



What's Holding Us Back: Hiring,  
Promoting and Retaining African  
American men as Educators and  
Leaders

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**Abstract**

The African American male has experienced many challenges and disparities in this country's short history. The issues range from slavery to the achievement gap to the employment gap. African American men are the lowest achievers in schools and they are underrepresented when it comes to employment within the education sector. This study sought to visit the challenges that African American men may face in gaining employment within education and gaining promotion into the administration side of education. This study focused on the shortage of African American men as teachers and administrators. This was a

qualitative design research using the Grounded Theory Design and the Ethnographic Design frame work. The researcher used a survey with a Likert Scale that was distributed to African American male school administrators throughout the United States searching to determine if there is a difference in the hiring practices for black men, what are qualities that will help African American men gain employment and promotion within education and what qualities or factors if any hurt the progress of African American men as educators. This study looked to help black men and hiring administration improve the number of African American men in education as teachers and administrators. This study found that there is a need and desire to employ more African American male teachers and administrators. The results showed that there is a shortage of African American male educators being hired and retained.

Certification: In accordance with college and university policies, this dissertation is accepted in partial fulfillment of degree requirements.

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# CHAPTER 1

## **Introduction/Background of the Study**

In recent American history the divide between African Americans and Whites has been shown to still be relevant. The OJ Simpson case and more recently the Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman cases have shown that the divide between black and white still exists. Part of the purpose of this study was to see if there is a divide between the hiring and promotion of African American male educators and other educators. The research explored the attitudes of African American men towards the field of education as teachers and administrators. The research also explored ways to help recruit, retain and promote African American men within the field of education.

If one were to travel to various school districts across the United States of America, one might find an absence of African American males as educators and administrators. It may be assumed that the various school districts have purposefully tried to recruit and maintain African American men.

There are several problems within education from funding, to the achievement gap, onto the teacher shortages in several areas. There were more than 3.4 million teachers who retired in 2013. Many states may face a dwindling pool of qualified teachers in the near future (Phillip 2013).

It is clear that there is a shortage of teachers, but this research focuses on the shortage of African American men and the challenges they face.

Some of the challenges that were faced while conducting this type of qualitative design, Ethnographic and Grounded Theory Designs research, centers around the fact that there has been very little research conducted on the topic of the challenges that African American males face in the general workplace or the educational workplace.

If black males never saw a black male basketball player, they would not aspire to play basketball (Phillip 2013). While white student often have someone who looks like them, acts like them and values many of the same things they do, this is not the case for many African American male students and this is important when

developing that role model that one aspire to. Yes, anyone may be a role model for a student, but people are generally compared to and emulate the people that they most resemble.

Is there really a shortage of African American male teachers? Ten years ago, the dearth of black males in elementary education attracted the attention of officials at Clemson University in South Carolina. Roy Jones, then the school's Dean of Education, was particularly struck by a pair of 'startling' statistics: there were more African American and Hispanic males in prison than in college and less than one percent of elementary school teachers in South Carolina were black men (Phillip, 2013).

The fact is that there is a teacher shortage all around and the shortage of male teachers is even greater, but just as we have an achievement gap, there is a gap between African American Males and the rest of the educational population when it comes to leadership and classroom teachers (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010).

This research will endeavor to show possible reasons for the shortage of African American male educators. This research explored factors that keep African American men from becoming teachers and educational administrators.

The ultimate goal is to help school districts and African American Males develop an understanding of the shortfalls in developing, keeping and promoting African American men as teachers and administrators.

### **Purpose of the Study**

#### **Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of this study was to determine if there are certain factors that present barriers to the presence of African American males in teaching and school administrative positions, to identify such factors, and to conclude the best way to overcome such factors. The final goal is to develop ideas that will allow for hiring, recruiting, retaining and promoting African American men in the field of education. After reviewing culture and history one may easily look and say that they understand how and why there is an employment gap among African American men in education. The problem is that there is more to the story and the entire picture must be reviewed before jumping to judgment

#### **Research Design, Procedures**

This qualitative research was conducted by using a survey designed to obtain the perspective of current African American administrators and hopeful administrators.

The researcher developed a survey using a Likert-like scale which was distributed to African American male administrators. This is needed to explore why these African American men have sought education as a profession, why they are successful and solicit opinions as to what will it take to get more African American men to seek education as a profession. The survey also sought information on how African American male administrators feel about their educational employment process, career development and career support. This allowed the researcher to test the directional hypothesis that there is evidence that biases, unfair treatment and lack of understanding has been part of the challenges that affect the shortage of African American male teachers and administrators within education. The two research questions studied were: 1. What biases, unfair treatments or lack of understanding if any may have led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrator? 2. How have the challenges that African American males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?

### **Significance of the Problem**

Many people experience challenges in their chosen careers. Many of the challenges that educators face will either galvanize the educational community or cause division. One of the most intriguing and challenging issues being faced by those in education is that of teacher and administrator shortage-particularly the shortage of African American males.

African American students have been experiencing an academic achievement gap when compared to the achievement of Caucasian students and other ethnic groups. Many schools are in need of implementing programs and policies that will help alleviate the factors that contribute to the existence of this gap. (Hall, 2013). This same gap seems to hold true when it comes to African Americans teachers and administrators, but just as with the academic achievement gap African American men are at the bottom of the chart, they are also at the bottom of the chart when it

comes to the educational employment gap.

The hiring gap between African American male teachers and administrators versus other educators is significant due to the lack of representation for African American children as a whole and especially as it relates to African American boys.

The dearth of male teachers-particularly at the elementary level where female teachers outnumber male teachers six to one-is a problem for boys. The average teacher is a well-meaning and dedicated woman who always did well in school and can't quite understand why boys won't sit still, be quiet and do their work like the girls do. Instead, boys need strong, charismatic teachers who mix firm discipline with an understanding and good-natured acceptance of boyish energy." (Sternod, 2011, pg. 1).

Although this statement focuses on all boys who are of school age, it is significant since the same holds true for African American young men who are looking for and need a role model that resembles themselves.

This study will help school districts develop programs that will allow for the recruitment and promotion of African American men. The research allows the various districts and schools to look at how African American men feel as educators and how they felt as students. There has been a shortage of African American male leadership within education and this research looks to identify negative views that African American men have towards education and the possible negative views the world of education has towards African American men. Since there has been very little research done on this subject there is little literature and support for studying how and if there is a problem or how to fix the problem. This lack of literature in the field may be due to the fact that it is a taboo subject to which no one really wants to be connected.

### **Scope of the Study**

#### **Data Collection**

This research used a survey to compile data on what the challenges may be for African American men in the field of educational employment. The survey used for this research was created by the researcher. Face validity was established by giving it to ten different African American male administrators. After the surveys were reviewed and

accessed for errors and consistency, several questions were removed or rewritten. The survey was then administered to ten more African American male administrators to ensure the tool was valid and reliable.

The data collected will be used to improve this employment gap. The research will be distributed and open for Superintendents and Human Resource Departments to review and use to help improve their pool for hiring and promotion of African American men. The data can also be used by African American men seeking jobs in education as well as promotion in the field of education.

### **Limitations of the Study**

#### **Validity and Reliability**

##### *Threats to Internal Validity*

The three main threats to the internal validity are:

1. Selection – there may be participants with a biased attitude towards the subject being researched.

2. Interaction with Selection – This can cause problems depending on how close the relationship with the selected participants and the researcher are to one another.

Again, one way to guard against any biases is through the way the survey questions are written. The questions were reviewed by ten school administrators as well as administered to another ten school administrators. Also by developing a committee to select the participants who will take part in the research, this helps eliminates some participant researcher familiarity. It is also important to vary the ages and experiences of the participants who took part in the research. The committee worked well together.

Each committee member helped the researcher seek out participants for the survey as well as set criteria for determining participants. The researcher was involved in every aspect of this section.

3. Mortality – This is important to recognize due to the fact that there may be participants who might drop out of the process for various reasons. For this reason a committee of African school administrators helped select thirty participants to be surveyed, but twenty are actually surveyed and the committee will kept track of the availability of each participant and each standby participant.

The instrument that was used for the survey did not contain leading question the questions are free from biases.

### *External Validity*

Interaction of selection and treatment and interaction of setting and treatment is a small factor, but to protect against these and increase external validity the researcher ensured that everything was as convenient as possible for each participant taking part in the research. Biases and generalizations were taken into account for each participant and instrument used in the research. This was accomplished by using a committee to review the questions and having four administrators complete the survey in order to look for weak question, leading questions as well as misunderstandings and common trends.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following are specific terms unique to this dissertation or not generally known:

*Achievement Gap.* This disparity in achievement between white and black students (Hall, 2013).

*Tokenism.* A show of accommodation to a demand, principle, etc. by small, often merely formal concessions to it. Token integration of blacks, as in schools, jobs, etc. (Kanter, 2010)

*Desegregation.* To abolish the segregation of races in [public schools]. (Ebony, 1994)

*Radicalized.* To make or become politically radical (Martino and Rezqi-Rashti, 2010)

### **Summary**

The research was conducted to help schools and districts develop programs that will recruit, promote and retain African American male teachers and administrators.

This study should help improve the overall mix of staff members throughout the State of Illinois by providing an understanding as to why there is a shortage of African American men teachers and administrators and how the employment gap can be fixed. The surveys will provide a true perception of how African American Male Administrators perceived their career paths and why they believe that they were successful and what obstacles they may have had to overcome as it pertains to education, race, and several other areas within the field of education.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Chapter Overview**

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature that will support and assist in providing understanding of the purpose of the research. The first subsection, reviewed literature that would provide history related to African American overall educational history. The Brown v Board of Education Supreme Court decision provides a look at how African Americans were pulled from an environment of comfort to an environment in which they were not welcome and began to separate from supporting their children educationally. The Cultural Considerations section reviews how the African American men and the total cultural of African Americans were affected by decisions made by America related to African Americans and their educational process. In total this chapter reviews pertinent literature that assist in providing understanding of the purpose, concepts and need for conducting this type of research.

### **Unfair Treatment**

#### **Background**

For years African Americans have had to fight for respect and fair treatment.

African Americans have historically been subject to many levels of injustice enslavement to racism.

Many are familiar with the ongoing fight of minorities to gain equal rights when facing opportunities of employment, loan approvals, housing in certain neighborhoods and cultural representation in film and television. The optimistic determination of the African American's journey to fulfill the need to be accepted on all terms as an American, was often juxtaposed with their realistic plight concerning the fulfillment of that need. Such injustices and lack of equal rights have led to numerous gaps in success between African Americans and their White counterparts. (Hall, 2013, pg. 18).

According to the Labor Department report of March, 2013, 68.7% of white men are employed and 59.4% of black men are employed. Black men are employed at the lowest rate of any ethnic group in the entire country according to the Labor Department

report. Although there were no statistics on the employment of African American men within education, it was noted earlier that in South Carolina fewer than one percent of elementary education teachers were black men (Phillip, 2013).

Some believe that this same sentiment can be felt for African Americans as students and educators. There seems to be a parallel between real world treatment and the educational treatment for African American men and African Americans as a whole.

African American educational history has been riddled with historical challenges that have involved the issues of African American literacy, attendance and parental involvement. African Americans have been subject to an educational history that has endured many changes and restructurings. A comprehensive understanding of the academic progress of African Americans from one generation to the next is needed to gain understanding of the entire issue (Anderson, 2005).

This is a gap that is not only felt in education, but has been prevalent throughout time for African Americans in the work place. According to Jones (1996), historically, African Americans on various levels have been denied equal access to business opportunities, political organizations and economic advancement. The employment gap for African American men appears to run deeper than its current state.

There are many ways to fix this problem and some will point to the controversial method of hiring based on quotas or tokenism. Based on a study of gender tokens in a male-dominated Industrial corporation, (Kanter, 2010) outlined three general tokenism processes rooted in the impact of numbers and independent of the beliefs and attitudes of tokens: performance pressures, boundary heightening, and role entrapment.

One might ask why we need African American Men to teach our students if you have a very capable white male or any other capable figure. One young lady, a minority student in a predominantly white school, remembers feeling not quite as smart or worthy and felt that she had to be 300 times better than everybody else. She believes that

minority teachers can better understand this radicalized dynamic of low self-esteem (Martino and Rezai-Rashti, 2010). While a person does not have to come from the same neighborhood or be of the same nationality in order to effectively teach a group, a 2010 study has shown that it is very important for students to have someone that looks like them in leadership roles as teachers and administrators (Martino, 2010). The article Male Teacher Shortage: Black Teachers' Perspectives explores the topic of having role models that look like the students for which they serve and having role models that can relate to the students they serve (Martino, 2010).

As of the writing of this paper there has been only one article that explores the treatment of African American Men in education or in the workplace and it is written by Sherry N. Mong and Vincent J. Roscigno (2009) and it is titled African American Men and the Experience of Employment Discrimination. The article explores the various forms of discrimination that African American men face. Although it is not written as an article that focuses on education, it is important because the problems are similar regardless of the field of work in which someone is employed. In both the educational and general sector of employment, studies have been conducted to show that African Americans generally receive lower job evaluations than whites. Subjectivity in performance evaluations may also shape discriminatory firing and partly related employers' layoff decisions. In this regard, quantitative analyses suggest that African Americans--particularly men are significantly more likely than whites to be laid off, after controlling for individual and job-related factors.

(Greenhouse et al. 1990; Sackett et al. 1991; Elvira and Zatzick 2002).

## **History**

### **Brown v. Board of Education**

*Brown* (1954) did not only drastically affect White schools, but it brought a massive change to African American schools, as well. As White schools were forced to welcome African American students, most African American schools were ordered to cease and desist. This, order lead to the disbursement of African American educators and administrators to Whites schools as well as some of them being laid off or fired

(Hall, 2013, pg. 26).

According to Kusimo, (1999) over 38,000 African American teachers and administrators were affected by the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. This decision appears to be significant because several African American educators were either forced out of work or demoted.

Ironically, the long-term effects of the Brown case, contrary to its hope and promise for defeating Jim Crow education, was to divorce African American educators from their students and local communities, diminish their talented employment pool and cripple their capacity for activist leadership and collective action” (Loder-Jackson, 2010, pg.152).

### **Cultural Consideration**

Macionis (2008) lists culture as being the very values, beliefs and behaviors that collectively form its people’s way of life. This appears important because according to the research after the Brown case the educational culture and cultural understanding of African American’s seem to diminish.

*Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) did not only drastically affect White schools, but it brought a massive change to African American schools, as well.

As White schools were forced to welcome African American students, most African American schools were ordered to cease and desist. This order led to the disbursement of African American educators and administrators to White schools as well as some of them being laid off or fired. (Hall, 2013, pg. 26)

There are many events throughout history that have affected the education of African Americans and the hiring and promoting of these same people. *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) put a dent in the education of African Americans and caused angst among the community, particularly when African American educators were demoted and laid off. This was a big blow to the African American pedagogy and negatively affected African Americans’ thoughts and beliefs towards education for generations (Lyons & Chesley, 2004).

It would appear that cultural understanding would be important to the success of African American students.

This is why it is important to look at hiring and promoting more African American males. More often, personal

beliefs and biases manifest from a limited or lack of cultural understanding. (Gere, Buejler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009). Furthermore, one's biases towards controversial social issues may affect teachers' performance and the rate of success that the teacher has with certain types of students. (Ijei & Harrison, 2010).

Performance pressures are increased by high visibility. Boundary heightening occurs when differences between the token and the dominant cultures are polarized or exaggerated. Role entrapment emerges from stereotypes about the token in the larger society used to incorporate the token into the dominants' world. Although I am convinced that these processes exist, it can be argued that they are not independent of the beliefs and attitudes of racial tokens in the school workplace (Kelly, 2007). There are several theories or conflicts that have led to the shortage of African American men in education. According to what Kelly has found, tokenism may have helped lead to the African American male shortage in education. There have often been rumors of individuals being hired to fill a position due to a color need, but then being fired due to the unofficial escape clause of "It just was not a good fit." One of the best ways to fix the problem is to explore and talk about the issues that were developed in the past and the ones that currently exist. Despite the fact that it might be assumed that most people may believe legally and ethically, race and skin color should not be a problem, the problem clearly still exists today. Research conducted by Finnegold and Wherry (2004) supports the fact that African Americans and Hispanics are three times as likely to be poor as non-Hispanic Whites and that 24% of African Americans and 20% of Hispanics experienced hardship over housing compared with only 10% of Whites. By looking at issues outside of education, one may see how and why certain issues are factors within education.

In 2008, The United States of America elected its first African American President. It has taken over 200 years for this great country to elect its first Black President although African Americans helped mold and shape this country into what it is today.

Although things are improving when it comes to equality in this country, there is still a long way to go in many areas such as education. According to a 1984 article

in Ebony Magazine called (*Is There a Plot against Black Teachers?*, *Ebony*, 1984), at one point in time in this country's history Black teachers were considered a mainstay in education and they took pride in nurturing young Black children. This changed when integration laws helped to reduce the number of Black educators. It was once reported that school desegregation had cost 31,500 African American teachers their jobs. This article focuses on the fact that states were making teachers who were certified to take a written competency test over and those against the retesting believed that this was done in an attempted to prevent Black teachers from becoming certified. In 1984 there had been, only 21 Blacks documented as new hires in the city of Baltimore, although administration claimed that there were 102 new Black teachers hired. (Ebony, 1984). This is important due to the fact that there were already few African American male teachers, but today some believe it is like an epidemic.

The data clearly show a persistent gap between the percentage of minority students and the percentage of minority teachers in U.S. schools. For instance, in the 2008-09 school year, 34% of the nation's population was minority and 41% of all elementary and secondary students were minority, but only 16.5% of all elementary and secondary teachers were minority.” (Ingersoll & May, 2014, pg. 1)

There have been programs developed that focus on helping develop and recruit Black men into the field of education according to the article *Getting More Men and Blacks Into Teaching*, MenTeach, a Minnesota-based clearing-house created in 1979 for men in K-12 schools (Chemelynski, 2006). Nelson of MenTeach traveled to high schools and asked teenage boys to think about a teaching career. His group provides mentors, training and stipends to prospective male teachers.

There was a partnership formed in the city of Maryland with Prince George County Schools and Bowie State University to support African American male teachers. The Prince George County School district served 135,000 students or more, 77% of whom are African American. But fewer than a quarter of its 8,600 teachers are men and more than 75% are white (Chmelynski, 2005). “Nationally, 45 percent of students are considered people

of color while around 83 percent of the teachers are white.”  
(Hess, 2014, pg. 2)

### **Research Questions**

There are several problems within education from funding, to the achievement gap, to the teacher shortages in several areas. With a third of the country’s more than 3.4 million teachers expected to retire by 2013, many states may face a dwindling pool of qualified teachers in the near future (Phillip 2013). It is clear that there is a shortage of teachers in the field of education, but this research focuses on the shortage of African American men and the challenges they face. This research seeks to answer the following questions: what biases, unfair treatments or a lack of understanding if any may have led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrators?

How have the challenges that African American males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education? The research questions supported the thesis and helped lead to better understanding of the shortage problem of African American male teachers and administrators. In turn the questions should lead to the hiring of more African American teachers and the promotion of more African American male administrators. Answering these questions hopefully will lead to better recruitment, retention and promotion of African American men into the education field.

#### **What biases, unfair treatments or a lack of understanding if any may have led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrator?**

“The average unemployment rate for blacks in 2011 was 15.8%, compared to 7.9% for Whites and 11.5% for Hispanics. Historically, Blacks have had persistently higher unemployment rates than the other major racial and ethnic groups” (U.S. Labor report, 2011, p. 2).

Although the statement refers to the overall unemployment rates in America, it is very reflective of the employment gap black men face within educational employment. “In addition once unemployed, Blacks are less likely to find jobs and tend to stay unemployed for longer periods of time. Blacks remained unemployed longer than Whites or Hispanics in 2011, with a median duration of unemployment of 27.0 weeks compared to 19.7

for Whites and 18.5 for Hispanics” (U.S. Labor Report, 2011, p. 2).

According to Macionis (2008), culture is the values, beliefs and behaviors that collectively form its people’s way of life. This may be important simply because people like to hire and work with those that are most like themselves. Therefore hiring practices of African American men in education should not be very shocking. “The African American culture, as a whole, has had a taxing education experience in the United States” (Hall, 2013, p. 28).

With few role models and leaders pushing for African American men to become leaders in education it may be somewhat difficult for a young want to aspire to becoming an educator or educational leader.

Since the 2008 election of Barack Obama, there has been a growing discussion about how his visibility as an African American president could provide a role model for other African American males. This public discourse about President Obama refocused attention on the ongoing concern in education about how to recruit more Black men to the teaching profession and led Education Secretary Arne Duncan to initiate a nationwide campaign to recruit and to place more Black men in the classroom (Brown, 2012, p. 296).

There is a concern by some researchers that White teachers do not have a total understanding of the African American culture which leads to a limited ability to identify with the struggles, concerns and overall needs of African American students, which leads to a hindering affect for connecting to student success (Hall, 2013). Watkins, Lewis and Chou (2001) also stated that culturally appropriate pedagogy, in which teachers relate to and show interest in the cultural tendencies of students, is essential to student success. Although this research focuses on the student-teacher relationship, the same can be said when it comes to the relationship practices of employer to employee. The question still remains, is there a lack of cultural understanding that lead to a shortage of African American Male administrators and teachers?

**How have the challenges that African American males**

**faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?**

People of all races, ethnic backgrounds and religions face challenges when it comes to being successful in the work place. However when it comes to African American male teachers it is even more difficult, due to the shortage of black male teachers and leaders.

within the context of debates about male teachers shortage is imbued with different meanings related to: (1) the number of male teachers relative to female teachers in schools; (2) a teaching environment considered to be more suited to females; and (3) to a backlash politics in which the female-dominated school environments are perceived to be promoting learning and social conditions that support the success of girls at the expense of boys? (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010, p. 249).

One of the biggest challenges for most men is the desire to move into education. Previous research supports the challenges, however, some of the challenges that African American men face may start even as early as birth.

Elton attributes the problems that some black boys experience to the presence of a matriarchal familial structure, as well as the presence of female teachers in elementary schools. For black boys it's overkill sometimes. They may have a female at home and then they come to school and then it's the female again. And maybe the mother might be domineering at home always on them and then at school they are always on them and it makes it worse. In some cases I have seen that happen where the kids are rebelling against the teacher and I've had students in my class that didn't have a male role model I had a student that actually in the middle of the year the male teacher left and a female teacher came in and his year was finished. And I had him in my class the previous year and it was a 360 turn around. But this rebellion was partially because and it was a white male who was teaching him – but he had

three sisters and his mom, had had no males at home and the male teacher left in the middle of the year. He had three women at home, you can just imagine three women and they were always on him, watching him...telling him what to do and he would just sit there. (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010, p. 259).

With few role models and leaders pushing for African American men to become leaders, one of the biggest concerns is the challenge of developing role models for young Black men as youth at home.

Starting in the 1930s, much of the sociological literature positioned African American men as absent fathers. The work of E. Franklin Frazier (1940, [1934] 1996) in particular, maintained that African American men who journeyed to the urban North to seek work began to establish negative cultural behaviors, such as promiscuity, that caused them to neglect their roles as fathers and husbands. As a result, researchers argued that the African American boy was left to fend for himself, with little to no adult guidance to support his development into a young man.

Therefore, the context of the troubled Black male youth centered on the absence of the father.

This narrative remained in place through the 1960s, with researchers giving increasing attention to the socio-psychological outcomes of African American boys who lacked the positive support and guidance of an African American male (Brown, 2012, p. 2).

Fair or unfair, our society specializes in grouping and this grouping is not limited to race and ethnicity. America has a tendency to place certain people from cultures into stereotypical groups. The African American culture seems to be recognized for its lack of academic production. There are several modern day challenges academically such as reading, attendance and parental involvement – challenges and concerns that appear throughout time. There are other educational factors of old that have crept into the everyday realities of the Black culture today. These challenges can affect belief systems, as well as the attitudes and beliefs of generations to come. (Allen & Bagozzi, 2001).

“Additionally, because the fate of African American academic success historically laid, in the hands of racial practices, the community as a whole has experienced a seemingly downplay of the importance of educational success by the dominant culture, as well as within the African American culture” (Hall, 2013, pg. 31). This does not fully answer the question of how the challenges that African American males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education. It does offer support for the idea that there were and are factors and challenges that hinder African American men when it comes to getting into education and looking to gaining access to being promoted as a leader in the educational environment.

**General Implications of the research**

“The call for more Black male teachers is often part of policy discussions addressing the academic underachievement of Black male students. This discourse generally assumes that the Black male teacher has certain dispositions and experiences that allow him to reach the troubled Black male student” (Brown, 2012, pg. 296). For the most part, humans perform better when they are in situations of comfort. To know that there are others that look like you and may have had some of the same experiences as you could aid in your success. Also by having more African American men in education helps young black men to aspire to become an educator. Having a teacher to see and be able to say I want to be like Mr. Hall someday may be the start towards closing the achievement and employment gap that African American men face. It is well known that there is a need for Black male teachers and this does make good sense given the educational conditions of African American boys. The only issue is the fact that little discussion has occurred in or around positioning the Black male teacher as the ideal pedagogue and role model for the Black male student. (Brown, 2012, p. 598).

**Table 1**

*Percentage of men working by ethnic group, U.S. Bureau of Census, Census of Population, 1970-2000; American Community Survey, 2007, 2010*

| <b>YEAR</b>  | <b>WHITE</b> | <b>HISPANIC</b> |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|
| <b>BLACK</b> |              |                 |

|       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 1970  | 73.4% | 85.5% |
| 80.4% |       |       |
| 1980  | 61.6% | 83.8% |
| 72.9% |       |       |
| 1990  | 55.9% | 84.8% |
| 70.8% |       |       |
| 2000  | 52.4% | 84.0% |
| 65.9% |       |       |
| 2007  | 48.8% | 81.4% |
| 77.1% |       |       |
| 2010  | 44.7% | 77.4% |
| 65.0% |       |       |

---

Table 1 shows, that not only are African American men underrepresented in education, but they are underrepresented in the workplace as a whole throughout the nation.

According to the Labor Department report of March 2013, 68.7% of white men are employed and 59.4% of black men are employed. Black men are employed at the lowest rate of any ethnic group in the entire country according to the Labor Department report. Although there were no statistics on the employment of African American men within education it was noted earlier that in South Carolina fewer than one percent of elementary education teachers were black men (Phillip, 2013).

The other factor that needs to be reviewed is how to develop African American men into educators, leaders within education and how to maintain their leadership roles once they obtain this position.

### **Other Key Factors**

Are there other factors that have led to the African American male educator shortage? Although this is not a research question in this study, it is a relevant one because it is a factor in the employment and position maintenance of good quality African American men in the field of education. For example David Brewer III is an African American male who was a Superintendent from October

2006-December 2008. Brewer is a retired U.S. Navy Vice Admiral with no education experience who steered the district to improve test scores. In 2007-2008, the dropout rate of LAUSD was 26 percent--a 32 percent decrease from the previous year and one of the largest improvements in California. Brewer shortly after decided to leave education because of pressure by school board members and civic leaders who lost confidence in him, Brewer did not see his four year contract to the end due to the pressure put on him although he appeared to be successful (Pascopella 2011).

How could this gentleman who had accomplished so much in such a short time have been able to keep his leadership position as Superintendent? Would his white counterpart have been able to hold the same position with lesser accomplishments?

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, there are a number of factors that aid in the employment gap of African American men within education as teachers and leaders. Also, while reviewing the research it can be noted that this employment gap is not only relevant to education, but the employment gap runs across the board. African American men are the lowest achievers in schools and they are underrepresented when it comes to employment within the education sector. This is important because research shows the importance of African American men as examples to African American boys.

Schools and especially the various publics must develop social and/or cultural wrap around services for Black males. Black males are swamped with social and/or cultural issues that retard their academic potential and the resiliency to graduate from high school. Having rigorous academic standards and a relevant curriculum, without building strong social and/or cultural opportunities will net the same results, deplorable graduating numbers for Black males. It is more than, just academics: social workers, nurses, school counselors, the community and Black males are needed to aid in increasing the graduation of this population (Bell, 2010, p. 16).

It appears that there are a number of factors that contribute to the educational gap of African American men,

but the key factor of this research is supported by the fact that Black men play an important role when it comes to helping young African American men succeed.

The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* provides us with a chance to reevaluate what has happened in the time since. In 1954, the argument was that the student's access to resources was unfair and therefore unconstitutional. That underlying problem has not been solved today. The consensus

among professionals is that teachers have the single largest effect on student achievement. Schools now are having an identity and hiring crisis and we have

a lack of quality teachers of color in the workforce.

There are far more students of color than there are teachers of color and this slows any hope of ending educational inequality. (Hess, 2014, p. 1)

This chapter reviewed literature that supports two questions and also leads to the reality that there needs to be more research on the employment and promotion gap of African American men in the educational settings. Those two questions are:

1. What biases, unfair treatments or a lack of understanding if any may have led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrator?
2. How have the challenges that African American men faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?

This study continues to look at issues African American men face with gaining employment as educators and educational leaders as well as exploring the need to have African American men in the role of educator and leader. "This often deficiency-based presentation and analysis of black life have generated a conceptual term that regards black families as inherently unstable and specifically, black men as both victims and villains of their own fate" (Brown, 2010, p. 598).

Ultimately the literature reviewed supports the fact that there is a need to further research the need of African American men as educators and leaders in school systems.

To this point the various articles and studies indicate that there may be a problem in teacher shortage across the board, but there is also a problem in the teacher shortage gap for African American men. The articles highlight the fact that there may be discrimination not only in the general populations, but also in the educational sector of employment for African American males. Although there seems to be some agreement towards the fact that African American males face challenges that their white counterparts do not face as leaders and teachers, the research seems to be very limited on this topic.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Research Design**

##### **Statement of Problem**

The purpose of this study is to determine if there are certain factors that present barriers to the presence of African American males in teaching and administrative positions, to identify such factors, and conclude the best way to overcome such factors. The final goal is to develop ideas that will allow for hiring, recruiting, retaining and promoting African American men in the field of education.

This study is descriptive research. According to Kerlinger (1986), this study is more specifically classified as survey research. Kerlinger noted that “survey researchers are interested in... What people think and do and the relationship between sociological and psychological variables” (p. 378). This survey research is designed to look at African American men and the challenges that they may or may not face in gaining employment and promotion in the educational sector. The survey questions will allow for the study to focus on the key characteristics of the ethical issues and it allows the researcher to note how African American men feel about the challenges that they may face or have faced as they journey toward the goal of becoming teachers and administrators.

The research was conducted by using a survey designed to obtain the perspective of current African American administrators and hopeful administrators.

##### **Research Description**

According to Glasow (2005), in survey research, independent and dependent variables are used to define the

scope of study, but cannot be explicitly controlled by the researcher. Before conducting the survey, the researcher must predicate a model that identifies the expected relationships among these variables. (Glasow, 2005). This survey research is designed to examine African American men and the challenges that they may or may not face in gaining employment and promotion in the educational sector. The survey questions will allow for the study to focus on the key characteristics of the ethical issues and it allows the researcher to note how African American men feel about the challenges that they may face or have faced as they journey toward the goal of becoming teachers and administrators.

### **Variables**

The study used a survey with a Likert-like scale for African American male administrators. This is needed to explore why African American men do not seek education as a profession, how those that have sought education as a profession are successful and what will it take to get more African American men to seek education as a profession.

The survey also allowed the researcher to see how African American male administrators feel about their educational employment process and career development and support.

This allowed the researcher to test the directional hypothesis that there will be evidence that biases, unfair treatment and lack of understanding have been part of the challenges that affect whether or not there is a shortage of African American male teachers and administrators within education. After the surveys were completed the two research questions were answered: 1. What biases, unfair treatments or a lack of understanding if any may have led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrator? 2. How have the challenges that African American males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education? These data should support the thesis and help to lead to understanding the shortage problem of African American male teachers and administrators. This in turn should lead to the hiring of more African American teachers and the promotion of more African American male administrators.

There are four independent variables within the research. These variables are Personal Educational

Experiences, Current Working Conditions, Personal Feelings, and Ways to Improve. These variables are all associated with the experiences of the participants who are involved in the survey. The intent is to see how each person's experiences has affected their decision to become an educator, how have these experiences have shaped the development of those who are successful as educators and how these experiences can help bring and develop African American men to become educators and educational leaders.

### **Setting and Participants**

The participants of this study were selected randomly from a total of four states throughout the United States of America. The participants were selected by a committee of African American administrators. The committee sought out participants whom they may have known and through internet searches. The participants ranged from building level administrators to district level administrators. There were 30 participants surveyed. The men who volunteered to participate in the study were asked to respond to survey questions with a Likert-like rating scale. The survey took about 15 minutes to complete. The questions in the survey asked each participant about his perceptions and experiences regarding education as a student and as a professional. The committee of African American administrators was developed to seek out qualified African American male administrators. The surveys were hand delivered, emailed and mailed to the participants. The participants returned the survey by either hand delivering the survey to the researcher or emailing the survey back to the researcher.

### **Instruments**

For validity and reliability a survey using a Likert-like scale was used. The researcher made sure each person received the same form of questions. The validity and reliability from the survey is increased by using the Lickert-like scale and by surveying 20 participants the survey was created and tested for validity and reliability.

The survey allows for those individuals who may want to be more private with their responses to answer and it allows the research to be less controlled. Using a survey provides more of a real life experience to the research. A survey is also important to use due to the fact that there has

been very little research conducted the topic of African American male employment and promotion in the field of education.

### **Procedures**

To obtain voluntary consent the researcher provided each participant with written notice asking permission, explaining the process and explaining the purpose of the study. The participants were not required to put their name on the survey and surveys were hand distributed in most cases as well as distributed by email. The participant's email was deleted once the survey results were printed and noted. The researcher was the only person with access to view the surveys. All surveys were stored in a home office in a key locked safe. Results were transferred to an electronic file and they were password protected, and this allowed for maximum protection of all data collected and at the end of the study the researcher shredded all of the survey documents.

For this research project the following procedures were followed:

1. The initial research of the topic was explored. The reason was to see if there was a need to study the topic in more depth and to see how much research existed on the topic. Although there is very little information on the topic of African American men in any work place it seemed to be an important topic among both African Americans and Whites.
2. Because there is very little research on the topic the researcher decided to take the approach of getting information from the people who seem to be most affected by the topic. This is why the researcher decided to use the survey method of research in order to gain real life opinions.
3. The survey was created by the researcher using a Likert-like scale. The survey was checked for face validity by first allowing ten African American male school administrators to look over the survey. The purpose for allowing the gentlemen to look at the survey was to ensure that the questions were strong and flowed with the structure of the research. It also allowed the researcher to check for biases within the questioning. The survey was then administered to ten more African American male

administrators to ensure that the survey was strong and lacked misunderstandings and misleading questions.

4. After ensuring consistency in the questions the next step was to have four more African American male administrators from the State of Illinois to complete the survey after the survey was enhanced.

5. After the administrators completed the survey the answers were compared and the next step in the process was developing a form letter to give to each person that would officially complete the survey for the actual research project.

6. Surveys' were mailed out January 15, 2015. The participants were chosen by the committee based on various searches and relationships with African American male administrators around the country. The committee helped provide names, but only the researcher knew to whom the surveys were distributed. The participants did not have to put their names on the surveys. Participants who did not respond by February 3, 2015 received a second survey with a reminder note. All surveys that were returned by email were filed in a locked file cabinet. Each email was deleted as soon as the survey was printed and the results were noted. No information about participants was disclosed to others without written permission. When the results of the research were published and discussed in conferences, no information was included that would reveal your identity. The results of the study were reported collectively and anonymously. Furthermore, the survey results were kept in a locked cabinet and destroyed upon completion of the study and any emails were transferred and deleted after printing.

7. Some surveys were hand delivered to schools and districts that had African American male administrators. Hand delivered surveys that were not returned by February 3, 2015 were followed up with a phone call and a mail out survey.

8. The rate of return for the surveys that were mailed out was 27% and the rate of return for the surveys that were hand delivered was 97%. The data was kept by tracking the number of surveys mailed out or hand delivered and keeping track of how many were returned. There were a

total of 30 surveys returned.

### **Data Analyses**

The respondents were provided a survey with Likert-like scaled and were asked several questions that would relate to the two research questions. The questions that best supported answering the first research question were 1,2,3,6,7,8,12, and 13. Those questions dealt with the respondents Personal Educational Experiences, Current Working Conditions and Personal Feelings towards working as educators.

In order to answer the survey Question 2 which asked “How have the challenges that African American Males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?” Survey questions 5,9,10,14,15,16,17,18, and 20 provided the best support. Those questions came from all four survey categories, Personal Educational Experiences, Current Working Conditions, Personal Feelings, and Ways to improve the training of African American men.

The respondents were African American male administrators or former administrators. Using a Likert scale the respondents were able to select from a scale of one through five. The hypothesis of each research question was directional and the data gathered was statistically analyzed by using a Microsoft Excel® Spread sheet. The data was broken down into mean, mode, standard deviation and frequency of responses to each question.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is multifold. The purpose has been to explore if there is a divide between the hiring and promotion practices of African American male educators and others. The literature indicates that there is a teacher shortage all around and the shortage of male teachers is even greater. Just as there is an achievement gap there is a hiring gap between African American Males and

the rest of the educational population when it comes to leadership and classroom teachers (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010).

Our perceptions affect our understanding and thinking. Therefore, experiences of African Americans may have affected their thoughts, actions and attitudes about education (Hall, 2013). This is relevant to the research topic because it reviewed African American men and the reason or reasons that they have not entered the educational career field, examined thoughts, attitudes and experiences when it comes to education as a student, or even as an employee seeking employment or promotion. African Americans have faced several challenges when it comes to education in this country such as slavery, segregation, under funding of schools and the list goes on. This research goal is to expose those challenges that still exist by seeking out African American teachers and administrators.

This research explores the attitudes of African American men towards the field of education as teachers and leaders. The survey used during this exploration has helped to explore ways to improve the recruitment, retention and promotion of African American men within the field of education. Research has been conducted on the shortage of male educators, such as Martino and Rezai-Rashti's study named Male Teacher Shortage: Black Teachers' Perspective, Gender and Education. There seems to be very little to no research being conducted on the shortage of African American men in education or educational administration.

### **Survey Validity**

Table 2

*Cronbach's Alpha survey validity test results*

| Cronbach's<br>Alpha | Number of<br>Items | Cronbach's Alpha Based<br>on Standardized Items |
|---------------------|--------------------|---|
|---------------------|--------------------|---|

.612

17

.547

Table 2 Cronbach's Alpha test results indicate that the reliability for the entire survey is a .612. After running the

original Cronbach's Alpha for the survey reliability improved greatly after removing questions 12, 17 and 20.

For the purposes of analysis only data provided by African American male administrators were used. The reason for only focusing on this group is due to the exploration of their perceived struggles and what lead to their current or past success or failure as educational leaders.

The data were analyzed by creating a Microsoft Excel® Spread sheet. The data was broken down into mean, median, mode, and standard deviation.

### Survey Validity for Research Question 1

Table 3

*Cronbach's Alpha survey validity test results for research question 1*

| Cronbach's Alpha | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items |
|------------------|-----------------|--|
| .602             | 6               | .652   |

Table 3 Cronbach's Alpha test results indicate that the reliability for research question 1 is a .602. Research question 1 ask, Are there unfair treatments or a lack of understanding that led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrators? After running the original Cronbach's Alpha for the research question reliability improved greatly after removing questions 12 and 2. The survey questions that best supported Research question 1 were 1,3,6,7,8 and 13.

### Question 1 Results

Table 4

*Are there unfair treatments or a lack of understanding that led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrators?*

| Question<br>Mode | Mean<br>SD |     |
|------------------|------------|-----|
| 1                | 3.3<br>1.3 | 4   |
| 3                | 3.4<br>1.2 | 2,4 |
| 6                | 3.4<br>1.1 | 4   |
| 7                | 3.1<br>1.0 | 4   |
| 8                | 2.5<br>1.1 | 3   |
| 13               | 4.7<br>0.5 | 5   |

The Lickert-like scale was represented as: 1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree and 5.

Strongly Agree. The results of question 1: my intelligence has been belittled by a teacher; this question showed a mean of 3.3, a mode and median of 4 and standard deviation of 1.3. Because the mode, median and standard deviation this indicates that the majority of the answers were between 2.0 and 4.6. The results from this survey question appear to show that most respondents had mixed results regarding the question of rarely have their intelligences had been belittled by their teachers. In this case the median would indicate that most of the respondents selected rarely that they felt their intelligence had been belittled by a teacher.

Question 3: states, I believe I have received unfair grading by a teacher in comparison to my white/black peers. The mean was 3.4, with bi-modal values of two and four and the standard deviation of 1.2 with a median of four. The overall results of this question seem to also show that most of the respondents fell into the neutral range when it came to weather of not they felt that they were graded on equal terms with their classmates, but as

indicated by survey question 1 the answer that was selected slightly more than the others was rarely. This means that more of the respondents felt that they believed it was rare for a teacher to provide unfair grading towards them in comparison to their classmates.

The next question which fits within Table 4 is Question 6 which asked each respondent, if their fellow workers treated them with equal respect compared to their white counterparts. The mean of this question was a 3.4, the mode and median was a four and the standard deviation was 1.1. Again, while the mean indicates a neutral response, the mode and median indicates a sense of agreement if they felt respected by their fellow co-workers. Therefore, respondents do feel that they are treated equal to their counterparts at work.

Question 7: asked if the respondent's supervisors treated them with equally to their counterparts at work.

The mean was 3.1, the mode was a 4 and the standard deviation was a 1.0, but the median was three indicating that the respondents were neutral. The median of Question 7 is three and this indicates that more of the respondents selected that they are neutral when it comes to feeling respected by their supervisors at work.

Question 8: asked if the respondents felt more or less job security compared to their counterparts. The mean for this question was a 2.5 with a mode and median of 3 and a standard deviation of 1.1. This response indicates that most of the respondents felt neutral about their job security in comparison to their counterparts.

The final question in table one was 13 and this question asked if the respondents were proud to tell others that they were educators. The mean was 4.7 with a mode and median of 5 and a standard deviation of 0.5. This indicates that overall the respondents are proud of their career choice and are still pleased to be part of the educational system even if they may feel a sense of unfair treatment in some cases. In most cases the respondents seem to be neutral when it comes to their treatment as African American men within the educational system.

The researcher rejects the directional hypothesis. It appears that the respondents were neutral to rarely/agree on the majority of the survey questions and therefore a prediction cannot be stated for any negative treatments that

may be holding African American men back in the employment or promotion.

### Survey Validity for Research Question 2

Table 5

*Cronbach's Alpha survey validity test results for research question 2*

| Cronbach's Alpha | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items |
|------------------|-----------------|--|
| .805             | 5               | .811   |

Table 5 Cronbach's Alpha test results indicate that the reliability for research question 2 is a .705. Research question 2 asked, "How have the challenges that African American males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?" After running the original Cronbach's Alpha for the research question reliability improved greatly after removing a couple of survey questions.

### Question 2 Results

Table 6

*How have the challenges that African American males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?*

| Question Mode | Mean | SD    |
|---------------|------|-------|
| 15            | 4.1  | 0.771 |
| 16            | 4.5  | 0.618 |
| 17            | 4.1  | 0.928 |

|    |       |     |     |
|----|-------|-----|-----|
| 18 |       | 4.3 | 5   |
|    | 0.699 |     |     |
| 20 |       | 4.2 | 4,5 |
|    | 0.748 |     |     |

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## Question 2

Question 2 states, “How have the challenges that African American males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?” The results have been listed in Table 2. Survey questions 15,16,17,18 and 20 helped to answer question, e.g. question two which focused on the various challenges that African American men may have faced as they moved from being students through their journey to becoming administrators and teachers in the educational system.

The first survey question that supports the second overall research question is Question 15. Survey Question 15 asked respondents if they felt that African American men will have or do have a more difficult time becoming administrators? The question had a mean of 4.1, a mode of 4, median of 5 and a standard deviation of 0.771. The numbers indicate that the respondents agree that they feel there is an issue with the ability of African American men becoming administrators.

Question 16, from Table, 6 is in regards to districts’ need and ability to develop and recruit African American men to become teachers and administrators. The mean to this question was 4.5, mode 5, median of 4 and standard deviation was 0.618. This again indicates a majority of the respondents strongly agreed that districts need to be more proactive when it comes to recruiting and promoting African American men.

Question 17 asked if a mentoring program will improve African American men’s chances of becoming administrators? The mean of this question was 4.1, a mode of 5, median of 4 and a standard deviation of 0.928. This indicates that the respondents do agree that if districts develop mentoring program it would help increase the chances of African American men becoming administrators.

Survey Question 18 asked if developing programs at the high school and college level for developing African American male interest in becoming an educator is the best

route to improving their presence in this career field. With a mean of 4.3, mode of 5, median of 4 and standard deviation of 0.699, this would indicate that respondents again believe that such a program at those levels would help improve the presences of African American men as teachers and leaders.

Survey Question 20 asked respondents if districts and universities should develop cultural awareness programs and professional development training/courses for African American men new to the educational field or new to a district. The mean for this question was 4.2, with bi-modal values of four and five, median of 4 and a standard deviation of 0.748. Again, these data indicate that there should be some form of cultural awareness program for young African American men entering education. This awareness helps the young men understand the environment that they are entering and helps improve their understanding of the education culture as a teacher and leader.

The directional hypothesis is accepted for research Question 2. Also, based on the responses the men appear to believe that there need to be programs developed for increasing the presence of African American men in education. The responses also support the fact that these men believe there needs to be programs developed in order to keep and develop African American men as educational leaders.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion of Findings**

This study was conducted to explore if there is a hiring and promotion gap between African American men and everyone else in the field of education. The study also looked to see what helped those African American men who were hired and promoted succeed within the field of education. Most participants surveyed assumed that this topic of study had been researched in detail, but this was not the case. In conducting the research there seemed to be several studies that indicated that there is a shortage of men within education, but not many studies that examined the shortage of African American men in the field of education. “A black male student, who has had about 55 teachers

from kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade across all subjects, could expect to have had one black male teacher in Detroit and three black male teachers in Memphis.” (Coleman & Dilworth, 2014, p. 2). While this may not be great when it comes to providing hope for Black men wanting to become leaders, it can only be effective if there is a true push to encourage young African American men to seek employment and leadership roles within education.

The results of this study indicated that 95% of the participants do not regret going into education although according to the results for survey question 16, they do feel that African American men do have a more difficult time becoming administrators. The research did not seem to provide much insight in to what helped the men surveyed gain success as African American male leaders in the educational field. But, based on the findings of the study, the fact that the men stuck with the ups and downs and struggles in the field of education provides insight to who or what type of person can have success as an educational leader. The results of this study indicated that the men who took part in the study feel strongly that there need to be programs that lead African American men towards the field of education and that school districts should develop programs that promote building these young men as leaders in the field.

### **Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine if there are certain factors that present barriers to the presence of African American males in teaching and administrative positions, to identify such factors, and to determine the best way to overcome such factors. The final goal is to develop ideas that will allow for hiring, recruiting, retaining and promoting African American men in the field of education.

This study was looking to help those African American men who desire to gain employment and promotion in the field of education. It was also designed to help those looking to employ anyone in the field of education to look at African American men as viable candidates and to see how they view their treatment as well as opportunities in the field of education.

Many groups came to this new country as indentured servants. However, African Americans most often came as slaves. A slave was a person whose life, liberty and

property is solely controlled by another human being. The institution of slavery provided America with opportunities of wealth and growth; however, it set a foundation of a pattern of inequality of African Americans in the United States (Hall, 2013). During the start of slavery, slaves were initially taught to read and write. Slave owners wanted slaves to read, particularly because this would be beneficial in converting them to Christianity and learning scripture (Anderson, 2005). This soon changed with the spread of abolitionist materials, forged traveling passes and other documents and the occurrence of slave revolts. The education of Africans became viewed as a threat to the societal way of life for slave owners (Anderson). Therefore after slavery came the Supreme Court's decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) that allowed for separate but not so equal education. What *Plessy v. Ferguson* did allow was for African Americans to be taught by other African Americans and it allowed for parents and families to feel comfortable taking part in school activities. However, the subsequent Supreme Court Decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) was a landmark case affecting all American schools in that it eradicated the institution of segregation. For African Americans, this meant the disbanding of their "separate but equal" schools.

Administrators, teachers and students were dispersed to all-white schools where they were met with resistance from white administrators, teachers and parents (Lyons & Chesley, 2004). African Americans walked into schools that did not welcome them and were far from the family-like structure they were accustomed to in their own schools.

African American principals were demoted to assistant principals and some to teachers (Lyons & Chesley, 2004).

About this time is when African American men may have begun to feel the effects of the challenge of becoming teachers and administrators.

### **Research Question**

This survey sought to answer the following questions:

1. What biases, unfair treatments or a lack of understanding if any may have led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrator?

The results of the study indicated that most African American male leaders agree that there is a shortage of

African American men in education as teachers and leaders. Throughout the study the most telling was the fact that a number of those surveyed responded neutral to rarely about, if they have felt belittled as a student growing up.

This could indicate that most of the discrimination may have come in more subtle ways as opposed to outright belittlement.

These findings are important because as students, participants were discriminated against, but as adults in the field of education they felt respected by their peers.

However, 74% of participants do not feel the same job security as their white counterparts. This could be a factor which has led to a shortage of African American male educators.

Discrimination tends to develop out of a lack of understanding of African American men as well as developing African American men's understanding of the culture of education. There may also be a lack of understanding of the educational culture by African American males.

Education professionals such as those affiliated with ACTI are culturally prepared to work with African American students. While many non Africentric school leaders and researchers continue trying to downplay the role of culture, their efforts are questionable because even if African American students miraculously began to perform well in school, they would still be culturally detached and woefully lacking the requisite skills for being able to solve the countless problems within their own communities (Schockley, 2010, p. 393).

Sixty two percent of the respondents are neutral on most of the early questions of the survey, but when it came to job security 74% did not feel the same. It is also surprising that while those surveyed felt little security, 68% still felt a sense of loyalty towards the career field of education and even the school for which they work. As the research progressed it is speculated that the respondents are neutral to most questions because of a sense of little job security.

This highlights the fact that these men feel that there is unfair treatment and a lack of understanding that has led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrators.

2. How have the challenges that African American

males faced as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?

Although no interviews were conducted, there was generally a similar feeling or agreement when talking to the respondents about the survey and the possible outcomes of the study. This is why it would be good for anyone who would like to expand on this research to use interviews as part of their research during the study.

### **Mentoring**

It appears that respondents agree that a mentoring program for African American men seeking to gain employment and promotion in education is needed. The programs should be developed at various levels, high school, college, and even within school districts. The programs could be similar to police cadet programs.

Programs such as mentoring programs may help increase the enrollment of African American men in the educational programs.

Sixty-eight percent of individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs in 2009-10 identified as white, eleven percent identified as Hispanic or Latino and nine percent as black or African American. A number of these programs, typically termed, alternative routes, are more abbreviated than others and appeal to teachers of color more-so than so called traditional programs. While many of these programs are situated in or affiliated with colleges and universities, a number of them do not provide a sufficient level of induction and /or mentoring support which is critical to retaining beginning teachers.

(Coleman & Dilworth, 2014, p. 10)

Those surveyed agreed at a high level that they were happy with choosing the field of education. This feeling of joy is good for recruiting future African American educators. Since these educators are pleased with their choice of careers, it seems reasonable that they would be great fits for mentoring and supporting younger educators.

The portion of the survey that damages the recruitment of future African American male educators and educational leaders is the fact that current African American men in the field feel it is and was more difficult for them as African American men to become administrators and stay

administrators in the educational system according to survey Question 15. This is why it is speculated by the researcher that a mentoring program by, for and with African American male leaders and long term teachers are needed for younger African American men. “In their quests to provide meaningful and relevant educational opportunities for children of African descent, about 15 years ago a group of [them] began to notice that there are not enough properly trained adults to work with the children in an authentically indigenous African (centered) way” (Shockley, 2010, p. 381).

The survey did support allowing those who aspire to be educators or educational leaders to see what it may take in order to be successful as teachers and teacher leaders.

Seventy one percent of respondents agree that there are challenges as an African American man in the field of education.

Ninety eight percent of the participants agree that there is a big need for mentoring programs in order to attract and promote African American men in the field of education. It is apparent one of the most agreed upon ways for overcoming the challenges that African American men face in becoming teachers and teacher leaders is for there to be mentoring for future educators or leaders, but there should also be cultural awareness for young African American men entering the field of education. The proposed program should address misconceptions that African American men have about education and other cultures. This program would also educate the young men as to what it takes to be successful in the field of education.

Over the last ten years the attrition rate for minority teachers has averaged about 10% annually and in 1995-1996 the average age of teachers was 46. At the same time, 30% of African American teachers were over 55, suggesting that attrition is likely to rise at a higher rate for them than for other teachers. The aging of the teacher workforce implies that the demand for new teachers is likely to increase dramatically in the next few years as retirement increases the teacher shortage. (Torres, Santos, Peck & Cortez 2004, p. 16)

A mentoring program appears to be needed as an action for decreasing the current teacher shortage.

## **Cultural Awareness**

There should also be cultural awareness for others on working with minority men. Judging by the results of survey Question 20, the respondents also agreed that early development of educators is very important. Shockley's 2010 article supports the fact that formal training is highly important when it comes to developing young teachers.

“What happens in teacher education programs and teacher professional development workshops in the United States, is part of the larger function of socializing teachers to think about their work in certain ways. In fact, from birth the purpose of all of the formal and informal education that we receive is part and parcel of some effort to socialize us that is to make us fit for life in companionship with other people.” (p. 379)

## **Limitations**

One of the limitations of this study is that there are so few African American men to take part in this type of research.

Another limitation to this research was that there is very little to no research focusing on the shortage of African American men in the field of education. This can be a limitation because there is little support to reference either for or against the study.

It also appeared that respondents voiced more of a concern to how they had been treated as teacher and leaders than they may have suggested through their survey responses. This is a limitation because participants appear more comfortable verbalizing their feelings than they do putting them on paper.

## **Recommendations**

Seventy percent of respondents provided a neutral to rarely responses on question one which asked what biases, unfair treatments or lack of understanding if any may have led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrators. While the respondents are neutral to the question it does not appear that these challenges have affected this group of men enough to deter them from the field of education. If this research is expanded, it would be very interesting to see if the researcher might be able to find men who started off in the field of education, but moved away for one reason or another.

If further research is conducting using this topic, it is

encouraged that the future researcher use interviews as part of the research. It is also recommended that anyone doing more research on this topic open up the survey portion of the research to either African American women leaders or white male leaders or both.

It is recommended that further research be conducted on this topic. It is suggested that this research develop a stronger focus on how current and past African American men became leaders in the field of education as well as how they maintain their status as leaders. It is also recommended that leaders of other ethnic backgrounds take part in the study to see what qualities they may see that helps certain African American men gain advancement within the educational field.

As the research comes to a close it appears that there are several needs in order to close the employment gap between African American men and the rest of the educational world. It is recommended that more research be conducted on a deeper level exploring the need for hiring and promoting African American men as teachers and leaders within the field of education. The research will help improve current district practices and allow districts to explore policies for implementing possible programs for improving hiring and promoting African American men. It is also important to explore how other cultures feel about the lack of African American men in the field of education.

### **Implications for Current Practice**

Based on the research there is value in developing understanding within the African American culture of the importance of having African American men in the field of education as leaders. It is apparent that current African American male leaders feel a great need for a mentoring program that will support the growth and development of young African American men that aspire to become employed or promoted within the field of education. It has been the recommendation of the researcher that districts explore and implement mentoring programs for African American men aspiring to become teachers and educational leaders.

Not only should districts use mentoring programs, but they should also develop committees made up of school and district level employees to review current district hiring

and promoting policies for all staff, but in particular for African American men.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A

#### Participant Survey

Highest Administration Position Held

\_\_\_\_\_ Total years in  
administration \_\_\_\_\_ Current position  
held \_\_\_\_\_

Is your school in a Urban \_\_\_\_\_ or Rural \_\_\_\_\_ area?

#### *Personal Educational Experiences*

A. My intelligence has been belittled by a teacher

1. Very Frequently 2. Frequently 3. Neutral 4. Rarely 5. Never

B. I have never experienced discrimination by a

teacher due to my race

1. Very Frequently 2. Frequently 3. Neutral 4. Rarely 5. Never

C. I believe I have received unfair grading by a

teacher in comparison to my white/black peers

1. Very Frequently 2. Frequently 3. Neutral 4. Rarely 5. Never

D. Overall my education as a student was great

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

E. I was allowed to take the most challenging courses

during my high school career

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

#### *Current Working Conditions*

A. Your fellow workers treat you with equal respect

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

B. Your immediate supervisor treats you equal to your

counterparts at work

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

C. You feel your job security is just as secure as your

white/black counterparts

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

D. The physical conditions in which I work are great

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

E. My district has a mentoring program for African Americans aspiring to be administrators

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

### ***Personal Feelings***

A. The chances of me switching career fields are small

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

B. I feel very little loyalty to this school/career field

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

C. I am proud to tell others I am an educator

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

D. Deciding to become an educator was the best decision I have ever made career wise

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

E. African Americans men will have or do have a more difficult time becoming administrators

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

F. Districts need to do a better job of developing and recruiting African American men to become teachers and administrators

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

### ***Ways to Improve***

A. A mentoring program will improve African American men chances of becoming administrators

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

B. Developing programs at the high school and college level for developing African American male interest in becoming an educator is the best route to improving their presence in this career field

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

C. Increasing the pay or developing incentives will help draw more African American men to education.

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

E. There should be cultural awareness professional development training for African American men new to the educational field or new to a district

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

Appendix B  
**INFORMED CONSENT**

**University of St. Francis**  
*Joliet, Illinois*

**Consent for Participation in Research**

What's Holding Us Back; Hiring,  
Promoting and Retaining African  
American men as Educators and  
Leaders

**Why am I being asked to participate?**

You are being asked to be a participant in a research study on the practices of hiring, retaining and promoting African American men within education conducted by Todd C. Hall. You have been asked to participate in the research because you are an African American male that is currently or has been an administrator. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the research.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without

affecting that relationship. All names will be kept private.

By responding to the survey and sending it back states that you are giving me permission to use your responses as part of the research project.

### **Why is this research being done?**

This research is being done in order to complete a doctoral dissertation. The survey helps answer the following questions.

3. What biases, unfair treatments or a lack of understanding if any may have led to a shortage of African American male teachers and administrator?
  
4. How have the challenges that African American men face as teachers and leaders affected their attitudes towards their ability to be successful and effective within education?

### **What is the purpose of this research?**

The purpose of this research is to see if there are any practices that keep African American men from educational employment, retention in the field of educational employment and promotion within the field of education. The research also focuses on ways to improve hiring practices, retention and promotion of African American men within education.

### **What procedures are involved?**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to respond to a survey with a Likert rating scale. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. You will be asked about your perceptions and experiences regarding education as a student and as a professional. I will either give you or send you the survey by email and you can return the survey in the same manner. Participation is voluntary. There are approximately 20 to 30 anonymous participants that may be involved in this research at the University of St. Francis

### **What are the potential risks and discomforts?**

Risks may include the possible loss of privacy between you and the main researcher and the possible inconvenience of answering some questions. If at any time you wish to not participate in the study, you may merely inform the researcher of your wish to discontinue participation.

### **Are there benefits to taking part in the research?**

While you will not benefit directly from the study, the collective results will benefit the hiring, retention and promotions of African American men within the field of education.

**Will I be told about new information that may affect my decision to participate?**

During the course of the study, you will be informed of any significant new findings (either good or bad), such as changes in the risks or benefits resulting from participation in the research or new alternatives to participation, that might cause you to change your mind about continuing in the study. If new information is provided to you, your consent to continue participating in this study will be re-obtained.

**What about privacy and confidentiality?**

The only people who will know that you are a research participant is the principal researcher, Todd C. Hall. All survey's that are returned by email will be printed and filed in a locked file cabinet. Each email will be deleted as soon as the survey is printed. No information about you, or provided by you during the research will be disclosed to others without your written permission, except:

if necessary to protect your rights or welfare (for example, if you are injured and need emergency care or when the USF Institutional Review Board monitors the research or consent process); or if required by law.

When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity. More specifically, while the researcher will know your identity or your school and that information that links your identity or your school will not be used in the study report or in any data exchange. The results of the study will be reported collectively and anonymously. Furthermore, the survey results will be kept in a locked cabinet and destroyed upon completion of the study and any email transfer will be deleted after printing.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

**What if I am injured as a result of my participation?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Todd C. Hall. He may be contacted at 773.971.1799 or at toddhall7@icloud.com.

**What are the costs for participating in this research?**

There are no costs to participating in this research except the time it will take you to complete and return the survey.

**Will I be reimbursed for any of my expenses or paid for my participation in this research?**

There is no monetary reimbursement available for completing the survey. However, the researcher will share the collective results of the study with you upon completion in order to better inform your administrative practice.

**Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

**Who should I contact if I have questions?**

The researcher conducting this study is Todd C. Hall. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact the researcher at: Phone: 773.971.1799 or his faculty advisor, Dr. Robert Barwa at: Phone 815.740.3500

**What are my rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at [irb@stfrancis.edu](mailto:irb@stfrancis.edu).

**What if I am a USF student?**

You may choose not to participate or to stop your participation in this research at any time. This will not affect your class standing or grades at USF. The investigator may also end your participation in the research.

If this happens, your class standing or grades will not be

affected. You will not be offered or receive any special consideration if you participate in this research.

**What if I am a USF employee?**

Your participation in this research is in no way a part of your university duties, and your refusal to participate will not in any way affect your employment with the university, or the benefits, privileges, or opportunities associated with your employment at USF. You will not be offered or receive any special consideration if you participate in this research.

**Remember:** Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship. You will be given a copy of this form for your information and to keep for your records.

**Signature of Participant or Legally Authorized Representative**

I have read (or someone has read to me) the above information. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Researcher \_\_\_\_\_ Date (must be same as participant)

Running head: African American male Challenges In educational employment



**Certificate of Completion**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Todd Hall** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 01/28/2014

Certification Number: 1337602

January 2, 2015

Todd C. Hall  
607 Kevin Lane  
University Park, IL 60484

Dear Todd:

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your research project: "*What's Holding Us Back? Hiring, Promoting and Retaining African American Men as Educators*" (IRB # 2014-15-0027). Your research project has been **approved**.

This approval is valid for one year from the date of this letter. Should there be any changes to your study, you are required to submit additional documentation to the IRB **prior** to implementing those changes. **You are also required to close out this study once it is complete.**

While the IRB stipulates that you have addressed the ethical concerns in previous drafts of the application, we would be remiss if we didn't advise you that we have serious concerns about the efficacy of the design of your study.

1. Your question is far too broad and should be narrowed in scope. You might, for example, consider focusing only on recruiting/hiring OR retaining, of teachers OR administrators. Perhaps the current research in one of these areas can point to a question that remains unanswered. Alternatively, consider an action research project that looks at recruitment OR retention of teachers OR administrators in a particular district.
2. We urge you to use a validated instrument. A reviewer suggests the attached resource to help you identify possible instruments.
3. If there are no validated instruments available (and we do not believe this to be the case), consider a qualitative research design that would help you begin to answer your question, and may ultimately lead to the development an instrument.

We understand that, as a doctoral student, you are learning the process of research. However, we must express our concern that you will be wasting not just your time and effort, but that of the participants you hope to recruit for your study. Your proposed study involves an issue of great importance, and we would like to see you contribution to

the professional knowledge. Please consider the above as advice from professionals with considerable expertise in research methods and design.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at [whitemcnulty@stfrancis.edu](mailto:whitemcnulty@stfrancis.edu). Good luck with your study.

Sincerely,

Lisa White-McNulty, Chair  
Institutional Review Board

Todd C. Hall  
607 Kevin Lane  
University Park, IL 60484

Dear Todd:

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your research project: "What's Holding Us Back: Hiring, Promoting and Retaining African American Men as Educators". Your research project has been approved.

Attachment: **Race, Racism, Ethnicity, Racial Discrimination & Related Measures**

While the IRB stipulates that you have addressed the ethical concerns in previous drafts of the application, we would be remiss if we didn't advise you that we have serious concerns about the efficacy of the design of your study.

1. Your question is far too broad and should be narrowed in scope. You might, for example, consider focusing only on recruiting/retaining OR retention of teachers OR administrators. Perhaps the current research in one of these areas can point to a question that remains unanswered. Alternatively, consider an action research project that looks at recruitment OR retention of teachers OR administrators in a particular district.

2. We urge you to use a validated instrument. A reviewer suggests the attached resource to help you identify possible instruments.

3. If there are no validated instruments available (and we do not believe this to be the case), consider a qualitative research design that would help you begin to answer your question, and may ultimately lead to the development of an instrument.

We understand that, as a doctoral student, you are learning the process of research. However, we must express our concern that you will be wasting not just your time and effort, but that of the participants you hope to recruit for your study. Your proposed study involves an issue of great importance, and we would like to see your contribution to