. Was there a change in the teachers' communication with parents?

Likewise there was a change in teacher's methods of communicating with parents. Teachers used RAR as a mechanism to discuss literacy with parents to share novel ways of using good literature and reading to their children. Nonverbal communication was increased in the teacher's use of displays and pictures of activities such as, parents reading to children, children's responses to books read and objectives/purpose of activities for child development i.e. fine motor, gross motor, auditory memory.

DISCUSSION

Implementation of the RAR program in centers for a minimum of ten weeks appears to make significant differences mainly in establishing reading routines in the home. While the amount of time spent reading aloud did not increase, a child's enjoyment of being read to by the parent significantly increased. This supports studies that raised the importance of the quality of interaction over the quantity of time together (Saint-Laurent & Giasson, 2005). Children enjoyed reading more and had more creative abilities when involved with book discussions with parents compared to those whose parents focused more on corrections and performance during reading.

Our findings demonstrate significant increases in library visits by families following implementation of the RAR program; however, the quality of the visits or follow-ups did not change; i.e., checking out materials, participating in library program activities, and seeking out resources from library staff. Although the majority of respondents indicated that reading and sharing books were essential, they did not significantly increase the number of personal books in the home based on the parent surveys administered. This emphasizes the importance of the RAR program and the public library in providing quality books to families. However, in order for the impact of the RAR program to be sustained, parents should be more involved in activities in the library. Therefore, the library needs to have an active role during the implementation of the RAR program.

Parents and guardians are willing to learn based on their participation in workshops and watching instructional videos. The RAR program presents parents with information on the importance of sharing books and strategies to increase the enjoyment of sharing books with their young children. Parents see the value of reading aloud to their children and the value of the daycare provider in playing a critical role on early literacy development, providing families with resources and home activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Based on the present findings, the following are essential factors that need further study to adequately assess the impact of RAR on family behavior and early literacy in children. First, future studies that directly measure early literacy skills in children are needed, specifically, the impact of RAR on a child's receptive vocabulary should be explored. It is hypothesized that reading to children frequently should increase their listening or receptive vocabulary. Second, observational behaviors examining a child's attitude toward books should also be explored by developing an observation checklist which contains specific behaviors related to book handling, book choice, and interest in books. Third, more creative activities and methods to encourage parent involvement are needed. Parent activity packets should be developed and sent home for use as story extenders of books taken home. Fourth, creating a network of teacher support is essential, particularly when studies reveal that

the literature education level of teachers plays a major role in the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom and their ability to communicate with parents. Finally, research involved in identifying library resources useful for parents is needed; this will then increase the interaction and involvement of parents with library staff and increase participation in library activities. While parents visited the library more, there was no direct evidence of what they did in the library. Parent focus groups indicated that the library needed more activities offered for parents on the weekend. Ultimately, the sustainability of the RAR program is dependent on families, early childcare providers, and the families' involvement with the library.

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GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHER CANDIDATE DISPOSITIONS TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES FOLLOWING SERVICE LEARNING WITH INCLUSION IN AN URBAN SCHOOL

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Abstract: This article examines the attitudes of 68 general education teacher candidates regarding towards students with exceptionality before and after completing a semester service learning course in inclusive classrooms in an urban middle school. The analysis compared teacher candidates with prior experience with students with exceptionalities to those without on their ranking of their comfort working with diverse learners. Findings indicate that overall, candidates reported that their comfort level working with students with exceptionalities increased following the course. Candidates with no prior experience reported a greater increase in comfort working with diverse learning populations.

Whether or not general education teachers are comfortable working with students with exceptionality is of critical concern in teacher education. Mandates that all students receive educational opportunities in the least restrictive environment have elevated inclusion as the standard in general education classrooms. This shift has been strengthened with the 2004 revisions to the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA), which expanded the role of the general education teacher by including them in the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team meeting that develops the learning plan for students with exceptionalities (Hadadian and Chiang, 2007). Inclusion is the process of educating all learners in their neighborhood schools, with age-appropriate classes and activities, without removing students with exceptionalities from general education classrooms for supplemental learning support (Price, Mayfield, McFadden, and Marsh, 2001). With the emphasis on inclusion, general education teachers are increasingly responsible for the learning outcomes of students with exceptionalities; a diverse group of learners who may experience a variety of cognitive, communication, developmental, perception, and social challenges that impact learning.

Inclusion challenges general education teachers to adjust to the responsibility of teaching students with exceptionality. Teachers have expressed concerns related to whether they are prepared to meet this challenge and whether inclusion will be detrimental to the learning of general education students (Heflin and Bullock, 1999). General education teachers also expressed frustrations that their relationships with special education teachers were either unclear or undefined and lead to problems implementing inclusion (Finley Snyder, 1999). Recent surveys indicated teachers reported needing additional supports, such as school wide cultures that sustain inclusion (Lohrmann, Boggs, and Bambara, 2006).

Teacher education standards, such as those established by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, specify that teacher education curriculums provide opportunities for candidates to acquire skills and work with inclusion as well as acquire “professional dispositions to help all students learn” (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, Standard 4, 2001). Professional dispositions include respecting and valuing learning differences. As a result,

teacher education programs are working to increase their curricular offerings in special

education to improve the readiness of teacher candidates for success in inclusive settings. Some of these methods include increasing the number of special education courses required for general education teacher candidates. The goal of such curricular changes would be to improve teacher candidate's knowledge of learning differences and to prepare them with the skills necessary to ensure student success among diverse learners. However, not all teacher education programs have the resources to expand required course offerings in special education. Therefore, some programs implement alternative methods that increase skills and professional dispositions among teacher candidates toward students with exceptionality. This article examines an attempt of one Midwestern university to expand the preparation of general education teacher candidates for practice with students with exceptionalities through the completion of a required service learning experience in an inclusive setting.

An Overview of Service Learning in Teacher Education

Service learning provides an opportunity for students to develop academic competencies through organized service that engages students in learning through a combination of methods. This pedagogy suggests that learning experiences consist of several components (Eyler & Giles, 1999). These methods include direct service, formal instruction, and reflection (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). The model includes a community-based experience, critical reflection that is written and oral, as well as academic questions. Experiences that have been most successful provide an opportunity for students to actively experiment with course concepts while connecting the service to the organizational needs of the community partner (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002).

Over the last two decades, scholars in the field of teacher education have demonstrated the usefulness of integrating service learning into the general education curriculum. Studies of service learning in teacher training programs found these models increase student learning, provide students with practice in leadership roles, and engage them in community issues (Grandy, Pierce, and Smith, 2009). These community issues often include examining diversity and social justice issues that students face who come from backgrounds that are often vastly different from that of teacher candidates (Baldwin, Buchanan, Rudisill, 2009). Teacher candidates reported understanding ambiguities related to teaching in general education classrooms (Ryan, Carrington, Selva, and Healy, 2009) as well as understand the importance of building relationships to help students meet their learning goals (Ng, Nicholas, and Williams, 2009).

A recent reflective evaluation of a team of special educators use of service learning in graduate and undergraduate special education courses indicated that the method helped heighten student understanding of course content and student values (Jenkins and Sheehey, 2009). Toni Van Laarhoven and her colleagues (2007) reported the findings of an evaluation of a course that exposed general and special education teacher candidates to inclusion at Northern Illinois University. They found the usefulness of this model was greatest among general education candidates.

The course evaluated in this article sought to expand the understanding of the benefit of service learning for general education candidates. This study specifically targets general education candidates, seeking to understand the impact of service learning on the formation of their professional dispositions toward students with exceptionalities. A review of the literature on teacher candidates placed in inclusive settings found that a positive attitude or disposition towards students with exceptionalities is a prerequisite for development of effective strategies in inclusive classrooms

(Blanton, 1992 and Bratlinger, 1996). This study also builds on prior research (Jenkins and Sheehey, 2009; Van Laarhoven, et. al., 2007) and attempts to expand the work of Azar Hadadian and Linda Chiang (2007) who examined differences in dispositions towards students with exceptionalities between candidates with experience with special learners and those without exposure to this group. They found that taking special education courses a stronger predictor of favorable dispositions than prior experience with diverse learners. The study in this article attempts to examine this between group difference further by asking whether the difference in experience may present as differences in attitude before exposure and further whether service learning mitigates this difference.

Context of the Study

This study examined the experience of undergraduate general education candidates fulfilling the school wide required "inclusive methods" class that used experiential methods. This urban Midwestern university requires undergraduate education candidates to engage in both a school site practicum and an experiential education experience. Enrollment in the course entitled "inclusive practices in education" meets both requirements. The relationship between the public school district and candidates is reciprocal in that this K-12 district receives in classroom assistance from teacher candidates and the candidates gain insight and skills that will improve their preparation for teaching careers.

The candidates spent at least thirty hours in the participating school in order to complete the course requirements. They were assigned to general education teachers and required to provide individual and small group instruction to students who were classified as disabled (as defined by the Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004) and other students with special learning needs in the general education classroom. Most of the candidates (70%) served in K-5 classrooms while 30% served in grades 6-8 classrooms.

The site of the inclusion learning experience was an urban, multi-cultural middle school. The racially and culturally diverse student body consisted of a third Hispanic students, a third African American students, and a third Caucasian. Roughly, 65% of the students receive free or reduced lunches. They have a high rate of newly enrolled students each year attributed to transitional industries employing the largely migrant Hispanic population. Special education students consisted of about 15% of the total enrollment, which was higher than the state target goal of 10% special education students. Special education and African American students failed to make annual yearly progress in both Math and English.

Each candidate completed a series of weekly journal reflections that included opinions regarding general classroom management, use of inclusive methods, use of differentiated instruction, and personal feelings about working with students with exceptionalities. Candidates also attended seminars on campus and completed weekly logs and journals. The professor assigned to this course taught the seminars and was responsible for fieldwork supervision. In seminar, the professor asked probing questions to ascertain students' professional dispositions. The professor also spent time in each classroom observing the teacher candidate interaction with the general education teacher and the child with disabilities. This supervision ensured that service objects integrated the candidates' learning goals. The professor and master teachers discussed the inclusive arrangements made in each classroom. In addition, before students began their field experiences, they had attended six weeks of seminars on campus where instruction included inclusive methods and service learning goals. The professor served as one of the researchers in this study.

To reduce bias and to integrate objectivity into the study design, a colleague at a different university analyzed the data and helped interpret the results.

METHODS

QUESTIONS

The following are the questions that guided the analysis:

1. Does the participation in service learning in inclusive classrooms impact the candidates' dispositions toward students with exceptionalities?
2. Do dispositions differ between candidates who are familiar with students with exceptionalities and those who have not had experience with students with exceptionalities before and after service learning?

PARTICIPANTS

The study examined the experiences of 68 general education teacher candidates. There were 55 female candidates (80%) and 13 males (20%). They ranged in age from 18 to 52 years old; the median age was 28. The class diversity closely mirrored the university and its surrounding community. There were 37 Caucasian candidates (54%), 15 Hispanic candidates (22%), 5 African American candidates (7%), and 11 candidates identified themselves as being of Mixed Heritage (10%). The majority of the candidates were elementary education majors (70%) while the remainder (30%) majored in secondary education. Seven of the secondary education candidates earned college degrees in fields outside of education and returned to college to complete a teacher certification. Most (87%) reported that they worked ten or more hours a week in paid employment. Eight other candidates volunteered five hours or more a month in social service agencies (homeless shelters, animal protection agency, after school programs, tutoring, and teaching Sunday school).

Candidates had varied exposure to students with exceptionality. Five students were eligible to receive classroom accommodations from the university such as modified testing. Twelve of the students reported prior or ongoing work experience as aids or substitute teachers in inclusive classrooms. Nine of the participants indicated that they had family members in K-12 who were currently eligible for learning accommodations.

DATA

Participants were given a survey that measured comfort level and knowledge about inclusive practices on the on the first day of university based instruction and again at the end of the semester as part of the course requirements as stated in the syllabus. The questions on the pre-test and post-test questionnaire included a ranking from 1-10 on whether candidates felt comfortable working with students with exceptionalities.

ANALYSIS

Question 1: Dispositions toward students with exceptionalities

For this analysis, descriptive statistics were generated which produced means and standard deviations for pre- and post-test scores. Then a paired sample correlations and t-test compared the pretest means to the post-test means on the question "On a scale of 1-10 what is your comfort level when working with children with disabilities?"

Question 2: Attitudes toward students with exceptionalities by experience

To answer question two, t-tests compared pre- and post-test means for candidate's rankings of their comfort with students with exceptionalities. This analysis compared the two groups, students with and without experience with

special learners. The analysis tested the hypothesis that the two groups would have equal means at both pre and post test measures.

FINDINGS

Question 1: Dispositions toward students with exceptionalities.

Table 1. Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1				
Pretest	6.629	62	1.6092	.2044
Posttest	8.089	62	1.2097	.1536

Table 2. Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Pretest & Posttest	62	.304	.016

Table 3. Paired Samples Test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std Error Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest Posttest	1.4597	1.6945	.2152	6.783	.000

Findings of the paired samples means indicated that the pretest mean was 6.6 out of a ranking of 10 (standard deviation of 1.6) and the post-test mean was 8.0 (standard deviation of 1.2). This finding indicates candidates reported that on average their comfort level working with persons with learning disabilities was about 6 out of 10. Yet, when they finished the class, their comfort level working with different learners raised to about 8 out of 10. In this study, the mean change was 1.45 points from before and after the course. The rating of their attitudes indicates that their post score was significantly higher than their self-ratings before the class [t (61) = 6.783, p=.01]. In other words, after the course, these candidates reported that they felt more comfortable working with students with exceptionalities.

Question 2: Attitudes toward special learners by experience with special learners group.

Table 4. Group Statistics

Special Education		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	St. Error Mean
Pretest	Yes	16	8.156	.9612	.2403
	No	46	6.098	1.4438	.2129
Posttest	Yes	16	8.531	.8459	.2115
	No	46	7.935	1.2850	.18995

Note: N=62, as 1 class members' data was missing

Table 5. T-test for Equality of Means

	t-test for Equality of Means				
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error Diff.
Pretest	6.412	39.643	0.000	2.0584	0.3210
Posttest	2.101	40.124	0.042	0.5356	0.2839

Before service learning, candidates with experience working with students with exceptionalities reported higher comfort working with this population than candidates in the other group. The pretest mean ranking among candidates with disability related experience 8.156 out of 10 and the group of candidates with no previous special education experience scored their comfort as 6.098 out of 10. This represented a difference of 2.058 points on a 10-point ranking.

The differences between the two means decreased following the course. The mean for candidates with special education or disability related experience on the same measure was 8.531, an increase of 0.375. On the other hand, the group mean for candidates with no experience with special needs students was 7.935, representing an increase of 1.837 points, a greater increase than that of students with prior experience working with special learners. Indicating that after the course, the differences reduced from 2.058 to 0.596.

We tested the differences between attitude scores for these two groups using t-tests. The findings indicate that there are significant differences between the two groups of teacher candidates, at both pretest and post experiential learning project on their attitudes toward working with students with exceptionalities (sig. >0.05). Since the t-test tested the hypothesis that the two groups would have the same attitudes, this means that the differences between the groups at both points were significantly different. Specifically, candidates that had prior experience working with students with exceptionalities had significantly more comfort working with special learners in inclusive classrooms.

Discussion and Implications

These findings are important for teacher education programs that seek to improve general education candidates' preparation for success teaching in inclusive classrooms through service learning. It demonstrates that a service learning model of instruction that immerses students into inclusive classrooms improves their professional dispositions toward students with exceptionalities by increasing their comfort working with diverse learners, an important factor in teacher success contributing to the development of and in implementing individualized learning plans. This study builds on the findings of Blaton (1992) and Bratlinger (1996) that found a positive disposition towards special learners was a prerequisite for development of effective strategies in inclusive classrooms. Our findings indicate that service learning in inclusive classrooms heightens this important factor.

This was true for candidates with no previous experience with special learners as well as for candidates having had a familiarity with a family member with a disability. While special education knowledge is important, it is highly likely that candidates can transfer these skills into practice when they feel comfortable working with students with exceptionalities.

The findings of this study are limited in its reflection of all learning due to the limited sample of candidates and its unique university and school district partnership. Future studies

can expand on these findings by examining multiple schools and multiple professors. Future studies can probe the relationship between mentor teachers and candidate attitudes toward students with exceptionality and inclusion. Specifically, mentor use of inclusive methods and their professional dispositions towards special learners and inclusion may influence candidate outcomes. This area of inquiry may expose important influences in university and school district relationships to help prepare general education teacher candidates for success in inclusive settings.

While these findings demonstrate a benefit to applying service learning to improve candidate dispositions toward special learners, they do not support the use of service learning as a replacement of intensive preparation of teacher candidates to work with special learners. Surly, teacher disposition is one of the necessary conditions for inclusive classroom success. However, positive disposition should not exist independently of expertise in creating learning environments that foster academic success among all learners.

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Instructional and Grouping Practices Impacting the Reading Gains of Diverse Students

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Abstract: With the demands of NCLB legislation, there is an increased emphasis on determining evidenced based practices so that all students can make adequate yearly progress. The author reviewed the literature to determine which instructional and grouping practices were found to impact the reading achievement of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English language learners.

This review of research examined research in instructional practices and student grouping practices for teaching reading to students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, and students who are economically disadvantaged. With the NCLB legislation emphasizing all students making gains, this review can help administrators and educators make important decisions on instructional practices and grouping so that all students can achieve.

Reading Instructional Practices by Student Demographics

Special education reading research

A limited amount of research is available on the subject of teaching reading to special education students. Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, Moody, and Schumm (2000) compared the effects of reading outcomes for students with disabilities based on grouping formats as compared to whole class instruction. The grouping formats examined were pairing, small group, and multiple formats. Results indicated that students with disabilities performed better in the grouping formats as compared to whole class instruction. Students in lower ability groups for reading instruction received inferior instruction as measured by instructional time, time on task, meaning orientation to reading tasks, appropriateness of reading materials, and amount of material read.

A study comparing the reading outcomes of students with learning disabilities to other low-progress readers found that intensive literacy remediation was equally effective with students with a variety of disabilities (Pogorzelski & Wheldall, 2002). These struggling readers were classified as either dyslexic or garden variety readers based on their performance on the Phonological Assessment Battery (PhAB). Dyslexic readers had a relatively high IQ, compared with their word reading ability, but had difficulties with the phonological processing of words. Garden-variety readers had a lower IQ, and not only struggled with the phonological processing of words but also with language, comprehension and vocabulary. The study examined gains made in single word recognition and oral reading fluency following intervention with the Making Up Lost Time in Literacy program (MULTILIT). Both groups made substantial gains on both reading measures and the PhAB sub test scores did not predict the size of gains.

Much research has focused on how students with learning disabilities approach and master objectives. Much of the focus has been on learning strategies. The basic assumption underlying this perspective on strategic instruction is that many students can be taught effective strategies for acquiring information (Nicholas, 2002). Strategic instruction in writing helps students enrich and upgrade their writing skills by teaching them new and different ways to formulate and structure their

thoughts (Harris & Graham, 1992). Specific strategy training can increase students' performance on tasks requiring metacognitive abilities (Tralli et al., 1996). If students have well developed metacognitive skills they will know how to study effectively, monitor their own understanding, and plan and budget their time more effectively. They will also be familiar with cognitive strategies that help them learn and remember more efficiently, and will frequently regulate their own strategy use (Nicholas, 2002).

There are several definitions for the term "learning strategies". For example, Deshler and Schumaker (1986) characterized learning strategies as "behaviors of a learner that assist learners to process information" (p.583). Underlining of key ideas in a passage, outlining ideas in a lecture, or trying to put some newly learned information into one's own words are examples of learning strategies. Similarly, Weinstein et al. (1988) viewed learning strategies as "thoughts or behaviors that facilitate learning" (p.17). These behaviors can range from simple study skills, such as underlining the main idea, to complex thought processes, such as using analogies to relate prior knowledge to new information.

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1993) offered a summary of findings in strategy training and relational thinking skills as applied to content area instruction and suggested that learning strategies and thinking skills should be integrated into special education practices. They suggested that although learning strategies are particularly suited for textbook-based approaches to content area instruction, they represented a mismatch with the characteristics of students with learning disabilities due to a heavy reliance on language and literacy skills. It was recommended that special education and general education should collaborate to continue a search for more effective strategies that promote relational thinking and more active learning approaches to understanding content area information. When teachers have used a direct, systematic approach that taught specific strategies for academic problem solving students with disabilities have shown success across all academic areas (Carnine et al., 1997).

Another study concluded that reading instruction was most effective for students with learning disabilities in an inclusion model where there was a team teaching approach that included techniques to help students enhance comprehension (Anderson, 2006). Two students with learning disabilities were pulled for eight 90 minute sessions over a three-month time span for direct instruction in meta-cognitive reading comprehension skills. The special educator pulled them from the social studies inclusion class which she co-taught with the general education teacher. Reciprocal teaching was used to provide students with a set of clarifying, predicting, questioning, and summarizing meta-scripts to provide structure and methodology that could be used in different situations. Anderson found no increase in the two students comprehension skills after comparing pre and post tests and interviewing the science and social studies teachers. Anderson concluded that meta-cognitive strategies should be integrated and embedded in a co-teaching general education classroom to benefit all students (2006).

Seo, Brownell, Bishop, and Dingle (2008) reported on a study that examined the classroom reading practices of beginning special education teachers and each teacher's ability to promote student engagement. They identified four themes related to instructional engagement that differentiated the teachers. The researchers found that the teachers who were the most engaging or at least highly engaging demonstrated the four themes of instructional quality (explicit, intense, focused, and cohesive), responsiveness to student needs, socioemotional climate of the classroom, and student autonomy. This is an accurate description of teachers who use differentiated instruction in their classroom.

Endress, Weston, Marchand-Martella, Martella, and Simmons, (2007) performed a study on the benefits of a decoding based reading intervention program, Phono-graphix, utilized with students with disabilities ages six to seventeen years of age. Phono-graphix addresses phonemic awareness, blending, segmenting, and letter-sound correspondence through explicit instructional techniques. The authors base their study on the premise that 90% of students with reading disabilities struggle with decoding at the single word level and that decoding centers on phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the recognition that words, which are made up of letters, consist of sounds. It is the ability to hear how many sounds are in a word. In addition to phonemic awareness, instruction in blending and segmenting phonemes is also very important in developing phonemic recognition skills. The authors admitted that some students will not develop this without direct, intensive instruction. However, they cited several studies to support the claim that even students with severe reading disabilities could make gains in these primary skill deficiencies at all ages with explicit instruction.

Endress, Weston, Marchand-Martella, Martella, and Simmons, (2007) delivered an 8 week intensive reading intervention using Phono-graphix for up to 2.5 hours per day for students ages six to seventeen with severe reading disabilities in special education classrooms. The elementary group made statistically significant gains in phonemic awareness and reading fluency. The upper elementary/ secondary group made statistically significant gains in phonemic awareness, reading fluency, and comprehension. The effect sizes for both groups exceeded the minimum of .25 for all skill levels. Their research supports other research that claims that primary skill deficits are responsive to intervention at all age levels.

Schmidt, Rozendal, and Greenman reviewed literature to identify pedagogically sound and empirically grounded reading approaches that could be used by all students in an inclusive classroom setting. They reviewed specific reading strategies effective for students with learning disabilities and contextual factors necessary for successful literacy learning in an elementary inclusion setting. Contextual factors included teachers' perceptions and beliefs, and student grouping practices. They found that teacher attitude and teacher-student collaboration were essential components to successful reading instruction for the student with disabilities in an inclusion classroom. In addition they found that strategy instruction is most effective when embedded in contextualized literacy activities, and that multifaceted interventions promote more reading growth than utilizing a single strategy. Finally, they reported on the necessity for all students to be engaged in construction of new knowledge, specifically where individual needs are addressed and teachers are willing to make modifications to instruction or use of materials (2002).

Dieker and Ousley (2006) suggest several tools and activities that secondary English and special education teachers can use to help students with disabilities. Their suggestions include a tool for planning a co-taught lesson, a modified cooperative learning tool for reading and behavior difficulties, technological devices to modify reading material, and two activities infusing non-fiction material with authentic assessment which allows for peer and teacher support. The researchers stress the importance of collaborative preparation to teach secondary English and special education teachers to speak a blended language across the two fields. The authors conclude by stating that higher education must provide practical ideas that teachers can use in middle and high school inclusive classrooms.

Coleman-Martin, Heller, Cihak, and Irvine (2005) conducted a study with three students who had severe speech impairments and physical disabilities or autism. Their purpose was to determine if computer-assisted instruction using the Non-Verbal Reading (NRA) approach was effective in increasing word identification. The students were provided decoding and word identification instruction using the NRA in the three following conditions: teacher only, teacher plus computer-assisted instruction, computer-assisted instruction only. Results indicated that the students reached criterion of at least 80% for two consecutive sessions across all three conditions. This research demonstrates that computer-assisted instruction is effective in teaching word identification to students with a variety of disabilities.

In a twelve-week study Shippen, Houchins, Calhoon, Farlow & Sartor, (2006) compared the effects of two comprehensive school reform (CSR) models, Success For All and Direct Instruction, on the reading growth of urban middle school students with disabilities who were performing two or more years below grade level. Results indicated no significant growth for either of the CSR models. Besides improving the instructional methods in both models, another implication that the authors mention is that comparing students with disabilities collectively is illogical. They suggest growth norms based on cognitive ability, and that adequate yearly progress (AYP) "could be based on a combination of average growth for non-disabled peers and average growth patterns for various disability groups" (p.327).

Economically Disadvantaged Reading Research

In a cross-national study comparing 46 countries (Akiba, LeTendre, Scribner, 2007), the opportunity for low-SES students to be taught by qualified teachers was compared to their high-SES peers. The resulting difference between the number of high-SES and low-SES students taught by qualified teachers was defined as an opportunity gap. The higher the opportunity gap, the less opportunity low-SES students had to be taught by a qualified teacher. The United States opportunity gap was the fourth-highest among the 46 countries. There was a 14.4% difference between the number of high-SES and low-SES students taught by qualified teachers in the United States, as compared to twenty-one other countries which had less than a 5% difference. Additionally, fifteen countries in the study provided a higher level of access to qualified teachers for low-SES students.

Much research documents a strong association between poverty and a student's academic success or lack of it. Chatterji (2006) reported that reading level at kindergarten was significantly correlated to poverty status. In addition, Chatterji found that class size, elementary teacher certification, attendance rates, and reading time at home were also significantly correlated to reading achievement. Children living in poverty are exposed to risk factors such as deprivations in physical, social, emotional, and sensory experiences which are critical to cognitive development of young children (Hertert & Teague, 2003). Research has shown that interactive teaching methods are associated with more learning in both reading and mathematics; however, the teachers most likely to use such methods are those who completed 40 college credit hours in their subject area or who had advanced degrees (Smith, Lee, & Newman, 2001). Much research has consistently shown that schools with a high percentage of low-income students have the least qualified teachers, and that these are the teachers who utilize more didactic methods instead of interactive methods (Smith, Lee, & Newman, 2001).

VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh (2006) concluded from their study that a high-powered curriculum, emphasizing developing

low-SES students' critical thinking skills, is only successful when combined with teacher training that stresses the importance of faithful implementation of units of study. Additionally, the researchers reported that instrumentation must be sensitive to low socioeconomic learners to accurately gauge the level and extent of their learning.

Taylor, Pearson, Clark, and Walpole (2000) performed a study to look at the reading achievement of primary grade students in schools with a high percentage of students on subsidized lunch across the nation in fourteen different schools. Results showed a combination of school and teacher factors which were important in the most effective schools. School factors found to be statistically significant included systematic assessment of student progress, strong links to parents, and strong collaboration and communication within the school. Teacher factors found to be statistically significant included time spent in small group instruction, time spent in independent reading, high levels of student on-task behavior, and strong home communication. Furthermore, these teachers supplemented explicit phonics instruction with coaching in phonics strategies for everyday reading, utilized higher level questions when discussing texts, and had the students respond to reading in writing.

Another challenge facing the quality of education that low-income students receive is the use of tracking. Ansalone (2004) stated that tracking increases dramatically in economically disadvantaged areas with considerable enrollments of minority students. Ansalone further reported that most schools organize students in ability groups based on past academic performance or outcomes on standardized tests. This results in separate instructional groups within the same or different classrooms. Tracking has been justified as a managerial strategy since it limits the wide range of academic diversity in the classroom (Ansalone, 2004). Ansalone (2004) examined results of tracking including differentiation of the curricula and teacher expectations; school misconduct; race, class, and gender bias; and the development of separate friendship patterns. Perhaps a key finding is that lower tracked students sense a differential attitude towards themselves and consequently lower their own expectations (Ansalone, 2004). Belief in personal efficacy diminishes, and students have little incentive to persevere in the face of difficulties (Noguera, 2003).

Limited English Proficient Research

Since poverty exists in disproportionate rates among African Americans, Hispanics, and English language learners, the research above is helpful in understanding the quality of education that many English language learners receive. In addition, research has noted that these learners need targeted, continuing intervention that is closely integrated with the main literacy program. Furthermore, teacher skills are very important as they must deliver intense, explicit, and supportive reading instruction (AERA, 2004).

Since research has clearly shown that there are a disproportionate number of minority and low-SES students receiving special education services (Harry & Klinger, 2006), reviewing the research to understand the educational practices that have been used with these subgroups of students helps to interpret any student demographic variables that may impact reading achievement.

Student Grouping and Differentiated Instruction

Besides instructional practices, another factor that contributes to a school environment of high expectations is how students are grouped

both between classes and within classes. Elbaum et al. (2002) compared the effects of reading outcomes for students with disabilities based on grouping formats as compared to whole class instruction. The grouping formats examined included pairing, small group, and multiple formats. Results indicated that students with disabilities performed better in the grouping formats as compared to whole class instruction. Students in lower ability groups for reading instruction received inferior instruction as measured by instructional time, time on task, meaning orientation to reading tasks, appropriateness of reading materials, and amount of material read.

The debate over if and how students should be grouped by ability is further complicated by confusion over the terminology of tracking, ability grouping (within-class and between-class), and untracking/detracking. This disagreement has confused the debate and the results of research (Oneil, 1998; Kulik, 1991). Proponents of ability grouping claim that the elimination of ability grouping has been detrimental to the gifted and talented population, and that ability grouping is being blamed for all the problems plaguing the American schools. Gifted learners need some form of grouping by ability so that their curriculum may be broadened and extended. Removal of these opportunities for gifted students may result in a substantial decline in achievement and attitude toward the subjects being studied and result in a further decline of national test scores (Rogers, 2002).

Little research on ability grouping has been conducted since Oakes and Slavin's critical analysis on the subject in the 1980's (Tieso, 2003). In a meta-analysis review of the effects of within-class grouping on student achievement and other outcomes, small group instruction was found to be more effective than whole group instruction. In addition, homogeneous grouping for reading instruction was found to be more effective than heterogeneous grouped reading instruction (Lou, 1996). More recent research suggest that flexible ability grouping, combined with appropriate curricular differentiation, can bring significant achievement gains for average and high ability readers (Tieso, 2003). Lewis and Bates (2005) reported that after five years of elementary teachers differentiating instruction, the students' proficiency rate on the state mandated end-of-year tests increased from 79% to 94.8%. In another study by Fisher, Frey, and Williams (2003) they reported that after four years of high school teachers differentiating instruction, the average student's reading level increased from a 5.9 grade level to an 8.2 grade level. In a study on how teachers differentiated instruction for students with significant cognitive disabilities, Fisher and Frey (2001) found that there was a decreased use of whole class learning and an increased use of peer-assisted learning and team-teacher collaboration.

Anderson (2007, p.50) states that differentiating instruction "integrates what we know about constructivist learning theory, learning styles, and brain development, with empirical research on influencing factors of learner readiness, interest, and intelligence preferences toward students' motivation, engagement, and academic growth within schools." Teachers use the elements of choice, flexibility, on-going assessment, and creativity to differentiate the content being taught, or how students are processing and understanding the concepts or skills, or the varied products students create to demonstrate what they have learned. They can differentiate based on students' readiness by varying the levels of difficulty. They can differentiate key skills and materials by student choice and interest. They can differentiate by student learning preferences by allowing student choice in working collaboratively or alone and by providing a variety of work spaces conducive to various learning preferences (Anderson, 2007).

Another way of differentiating instruction is arts integration. Deasy's study (as cited in Mason, Steedly, & Thormann, 2008) found that art integration was particularly important for students with disabilities and students with other learning needs. He concluded that "the arts influenced academics in the following ways (a) drama develops higher-order language and literacy skills, (b) music enhances language learning, (c) art experiences develop literacy and writing skills, and (d) arts experiences develop numeracy skills"(p.37). Eisner found (as cited in Mason, Steedly, & Thormann, 2008) that the "arts enhance a variety of cognitive abilities including perception, memory, and ability to interpret events and concepts, in part due to changes in neurobiological functioning and perception that occur in the process of creating art" (p.37). Demoss (2005) found in some Chicago Public school that students of all achievement levels demonstrated statistically significant increases in their analytical assessments following arts-integrated units but not in traditional units.

Rubin noted that detracking efforts vary greatly in method and scope (2006). Detracking efforts in a classroom are more about building from a set of underlying principles, rather than using particular activity systems (Rubin, 2006). Tomlinson (2001) supports this theory by describing a mixed-ability classroom that does not reflect adherence to these principles. Teachers should use a flexible approach to grouping so students can get to know all their classmates, to foster a sense that ability is not fixed, and so teachers can target instruction more effectively (Rubin, 2006).

Coelho stresses the importance of using mixed-ability grouping practices by pointing out the cumulative effects of same-ability grouping practices. Starting in elementary school, students are often grouped by ability within the classroom. Students in low-ability groups do not receive the same quality of instruction and often have teachers who are unqualified teaching them. Even when these students have teachers who are committed, enthusiastic, and skilled, it is difficult to establish an effective learning environment in these classrooms because these students resent their status, respond defensively, and often refuse to participate in the academic efforts which could bring them more success (1998). Loton stresses the need for mixed-ability grouping to create equal status, balanced interaction among students working in small learning groups (2006).

Mixed-ability grouping has several benefits. Burris and Welner found that minority students participating in mixed ability classrooms were more likely to graduate with a Regents high school diploma (2005). Another outcome of mixed ability grouping is that students learn to value working together and appreciate the benefits each can contribute (Lyle, 1999). Bolar (2006) also reported that students increased in their relational equity, as well as in their math achievement at an urban, ethnically diverse school that incorporated heterogeneous grouping and complex instruction. In another study, tracking was found to influence students' college attendance after controlling for students' plans (Rosenbaum, 1980). Students in mixed ability classes were more likely to attend college than those in low-ability grouped classes. Slavin (1991) found that between class ability grouping was not beneficial for high achieving students. Furthermore, students in the low tracked classes were more likely to be delinquent or drop out of school.

Ansalone (2004) examined results of tracking including differentiation of the curricula and teacher expectations; school misconduct; race, class, and gender bias; and the development of separate friendship patterns. Perhaps a key finding is that lower tracked students sense a differential attitude toward themselves and consequently lower their own expectations (Ansalone, 2004). Belief in personal efficacy diminishes, and students have little incentive

to persevere in the face of difficulties (Noguera, 2003).

Lowe (2005) performed a research study to evaluate whether fifth grade students of highly qualified teachers would outperform fifth grade students of qualified teachers in reading achievement. An ANCOVA was utilized and covariates included ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Results did not reveal any significant differences between the students of highly qualified teachers and the students of qualified teachers for both the economically disadvantaged students and the minority students. However, Lowe did find that minority and economically disadvantaged student achievement decreased with the increased percentage of minority/economically disadvantaged enrollment regardless of teacher quality.

Robinson (2008) also made this discovery in her research. Robinson's study was to examine factors believed to affect reading achievement of ninth grade students with disabilities in intensive reading classes. The factors under study were the reading achievement of students with mild disabilities in classes taught by teachers who were highly qualified in reading (as defined by NCLB legislation), not highly qualified in reading, and teachers highly qualified in both reading and special education (distinguishing between traditional and alternate special education certification). In addition, student demographics and teacher demographics were analyzed as covariates to determine their effects on student achievement. Results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the reading achievement of students taught by the four classifications of qualified reading teachers. However, after controlling for their 8th grade FCAT scores, as the number of students with disabilities per HQ, HQAP, or HQP teacher increased, student reading achievement decreased.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES AND POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS

Kates and Klassen (2007) found that the single strongest predictor of job satisfaction in both regular and special education teachers was their collective efficacy to manage student discipline. Since many students with disabilities exhibit challenging behavior, it is important that teachers working with these students understand how to utilize positive behavior interventions. Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), which is based on Applied Behavioral Analysis, has been used for years to create individual behavior management plans for students with disabilities with very challenging behavior. It is now used as part of the Response to Intervention plans as a school-wide intervention in many schools across the nation. Positive Behavior Supports involve the use of:

> data-based accountability, an emphasis on broad outcomes reflecting lifestyle improvements, ecological and social validity, a collaborative approach to planning and implementation, and an emphasis on proactive interventions focusing on instructional and environmental redesign (Clarke & Dunlap, 2008).

In a longitudinal study in New Hampshire, results indicated that the 28 early childhood education programs and K-12 schools that participated reported a reduction of 6,010 office discipline referrals and 1,032 suspensions. In total, the schools reported recovering 864 days of teaching, 1,701 days of learning, and 571 days of leadership. Furthermore, they reported that the middle schools and high schools experienced the most benefit. Additionally, in the schools that implemented with fidelity, implementation was associated with academic gains in math.

Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, and Feinberg (2005) performed a study to determine the effects of PBS on discipline problems and

academic outcomes of students enrolled in an urban elementary school. The whole-school-model was designed with teachers and emphasized improving instructional methods, formulating behavioral expectations, increasing classroom activity engagement, reinforcing positive performance, and monitoring efficacy through data-based evaluation. The results depicted that over the course of several years, office referrals and suspensions decreased, and student reading and math gains were associated with the implementation of PBS. Additionally, Bohanon, Flannery, Malloy, and Fenning (2009) reported that in high schools using PBS general school expectations and interactions between students and teachers were improved. Furthermore, they reported that there was improved student behavior, school climate, and improved school completion rates including those students with high-incidence disabilities.

SUMMARY

Effective instructional practices for diverse students include heterogeneous grouping, computer assisted instruction, explicit instruction, phonemic awareness and phonics instruction, differentiated instruction, interactive teaching methods such as arts integration, and the use of positive behavior supports. All students can learn. Teachers need to learn how to effectively teach all students. Utilizing some of the practices above should raise a teacher's sense of self-efficacy in teaching students from diverse populations.

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MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS: ESSENTIALS FOR TODAY'S URBAN AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH

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Abstract: A mentorship program for urban African American youth can be a productive experience for all involved and can provide hope for African American youth who are experiencing challenges in schools and home. Thus, the purpose of this article is to (a) discuss the history and definition of mentorship; (b)discuss four advantages of a mentorship program and suggestions for organizing a mentorship program for urban youth and (c) share the results of one successful mentorship program.

The education of African American youths has captured national, state, and local attention. Concerns about educating African American children are not limited to a specific area since these concerns exist in rural, suburban, and urban areas throughout the United States. A major reason for the growing concerns about educating African American youth is the result of the high rates of incarceration and the achievement gap that exists between this group and their White peers (Hattery & Smith, 2007; Tilman, 2009). Nationally, African American students score significantly lower on the measures of academic success—standardized test, competency test, receive more high school certificates instead of high school diplomas (Lewis, Hancock, James, & Larke, 2008). In addition to these challenging statistics, the chances of African American students being taught by an African American teacher are almost non-existent (Larke, Larke, Webb-Johnson & Standish, 2008; Gay, Digus & Jackson, 2003; Irvine, 2009). In fact, in 2004, African American teachers accounted for about 8.8% of the elementary teachers and 7.5% of the secondary teachers in the United States (Milner, 2009).

Despite the horrendous statistics that seemed to pervade the educational experiences of African American students, there are programs that provide a possibility that these negative experiences can be transformed. One source of hope is through the development and implementation of a mentorship program (Burnette, 1995; Good, Halpin & Halpin, 2000). As such, the purpose of this article is to: (a) discuss the history and definition of mentorship; (b) discuss four advantages of a mentorship program and provide suggestions for organizing a mentorship program for urban youth and (c) share the results of one successful mentorship project.

HISTORY AND DEFINITION OF MENTORSHIP

History. Although Biblical research reveals that the mentoring concept began many centuries before Western thought (Alexander, 1978; Life Application Bible, 1988), most scholars have associated the development of the mentoring concept to the Greek word "mentor." Mentor means steadfast and enduring, according to Homer's book, *The Odyssey*, in which a character in the story was named Mentor who was a friend of Odysseus (Bey & Holmes, 1990; 1992). Odysseus

entrusted Mentor with the guidance and education of his son. However, in the seventeenth century, a writer name Fenelon retold the story and made the son and Mentor the main character and the concept became more highly associated with Western thought. Other writers used the concept in their work including Dante (Daniel, 1989). However, the fact remains that the mentoring concept had its beginning years before Western thought.

Definition. Mentoring is a highly complex process that involves people developing relationships that are both professional and personal. In many cases, the mentoring relationship produces life-long relationships. A mentor often is called a friend, a teacher, a counselor, a role model or someone who has a genuine care for another. The mentor encourages this special person to pursue life's goals to the fullest of their capacity (Larke, Patitu, Webb-Johnson, & Young-Hawkins, 1999). According to Sweeny (2006), the International Mentoring Association defines a mentoring relationship as a developmental relationship of a mentor and protégé which is characterized by confidentiality, trust, caring, and mutual support and challenge for growth. He further states that mentoring relationship creates the necessary context of safety and confidence for the mentor and protégé (mentee) to take the risks of trying new work strategies and of learning in front of each other and that . . . this context is necessary for accelerated professional growth" (Sweeny, 2006).

Advantages of a Mentorship Relationship

A mentorship relationship can be very positive for today's African American youths as indicated in the section discussing the case of one mentoring program . After reflecting over the past years of this program, we identify four advantages of a mentorship program and its impact on African American students. These four advantages are self-worth, opportunities to know professionals, academic growth and emotional support. Each advantage will be discussed below.

Self-Worth

The mentoring relationship will strengthen African American students ' feeling of self-worth. Having another adult to encourage African American youth can provide the extra support to build their self-confidence when they are faced with situations that are out of their control. For example, students often internalize school failure as, " I must be a "bad person or I must be a failure" rather than "I am a good person, but I did not use my ability in that academic situation." Self-worth can be enhanced by providing encouragement during difficult times within their lives.

Opportunity to Know Professionals

Since many African American professionals live in suburbia or selected urban neighborhoods, students often do not get the opportunity to share the same neighborhood with these prospective role models. A mentoring relationship can help to identify and to develop relationships with successful and caring African American professionals. The students get to know a professional with whom they can have a face-to face conversation and not just see them on "TV" or read about them in books or on computer sites such as "face book."

Academic Support

The relationship can provide the student with academic support that will encourage their success in elementary and secondary school and college. The current statistics show an overall decline in the number of African Americans males going to college. Simultaneously, the number of African Americans graduating from high school is increasing. Having a mentor can help to increase the num

ber of African Americans graduating from high school and attending college by monitoring school work and providing students with the "cultural capital" for passing state competency exams and getting the appropriate advising for college admissions requirements.

Emotional Support

African American students, like other students, are influenced by their peers. While positive peer support is important, having a mentor who can share experiences about peer pressure would provide them with nurturing and emotional support needed to overcome negative peer pressures. More importantly, students will benefit from the wisdom of a successful adult who can provide personal experiences about their life challenges in various situations and the impact of their decisions as a youth.

Organizing a Mentorship Program

A number of guidelines must be considered in organizing a mentorship program. These guidelines/suggestions include:

Locate Mentors

Solicit persons from your community who are willing to serve as mentors. Some organizations (sororities, fraternities, social clubs, church organizations, etc.) have service projects. Mentoring programs makes an excellent service project. Ask retired personnel such as teachers, military persons, and other professionals to serve as mentors. The relationship between a youth and a senior citizen can be enlightening for both involved. Being a mentor is a very time consuming task and sometimes can be emotionally draining, especially at times when the relationship is "rocky" or when the mentorship relationship is broken. Potential mentors must be made aware of situations that could affect their relationships in which neither the mentor nor African American youth have any control. Provide Training. Some types of formal training/guidance should be provided for the mentors before the meeting between the mentee and the mentor. Discussions should include such topics as: "What is a mentor?"; "Developing a mentoring relationship do's and don'ts"; "Suggestions for setting goals"; and "How to involve parents". Join professional mentoring organizations such as the International Mentoring Organization. Conduct electronic searches for training information and services.

Provide Seminars

In addition to an initial training session, organizers of the mentorship programs need scheduled times to discuss questions the mentors have regarding their relationship with the African American youths. Seminars should focus on such topics as: goal setting, career awareness information, college requirements, financial aid packets, job interviewing skills, etc. These seminars will provide mentors accurate information to share with their mentees.

Identify African American Youths

Use several means to identify African American youth who may be in need of mentorship. A built-in resource is the church, but do not forget about the youths who are involved in other community organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs. Conduct a neighborhood door to door visit or arrange a meet the mentor day at local housing areas. Meet with local educators (principals, teachers, superintendents and teacher's aides) to solicit names of African American youths.

Set Goals and Objectives

Have organized plans for your program. All students should set goals and objectives and provide timelines for meeting those goals and objectives. Provide enriching and cultural activities (i.e., educational trips to local college/ universities, museums, social trips to athletic events, museum tours, other educational facilities within the areas). When selecting to provide enrichment and cultural

activities, mentors should be mindful that some urban youth do not have financial or transportation means to attend these events and should plan accordingly.

The Story of One Successful Mentorship Program

In this section, we will share a description of a successful mentoring project that was designed to raise the awareness level of two African American males who were considering the possibility of becoming future elementary teachers. The program began almost twenty ago with the two African American males. And, today one of the African American males is a reading teacher in an urban elementary school. The other is enrolled in college to complete his degree in elementary education with emphasis in reading after a career as a contractor and real estate broker. We will share the history of the mentoring program that impacted these two African American males to seek a career as an elementary reading teacher.

In 1992, the authors were awarded a grant from Phi Delta Kappa to increase the awareness of African American males to seek a career as an elementary teacher (Larke & Larke, 1992). The project was entitled, "Minority Male Elementary Teachers: The Crisis of the Crisis (M-MET). M-MET involved a 15-month one-to-one mentoring relationship between two ninth grade African American males (mentees) who were twin brothers and two professors (one male and one female mentor) from a southwestern university. The goals of M-MET were:

- To provide experiences to develop African American males interest in becoming elementary teachers.
- To provide African American males with information regarding college requirements, financial incentives and academic preparation for seeking a career as elementary teachers.
- To provide African American males a one-to-one mentoring relationship with two educators that will continue after the grant.
- To provide a workshop for other African American males (12-20) about information on the education and health related issues for African American males.

Selection of M-MET Mentees. During the fall 1991, the two professors met the counselor of the high school to identify the possible participants and to share information about the purpose and objectives of M-MET. The guidance counselor selected two ninth grade males who had a B average and who indicated an interest in elementary education and needed the support of significant others to encourage them in their academics. Parents gave approval and the professors took the opportunity to mentor the participants. The mentors and mentees met weekly during the fifteen-month period. They participated in a variety of activities. These activities were:

- Formal meetings and field trips in the spring 1991, spring 1992 and summer 1992 to provide students academic information (high school and college requirements) and financial aid information and issues related to a career as an elementary teacher. These meetings were conducted on week-ends and weekdays while the mentees visited with the mentors. The mentor and mentees toured four colleges.
- Meeting and talking to inservice African American elementary and secondary teachers about their jobs.
- Self-esteem formal and informal talks to mentees to assist African American males

  in building higher self-esteem. The talks included such issues as: positive side posing cool; the burden of "acting White" and overcoming the odds that included conversations with successful African American males.

- Parental involvement activities to encourage parents to participate actively in the education of their children.

The project required each mentee to write an essay about "Why they wanted to be an elementary teacher." These were written when the mentees were ninth grade students. Here are excerpts from their essays.

Mentee A wrote:

> I want to be an elementary teacher because I love to work with kids. Kids are our future, and I think they need all the help and preparation they can get in order to do a good job of carrying on the worldly responsibilities. I want to be a teacher that kids look up to as someone "special.". . . I do not want to be a teacher that gets the kids at 8:30a.m. and leave before 3:30p.m. . . I think that I would be a caring person and also a caring teacher. I want to have a type of relationship with the kids where they would consider me as a "big brother" if necessary. On the other hand, I would like to have their respect as a teacher from a student, and I would give the same respect. I think that I would make a very good teacher because I would try to be sensitive to all of the children's needs.

Mentor B wrote:

> The reason I would like to be a teacher is because I enjoy working with other people and children. I think I am capable of establishing good personal and working relationships with students. I get along well with others; therefore, I feel that I can gain the confidence of young children and easily guide them into constructive activities. In addition to this, I believe that I can teach them daily assignments in a fun manner so they will not mind coming to school. . . I have heard that good teachers were good students and I think that I am a good student and a great person, therefore; I fee l that I will be a great teacher. . . I would like to think that I could be an asset to molding the life of some youngster that will become successful in the future, whether it is a teacher or whatever profession they decide to choose.

Now nineteen years later, Mentor A has returned to college and is working on his last eighteen hours of course work to complete his degree in Elementary Education with a reading emphasis. He attributes his returning to school to his mentors who continued to mentor him over the past nineteen years. He anticipates completing the degree within the next year.

Mentor B is a reading teacher in an urban school district. He has been teaching for ten years. He, too continues to be mentored by his mentors. He states that he has found his passion in teaching and enjoys working with his fifth grade students. When given opportunities to share his career path, he shares how the mentorship project helped him to pursue his calling as a teacher.

SUMMARY

Many successful African American professionals can identify with or relate to the support of a mentor. Mentorship can provide the stability and support that enables many African American youth to be successful. Undoubtedly, a mentorship program for African American youth can be a productive experience for all involved as noted in the case presented here. In many instances, African American professionals have a need to contribute "something back" to the African American community and this program provides this possibility.

Historically, African American teachers and ministers have served as mentors to African American youth. However, with the dwindling number of African American teachers, this mentoring relationship between African American teachers and African American youths is becoming almost non-existent for many African American youth in this country. African American youth are in desperate need of positive professional African American mentors, and a mentoring program will satisfy this need. Therefore, a mentorship program could inspire a new generation of African American youth to become professionals who could potentially impact future generations.

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Through the Looking Glass: Culturally Competent Transformative Learning for Early Childhood Teacher Educators

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Abstract: The challenge for today's early childhood teacher education programs is to provide effective preservice teacher preparation to meet the needs of twenty-first century multicultural student populations. Since the majority of teachers in the U.S. are white a major concern is the lack of multicultural education in preservice teacher education programs. Knowledge in the area of multicultural education is vitally important to creating equity and equality of education for all children. This article discusses the importance of multicultural education, cultural competence, transformative learning, professional development, and instructional practices in preparing future classroom teachers. Banks Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum Reform (2006), Blunt's Cultural Competence Model for Transformative Education (2007) and Burchum's Cultural Competence Model (2007) are highlighted as strong foundations that provide strategies to meet this challenge. Based on these frames, a proposed frame for teacher educators is presented to begin a transformative process for acquiring a strong multicultural knowledge base.

According to recent demographic patterns, the number of non-White children comprising the U.S. population will continue to increase. These demographic trends make it imperative for teachers to be knowledgeable of multicultural education concepts, especially since the overwhelming number of teachers in the U.S. are White (Merryfield, 2000; Barnes, 2006; Souto-Manning & Dice, 2007; Lim, Maxwell, Able-Boone, & Zimmer, 2009; Kidd, Sánchez & Thorpe, 2006; Gorski, 2009). To that point, Kunjufu (2002) cogently observes that the education of African American children is in the hands of "White women." To effectively create educational opportunities that provide all children with optimal learning experiences, teacher education programs will need to specifically address the crisis of cultural incongruence that may exist between the majority White teaching force and the growing number of non-White students.

Barnes (2006) notes that teacher education programs are still struggling with implementing effective multicultural competencies. In part, the challenge of implementing multicultural education in teacher education programs exists because of the lack of critical discourse on multicultural education that would help pre-service teachers engage in critical self reflection. Given these concerns, professors and administrators who prepare teacher educators need to develop a multicultural teacher education curriculum. A curriculum that focuses on multicultural education using critical multicultural education would provide prospective teachers with the knowledge needed to address the systemic inequalities that impact non-mainstream students. In addition, critical multicultural education would help these prospective educators to self reflect on how their life experiences have shaped their views of the world in ways that are incongruent with lower socioeconomic students from Black, Latino, Native American, and other historically marginalized groups (Au, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2000; and Smith, 1998, in Barnes, 2006). Given these issues it is essential higher education programs equip pre-service teachers to meet the challenge of teaching diverse groups of students in the twenty-first century and provide teacher educators with professional development in culturally competent transformative learning programs using multicultural education as the foundation for preparing pre-service teachers.

This article discusses the importance of multicultural education, cultural competence, transformative learning, professional development, and instructional practices in preparing future classroom teachers. Banks and Blunt's Cultural Competence Model for Transformative Education (2007) and Burchum's Cultural Competence Model (2007) are highlighted as strong foundations that provide strategies to meet this challenge. Based on these frames, a proposed strategy for teacher educators is presented to begin a transformative process

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Regarding college and university faculty, Merryfield (2000) suggests:

> We know very little about the ability of college and university faculty and other teacher educators to prepare teachers in multicultural and global education. Have the white, middle class, mostly male, fiftyish professors of education in the U.S. had even the minimal kind of experiences with diverse cultures? Do today's educators have the knowledge, skills and commitment to teach for equity and diversity either locally or globally? (p. 430

The above quote describes the dilemma facing teacher educators as they prepare pre-service teachers in the twenty-first century. In part, teacher educators have become deskilled in ways that are congruent with P-12 teachers. Using several new technological devices to track student learning in conjunction with prepackaged teaching materials in many cases, teacher educators have become technicians. McLaren (2007) writes, "Today, technocratic consciousness is looked upon as the new educational mechanism for generating classroom health. Teachers often give technocratic theories the benefit of doubt and exhibit at times an incredulous penchant for following instructions and deferring to the experts" (p. 237). Moreover teacher educators "dish out knowledge like fast food; burger specials arrive limp and overcooked from the Insight Kitchens of IBM, Xerox, and Enron" (p. 237). In their delivery of course content teacher educators focus more heavily on teaching technical skills than on giving students the ability to critically analyze the technical aspects of teaching. In doing so, there is no in-depth critique of the decisions that determine what knowledge is taught in schools.

Multicultural education in teacher preparation programs is left to a few courses that may not use a critical theoretical approach to understand the teaching and learning dynamics. In too many cases concepts like critical pedagogy, critical race theory, and the Afrocentric paradigm are unknown to teacher educators. As a result, pre-service teachers are not able to discern the systemic issues that prevent non-mainstream students from achieving at high levels. Even more problematic is that there is a fear among teacher educators and higher education administrators that critical discourse would create problems. Besides, many teacher educators argue that race, class, and culture have nothing to do with education. In this watered-down approach to teacher preparation, future pre-service teachers become merely gatekeepers perpetuating the same system of inequalities with more sophistication. Multicultural education then becomes mere moments to celebrate the foods, music, and cultural artifacts of diverse groups. The origin and purpose of multicultural education is thus lost and the critical approaches to multicultural education that could transform schools so that all children receive equality of education are sidelined (Pitre et. al, 2011).

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teacher educators need a culturally relevant knowledge base to develop sound instructional practices for pre-service teachers. To meet this

challenge, I believe that teacher educators must become analytical of themselves and other perspectives regarding multicultural education. As a teacher educator, I attended many seminars that provided weak strategies to address multicultural education in early childhood teacher education programs or pertinent research findings that fell on deaf ears. I commonly observed a sea of red faces and heard defensive questions from the audience. The seminar focus becomes defensive attitudes voicing the dominant perspective versus accepting the pertinent information presented and moving toward a resolution. I usually left those seminars with anxious feelings.

These experiences indicate teacher educators' "low comfortability levels" or fear of new knowledge (Dirkx, 2008). My experience as program reviewer of early childhood teacher education programs for the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) show a weak effort to align their programs to meet diversity guidelines. It appears to be a never-ending struggle. Why is that? I believe that in order for teacher educators to move forward with the challenge of ensuring the implementation of multicultural education into teacher preparation courses, the professional development must begin with self in regards to examining values and beliefs, any lack of cultural competence awareness, and the impact of this lack on instructional practices.

Jack Mezirow's (1997) transformative learning concept, which involves emotional and cognitive aspects, asserts that the act of moving from one set of cemented values and beliefs, biases, mindsets, to a different perspective is a movement towards self-examination, complexities, and critical reflection that brings a person to a new level of thinking that incurs action. Regarding the emotional component of transformative learning, John Dirkx (2008) proposes that emotions factor into adult learning in positive or negative contexts and that emotional issues may consciously or unconsciously impede adult learners from critical thinking. In his view, adult learners may feel intimidated or fearful of new knowledge or may have outside pressures that dissuade new learning. These feelings must be faced and worked out before adult learners can proceed to critical thinking and self reflection.

I agree with Dirkx's emotional aspect. Many White teacher educators, I believe, display defensiveness as a cloak for fear and intimidation. Cranton and King (2003) believe knowledge regarding teaching envelops self understanding and understanding of others and the norms of the organization, community, and the society of today. Further, their view of knowledge about teaching requires critical questioning and self reflection. King (2004) examined the emotional and cognitive sides of transformative learning through a study with a professor and pre-service teachers. The professor and pre-service teachers engaged in critical reflection and dialogue through active student learning and professor self reflection on instruction. King views this approach as "perspective transformation."

Genor and Schulte (2002) posit the challenge for teacher educators is to become self reflective about race and its implication for Whiteness as a dominant culture. Their essential argument is that self-study research begins within the context of one's work and requires the ability to recognize the value of personal experiences. Further, self study requires the willingness to make oneself vulnerable (Lunenberg & Willemse, 2006; Baum & King, 2006). This information suggests self study is a beginning step to a change in mindset. Given that values and beliefs, mindsets and biases are all a part of feelings and emotions (Dirkx, 2008), teacher educators must experience struggle within before understanding the significance of multicultural education as an essential part of teacher education.

There are some teacher educators in the literature who have engaged in self study and implementation of multicultural education in their instructional practices with pre-service teachers. In regards to self study, Milner (2010) offers transformative learning and social action as key elements for teacher educators . Gay (2002) proposes an infusion of multicultural education into the existing conventional teacher educator approach. Genor and Schulte (2002) review a critical reflection of a multicultural film. Zimmerman, McQueen, and Guy (2007) discuss their experience with "*positionality*" with pre-service teachers and self that connects their teaching. Gorski (2009) examines course syllabi for multicultural embedment, while, in regard to implanting course instruction that is culturally sensitive, Brock, Wallace, Herschbach, Johnson, Raikes, and Warren, et al. (2006) discuss a study initiated by teacher educators that examined teacher practices for effective literacy instruction of culturally diverse children. Hale, Snow-Gerono, and Morales (2008) present narrative, ethnographic tools, and writing as a method of educating teachers of culturally diverse children. Chen, Nimmo, and Fraser (2007) offer a self critical tool that provokes pre-service teachers into critical reflection regarding families and communities.

Kidd, Sánchez, and Thorpe (2006) engaged pre-service teachers in fieldwork to gather family stories, which allowed students to experience diverse cultural values. Combining text talk and culturally responsive teaching is another concept that allows pre-service teachers to engage children in thoughtful discussions beyond the content of a story (Conrad, Gong, Sipp, & Wright, 2004). Barnes shares instructional practices that include specific assignments on cultural and linguistic concepts that allows for a supportive learning environment for future teachers. Data was collected from five areas: a) an autobiographical poem and cultural artifact, b) cultural diversity awareness inventory, c) three book discussion groups, d) inquiry project, and e) structured field experience. The author's goal was for students to begin to self reflect. In the pre-field academic preparations, the course assignments, including, an autobiographical poem and a cultural artifact fostered student reflection.

Cultural Competence

Three culturally competent models that implicate transformative learning for professional development are Banks' Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum Reform (Transformative Approach, 2006), Blunt's Cultural Competence Model for Transformative Education (2007) and Burchum's Cultural Competence Model (as cited in Blunt, 2007.)

Banks' (2006) approach includes four levels: the Contributions Approach, the Additive Approach, the Transformative Approach, and the Social Action Approach. In essence, the Transformative and Social Action approaches show curriculum revised to include perspective taking regarding cultural diversity while the Social Action Approach fosters individuals as decision makers. Both approaches are positioned at the higher end of Banks' model.

Keisha Blunt (2007), a pre-service social worker, provides Blunt's Model of Cultural Competence for Transformative Education so that social work educators become knowledgeable in cultural competence enabling pre-service social workers to grapple with the challenges of values, belief systems, mindsets, and more in a safe and sensitive environment:

> This is a non-linear model that presents the fundamental role cultural competence as a basis for the construction of transformative education through relationships and environments. As a non-linear model, this suggests that the individual is able transverse the stages. (p. 104)

In other words, given reality, the educator will move back and forth through stages during the learning process. The educator may work to a stage of competence and regress due to a negative incident or situation that causes the educator to return momentarily to his or her original safe place before the transformative learning process began.

Blunt's model employs a six-level approach (Breakdown, Inability, Competence, Cognizant, Pre-transformative, and Suitability), each level building upon the previous and each aligned with a social work educator type (Slighting, Inefficient, Grasping, Sensitive, Adaptive, and Conducive).

Blunt (2007) describes Burchums's Perspectives Model as a non-linear evolutionary model that encompasses seven layers of cultural competence: cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural understanding, cultural sensitivity, cultural interaction, cultural skill, and cultural proficiency. Each layer builds on the other through proficiency.

All three models have solid cultural knowledge bases that allow teacher educators to self examine their comfortability levels and move through stages that transverse thought processes. Time and experiences within the process of cultural knowledge development allow the educator to feel comfortable incorporating new knowledge into their instructional practices and coursework. According to Blunt (2007), instructors and pre-service social workers must build cultural congruence with each other.

Early Childhood Teacher Educators and Culturally Competent Transformative Learning

Based on the previously discussed models, a proposed strategy for early childhood teacher educators can be put into three stages: *cultural inability*, *culturally cognitive*, and *culturally consistent* (see Table 1). The frame can be used as a guide for teacher educators to begin a journey of critical self reflection that moves their thinking to a culturally competent stance.

The *cultural inability stage* demonstrates that the teacher educator is stagnant in his or her beliefs and unaware of other ways to instruct. The mindset associated with this stage is a beginning place to self reflect. The *culturally cognitive stage* suggests that the teacher educator is aware of the influence that his or her values and beliefs have on instructional practices. At this point, the teacher educator's thinking becomes active and teaching strategies demonstrate a cultural knowledge base in his or her teaching. The *culturally consistent stage* signifies that the instructor is a facilitator for a cultural knowledge base and consistently seeks to improve or extend teaching strategies that foster a strong cultural knowledge base, thus providing a rising comfortability level.

The frame can be used as a self-reflective tool for teacher educator training. Teacher educators can reflect on their value and belief systems, engage in activities to raise their cultural consciousness, understand their comfortability levels with other views and how these impact course instruction, and begin to move toward perspective taking and embedding multicultural aspects into all coursework and fieldwork while evaluating their instruction. Teacher educators' interactions with pre-service teachers from diverse cultures or direct experiences with the unknown begin the cycle for perspective taking and becoming familiar with cultural norms and values different from their own.

Table 1. Stages of Transformative Thinking

Stage	Mindset	Action
Cultural Inability	My instructional practices are sound. I am uncomfortable with sensitive issues regarding perspectives other than mine. I have valid values and beliefs.	Traditional approach to instructional teaching practices. One perspective.
Culturally Cognitive	I know the importance of including culturally relevant content and practices in my instruction. I am aware of other perspectives. My role is to infuse critical thinking regarding other perspectives.	• Reflection: Where is my comfortability level regarding other values and belief systems? • Class Presentations of Values and Beliefs
Culturally Consistent	I must further investigate classroom instruction strategies that promote culturally competent knowledge for preservice teachers.	• Administer a multicultural survey to assess pre-service teachers' knowledge base. Use results as a guide for differentiated instruction that includes multiple perspectives. • Family story assignment • In class or online discussions that provoke perspective taking • Field experiences with diverse groups of children

CONCLUSION

Given the challenge for teacher educators to import culturally relevant practices into their programs, it is crucial that the educators engage in in-depth self study to examine their own values and belief systems. Culturally competent transformative learning as a part of professional development is crucial for early childhood teacher educators, and a strong knowledge base is provided by transformative learning theory along with the models proposed by Banks, Blunt, and Burcham. Cultural knowledge based on transformative learning is needed to effectively prepare pre-service teachers who will teach the children of the twenty-first century.

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CAN PRESERVICE TEACHERS BUILD COMMUNITY? YES, THROUGH POWERFUL LITERATURE!

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Abstract: Creating a classroom community is a critical component of a successful classroom experience, specifically, the teaching and learning that occurs. However, it is difficult to provide preservice teachers the opportunity to create a classroom community as they complete their field experiences where the environment is generally determined and established by the classroom teacher. This article presents a study of four preservice teachers that were given the opportunity to create a positive classroom community using children's literature in an urban summer program with public school students unlike themselves. University faculty and an on-site lead teacher supported the preservice teachers. The study revealed that the experience was valuable, and that the preservice teachers were able to use literature as a tool to help establish a positive community. The preservice teachers recognized and valued the positive the daily interactions with the students as a link to learning outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Preservice teachers must be afforded the opportunity to focus on the needs of their students in order to establish community in the classroom that is arguably a necessity for learning. Based upon that premise, many new teachers will begin their teaching career in urban schools, schools with students unlike themselves. Therefore, it is crucial that tomorrow's prospective teachers have the opportunity to develop classroom community while also developing a, "specialized knowledge of the lives and learning styles of the urban child, (having) first hand experiences in urban schools, and (developing) an understanding of the community from which the child comes" (Reed and Simon, 1991 p. 32). Through these appropriately structured experiences, the preservice teacher is more likely to graduate equipped to meet the needs of the students they will teach.

Generally, it is difficult to provide preservice teachers the opportunity to "create" classroom community as they complete their field experiences in a classroom where the community, or lack thereof, is established by the cooperating teacher. Therefore, an urban school enrichment program was designed to provide this opportunity for fourteen elementary pre-service teachers in the summer of 2009, reaching approximately 150 urban students in the third through fifth grade. The goal of the program was to provide for these pre-service teachers, an authentic experience in an urban setting structured as a non-evaluative environment, while simultaneously limiting the summer slide that many urban students experience because of academic inactivity during the summer months. This opportunity was designed to provide pre-service teachers with the experiences needed to become effective teachers of all children—not just children who look like them or come from the a similar socio-economic status. Specifically, this study was designed to examine the preservice teacher's perspective of the impact of creating the classroom environment through the use of preadolescent literature.

Teacher Preparation

Teachers in training need assistance in addressing issues of capability and comfort level as it relates to urban children and urban environments. Those charged with their preparation must consider the educational impact of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and economic differences that teachers face in urban environments (Sulentic Dowell, 2008). Admittedly, as Haberman (1993) suggests, teaching in urban environments is a different order of teaching for many people.

Haberman (2005) cites the "failed system of traditional teacher preparation" (p. 331) as contributing to the continuous teacher turnover currently plaguing the profession, and Darling-Hammond (2007) notes that "disparities in access to well-qualified teachers are large and growing worse" (p. 323). Recruiting, preparing, and retaining teachers for academically challenging and diverse situations is a dilemma for every institution involved in teacher preparation today (Thompson & Smith, 2005). The answer may lie in determining how best to integrate the pedagogy of teacher education that is empirically based while being practically oriented in order to graduate successful teachers committed to staying in the profession (Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006). Ultimately, in many urban communities the teacher is the last hope that some children have, so the proper preparation of these teachers is of the utmost importance. Preparing aspiring teachers to handle these rigors is a necessity.

In addition, it is difficult to provide all teacher education candidates authentic experiences in urban environments, experiences in which they have the opportunity to do more than teach isolated lessons. These same graduates are then hired to work in urban schools because these are typically the schools with the highest number of vacancies due to the attrition of teachers leaving the profession or being transferred to a better performing school with a different student demographic. It is not surprising that research suggests that less than 36% of all new teachers reported feeling "very well prepared" to implement curriculum and performance standards in the classroom (NCES, 1999) and that over 50% of new teachers in low-income schools will leave the profession in their first five years of teaching (Hare & Heap, 2001; Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003). This phenomenon means that children from low-income communities are likely to have teachers with little experience when what the students truly need are teachers who have high expectations, a caring demeanor, and knowledge about how to teach them. Students in urban communities need teachers who want to be there, are prepared to be there, and believe that children can learn no matter their circumstances (Wright, 1980).

Classroom Community

A classroom community may be defined as a classroom that promotes a "sense of connection to, being valued by, and having influence with their (the student's) classmates and teacher" (Schaps & Lewis, 1997, p. 14). Participating as a contributing member of a community is essential for the well-being and academic success of all students, especially early adolescents (Bickart, Jabion, & Dodge, 1999). Research shows that a strong sense of classroom community contributes to positive student outcomes (Schaps & Lewis, 1997).

Most educators would agree that a positive classroom community is directly linked to effective classroom management. A positive classroom community also helps create an environment in which students can be open to learning, care for themselves and others in the community, and solve problems in a productive manner. The community in the classroom is also directly connected to the way students think and learn, as Vygotsky's (1978) perspective was that students' interaction with one another helps them to process and internalize new information. The classroom community should be a place where learning is

reciprocal between teachers and student; community members agree to disagree or come to a consensus; historical dilemmas are examined, as well as societal inequities; and problems are identified as significant to the group (Sanchez, 2008).

However, a positive classroom community is generally not created automatically. It is the responsibility of the teacher to cultivate the classroom community in such a manner that students grow ethically, socially, and academically. If students experience the classroom as a caring, supportive place where there is a sense of belonging and everyone is valued and respected, they tend to participate more fully in the process of learning (Lumsden, 1994).

A positive classroom environment will likely result in a risk free learning environment that promotes student thinking, and stimulates personal expression of such thinking (Sanacore, 1997). As preservice teachers get to know their students and acknowledge their strengths, they can arouse motivation in students by highlighting these strengths within the classroom community and individually. Preservice teachers must learn to personalize each student's educational experience within the community, in order for students begin to discover their own strengths, work at improving their weaknesses, and start to feel better about themselves (Nelson, 1995). Preservice teachers can learn to help every student feel successful by paying attention to the strengths and giving options for assignments during their teaching time that allow for the students' strengths to be utilized. Instructional methods need to be incorporated to accommodate a variety of learning styles and backgrounds (Maheady, Mallette, & Harper, 1997).

The learning community facilitates interdependence, and the students are treated like partners in the learning endeavor, therefore they express more interest, take more responsibility, and are more interested in self-improvement. Specifically, in order for preservice teachers to create an environment for the young adolescent to be successful in the school classroom, a shared sense of community must exist. The students must feel connected to, valued by, and have influence with their peers and teacher.

Teaching and the Learning Environment

The classroom community is strongly linked to the learning environment, and ultimately to student achievement. A positive community allows educators the needed foundation to provide instruction that matches the content of the curriculum to the needs of the students. As preservice teachers understand that each student learns differently and commits to meeting their learning needs, they will be able recognize that building upon student strengths helps to meet areas of need in meaningful and productive ways. The preservice teacher will realize that most students will engage willingly when they feel that they have something meaningful to contribute (Turner and Meyer, 2000). The way students' perceive their educational experiences generally influences their motivation more than the actual, objective reality to those experiences (Anderman & Midgley, 1999).

The learning environment is made of the individual students in the class. Teachers must be in tune to the whole child in order to find the spark that will motivate each child. It is imperative that teachers get to know students individually, and make the students feel that their interactions are valued (Skinner & Belmont, 1991), as they impact the community as a whole. There are things that teachers can do to help create an atmosphere of learning and desire to learn through the use of appropriate literature. Teachers can set clear and consistent classroom expectations for performance and behavior (Skinner & Belmont, 1991) as the community is established through reading out

loud. Students should feel welcomed and supported, and an integral part of the classroom (Lumsden, 1994).

Students' attributions for failure are also important factors of the classroom community. When students have a history of school failure, it is particularly difficult for them to have a positive sense of self worth, which will impact the classroom community (Anderman & Midgley, 1999). These learners must be made to feel a valued part of the classroom by protecting their self-confidence helping them to avoid experiences of incompetence (Moriarty, Pavelonis, Pellouchoud, & Wilson, 2001). Encouraging a student's self-worth and natural abilities in order to have engaged and motivated individuals is essential to a positive classroom community.

Rogers and Renard (1999) cited several strategies to help students feel that the classroom is a meaningful place to be. One way is for teachers to use literature to invite students to discover and share ways that the content is relevant to their lives. Reading instruction that focuses on rich literature integration allows for deep conversations which can result in helping students feel personally heard, known and respected. Carefully selected literature for the young adolescent can be the foundation of establishing trust that allows the students to exhibit care and concern for each other, their environment, and ultimately for their learning.

THE VEHICLE

In the summer of 2009, fourteen elementary pre-service teachers served as classroom teachers in an urban school enrichment program for approximately 150 urban students in the third through fifth grade. This study examined the development of the classroom environment on the four of the pre-service teacher participants that were identified to teach reading. The summer enrichment program was conducted for thirteen days over the course of four weeks. The 150 third, fourth and fifth grades were placed in classrooms by grade level and gender. The students rotated through the content areas in order to have one hour of instruction in reading, math, and science each day with additional time spent in art and character education. Each pre-service teacher had total autonomy over their classroom with assistance from professors and in-service/lead teachers.

The goal of the program was to provide the pre-service teachers an authentic experience in an urban setting in a non-evaluative environment while simultaneously limiting the summer slide that many urban students experience because of academic inactivity during the summer months. This opportunity was designed to provide pre-service teachers with the experiences needed to become effective teachers of all children. The pre-service teachers participating in the teaching of reading were scheduled to student teach the following semester and all of the pre-service teachers were compensated for their participation in this program.

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

The upcoming summer program was presented to the methods' students during the spring 2009 semester. The students interested in participating completed an application. From that application, the reading method's instructor selected the four female preservice teachers she determined would best meet the needs of the program in terms of teaching reading. Those selected were strong students in the reading courses, had good field evaluations, and had demonstrated the dispositions needed to be both a student and teacher in this particular setting.

One goal of the program was to provide for each pre-service teacher as much useful knowledge as possible and to ensure that the experience did not do more harm than good by confirming any preconceived notions or negative stereotypical beliefs that many people hold about students from urban communities

(Gomez, 1996; Haberman & Post, 1992). For this reason, an experienced teacher of reading or lead teacher, with experience working with children from urban schools mentored the pre-service teachers during the enrichment program. It was the job of this professional to have discussions with the pre-service teachers to assist them in understanding some of the behaviors and norms of the students they were teaching as well as to guide them in their planning and instructional techniques. The lead teacher was selected based on her demonstrated excellence in teaching and ability to act as a lead teacher through her involvement with reading faculty through district professional development; by participating in other university and school district partnership programs; and by obtaining a Reading Specialist certification through the sponsoring University. In addition, the university reading faculty visited each classroom on a weekly basis to provide support to the pre-service teachers.

Teaching of Reading to Develop Classroom Community

Reading instruction can be a powerful vehicle for creating a positive classroom community, specifically through the use literature and poetry written for the young adolescent. Using appropriate text can help establish a positive classroom, and can be used throughout the year to develop various dimensions of the classroom environment. A positive classroom community helps a teacher create experiences that are common and predictable, which promote a classroom connection. The preservice teachers were taught how to use reading aloud and sharing poetry to build both reading strategies for the students while simultaneously developing the classroom community.

University reading faculty members provided the professional development regarding the teaching of reading to both the preservice teachers and the lead teacher. The decision was made to focus on the affective aspect of reading, to build a community of readers by fostering a love of reading, hopefully impacting student achievement as students' developed a desire to read.

Through the professional development, pre-service teachers were encouraged to use the reading block to develop classroom community, while examining the role of each individual student as a valued member of the community. The professional development was structured around using literature for the young adolescent to help develop classroom community in various ways. This begins with developing authentic, engaging, and pertinent lessons as a critical first step. Selecting the appropriate text for specific needs so students feel like what they are learning and discussing really matters and relates to their lives was also presented as critical to successful lesson implementation.

Other components of the professional development addressed read alouds and shared reading and the premise of these is the active participation of the students. It was critical that the preservice teachers understood that in participatory classroom communities, along with teacher demonstrations, students are allowed time to share and the teacher listens to students and acts as a model by teaching students how to appropriately listen and respond to their classmates (Sanchez, 2008). Following the professional development the preservice teachers worked to develop the participatory classroom through read aloud and shared reading experiences. The intent was to build a community that exudes, "we are all teachers and learners" in the classroom, respecting varying opinions and learning from different perspectives.

Each preservice teacher was given a set of books (see Table 1) and poems (see Table 2) to use to develop their lessons. Preservice teachers were also encouraged to use additional texts they found to teach the concepts of the lessons. The inservice teacher was available to offer suggestions on other texts and resources.

Table 1. Books Used to Build Community and Teach Reading

Title	Author	Community Objective
Chicken Sunday	Patricia Polacco	Diligence and Honesty
Mr. Lincoln's Way	Patricia Polacco	Racism and Bullying
The Butterfly	Patricia Polacco	Compassion, Respect, Friendship
Thank You, Mr. Faulker	Patricia Polacco	Bullying and Never Giving Up
Pink and Say	Patricia Polacco	Friendship
Uncle Jed's Barbershop	Margaret King Mitchell	Dedication and Determination
Mr. Peabody's Apples	Madonna	Choosing Words Carefully
Salt in His Shoes	Michael Jordan	Goals/Dreams and Determination

Table 2. Poems Used to Build Community and Teach Reading

Title	Author	Community Objective
Life Is A Gift	Mother Teresa	Never Giving Up
RESPECT	Unknown	Respect
Can't you take a joke, kid?	Harold Jarche	Choosing words carefully, bullying
Future Plans	Useni Eugene Perkins	Self-acceptance
For Peace Sake	Cedric McClester	Friendship, Racism
Dreams	Langston Hughes	Goals/Dreams and Determination
Your World	Georgia Douglas Johnson	Perseverance

LITERATURE LESSONS

Developing authentic lessons based on the needs of the classroom community is a strategy the preservice teachers welcomed. For example, one of the preservice teachers who had a group of third grade girls, used the poem *Who Am I* by Kali Grosvenor as her shared reading on the first day of class. "Girl Power" was her theme, which the students saw as they came into the classroom via the decorated door. As the students worked on developing fluency, they enjoyed chanting the poem together and simultaneously developing a sense of pride in who they were as a group of girls on the first day of the summer program. The preservice teacher brought in the song "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," which she also used to follow up with the fluency objective and helped further develop the community on the first day of class.

Revealing your own emotions as a teacher as you read various texts aloud also helps develop the classroom community(Sanchez, 2008). The students realized that the preservice teachers

were a real people, with thoughts and feelings, and began trusting them in that light. As the preservice teachers read aloud texts such as *Chicken Sunday* and *Pink and Say*, both by Patricia Polacco, they conducted think alouds, making text- to-self connections with the characters in the text. These connections were intentional in helping the students hear what a "good reader" thinks while reading, and also intentionally focused on building the classroom community. For example, when a character in the text was angry, disappointed, happy, or excited the preservice teachers talked out loud about what they were thinking in effort to show the students how to discuss those emotions and how to appropriately deal with them. Conversations ensued with the students regarding specific situations they dealt with where these emotions were revealed, how they handled the emotions at the time, and how they may change their behavior in the future.

By celebrating, honoring, and respecting differences of the characters in texts, teachers lay the foundations for recognizing and respecting individual differences within the classroom community (Sanchez, 2008). The preservice teachers worked to help the students realize that it is the power of each individual in the class that orchestrates the dynamics of the classroom community. The students were lead to realize that it is up to them to accept each person for who they are and capitalize on the differences and strengths for the betterment of the community. The preservice candidates read texts to help the students make these realizations. For example, in Sally Hobart's, *She Touched the World: Laura Bridgman, Deaf-Blind Pioneer*, students learn how in the 1830's, a blind girl changed history as she overcame severe disabilities. Ultimately, Laura changed a history she would never know as she taught Annie Sullivan, the future teacher of Helen Keller. The text was a powerful way to teach students that the disabilities that a person has can be used in positive ways, especially as a (classroom) community comes together to offer support.

Using literature that helps to build a trusting relationship within the community may be one of the most critical elements in a classroom (Schaps & Lewis, 1997). Building trust does not mean that everyone in the class must share everything, or that honesty should not be central focus to the trusting each other, even when the truth may not be what everyone wants to hear. The preservice teachers read Patricia Polacco's wonderful stories for the young adolescent to help build community in the classroom. For example, *Thank you, Mr. Faulker,* a story about a fifth grade struggling reader as she builds an incredible trusting relationship with a teacher sent a powerful message to the students regarding the connection between a teacher and student in relation to their emotional, social, and academic growth.

Students were allowed time to discuss, analyze, and reflect on the readings in small groups or pairs, and/or to create responses to the literature with a partner or group, in order to facilitate community. The class community was strengthened as interdependence was established within the group. The strengths of individual students were once again highlighted in the context of the larger group as specific roles and responsibilities are carried out. Students were recognized, valued, and strengthened as challenges were faced and dealt with throughout the collaboration.

Data Based Discussion

University Faculty

In addition to providing the initial professional development, two university reading faculty regularly visited, observed, and conferred with the four reading preservice teachers. The university faculty made suggestions to the preservice teachers regarding both content and specific behaviors that would help contribute to a positive community.

These classroom visits revealed that, though the preservice teachers needed some guidance, they were all trying to develop the community. Three of the four were obviously experiencing success. Evidence of the success included the preservice teachers being excited about what they were teaching, listening to their students' remarks, allowing the students to have conversations with the teacher and with each other, and treating the students with dignity and respect. The preservice teachers did a good job of using the texts they were reading aloud to emphasize positive character traits and problem solving techniques. Discipline with dignity was prevalent as the students were talked with calmly and quietly when they were not behaving appropriately. The preservice teacher that seemed to be having a difficult time establishing community spent most of the observed day sitting behind the desk, immediately putting a barrier between her and the students.

Lead Teacher

The four preservice reading teachers met each morning to discuss challenges and triumphs with the lead teacher. The preservice teachers used this time to plan together, share ideas, and strategize on how to best meet the needs of their students. In addition, the lead teacher facilitated conversations specifically regarding the classroom environment in relation to teaching the content, and the classroom management and organization.

The lead teacher regularly emailed and conversed with the university faculty regarding the progress of the preservice teachers. Throughout the experience, the lead teacher reported that, based on classroom observations, it could be postulated that three out of four of the preservice teachers were effectively developing a classroom community in which the students wanted to be active participants. They were developing meaningful relationships with the students through their reading activities as the students made text-to-self connections, especially in relation to their feelings and self-esteem. The students appeared "excited" to be active participants in the reading class.

According to the lead teacher, the fourth preservice teacher had a difficult time developing the classroom community. A (preservice) teacher – student relationship was not apparent, as the students did not seem excited to be a part of the class. The lead teacher conferred with the preservice teacher daily to provide ideas and support. The reading faculty also attempted to intervene by providing additional classroom visits to support the preservice teacher. According to reports from the preservice teacher, she had a health condition that was taking a toll on her daily well-being, and she didn't have the energy needed to spend more time planning lessons that would contribute to developing the classroom community.

Preservice Teachers

A focus group meeting was held with the preservice teachers of reading at the conclusion of the summer program. Informal conversations were held regarding their perceptions of teaching reading and building classroom community. The preservice teachers felt as if their daily instruction did help prevent the "summer slide" as they provided the students with daily opportunities to interact with text. They felt their instruction was effective and that they had accomplished their goal of developing a community of learners. They believed this was evident because the students were active participants in the learning community. The preservice teachers did not think of themselves as "different" from the students they were teaching, saying that they were just teaching children.

The preservice teachers reported the effectiveness of using think alouds to build character. The students reportedly came in the classroom eager to participate. They used the strategy "think-pair-share" to allow the students time to talk with each other. They reported operating on the theme, "we are all teachers and learners," as they encouraged the

students to make thoughtful responses, and took time to listen to the responses. The preservice teachers reported minimal classroom management problems, as the students were actively engaged in meaningful reading activities. The songs, chants, and choral reading were perceived as "fun" fluency activities, and the read alouds captured the minds and hearts of the students.

Though the preservice teachers did allude to occasional struggles, specifically regarding a text perceived as "boring" by the students, or a behavior challenge, they felt that the community they established helped to minimize the disruption, and allow the students to take ownership in solving the problems. For example, the theme of fairy tales was not well received by the class of fifth grade boys so they made a suggestion as to what books and poems they would like their teacher to read. Another example given was when a student became a behavior problem, they were given a structured choice as to correcting their behavior and remaining part of the community or being removed from the community to an isolated part of the classroom. Amazing to the preservice teachers, the simple opportunity for the students to make a choice revealed that they wanted to remain a part of the community.

Finally, the preservice teachers valued the opportunity to be a "real teacher." From the set up of their classroom, to planning for instruction, gathering materials, and teaching, which was all dependent on the classroom community, the preservice teachers reported the experience as valuable to their preparation. As they had gender based classrooms, smaller numbers of students than during the school year, and support from a lead teacher and university faculty, they realized the value of building a positive classroom community as central to the teaching and learning of students, and the role that reading instruction could play.

CONCLUSIONS

Generally, students want to be in an environment that empowers them to make choices. They want to learn, perform, and be successful. Though most students do not want to do badly, they will avoid doing anything at all if they feel like a failure. Preservice teachers need the opportunity to facilitate a learning environment that helps students realize their potential. They need to learn how to show students that they can make a difference in their environment and become competent problem solvers (Shcunk & Cutshall, 1997). Preservice teachers also need the opportunity to see how using reading materials can help facilitate the development of the classroom community. Developing the community should not be viewed as an isolated event, rather interwoven throughout the entire school day.

Preservice teachers must learn to maximize the community in their classroom to facilitate learning. Students must be seen as members of the community that are central to the process of building a community; therefore the community will likely change with each group of students, as a community is based around the shared interests, values, and goals of its members. Changes may also result in the teacher and students within a given time period that causes the community to change. Therefore, it is central to continually focus on the process of building community, as it is dynamic process that requires attention in order to for everyone to reap the benefits.

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THE IMPACT OF LITERACY-FOCUSED CURRICULUM ON LITERACY OUTCOMES OF PRE-K HEAD START CLASSROOMS IN AN URBAN SETTING

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Abstract: This study examines the effects of two literacy-focused pre-kindergarten curricula on developing literacy skills among young children in an urban Head Start setting. *Success for Life: Success Through Academics and Reading* (STAR) (Success for Life, 2000) and *Language Enrichment and Activities Program* (LEAP) (LEAP, 2008) were used with 15 Head Start classrooms. Each program is considered developmentally appropriate, uses literacy based activities within their ongoing design, and utilizes a mentoring support system for teachers. Effects of the study revealed statistically significant scores for children who participated with the STAR and LEAP programs. Student outcomes were measured using the *Developmental Skills Checklist* (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1990) in five major areas (math concepts, letter knowledge, phonological awareness, print concepts and pre reading skills). Mentor support was assessed with the *Mentor Teacher Curriculum Implementation Support Measure* (Brown, 2002). All children in the treatment groups made significant gains suggesting that literacy-focused curriculum that uses a mentoring support system can improve literacy skills among young children in urban Head Start settings.

A growing body of literature has demonstrated the importance of children developing early reading and literacy skills, before formal education begins. In fact, how well children learn to master key literacy skills (i.e. the ability to speak, read, and write) will influence how successful they will be in other academic areas (Hawken, Johnston, & McDonnell, 2005; Hart & Riesley, 2000; Missall, Reschly, Betts, McConnell, Heistad, Pickart, et.al., 2007). Learning environments rich in print, reading materials, and print resources provide young children with a solid foundation to build reading and literacy skills that will positively influence all areas of academic achievement (Hunter, 2000; Wayne, DiCarlo, Burts, Benedict, 2007). Children who are ready to read in first grade, who develop vocabulary and reading interest are successful in school activities and are less prone to grade failure. Language and vocabulary accomplishment at age three are predictive of language and reading performance at age nine. Rich vocabulary and good comprehension skills are directly related to early literacy learning and success in school (Hart & Riesley, 2000).

Snow, Burns, & Griffin, P. (1998) reported that most reading difficulties can be prevented, and that excellent instruction is the best intervention for children who demonstrate problems in learning to read. The Children's Learning Institute (2008) identified a number of evidenced-based principles supporting classroom and home reading experiences. Preschool programs also were found to be particularly beneficial for children who experience limited reading opportunities in the home (Campbell & Ramey, 1995; Rush, 1999). Reading experiences with family members support later school-based reading and positively influences children's reading achievement (Baker, Scher, & Mackler, 1997; Neuman, 1996; Weigel, Lowman, & Martin, 2007). Children's reading skills significantly improve as they develop letter-name knowledge and phonemic awareness skills (Phillips, Norris, & Mason, 1996; Hunter, 2000; Manning & Kato, 2006).

Literacy experiences are particularly relevant for children involved in urban Head Start centers. Families report a lack of knowledge regarding the necessity for literacy training in the home which may cause them to shy away from using community organizations such as the city library. Specifically, families cite reasons such as a fear of damaging books, lack of transportation to the library, or no recognition of the need. (Nespeca, 1995).

This study investigates two literacy-based preschool programs that were implemented among urban children enrolled at Head Start of Greater Dallas, Inc. The two programs, *Language Enrichment and Activities Program* (LEAP) (LEAP, 2008) and *Success for Life: Success Though Academics and Reading* (STAR) (Success for Life, 2000) were used with fifteen Head Start classes to create a stronger foundation for later reading experiences and academic success in school. The following research questions guided the investigation.

1. Do specialized professional development and curriculum support significantly impact urban Head Start children's pre-reading skills as measured by the Developing Skills Checklist?
2. Do specialized professional development and curriculum support impact urban Head Start teacher's classroom practices as measured by the Mentor Teacher Curriculum Support Measure and the structured interviews of Head Start target teachers?

Method

Setting

All sessions occurred within fifteen classes of Head Start of Greater Dallas, Inc. which serves over four thousand children in Dallas County, Dallas, Texas an urban metropolitan city in the southwest. The Head Start program seeks to address each child's nutritional, health, physical, self-esteem, and pre-reading skills Children served in the Head Start program qualify for services by meeting federal poverty guidelines (Head Start of Greater Dallas, 2009). Classrooms involved in this study included children with and without disabilities between 3 and 5.5 years old.

Control Group Setting

The control group received normal curricular experiences adopted by Head start of Greater Dallas, Inc. Classroom planning was based in developmentally appropriate methodology. Teachers received support from the agency specialist who provided some expertise in general literacy skills. Children in the control classrooms were 27.6% Spanish language dominant.

Treatment Group Settings

Two groups of classrooms received one of two literacy based curricula (i.e. *LEAP AND STAR).* Both programs were based in developmentally appropriate practice. Each emphasized literacy-based skills and included a mentoring support system in addition to an agency specialist. Children in the LEAP and STAR classrooms were 8% and 19.6% Spanish language dominant respectively.

Participants

Participants in this study included teachers who implemented the literacy-based curriculum models, children who were enrolled in the individual classrooms participating in the study, and mentors who advised teachers.

Teachers

Two groups of teachers participated within this study (i.e., control group and treatment group). Teachers in the treatment group revealed a mean of 10.7 years of teaching experience while control sites rendered a mean of 6.8 years

of experience as a Head Start teacher. Teachers in the treatment sites had at least four more years of teaching experience than teachers in

the control sites. The range of teaching experience for treatment teachers was from one to twenty years. In contrast, teaching experience for control teachers was from one to fifteen years.

Demographic data revealed that 20% of the teachers held a bachelor's degree while 10% held an Associate's degree. However, the largest percentage of teachers, 30%, held Child Development Associate (CDA) certificates and 40% held only the high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) certificate.

Children

One hundred sixty-three children participated in this study. Of this group 52% were male and 48% were female. The largest percentage of children in the study was Hispanic (68%), followed by African-American (29%), and other ethnic groups including Caucasian, Vietnamese, and American-Indian (3%). The age of children in the study varied from 3.0 to 5.5 years. The largest group was 5.0 years (64%), followed by 5.1 to 5.5 years (34%), and 3.0 to 4.0 years (2%). Table 1 describes the language, ethnicity, chronological ages, and gender demographics for the children involved in the study.

Families of children in the study had varying levels of educational attainment. In the control group 62% of families reported no GED or high school diploma, 28% reported holding a GED or high school diploma, and 15% reported some college. In the STAR treatment group 57% reported no GED or high school diploma, 39% reported holding a GED or high school diploma, and 17% reported some college. In the LEAP treatment group 47% reported no GED or high school diploma, 67% reported holding a GED or high school diploma, and 7% reported some college.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Children (N=163)

Characteristic	N	%
Predominant Language		
English	73	45.00
Spanish	90	55.00
Vietnamese	1	
Unknown	2	
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	111	68.00
African American	48	29.00
Caucasian	2	0.01
Vietnamese	1	0.00
Biracial	2	0.00
Unknown		
Chronological Age		
3.0-4.0	4	0.02
4.1-5.0	103	64.00
5.1-5.5	55	34.00
Gender		
Male	86	52
Female	79	48
Unknown	1	1

Mentors

Mentors were selected by Head Start administrative personnel based on willingness to serve in a mentor-mentee role and demonstrated teacher effectiveness in prior Head Start teaching experiences. Mentors served as guides and counsel for treatment teachers as they navigated curriculum implementation throughout the school year.

MATERIALS

The treatment teachers in this investigation utilized two literacy focused preschool curricula. A description of each curriculum is provided below.

Success For Life

Success For Life: Success Through Academics and Reading (STAR) is a research-based pre-reading program that is aligned with the Texas

Pre-K Guidelines and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. It includes eight key areas of study (i.e., literacy, math, science, music and the arts, health and wellness, social studies, technology and character education) (Success for Life, 2000).

STAR literacy skill development is organized around individual lessons with teachers using guided conversation to help children achieve the lesson objectives. Lessons occur five times a week in a sequential fashion. To enhance comprehension skills, teachers utilize prediction and questioning methods. Students are encouraged to associate authors with stories and expand their knowledge of literary forms.

STAR also offers mathematical instruction based on a range of mathematical concepts (i.e., number operations, problem solving, and measurement, etc.). As the concepts are introduced, language development is embedded within the teaching plan. The use of concrete objects and manipulatives to teach math concepts helps to further cement language development.

The STAR program provides a minimum of five days of professional staff development throughout the program year, bi-weekly mentor teacher supervision, and consultation in classrooms. STAR emphasizes scaffolding in teacher training, and professional trainers work with small groups in developing skills. Training is provided in the following areas: STAR program implementation and field site coordination, pre-reading and literacy development for pre-kindergarten children, science and math to enhance pre-reading development, music and creative arts to enhance pre-reading development, assessment of pre-reading skills, and developmental and neuroscience research supporting pre-reading skills. By discussing relevant research, teachers learn why certain strategies and activities benefit children. Trainers model teaching behaviors and teach effective classroom practices.

Language Enrichment and Activities Program (LEAP).

The Language Enrichment and Activities Program (LEAP) curriculum is a multi-sensory language program focusing on the pre-academic skills in oral and written language.

Specific components of the LEAP program include:

Language with Stories (listening with a purpose)
Language with Words (expressive language)
Language with Sounds (phonological awareness)
Language with Letters (alphabet)
Language with Ideas (concept development)
Language with Motor Development (pre-writing fine motor development)
Language with Math and Science (predict, explore, conclude)

The program is based on read-alouds from books and language activities embedded within the ongoing daily preschool schedule. Games and pictures are used for building language skills. Teachers are trained to talk with children regularly using standard grammar and expressive vocabulary. Word games, nursery rhymes, fairy tales, and creative play are utilized with environmental print, literature, writing, and language experience charts to foster language skills and print awareness.

LEAP mathematical development emphasizes numbers and operations, patterns, geometry, measurement, classification and data collection. Each skill is embedded within activities that are consistent with the child's developmental level (LEAP, 2008).

The following instruments were used during implementation of the two literacy focused curriculum to measure children's progress.

Developing Skills Checklist (DSC) (CTB/ McGraw-Hill, 1990).

The DSC is a norm referenced test that contains five subscales and a total pre-reading score. Administration time is approximately 10-15 minutes for each subscale. The DSC is a comprehensive assessment package that measures a full range of skills and behaviors that are typically developed between preschool and first grade. The following skills are measured: math concepts and operations, letter knowledge, phonological awareness, print concepts, and pre-reading. The DSC also measures social and emotional skills, fine and gross motor development. The DSC contains national norms for children four to six years of age and shows strong reliability, content, and construct validity.

Mentor Teacher Curriculum Implementation Support Measure (MTCISM) (Brown, 2002).

The teacher fidelity measure is designed to gather information about the type and intensity of instructional support provided by the mentor teacher. Types of information include: materials provided by mentor; description of classroom context; observations and suggestions for classroom enhancement; suggested follow-up activities; as well as specific activities observed including literacy, math, science, technology, creative arts, and small and large group activities.

Procedures

Fifteen teachers working within Greater Head Start of Dallas, Inc. were randomly selected to participate in the present study. They were randomly assigned the task of implementing the STAR or LEAP literacy-based curriculum program within their classrooms. The treatment groups (STAR or LEAP) comprised 96 children. The control group was comprised of 67 children. Children within the STAR, LEAP, and control classrooms participated in the project over a nine-month time period (September thru May).

Curriculum consultants provided by Language Enrichment and Activities Program (LEAP) and Success for Life: Success Through Academics and Reading (STAR) provided training to target teachers associated with each corresponding curricula program. On-site training was provided during some of the training while most training was provided during large groups in centralized locations. Mentor teachers provided ongoing curriculum support and technical assistance to each target teacher. Training occurred for teachers in both programs prior to implementation of the project and during the treatment phase.

In the ninth month of the project, children were individually measured using the *Developing Skills Checklist (DSC) (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1990).* Trained examiners administered the test.

The Mentor Teacher Curriculum Implementation Support Measure (MTCISM) (Brown, 2002) was used at the end of the project to assess the effectiveness of the mentor teacher support system during the project.

Means and standard deviations were generated among the control, LEAP, and STAR groups on each measure of the DSC checklist. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine the emerging statistical patterns between the control, LEAP, and STAR groups on each element of the DSC checklist.

Results

Child-based Outcomes

Results of the study revealed that children in the LEAP and STAR treatment classrooms scored significantly higher than the control classroom. The LEAP treatment classrooms showed scores (M=64.92; SD=20.55) on the total pre-reading subscale. STAR classroom showed scores (M=39.25; SD=21.46). Table 2 describes mean and standard deviations for each variable.

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations for Control, LEAP, and STAR Literacy-Based Curricula and Five Dependent Variable

Variable	Control		LEAP		STAR	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Math Concepts	14.7	10.47	23.12	7.42	15.03	8.92
Letter Recognition	7.49	8.28	16.17	8.22	7.64	6.12
Phonological Awareness	6.86	6.22	12.15	4.96	6.80	4.52
Print Concepts	7.73	5.78	13.47	3.74	9.96	4.63

The first research question of this study dealt with the impact of specialized professional development and curriculum support on Head Start children's pre-reading skills as measured by the DSC. Statistical results support the use of specialized professional development and curriculum support to increase pre-reading skills in Head Start outcomes. Overall findings from the analyses were favorable for children receiving one of the two literacy-based curricula (LEAP or STAR). ANOVA results showed statistically relevant developmental skill gain in the areas of math concepts, letter recognition, auditory processing, print concepts, and overall pre-reading skills. Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of Variance for Effects of Literacy Based Curricula on Five-Dependent Variables

Variable and Source	df	SS	MS	E
Math Concepts				
Between Groups	2	2,076.961	1,038.481	12.036*
Within Groups	162	13,977.573	86.281	
Letter Recognition				
Between Groups	2	2,248.584	1,124.292	19.465*
Within Groups	162	9,357.131	57.760	
Phonological Awareness				
Between Groups	2	856.754	428.377	14.722*
Within Groups	162	4,713.946	29.098	
Print Concepts				
Between Groups	2	834.486	417.243	16.914*
Within Groups	162	3,996.317	24.669	
Total Pre-Reading Scores				
Between Groups	2	22,883.815	11,441.908	19.481*
Within Groups	162	95,149.122	587.340	

*p < .0000

Teacher Outcomes

The second overarching research question of this study was: What is the impact of a professional development training program and ongoing instructional support by mentor teachers on Head Start teachers' classroom and instructional practices? Ten target teachers were randomly selected from the group of treatment teachers to participate in a structured interview by researchers. Questions examined the nature of the training and its impact on classroom practices, development of print-rich environments, the use of instructional materials, teacher-child interactions, and problems and challenges encountered in implementation of the literacy curriculum. Interviews ranged from 20 to 40 minutes and were recorded on audiotape. A skilled typist transcribed the tapes which yielded 40 pages of narrative text. Transcripts were color-coded and arranged by respondent program type. The evidence from narrative data strongly supported the use of mentor teachers in providing ongoing instructional support. Data was analyzed using the constant comparative method (Denzin & Lincoln, 2007).

Teacher interview questions focused on the impact of training on classroom practices, the use of instructional materials and strategies, and professional development opportunities. Interviews were transcribed and coded around emerging themes that were clustered. An analysis of the preliminary data suggests that treatment target teachers endorsed the LEAP and STAR intervention curricula. Teachers were extremely pleased with mentor teacher support. Mentors modeled activities and provided instructional materials and provided ongoing technical assistance to develop a print-rich classroom. Additionally, they demonstrated different methods for using instructional materials to teachers. Teachers recommended that mentoring support continue.

The MTCISM showed teacher progress in five areas:

(a) conducting read-alouds to children,

(b) developing questioning skills of children,

(c) designing literacy centers and print-rich environments,

(d) using literature to promote literacy in young children, and

(e) progress in the use of math manipulatives to promote math literacy.

Teacher interviews and mentor observation reports suggest that teachers' instructional skills and practices increased as a result of participating in the intervention programs. Feedback from teachers are listed in Table 4.

Interview data suggests that Head Start teachers are highly motivated to implement the literacy-focused curricula. They have experienced many successful interactions with mentor teachers. Reports from target teachers suggested that mentors provided instruction in many areas of literacy development (i.e., read-alouds, use of expressive language, reading strategies, phonological awareness activities, writing centers, numeracy activities, letter recognition, use of story props, instructional materials, classroom arrangement, and literacy charts and graphs).

Target teachers reported that the mentoring approach enhanced communication between teachers and program managers and resulted in teachers being receptive to implementing the new teaching practices. Mentoring was found to enhance both the confidence of target mentor teachers and mentee teachers.

Analyses of the Mentor Teacher Curriculum Support Measure (MTCISM) revealed that mentor teachers provided instructional support in the following areas:

1. Conducting read-alouds with young children.
2. Developing a print-rich environment.

3. Developing phonemic awareness in young children.
4. Creating language and literacy activities in the classrooms.
5. Center-based activities for young children.
6. Teaching math activities for pre-kindergarten children.

Table 4. Quotations from Teachers Describing Both Formative and Problem-based Mentor Support

Mentor Support	Teacher Quotations
Formative Support	1. "The mentor teachers are wonderful. They come into the classroom to observe the children. They show us how to substitute different materials in lessons, and they participate with the children in different activities." 2. "Mentor teachers bring instructional materials to our classrooms and model how to teach children to read a book." 3. "The mentor teacher comes into our classroom once or twice a week and was very helpful with curriculum activities. " 4. "The mentor teacher always has some positive comments when she comes to my classroom. She talks to my children, and they talk to her. " 5. "Continue to have mentors because they model activities, meet the students, model the use of puppets when reading stories. "
Response to Problems	1. "The mentor teacher gives us ideas when we are having difficulties in some areas. She explains and tells us how we can change something or do it differently." 2. "We talked about language development and numeracy. We also discussed how to control children's behavior by making circle time more attractive to the children."

DISCUSSION

Results of the study revealed that children in the three groups scored significantly different on the DSC subscales. Specifically, children in the intervention classrooms scored higher on subscales (math concepts and operations, letter knowledge, phonological awareness, print, and total pre-reading) than students in the control classrooms.

Factors influencing statistical differences between the control and treatment classrooms may have been due in part to confounding factors inherent in the demographic makeup of the varying classrooms. For instance, LEAP and STAR classrooms were 8% and 19.6% Spanish language dominant respectively whereas control classrooms were 27.6% Spanish language dominant.

Interview data suggests that the Head Start teachers who participated in this study are highly motivated to implement literacy-focused curricula in their classrooms. Self-reports suggest that participating teachers demonstrated an increasingly enlarged repertoire of literacy based strategies during the course of the project. The largest percentages of literacy activities included use of expressive language (over 65%) and print awareness (over 32%).

The use of new instructional activities provided by mentors in the classroom indicates the impact of the mentoring experience on teachers, children and classrooms. Target teachers reported that the mentoring approach enhanced communication between teacher and program managers and resulted in teachers being receptive to implementing new teaching practices acquired during the mentoring process.

They reported experiencing many successful interactions with mentor teachers and look forward to continued guidance in a mentor-mentee relationship.

The mentoring was found to enhance the confidence of target teachers and mentor teachers working with the teachers and program managers. Reports provided by mentors and the classroom teachers suggest that children are ultimately benefiting from the positive relationships that mentors have established in the classroom.

Implications

Statistical analyses (i.e., means, standard deviations and ANOVA) revealed a significant treatment impact among participants using the literacy based curricula (LEAP and STAR). The mentoring program did positively impact Head Start teacher's classroom practices.

As Head Start programs embrace more literacy-focused programming (Administration of Children and Families, 2006; Paulson et al, 2004) the present study indicates that it is important to consider many factors when making a curriculum choice. The Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) (Administration of Children and Families, 2006) revealed several factors that could influence child literacy outcomes. For instance, thirty-three percent of Head Start children surveyed through FACES were English Language Learners. Additionally, increased parent-involvement with their children while at Head Start and at home was shown to produce higher scores on emergent literacy and math tasks (i.e., attend parent-teacher conferences, volunteer in child's classrooms, reading with children at home, doing errands together etc.). Fifty-five percent of teachers report training was most often received from within the teachers' own program. The results of the present study support the findings of FACES. Factors such as language dominance, family involvement, and mentoring among teachers appear to effect child-literacy outcomes and must be examined prior to and during the implementation of a chosen curriculum.

Specifically, this study revealed that a literacy-focused curriculum that is embedded in developmentally appropriate practice is helpful to young children in Head Start urban settings. The study also revealed that an accompanying training program that includes an emphasis on mentoring among teachers is necessary to achieve literacy based outcomes. The mentor-mentee relationship is an integral part of curriculum implementation and must be addressed if optimal child outcomes are to be achieved. Head Start programs should give special consideration to the following questions when developing the mentoring program for classroom practitioners:

- How are mentors selected and who is responsible for the selection?
- What type of training should be provided for mentors?
- When should training be provided and by whom?
- How will the mentor teacher's performance be assessed?
- Who will provide supervision?
- What skills, behaviors and knowledge should mentor teachers possess?

In addition, mentors must be cognizant of the relationship involved in the mentor-mentee paradigm. Practices that involve thinking about and reflecting on what helps a curriculum procedure fit with the individualized needs of children is best achieved when the relationship is characterized by a great deal of networking, observing, talking and discussion (Goffin & Wilson, 2001). Each element requires considerable discussion and planning before developing a successful mentoring program for Head Start teachers. This implies aggressive scheduling time and commitment of resources for optimal achievement.

Selection of specific early childhood curriculum has often been based upon services deliv

ered and outcomes of the curriculum. The current emphasis of choosing curriculum according to alignment with state and federal guidelines is noteworthy. However, the results of this study suggest that other salient factors may be important to child literacy outcomes and must be considered when comparing programs. Any evaluation must include characteristics of the young children who will be served within the program, an explanation of how services are delivered, and the mentoring support teachers receive. Children within urban Head Start programs are particularly vulnerable to these factors due to the lower socio economic status and educational achievement of participating families, higher percentage of English Language Learners, and low levels of educational attainment among teachers.

Other areas of research prompted by these questions could investigate ways to develop, implement, evaluate, and sustain a mentor-mentee relationship that responds to the dilemmas teachers face within an urban Head Start classroom. Investigations concerning differences between LEAP and STAR outcomes are additional sources of further research.

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INCREASING STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC DIALOGUE AND ADDRESSING COGNITION USING THE *NEW YORK TIMES*

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Abstract: Although the need to become more informed and a more active participant in democratic dialogue is greater than ever, studies indicate that students' awareness of global issues is limited (Decker, 1995; Torney-Purta, 1982). In an effort to increase students' understanding of democratic issues, as well as, increase their ability to actively participate in constructive democratic dialogue, a metropolitan university located in the southeast section of the U.S. adopted the *New York Times* Newspaper in Education Readership Program. Although The *New York Times* Readership Program at KSU received mixed reviews in reference to the newspapers' social, economical, and political perspectives, the findings of this study strongly suggest that students frequently utilized the paper and that the paper served as a catalyst for increasing democratic dialogue among students.

INTRODUCTION

The literature on how curriculum-related factors affect student underachievement is substantial (Burden & Byrd, 2009; Eggen & Kauchak, 2000; Good & Brophy, 2007; Joyce & Weil, 2008). Directly related to the issue of a challenging curriculum is the relevance of the curriculum for the students. Montgomery and Rossi (1994) argued that a major cause of poor school performance is the sizable number of students who view the bulk of schoolwork as dull, passive, and unimportant.

When we consider the degree of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in schools today, the goal of developing a curriculum that meets the needs of all students becomes even more challenging. Meeting curriculum needs of diverse ethnic student groups often requires adjustments in instruction and course content. Curriculum refinement is also necessary when students are from homes in which English is not the primary language (Bien-Aime, 1993; Bonilla & Goss, 1997; Reid, 1995). The research clearly suggests higher academic achievement is more likely to occur when course content and materials are culturally and ethnically relevant (Nieto, 2000).

In addition to meeting the academic needs of students, many k-12 systems, as well as, many colleges and universities are attempting to address students' understanding of democracy. The importance of students having an understanding of the construct of democracy and their having the ability to participate in constructive democratic dialogue are fundamental aspects of the United States' culture. Regardless of your position as a republican or democrat, your stance as a liberal or conservative, or your address being that of a red or blue state, the persistent flux in the state of the union and the world have forced most of us to become more aware of and more informed of the day to day social, political, and economical changes taking place. This need to remain abreast of important events, in addition to the U.S.'s role as a major participant and leader in the global community necessitate not only being current on domestic issues but international issues as well.

Although the need to become more informed and a more active participant in democratic dialogue is greater than ever, studies indicate that students' awareness of global issues is limited (Decker, 1995; Torney-Purta, 1982). In one study, a survey of middle school students' awareness of global issues revealed that the students had an extremely poor understanding of global issues (Torney-Purta, 1982). Such findings might infer that students, at the college level, are lacking an awareness of global issues. This argument, although somewhat difficult to make due to the limited amount of empirical evidence specifically focusing on college students' level of awareness in regard to global issues, speaks to the directly to the focus of this study.

As we consider methods of enhancing students' level of awareness of global issues, a variety of curriculum approaches should be considered. Several studies suggest when teachers introduce activities and approaches to make curriculum and instruction more interesting and relevant, students tend to achieve. Additionally, Maeroff (1998) suggested that, for many students, education often lacks relevance because students cannot imagine how the educational experiences connect to the realities of their lives. Hinson (1988) reviewed theory and corresponding research that emphasized the importance of the teacher's relating the curriculum content to learners' interests, experiences, and prior learning. Furthermore, teachers can help students realize the relevance of the academic curriculum by involving students in real-life vocational activities and by having guest speakers from the community who can connect academic skills to real-life circumstances (e.g., a banker who shows how mathematics skills can help manage personal finances).

The aforementioned learning approaches would be generally described as addressing students' cognition and/or students' cognitive style. The term cognition is generally accepted as referring to the mental processes involved in gaining knowledge and comprehension, including thinking, knowing, remembering, judging, and problem solving. Cognition refers to the process a learner goes through to learn, absorb, and process information. A person's cognitive behavior represents one of the major paradigms from which their learning style stems (Hergenhahn, 1996).

According to Hunt (1995), cognitive styles are related to personality: how we interact with information is "reflective" of the ways in which we interact with each other through our personality. Lieberman (1991) defined cognitive process as the universal, cerebral means employed to handle a specific task or problem. Shade (1982) categorized cognitive learning styles into three categories: (a) emphasis on visual-spatial preference, (b) focus on categorization and abstract preference of strategies for concept attainment; and (c) focus on personality traits and the ways in which an individual views and responds to information about the world.

Hypotheses

It is the hypothesis of this study that by introducing the *New York Times* as an ancillary resource in courses, students' from this university would have the ability to constructively participate in democratic dialogue will increase. It is further predicted that by increasing student participation in democratic dialogue, when supported by the *New York Times* as an ancillary resource, students will have the opportunity to enhance their cognition of global perspectives.

Methodology

In an effort to increase students' understanding of democratic issues, as well as, increase their ability to actively participate in constructive democratic dialogue, institution adopted the *New York Times* Newspaper in Education

Readership Program. The *New York Times* also serves as a partner and a major component of the American Democracy Project for Civic Engagement, a national, multi-campus initiative that seeks to foster informed civic engagement in the United States and to create a greater intellectual understanding and commitment to participate in civic life. As an American Democracy Project member institution, the university was able to establish a university-wide readership program in which the *New York Times* newspaper served as the primary reading material.

The paper was distributed in six locations throughout the campus with approximately 350 papers distributed daily. Through the campus wide distribution points, the *New York Times* was provided free to students and faculty for a period of one academic year, from August to May. In addition, various faculty members from all of the university's seven colleges (Arts, Business, Health and Human Services, Humanities and Social Sciences, Education, Sciences and Mathematics, and University College) independently included the *New York Times* as ancillary reading material in almost every discipline. In some instances, the *New York Times* was implemented as required reading while in other instances the paper was used as a method for students to earn extra points academically.

After two semesters (fall 2004 and spring 2005), students were asked to participate in an online survey designed to gather their perceptions regarding their usage of the *New York Times n*ewspaper as supplemental reading material. More specifically, the survey was designed to assess students' perspectives of whether or not the *New York Times* newspaper helped to improve their ability to constructively participate in a democratic dialogue with others. In addition, the survey was designed to assess if students' participation in democratic dialogue enhanced their cognition of global perspectives.

The participants for this study consisted of a convenient sampling of students with a total of 94 participants. Participants' academic classification included a mix of students; twenty-four freshman, six sophomores, twelve juniors, thirty-six seniors, and eighteen graduate students. The survey instrument was designed by the researchers and included ten items using a Likert-type scale with one qualitative question allowing students to provide a more detailed open-ended response. This brief, but informative, study provided the following findings:

Findings

Although the hypothesis of this study does not specifically include the need to assess students' usage and readership of the *New York Times*, the aspects of usage and readership in many ways directly correlate with the student's attitudes toward the benefit of the paper as a resource in promoting academic success and broadening their understanding of the democratic process. By gaining a sense of how often the students read the paper, it would be more feasible to gauge the potential for benefit. A pattern of higher degrees of usage and readership are not likely to be the results of random interest in the paper. For these reasons, the aspects of usage and readership were assessed. When examining the aspects of usage and readership, the data collected through this study indicated that 79% of the study participants read the paper one or more times per week. The data collected through this study were corroborated by the distribution data provided by *New York Times* circulation representative who indicated that only 6% of the paper was being returned or not picked-up by readers. These two independent sources of data clearly suggest that *New York Times* had a strong readership base at the university.

One of the main hypotheses of this study was that usage of the *New York Times* as an ancillary resource would increase students' ability to constructively participate in demo-

cratic dialogue. In order to test this hypothesis, participants were asked to complete a short survey designed to assess their perceptions of the influence the *New York Times* newspaper had on their ability to participate in democratic dialogue. The data collected from this study regarding the *New York Times*' impact on increasing democratic dialogue for students attending the university clearly suggests the newspaper helped to increase constructive democratic dialogue among students. More specifically, student responses to the survey items focusing directly on the aspect of democratic dialogue support the researchers' initial position that the *New York Times* newspaper helped to increase democratic dialogue at KSU. A closer review of the survey responses reveals that, when asked if the articles they read in the *New York Times* were sometimes and/or often discussed in their classes, 80% of the participants indicated they either agreed or strongly agreed.

In a similar survey item inquiring whether or not articles found in the *New York Times* are related to topics discussed in class, 82% of the study participants either agreed or strongly agreed. And when asked if the *New York Times* was a useful resource for addressing current events in class, 85% of the participants indicated they either agreed or strongly agreed that the paper served as a useful resource for addressing current events. Finally, 80% of the participant responses regarding the *New York Times*' serving as a catalyst for discussion between students and their families and friends further indicate that the newspaper has helped to increase democratic dialogue between students and their family and friends

The second hypothesis of this study involved determining if students who read the *New York Times* believed the democratic dialogue they engaged in provided them with an opportunity to better understand global perspectives. In order to answer this question, focus was placed on students' perceptions of the types of issues addressed in the *New York Times*. When ask about their perceptions of the issues presented by the *New York Times*, 36% of the participants stated that they perceived the paper as having a national focus while 26% stated that perceived the paper as having an international focus. Only 5% of the respondents indicated they perceived the paper as having a local focus. The majority of the participants in this study (54%) did perceive the *New York Times* as being balanced between local, national, and international issues. This hypothesis also focused specifically on students' perceptions of their understanding of international issues. When considered collectively, the data gathered for this hypothesis strongly suggests that students felt the *New York Times* increased their view of national and international issues, therefore, enhancing their cognition of global perspectives. When students were asked if the *New York Times* provided them with a better understanding of international issues, 76% of the students responded that it did. Again, the data gathered clearly suggest that students felt their cognitive levels were enhanced in regards to global perspectives.

Discussion

Although The *New York Times* Readership Program at KSU received mixed reviews in reference to the newspapers' social, economical, and political perspectives, the findings of this study strongly suggest that students frequently utilized the paper and that the paper served as a catalyst for increasing democratic dialogue among students. The findings of this study also suggest that students' regular usage of the *New York Times* as supplemental reading material has helped to increase their ability to participate in constructive democratic dialogue. The combination of students' usage of the *New York Times* and instructors' reference to the *New York Times* as a resource for social, economical, and political issues provides students with the necessary platform to develop

the required skill set to participate in democratic dialogue. The implementation of readership programs, such as the *New York Times* program, on college and university campuses offers students the challenge and opportunity to develop the skills required to participate in democratic dialogue and the opportunity to actually participate in constructive democratic dialogue with others. The findings of this study also provided data indicating KSU faculty members, in general, have the ability to use the paper as a catalyst for democratic dialogue.

While there is much to be considered when establishing the quality and frequency of such dialogue, the data collected in this study clearly suggest students perceive their participation in constructive democratic dialogue provides them with the opportunity to enhance their cognition of global perspectives. The readers' connection with articles which have a global focus allows them the ability to establish a personal position, a factor believed to be critical to their cognition of the global perspectives.

Based on the assumption that most newspapers cover a broad enough spectrum of events, it would be safe to assume that the majority of students would be able to find an article of personal interest, affording them the opportunity to take a personal position in a discussion or dialogue exchange. It is this point that college and university professors must focus on and provide students with the opportunity to connect and become engaged by utilizing resources such as the *New York Times* to foster that engagement. By establishing connections with the larger community, students will gain a stronger understanding of their community and the world around them. As we consider the reality of our increasing global connectedness, professors must constantly search for the most meaningful methods of connecting their students to global perspectives. The *New York Times* has a well-established history of providing a wealth of information ranging from the global to the local perspective. Many of the articles found in the paper allow readers the ability to establish a connection between events with-in their local community and events at a national or global level. Thus, the connections provide as a result of using the *New York* Times as an ancillary resource in a college or university setting is that students are able to establish the cognitive/affective relationship needed promote their participation in constructive democratic dialogue as they continue to enhance their cognition of global perspectives.

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BOOK REVIEW

DEFENDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS: EDUCATION UNDER THE SECURITY STATE

Edited by David A. Gabbard and E. Wayne Ross
Teachers College Press, 2004
ISBN: 978-0-8077-4900-5

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In their co-edited book, *Defending Public Schools: Education Under the Security State* David Gabbard and E. Wayne Ross have cogently tackled the underlying reasons for some of the problems confronting public schools. The contributors move beyond the illusion that schools are failing because they are unable to prepare a viable workforce in the twenty first century. In this brilliantly edited volume, the contributors examine the reasons for the necessary illusion of school failure that has befuddled the masses including educators who have become commissars for the new authoritarian state. Gabbard argues, "Since the 1980's and even before, the purposes of public schools have been by the interests of the state and of concentrated private/corporate power, as follows from what I described earlier, as neoliberalism" (p.xv). Thus, schools have been under attack from a corporate controlled media that projects public schools as blight on American life. The negative media images have created a situation whereby public schools are being primed for takeover by private corporations.

In critical education theory discourse the book does not sugar coat the corporate attacks on public education. Starting with the foreword by world renowned critical educational theorist Peter McLaren who posits, "One of the advantages of untrammeled U.S. power is the ability it affords its ruling elite to establish the definitions of terrorism and evil, to circumscribe their ideological formations and relations, to administer the means to publicize them, and, in doing so, to normalize those definitions for propaganda purposes" (xviv). Throughout the book power relations regarding the ruling elite resonates the reality that schools operate within a much larger world outside of the school which must be juxtaposed with larger corporate and capitalists interests. The critical reader can clearly see the connections between the Bush administration's national and international policies and the role of public schools in maintaining a populace that will be dumbed down to life in a Matrix. The book is divided into three sections, *The Security State and the Traditional Role of Schools, Security Threats,* and *Security Measures: Defending Public Education from the Public.* The book lays the foundation for understanding the assault on public schools and its impact on the egalitarian goals of a democratic society.

Part 1 of the book, *The Security State and the Traditional Role of Schools,* highlights the Matrix which has become a reality in our lives. Gabbard describes how the ruling elite have used public schools to condition the young for life as "coppertops" meaning a life in service to the market. Additionally, he points out that a purpose of school is to make students obedient to the state. This coincides with Fotopoulus's exegete that education is a political act that has ties to those wielding power. Both Gabbard and Fotopoulus in their

articles address historical educational issues in relationship to citizenship.

In Part II of the book, *Security Threats,* Sandra Jackson specifically addresses the African American struggle for a place in the curriculum that disrupts the Euro-centered dominant curriculum that prevailed prior to the Civil Rights Movement. Taking the reader back to the Civil Rights Movement and the quest to equalize educational opportunities for African Americans she paints an excellent portrait of the African American challenge to racist school curricula. She argues this ongoing struggle for equality and equity led to Black Studies on college campuses throughout the nation. Jackson also expands the conversation regarding the struggle to offer multicultural curricula. She raises the discussion about the positive impact Black history could have on disrupting the Euro-centered curricula that has mis-educated white students, "…who are given the impression that the experiences of black people are not important and do not matter" (p.65). Going a step further she also addresses the white male dominance in the professoriate. Jackson highlights that the quest for equality and equity of education should address not only curriculum but the need for more African American professors in the university.

Part III of the book, *Security Measures: Defending Public Education from the Public* has ten chapters that make up the majority of the book. In this section, what is most notable is the wealth of information regarding the history of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. Several of the contributors draw connections to the *Nation at Risk* report in 1983 as being the impetus to NCLB. The contributors raise questions about the authenticity of the report and suggest that it was manufactured. This coincides with Berliner and Biddle's book, *The Manufactured Crisis* which posits that much of the *Nation at Risk* report was filled with errors. Matthison and Ross note that "the report created powerful rhetoric from which the current accountability movement derives" (p.93). Skillfully, the contributors argue that NCLB and its accountability measures are driven by corporate business. They argue the new accountability measures have created a situation where teachers and administrators are being turned into technicians instead of intellectuals. The de-intellectualization of students, teachers, and administrators will result in the "McDonaldization" of education creating a situation whereby business principles will remain the dominant force in a variety of sectors in American society. Thus, accountability becomes another form of making sure that the masses acquiesce to the prevailing disorder created by the ruling elite. Additionally, accountability is seen as a way of interacting between those "who have power and those who do not" (p. 92). The *Security Measures* section while diverse in its discussion is replete with themes related to NCLB and its accountability rhetoric. What is clear after reading this section of the book is that there is a need for renewed activism among the masses. It is hopeful that educators will be at the forefront of this change once they collectively acquire more knowledge about the origin and purpose of hegemonic school policies such as NCLB that dis-empowers students, teachers, and administrators.

Overall, *Defending Public Schools* is an excellent book for those looking to uncover some of the systemic problems that plague public schools. If any drawbacks can be found in the book one might argue that the book does not specifically examine racism and its deleterious impact on African American students. Additionally, the historical role of schools and education as it relates to African Americans is not specifically spelled out. The language used in *Defending Public Schools* might be considered a softer/gentler approach to discussing issues that are specific to African American students by couching most of the

book in terms of race, class, and gender. While the specificity of African American educa-

tional issues is not illumined, scholars of African American educational history can certainly connect several of the points in the text to the educational experiences of African Americans. For example the text specifically points out that schools have served the purpose of making students compliant and obedient to the state. Thus, schooling becomes ". . . a process of training people to believe in the legitimacy of state order" (p. 208). Similarly, Afrocenteric educational scholar Shujaa in his book, *Too Much Schooling, Too Little Education* distinguishes between schooling and education. Shujaa asserts that African Americans have had too much schooling meaning they have been indoctrinated with a Euro-centered education that leaves too many African Americans mis-educated. Woodson also decried that schools for African Americans were controlled by the people who oppressed them and as a result they served as sites where thought was controlled. He brilliantly declared that when you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. Webber (2004) one of the contributors in *Defending Public Schools* relays a similar deconstruction of schools when she declares students "learn not to question authority". Watkins (2001) in his brilliant text, *The White Architects of Black Education*, identifies the root causes for the current state of education in America particularly as it relates to African Americans. Watkins detailed analysis provides insight into the "white architects of black education" and their role in constructing a security state for African Americans.

The contributors in this volume clearly have a good grasp of the political philosophy that has shaped public education in America. The title of the book *Defending Public Schools: Education Under the Security State* is certainly a noble book that argues for the reexamination of what public schools could become. The book attacks *the lies we have been told* by those desirous of shifting public schools from the public and into the hands of private few who wish to have more direct control of schools. With regards to African Americans, education has always been under the security state. In fact, the education of African Americans has been regarded as one the greatest national security threats in America. Since, its inception as a nation it was a criminal act for Africans to read, write or be taught. African American leaders who were some of the community's best teachers were put under surveillance by the U.S. government. The counterintelligence program of J. Edgar Hoover is an excellent example of the measures taken to keep African Americans controlled. *Education Under The Security State* is not new to African Americans but as corporate power has increased it has indeed become "the crisis of our age".

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