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African American Male Elementary Teachers' Perceptions on Factors that Influence Their Retention and Attrition: A Qualitative Study

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The University of Southern Mississippi

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS
ON FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THEIR RETENTION
AND ATTRITION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

by

Lemanski Chante' Walker

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

December 2012

ABSTRACT

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THEIR RETENTION AND ATTRITION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

by Lemanski Chante' Walker

December 2012

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe and explore American male elementary teachers' perceptions on factors that contribute to decisions to remain in or exit the teaching field, specifically elementary education. Ten African American male elementary teachers participated in the study. The theory from this study was the Motivation–Hygiene theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 2010). The study was conducted on the basis of Phenomenology with the use of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954). Research yielded African American males' perceptions. Data were collected consisting of one on one interviews. The interview data were analyzed and collected using Colaizzi's (1978) method. Analysis revealed three emergent themes: role model, recruiting, and financial aspect. Sub-themes were: representation, commitment, mentoring, preparation, work conditions, and career options. Emergent themes were supported by sub-themes. Recommendations for future research included using the present qualitative study to compare African American male retention and attrition data to other genders and ethnicities.

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A Dissertation
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December 2012

DEDICATION

To my maternal grandparents for all of their guidance, wisdom and support, I dedicate this.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank God for allowing me to accomplish this objective. Secondly, I want to thank my mother, brothers, family, friends and love ones who stood by my side throughout this process. Thank you to my dissertation chair, Dr. Jones, for your loyalty, dedication and guidance. To my dissertation committee: Dr. Johnson, Dr. Daves, Dr. Crowe, thank you for all of your feedback and assistance. Thank you to several other faculty and staff member of the University of Southern Mississippi. I would not begin to mention names for fear unintentionally leaving someone out.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There is a shortage of African American male teachers (Graham & Erwin, 2011; Kunjufu, 1990; Okezie, 2003), specifically at the elementary level in the United States of America according to data (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Discussions and debates have existed for years on the shortage of teachers in the United States. The number of male teachers is considerably low in this country and African American males compile a small percentage of that population. There were 3,404,520 public school teachers in the 2007-2008 school year and of those, only 24.1% were male (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). White, non-Hispanics made up 83.1% of the public school teacher population and seven percent were African American, non-Hispanic (NCES, 2009). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), out of the 3,404,520 public school teachers, 239,460 were Black, not Hispanic or Latino. Out of the 239,460 black teachers, only 23.5% were males. Moreover, those numbers are equivalent to less than two percent of the teaching force as African American. When looking at numbers of African American male elementary teachers alone, the percentage is less.

Studies have been conducted and literature written on teacher attrition (Hill & Barth, 2004; Ingersoll, 2001). However, the literature available on the retention and attrition of African American males is limited. When analyzing attrition and retention of African American male elementary teachers, factors related to general teacher attrition and retention may or may not be relevant to that specific population. Recruiting teachers has been a consistent topic of analysis even though the National Committee for Teachers

and America's Future (NCTAF) stated that the teacher turnover rate is at 16.8 % according to data in their *High Cost of Teacher Turnover* reference. When focusing on turnover, according to Ingersoll and Smith (2003), teaching in relation to other careers is large. Recruiting teachers will not impact the financial challenges associated with the turnover of teachers (The High Cost of Teacher Turnover, 2007). The National Committee for Teachers and America's Future also found that teacher attrition costs the United States over 7 billion dollars annually. Ingersoll (2001) referenced data that showed teacher turnover was connected to low salaries, not having the right administrative assistance, and discipline issues with students. According to Ingersoll and Smith (2003), recruiting teachers is not the solution to the teacher shortage. Teacher retention has to be a component. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) further stated that one-half of beginning teachers leave the profession early.

Recruitment of African American Males

The shortage of African American male teachers has caused some educators and researchers to investigate the recruitment of African American male teachers. Recruiting and assistance strategies have been implemented by programs such as one mentioned by Chmelynski (2006) called the Call Me MISTER (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) program. This particular program based in South Carolina provides the opportunity to prepare and assist black males for positions as elementary teachers. The Call Me Mister program works with other universities in an effort to assist with the issue of African American males' absence in the elementary classroom (Norton, 2005).

Spradlin and Prendergast (2006) discuss how some programs are designed to recruit teachers, although some of the programs that offer incentives, only mandate a specified amount of time for teachers to stay in a particular school system. According to Lewis (2006), reasons, such as discipline, test scores and serving as role models, for retaining and recruiting African American males are numerous due to the changes in school systems. Spradlin and Prendergast (2006) referenced a high turnover for teachers in high-poverty schools in urban and rural areas. However, Rettig and Khodavandi (1998) found that minorities drop out of school prior to graduating and limit the potential candidates for programs in education. In addition, according to Kane and Orsini (2003):

Most scholars who have carefully studied the matter agree that three central factors have limited the participation of teachers of color in the profession of teaching; the low socioeconomic status and poor education of children of color; the imposition of competency tests during the reform surge of the 1980s; and the exodus of people of color to more lucrative, higher-status professions in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement and the advent of affirmative action and increased professional opportunities. (p. 35)

Addressing the diversity in the teaching field is a component related to confronting the recruitment and retention of African American males.

Diverse Teaching Field

With the diversity of the United States increasing, the demand for a diverse teaching field has come into discussion. According to King (1993b), the numbers of African American teachers who are entering the field of education are not equivalent to the population that may benefit from their presence. Smith, Mack, and Akyea (2004)

noted that students from diverse backgrounds may enter and exit public schools without ever having a teacher who represents their background. Furthermore, Smith et al. (2004) found the diversity of teachers is not growing as that of the population of the United States. Similarly, Gardiner, Canfield-Davis, and Anderson (2009) stated the school administration and teachers are not representative of the diversity that is present in the student population in America. Grant (1988) noted that schools are a combination of different types of individuals with different backgrounds, genders and races along with teachers continue to have issues to face in regards to these differences. When considering the diversity in the field of education, accounting for African American males' decisions to enter the field of elementary education is up for discussion.

The Decision to Embark on Elementary Education

Various reasons influence African American males to choose education as a career path or not, specifically in the field of elementary education. Teaching is not the only career option African Americans have today as compared to what has been cited from previous segments of history (Fairclough, 2001; Fairclough, 2007; Gordon, 2000). Some individuals may even be discouraging possible candidates from entering the field (Gordon, 2000; Smith et al., 2004). Cole (1986) cited that some minorities are not passing competency testing and are not able to go into the profession of teaching. Cooper (1986) noted that the lack of certified teachers may lead to African American teachers becoming an *endangered species*. An additional challenge facing the low number of African American male teachers is lack of role models in the workplace. According to Rettig and Khodavandi (1998), minorities do not enter teaching because they do not see

examples of minority participation which eliminates the self- perception of actually being a teacher.

By looking at teacher attrition, decisions can be made on how to retain African American males as elementary teachers. Grissmer and Kirby (1987) noted that people leave their jobs because of factors associated with life and demanding careers, not just conditions on the job and money. Below-standard performance, sickness, expectations of going to a positive situation are, according to Grissmer and Kirby (1987), possible reasons why it is essential to consider different factors involved in people exiting and also the numbers associated with their retention. Yet, according to Lewis (2006), the techniques that have been used to keep African American males in teaching have not undergone any change for years. Studies that have analyzed teacher retention and attrition have presented a variety of factors (Ingersoll, 2001; Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2005; Perrachione, Rosser, & Petersen, 2008). Financial incentives are factors that are usually consistent in several analyses and literature on teacher retention and attrition (Grissmer & Kirby, 1987; Kersaint et al., 2005; Lewis, 2006). However, Greenlee and Brown, (2009) suggest financial gains may not be the only factor to consider when looking at teacher retention according to existing information. African American males may make the decision to embark on a career in elementary education, however, retaining them is could be an obstacle.

Retaining African American Male Elementary Teachers

The number of African American male elementary teachers in the United States is extremely low (Graham & Erwin, 2011; Kunjufu, 1990; Okezie, 2003). Understanding why other teachers leave the profession may help in comprehending why African

American male elementary teachers leave, as well. According to Carr (2009), knowing why teachers remain in the field and why they enter is valuable when developing a technique for retaining and recruiting teachers. Lewis (2006) noted the field of education will not be able to compete with other professions unless changes are made. According to Smith et al. (2004), African American males' outlook on teaching can be changed from a less than desirable one to one that is more appealing by recognizing the significance of mentors and analyzing school climate. However, teaching has been looked upon in a positive light throughout earlier years according to Lewis (2006).

Analyzing different factors concerning the retention and attrition of African American male elementary teachers will give insight into reasons for attrition and ways to retain African American males as elementary teachers. According to Grissmer and Kirby (1987), to develop policies related to teacher issues, it is insightful to understand why teachers leave the profession or change schools or systems. There may be an issue with the conditions at work and earnings if attrition rates are excessive (Grissmer & Kirby, 1987). Sargent (2003) discussed the importance of schools providing professional development and creating settings where new teachers could be happy working. In addition, Spradlin and Prendergast (2006) have found that some states have money available for programs designed for mentoring at the state or district level. Retaining African American male elementary teachers requires analyzing factors and reasons that contribute to the retention and attrition of them.

In summarizing the topic of consideration, the presence of African American males in elementary classrooms can be beneficial to all parties involved. Cooper (1986) stated that if black teachers are not present in classrooms, the representations of culture

will not be available. Brown (2009b) has discussed the idea of African American male teachers being able to connect with African American male students by way of particular characteristics they may have. Obtaining information on the attrition and retention of African American male elementary teachers leads to justification and analysis in the area.

Problem Statement

The purpose of the study was to determine what factors contribute to the attrition and or retention of African American male elementary teachers according to literature. The number of African American male teachers is low. The researcher used qualitative methods to answer three research questions: (a) What factors have contributed to African American male elementary teachers who remain in the field? (b) What changes can be made to improve the retention of African American males in elementary education? (c) What factors cause African American elementary teachers to desire to leave the field of education? The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with African American male elementary teachers to answer the research questions.

Theoretical Framework

The theory from which the study was conducted is the Motivation-Hygiene theory by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (2010). The methodology for the study itself was conducted on the basis of Phenomenology (Creswell, 2007). Phenomenology is defined as “a phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon.” (Creswell, 2007, p. 57). The participants in the study were asked questions pertaining to their experiences relevant to the research questions. Moustakas (1994) explained the method of phenomenology and how this particular methodology enlightens the practice of not using prejudgments and analyzing a

scenario for what it is, analyzing the experiences of individuals without making assumptions. The researcher used the methods of Colaizzi (1978) to analyze the data. Colaizzi provided a step by step process for the phenomenological methodology.

Herzberg theorized about the different components that motivate the performance of individuals. Herzberg looked at two particular terms, “motivation” and “hygiene” (Herzberg et al., 2010). Motivating factors are those that contribute to the satisfaction of an individual. Hygiene factors are factors that may not necessarily make an individual satisfied, but the absence of them can cause dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 2010).

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory was used as a foundation of the study along with Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory. Subsequently, Maslow studied motivation and personality (Maslow, 1954). Maslow found that individuals are motivated as a whole instead of just a portion of that individual. Maslow also referenced *multiple motivations* and *The Esteem Needs* focusing on achievement, reputation and prestige along with *self-actualization* (Maslow, 1954). Consequently, Ingersoll (2001) noted:

Researchers have found that among the most important of these organizational conditions are the compensation structure for employees; the level of administrative support, especially for new employees; the degree of conflict and strife within the organization; and the degree of employee input into and influence over organization policies. This research has found strong links between these kinds of organizational conditions and employee motivation, commitment, and turnover. (p. 506)

The following table shows a list of theorists and theory analyzed for the study.

Table 1

Theorists and Theory

Theorists	Theory
Frederick Herzberg	Motivation-Hygiene Theory
Colaizzi, Creswell, Moustakas	Phenomenology
Abraham Maslow	Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What factors have contributed to African American male elementary teachers' decisions' to remain in the field?
2. What changes can be made to improve the retention of African American males in elementary education?
3. What factors cause African American elementary teachers to desire to leave the field of education?

Definition of Terms

African American Male- For the purpose of this study, African American male was used to refer to Black American males which may have a variety of ethnic backgrounds such as African, Caribbean, and other locations. African American and Black will be used interchangeably throughout this study.

Elementary teacher- For the purpose of this study, elementary teachers were teachers who teach grades kindergarten through the sixth grade.

Teacher Attrition- Boe, Cook and Sunderland (2008) referred to attrition as “leaving teaching employment” (p. 8). For the purpose of this study, attrition as it applies to teachers, specifically African American male elementary teachers, will be the focus.

Teacher Retention- Gonzalez (1995) defined retention as “The term, retention, refers to “stayers” –teachers who remain in the same teaching assignment, in the same school as in the previous year” (p. 1).

Assumptions

(1) It was the assumption of the researcher that the participants involved in the study were being honest with their responses.

(2) The instrument used provided the opportunity to gain answers relevant to the research questions.

Limitations

The limitations for the study were as follows:

(1) The sample used for the study varied in age, education level, grade levels taught, and years of experience.

(2) The size of the sample that was used for the study represented a small percentage of the total population.

(3) The participants were from a southeastern state in the United States, therefore, the representation was specific to that particular state.

Delimitations

The delimitations for the study are listed as follows:

(1) The sample used for the study was African American male elementary teachers.

(2) There were not any other cultures or genders used for this study.

(3) The sample was taken from one southeastern state.

Justification

There is limited existing literature and studies that focus specifically on African American male elementary teachers and retention. The topic does have a significant role in the present educational system of the United States of America because the actual number of practicing African American Male Elementary teachers is low in comparison to student population. To increase the number, administration at all levels need to identify factors that will keep them in the field and also factors that will deter them from exiting the profession.

The study was beneficial because of the impact that it will have on different educational organizations. School systems and state departments of education can use the data to make decisions on how to retain African American male elementary teachers. The data can be used to conduct further research in the area by looking at retention factors on all levels including secondary and post-secondary.

This study will benefit school systems in recruiting African American males by providing information or data that will assist in developing a positive outlook in regard to retaining teachers once hired. Various perspectives of the subjects will allow administration to consider a variety of options when looking at African American male teacher retention. Policymakers at the state, local and national level will have the opportunity to use the data to draw conclusions or generalizations, considering the information has been collected from one state, about the factors that cause an African

American male to remain in the field and also those factors that would possibly cause them to leave.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Chapter II presents four main areas related to the research questions. Each area is divided into three sections with the exception of the summary. The literature concentrating specifically on the retention of African American male elementary teachers is limited. However, there are components of existing literature that assist in the overall perspective of teacher retention which may apply to African American male elementary teachers. To study and analyze the shortage of African American male elementary teachers, it was necessary to look at all possible factors that contribute to the retention of teachers in general. The sections were: (a) background on teacher retention and attrition, (b) African American male teacher retention and attrition, and (c) the impact of African American male elementary teachers, and a summary.

Background on Teacher Retention and Attrition

Factors Contributing to Teacher Retention and Attrition

According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future 2007, keeping teachers is the problem, not finding the teachers. Ingersoll (2001) referenced data that highlighted student discipline, low salaries, administration issues, and not being involved in facets of school operations as parallel to teacher turnover.

Kersaint et al. (2005) conducted a study analyzing six different factors and their relationship to teacher retention. The study analyzed *leavers* and *stayers* for the collection of data. According to Kersaint et al. (2005), the results of the study were as follows: *Time with family* was of high importance to leavers and low to stayers ;

administrative support was of medium importance to leavers and of low importance to stayers; *financial benefits* were of medium importance to leavers and low importance to stayers; *family responsibility* was of high importance to leavers and stayers; *paperwork/assessment* was of medium importance for leavers and stayers; and *joy of teaching* was of low importance for leavers and stayers. Kersaint et al. (2005) realized the need for more research so that steps can be taken to prevent teacher turnover.

A study conducted by Perrachione, Rosser and Petersen (2008) looked at variables that had an impact on teachers' decisions to remain in teaching and also their overall satisfaction. Perrachione, Rosser and Petersen looked at intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors. For the retention section of the study, three questions were examined:

Question 1, *If the opportunity arose, would you leave the teaching profession for another occupation? Why?*

Question 2, *Given that you have been a teacher for over five years, what is your number one reason for remaining in teaching? Why?*

Question number 3, *How long do you plan to remain in teaching? Why?*
(Perrachione et al. 2008).

For question one, the top responses were *job satisfaction, retirement, personal teaching efficacy, schedule/ time off, and working with students*. The top two reasons that teachers would leave were *low salary* and *role overload* (Perrachione et al., 2008). For question two, top responses were *personal teaching efficacy, working with students, job satisfaction, schedule/time off, and retirement*. Perrachione et al. (2008). For question three, top reasons were *retirement, job satisfaction, working with students, personal teaching efficacy, and schedule/time off*, according to Perrachione et al. (2008). The three

research questions by Perrachione et al. showed that job satisfaction and working with students are reasons to be accounted for in analyzing teacher retention.

Greenlee and Brown (2009) conducted a study to analyze factors that would cause a teacher to remain in teaching, such as certain incentives and leadership practices. The study by Greenlee and Brown reviewed factors to be discussed when attempting to retain teachers in schools that are considered to be challenging. The study surveyed teachers from different backgrounds about what factors contribute to the desire to return to a challenging school (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). The data from the survey produced different responses according to the educational routes of the teachers involved and also the schools in which the teachers worked (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). Whether or not the teacher experienced an alternative route or traditional route certification displayed a difference in the responses. Also the demographic and financial makeup of the student population of the schools they worked in made a difference (Greenlee & Brown, 2009).

The results from the data collected by Greenlee and Brown (2009) included some information pertaining to the perspectives of teachers in regards to finances. The majority of the teachers (57%) felt providing certain financial motivations would encourage them to remain in a school with a large low income or large minority student population. Enticements such as *an additional 5-10% salary bonus (34%), tuition reimbursement (16%), performance pay (5%), or enhanced retirement benefits (2%),* would contribute to their retention. However, according to Greenlee and Brown there were some differences between traditionally certified and alternatively certified teachers in regards to the importance of the financial perspective of retention. Different factors and variables have to be addressed with analyzing possible reasons for teacher attrition.

Teacher Attrition

The need for new teachers, according to Ingersoll and Smith (2003), is not based strictly on retirements and enrollment, but on teacher attrition. Producing more teachers, according to Greenlee and Brown (2009) does not correct the issues associated with teacher retention. According to the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and Teacher Followup Survey (TFS) data analyzed by Ingersoll and Smith (2003), it is estimated that approximately of 40-50% of beginning teacher leave the profession of education after five years. Darling-Hammond (2003) agrees that to the attrition rate of new teachers as an issue. According to Garibaldi (1989), working conditions, salaries and opportunities for career growth are areas the younger generation is aware of considers carefully.

As indicated by Ingersoll (2001), teacher turnover can have an impact on the school as well as tell about the school organization itself. When looking at turnover, teaching has a high turnover in comparison to other fields according to Ingersoll and Smith (2003). In addition, according to NCTAF, teachers who may not be prepared to teach are often put in a position to teach children inappropriately because of the amount of teacher turnover particularly in certain types of schools. This causes the teacher to want to leave teaching (The High Cost of Teacher Turnover, 2007).

Within a five year span, one third of beginning teachers leave (Darling-Hammond, 2003). When looking at the high rates of attrition in high poverty schools, several factors have to be accounted, according to Darling-Hammond (2003), including working conditions, family issues of students, and limited resources or supplies. Ingersoll (2001) mentioned that data showed job satisfaction and pursuit of other careers was more significant in regards to teacher turnover than retirements. According to Ingersoll (2001),

retirement is not the overwhelming factor in staffing problems because teachers are leaving the field for a variety of reasons. Ingersoll mentions teachers' *age* as a factor for leaving the field, specifically younger teachers according to researchers. Hill and Barth (2004) also studied the attrition of teachers.

Hill and Barth (2004) support the study by naming several factors that may determine when teachers exit the classroom, such as the amount of experience of the teacher, his or her age, the preparation, and certification of the teacher. Hill and Barth also referenced that the research shows the length of programs for preparing teachers is a factor. Darling-Hammond (2003) reported factors contributing to teachers leaving certain schools. "Four major factors strongly influence whether and when teachers leave specific schools or the education profession entirely: salaries, working conditions, preparation, and mentoring support in the early years" (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p. 9). Darling-Hammond mentioned that in order for the teaching profession to be competitive, incentives, such as salaries, must be in place along with attention to working conditions as well.

Financial issues have often been in the discussion of teacher attrition issues (Farber, 2010; Kersaint et al., 2005; Lewis, 2006). When teachers enter the field, they do not feel respected because of issues related to their salaries (Farber, 2010). Carr (2009) made reference to an analysis of studies on teacher retention that displayed an elevated number of teachers leaving the field during their initial years as teachers. Carr stated that this may indicate that other factors besides money can influence beginning teachers. Kersaint, et al. (2005) mentioned the financial aspect may have a connection as to why teachers do not stay in the profession according to collected data. Viadero (2008) stated

that factors related to teachers' jobs may make a bigger difference than salaries when looking at teacher retention according to studies.

Viadero (2008) referenced the fact that, according to some studies, working conditions may be a more prevalent factor than money when looking at recruiting and keeping teachers. According to Darling-Hammond (2003), work conditions play a role in whether or not a teacher leaves or stays according to surveys. A study conducted by Smith et al. (2004) showed that participants in the study, who looked at teaching as a possibility, expressed a belief that money is basically the top priority along with a list of other motivators, such as technology and safety. According to Grissmer and Kirby (1987), teacher retention can be positively affected by changes related to working conditions, pay and benefits when comparing teaching to other career fields. Grissmer and Kirby referenced that a high demand for teachers should cause an increase in salaries and benefits not related to money as well. This should affect how districts handle these issues in order to compete (Grissmer & Kirby, 1987).

No Child Left Behind

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 has been discussed when analyzing teacher retention (Colgan, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Spradlin & Prendergast, 2006) from the perspective of the mandates of *No Child Left Behind* and the challenges associated with recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers. According to Viadero (2008), *No Child Left Behind* has made requirements in an effort to have schools meet certain requirements for teachers. Hence, Exstrom (2003) mentioned that by the year 2005, *No Child Left Behind* called for *highly qualified* status for teachers instructing in their areas. The requirement of NCLB, according to Porter-Magee (2004) provided the opportunity to

assist teachers in need and also deal with those teachers that fall on the lower end group as far as performance is concerned. "NCLB requires that all teachers be highly qualified in the subjects they teach by 2006" (Porter-Magee, 2004, p. 27). Porter- Magee (2004) referred to the requirements of NCLB as being certified in the state, having a degree and having obtained mastery in a particular area. *No Child Left Behind*, according to Dee (2005), has gauges to assist subgroups in being proficient by using researched based measures. Supplying students from all different backgrounds the opportunity to have a teacher of highly qualified status is one component of No Child Left Behind. (Spradlin & Prendergast, 2006).

No Child Left Behind has played a role in requiring school systems to begin new and different programs in an effort to retain teachers (Colgan, 2004). According to Hill and Barth (2004), No Child Left Behind was designed to assist in closing achievement gaps among different groups, but teacher retention was not accounted for or taken into consideration. Furthermore, according to Hill and Barth, some teachers will have to go back to school or pass exams in order to meet NCLB standards. However, according to Spradlin and Prendergast (2006), there were issues regarding the shortage of teachers prior to No Child Left Behind coming into existence. When looking at teacher attrition, Darling-Hammond (2003) referred to NCLB and the problems associated with keeping teachers that have developed, especially in poor schools.

African American Male Teacher Retention and Attrition

The Problem

The shortage of African American male teachers has been documented and accounted for in a variety of formats such as the National Center for Education and

Statistics data. According to Irvine (1988), the number of black teachers has gone down. The National Center for Education and Statistics (2009) reported that out of 3,404,520 public school teachers only 239,460 were African American non-Hispanic and 23.5 % from that number were male. According to Chemlynski (2006), men do not enter the field because of abuse accusations, low salaries, and the perceived status of teaching. According to Kunjufu (1986), "The increase in the cost of living has forced many men to leave the educational profession" (Kunjufu, 1986, p. 11). Buxton (2000) mentioned that there are ways used to recruit African American teachers because there is a shortage developed from issues related to money, state certification, changes in careers and also retirement. One issue related to the shortage is getting African American males to choose the field of education.

Career Decision

According to King (1993a), one of the most dominating factors that impacts teachers staying in the field is the feeling they receive from it. Individuals in the past, according to Irvine (1988), have gone into teaching because they felt it was a vertical move. Kunjufu (1990) mentioned hesitation of individuals entering the profession because of negative behavioral issues related to students. Kunjufu (1990) referenced discussions he has had with African American students about their chosen fields. He noted the financial aspect as being a top component in the decision when choosing a career. Carr (2009) mentions research which provides implications that intrinsic rewards are significant when looking at African American teachers because of their desire to influence students.

However, according to interviews conducted by Gordon (2000), some of the African American teachers interviewed did not promote a career in teaching. Over half of the teachers interviewed 75% would not recommend becoming a teacher. Gordon mentioned some of the teachers interviewed felt individuals who have the opportunity to go into other professions should do so, considering how during segregation, some options were not available.

King (1993a) mentioned how student loans can affect whether or not African Americans students enter the field considering the perspective of salary compared to the debt they incur. King mentioned the lack of opportunities for blacks in other fields and the connection to the relationship between African Americans and teaching. King indicates that the career decisions of African American students may be due to changes in the state of financial and educational factors of families. According to Irvine (1988):

Teachers and principals of all ethnic groups need incentives to acquire the skills and knowledge to teach black inner-city students. These incentives could be monetary but could also include decreased class size, aides, additional resources, materials, computers, and professional development training. (p. 511)

“Salary as a disincentive for people of color to go into teaching is closely coupled with the disincentive of the lack of status, respect, and prestige that is associated with teaching in many people’s minds” (Kane & Orsini, 2003, p 37). Waldron (2010) also quoted a teacher in *Jet Magazine* as noting the low salary issue and the need for individuals to take care of their families. A study conducted by Lewis (2006) analyzed different factors that have an impact on the recruitment and retention of African American males in the field of education. Lewis considered had two research questions,

What recruitment mechanisms were most effective in your selection of the teaching profession? and *What retention mechanisms were the most effective in your decision to remain in the teaching profession?* The responses to question one were *helping young people, needing a job, contributions to humanity, location of job, and other*. The responses to question two were *job security, contributions to humanity, goals (short/long-term), location of job, and administrative support*. *Salary* was at the bottom of the list with a mean of 2.48 and a Standard Deviation of 1.03. *Job security* was at the top of the list with a mean of 3.36 and a standard deviation of .63.

When participants were asked about the methods their districts could use to recruit African American males, one of the responses was to “Provide better benefits, higher salaries, and better working conditions” (Lewis, 2006, p. 237). Participants, according to Lewis (2006) said that family members had an impact on them entering education. Lewis suggested districts can consider this when making recruiting efforts. He further suggested that since participants emphasized *job security, contributions to humanity, and short-and long-term goals*, that districts could use mentoring, opportunities for career growth, and emphasize the connection between teaching and how it relates to humanity. Brown and Butty (1999) used three analyses to analyze data collected from a study on factors that aided in determining career and educational paths of some African American males. Thus, these researchers noted, *background, undergraduate college major, qualifications, and motivational variables* were analyzed to determine if there was a noteworthy impact on the career and education preferences of the selected African American males.

The first analysis, according to Brown and Butty (1999), showed that the *sole significant predictor* of the educational choices of African American males was *motivation to teach*. The second analysis, according to Brown and Butty, found *no significant predictors* for African American male career choices in regards to motivation to work or not as an administrator or a teacher within a 10 years span in a public school setting. The third analysis, according to Brown and Butty, showed that the undergraduate major was the *sole predictor* as to whether or not they thought they would be a teacher or administrator within a ten year span in a public school setting. According to Brown and Butty the need for teachers, including those who can identify with a diverse population, is in demand due to attrition, the projection of population and diversity increases and the present teacher population which is getting older and reflects a number that is not proportional when looking at gender.

King (1993b) analyzed data collected from a previous study she conducted to look at reasons why some African American teachers entered the field of education and reasons why some choose to remain in the field. The research conducted by King studied a cohort of African American, as well as Caribbean American and African teachers, prospective and beginning, to analyze why they selected education as a career option. The group also looked at why they thought teachers similar to them would remain in the field (King, 1993b). King looked at the backgrounds of participants and broader areas such as, why minorities do not enter the field, as well as what would change that perception, why they entered the field, and also the recruitment and retention of African American teachers.

Participants in the study by King (1993b) indicated their decision to enter the field of education developed in different times. Therefore, King stated that when looking at the question on what attracted the participants to become a teacher, 83% cited “*the opportunity to work with young people.*” One of the lowest factors selected by participants was “*good salary*” at 20% (King, 1993b). Furthermore, King also noted salary was more influential in the perception of males (43%) in comparison to females (15%). King also revealed how males responded to other factors such as, *by the professional prestige they expected in teaching* and *by the amount of control they expected to have over their own work* as higher than females. King pointed out that there may be a connection between these viewpoints and why males move into administrative positions and also coaching promptly.

Hence, King (1993b) found the participants noted one important reason that they entered the field of education was the “lack of good role models in their own youth.” Participants in the study conducted by King revealed several reasons why minorities may not enter the field, including the lack of respect, co-workers and lack of prestige. Participants also discussed the low salaries associated with teaching (King, 1993b). Participants in the study conducted by King mentioned other reasons such as issues with work conditions, other career options, and preparation. The participants mentioned very similar factors that hinder minorities from entering the field may also be used to assist them in choosing teaching as a profession such as the financial aspect, improving conditions at work for teachers and addressing recruiting and prestige issues. In addition, King noted that when it is understood why teachers select to enter a teaching career,

practices and strategies can be implemented that will allow them to follow through on those expectations.

Smith et al. (2004) analyzed survey data collected from a group of African American male high school honor students. The data collected gave insight on the perspectives of 24 participants about teaching as a possible career choice (Smith et al., 2004). Half of the participants did not see themselves entering the field at all and teaching was not the first option for a career from any of the participants, they listed other career choices instead (Smith et al., 2004). In fact, in the study by Smith et al. , participants had different reasons for not wanting to teach, which included unappealing salaries, their own scenarios that may have not been positive, discipline issues and not being satisfied with the job. The participants, however, did understand the importance of teaching (Smith et al., 2004). Choosing a career in education has another component to account for, testing

Testing has long been a topic related to African Americans in relation to education (Cooper, 1986; Irvine, 1988; King, 1993b). According to Cooper (1986), black educators are not making passing scores on standardized tests to achieve certification, particularly those who attend certain universities. Irvine (1988) referred to competency tests and the negative affect they have towards the existence of black teachers. King (1993a) referred to issues with competency tests along with additional career opportunities as factors that may entice African American away from education.

According to Cooper (1986), educators deem that Blacks and minorities may not enter the field of teaching if competency test standards increase. Rettig and Khodavandi (1998) mentioned that when looking at standardized test scores, minority students have

not scored well. Oakley, Stowell, and Logan (2009) mentioned the NTE (National Teacher Examination) and the discrepancies of the test related to race. According to Irvine (1988), some of the factors associated with the decrease in the number of minority teachers are competency tests, number of black students in college, majors selected, and career opportunities.

Desegregation

“The 1954 *Brown* decision dictated that white school boards and superintendents were now in control of critical personnel decisions, such as hiring, firing, and transfers, in previously all-black schools” (Irvine, 1988, p. 504). According to Irvine (1988), black teachers were transferred and dismissed following desegregation. *Brown vs. Board of Education 1954*, according to Gardiner et al. (2009) was a Supreme Court decision that paved the way for all students to have the opportunity to receive an equal education. Black schools of the years prior to *Brown vs. Board of Education 1954* had an image that was not positive. However, the schools now are looked upon for their positive impact on black populations and the teachers have an encouraging influence on African American students. People who graduated from segregated schools referenced the positive attitudes of the teachers during that time frame (Fairclough, 2004). Fairclough (2007) mentioned the economic status of teachers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and also the influence that they had as leaders.

Cole (1986) stated that almost half of educated African Americans were in the field of teaching and other options were limited to blacks in 1950. “Racial discrimination restricted economic opportunities so severely that the occupations of preaching and teaching accounted for the overwhelming mass of the black middle class. In 1910, over

half of all black college graduates became teachers, one-sixth became preachers” (Fairclough, 2001, p 5). African Americans, according to Gordon (2000), had boundaries in the South that limited their choice of profession to teaching. However, according to Cole (1986), many African American teachers and administrators lost their jobs around the mid-1960s, when desegregation took place. African American principals underwent the same treatment as African American teachers after the Brown decision in 1954 (Irvine, 1988).

Furthermore, King (1993a) noted that desegregation was put into place to improve the chances associated with education for African Americans, but it separated African American teachers and African American students. Irvine (1988) referred to the impact of desegregation and how black schools were, basically, not given the attention needed. Fairclough (2004) reported that individuals who graduated from segregated schools spoke of the African American teachers’ loyalty to their work, considering the lack of resources.

Fairclough (2007) discussed how integration brought about negativity in the lives of some African American teachers and this included their status in the community. According to Fairclough (2004), one particular organization was aware of the repercussions of segregation, but did not look at it as being negative because it could serve as an avenue to get rid of teachers who may have not been up to a certain level of performance during the 1940s and 1950s. Gardiner et al. (2009) referenced how everyone was negatively impacted in some way by segregation. According to data analyzed by Oakley et al. (2009), there was a decrease in African American teachers

between the time frame of 1970 and 1990 in the southern area of the country. The decline happened when the courts interjected during this period.

Foster (1997) discussed the role of African American teachers in previous years during the era of segregated schools. Foster stated there was a high number of African American teachers in the southern part of the United States because of the number of blacks in the region and that segregated schools were the only option for African American teachers to teach in the South. Foster mentioned that 46,381 teachers were working in the south out of the 63,697 African American teachers in America during the year 1940. According to Fairclough (2001), African American principals had to play a variety of roles under the watch of white superintendents and board members, such as chauffeurs. Oakley et al. (2009) explained:

In the South, mandated desegregation created conditions that resulted in decreases in black teachers. But in the non-south the opposite occurred, although the impact of mandated desegregation weakened after 1990. Nonetheless, today, black teachers are under-represented in all regions- and, as the racial and ethnic diversity of the school-age student body continues to increase, the shortage of black and other minority educators has grown into a major public- education policy issue. (p. 1592)

Cole (1986) mentioned that teaching was prevalent among African American because of the segregated schools in the South. Oakley et al. (2009) identified the impact of integration on the employment of African American teachers in the south. In addition, Oakley et al. stated that African American teachers were affected by desegregation depending on the region they taught. According to Fairclough (2004), males in the south

were affected by integration because they lost leadership positions in the process and some schools that were named after African American were renamed.

According to Fairclough (2004), there was unhappiness among southern black teachers because integration had a negative impact on the black population by way of the schools. By comparison, Fairclough (2007) stated that teachers were not paid very much and they had to use their money for particular clothing, supplies and other things required of the occupation Fairclough (2007) also noted that discrimination caused limitations on their career choices. Some did, however, view the teaching profession from a different perspective. Table 2 shows a comparison of different studies.

Table 2

Researchers, Audience and Study Focus

Researchers	Audience	Study Focus
Lewis (2006)	African American teachers	Factors that had impact on recruitment/retention of African American males in education
King(1993)	African American males	Why African American teachers enter the field and why they stay
Brown & Butty (1999)	African American males	Analyzed factors that determine career/educational paths of some African American males

Table 2 (continued).

Greenlee & Brown (2009)	General	Factors associated with keeping teachers in challenging schools
Perrachione, Rosser, Petersen (2008)	General	Variables for teachers to remain in the field and Teacher Satisfaction
Smith, Mack, Akyea (2004)	General	Teaching as a possible career choice

The Impact of African American Male Elementary Teachers

Kunjufu (1990) cited that the number of African American male teachers as barely over one percent of all teachers and further notes a decline in numbers of African American elementary teachers specifically. Bianco, Leech, and Mitchell (2011) mentioned the need for a variety of equipped teachers that are able to identify with culture, particularly African American male teachers, in order to address the needs of African American males. Thompson (2004) noted that non-black teachers could seek ideas from African American teachers for assistance in certain cultural scenarios related to African American students.

Shaw (1996) referenced the literature that cites how the reasonability of African American youth can have African American teachers who can present themselves as role models. Shaw also stated how other students can benefit from having teachers from different cultures. Okezie (2003) noted African American teachers being role models and having a positive effect on the performance of minority students. According to Shure

(2001), the growing minority populations in U.S. Schools and the lack of minority teachers will lessen the opportunities for minority students to have role models with similarities. Tillman (1992) reflected on his personal experiences of serving as a *role model* to the sons of single mothers.

Educational Impact and Contribution

Dee (2004) conducted research comparing the performance of students in relation to the ethnicity of the teacher. Furthermore, Dee analyzed data to determine whether or not the race of a teacher had any impact on the performance of students. The results of Dee's study, looking at percentile-points, determined that African American students with a African American teacher for a period of one year earned higher scores in math and reading. When placed with a teacher of the same race, Caucasian students scored higher in math, but in regard to reading, Caucasian boys scored higher and Caucasian girls had no noticeable difference. According to Dee, students may have a connection with teachers of the same race which could lead to better outcomes for students. Dee discussed the make-up of some urban schools that have a large percentage of Caucasian teachers and a large percentage of minority students.

According to Dee (2004), students taught by teachers of the same race learn more, however, the data collected from one state. Therefore, Dee (2004) suggests that there may be some actions on behalf of the teacher that show a connection with same race students that may not be done on purpose. Dee (2004) did mention that the differences could be due to the quality of the teachers. One of the findings by Dee (2005) indicated that the odds of a teacher of a different *racial/ethnic designation* are 1.36 times larger to view that student as disruptive.

A study conducted by Brown (2009a) looked at the different pedagogical practices of African American male teachers in relation to African American male students. Brown considered nine African American male teachers to determine some of their pedagogy involved in teaching African American males. Different strategies, according to Brown were used by African American males in the study to ensure children's education and social circumstances were addressed. According to Brown, the African American teachers in this study used different pedagogies to assist in a common issue of educating African American male students.

Brown (2009b) conducted interviews that gave the perspectives of African American male teachers and their insight pertaining to several areas related to African American male students. Brown notes that the pedagogy of African American male teachers can have an impact on African American males, academically and socially. Brown stated through the interviews conducted gave him the opportunity to gain insight on how African American male teachers effected African American males in regards to education, socially, *interactions* and *socio-historical realities*. Brown (2009b) discussed the different perspectives of the teachers and the connection they displayed between their *ideological discourse* and how the African American male would evolve or turn out. According to Brown, African American male students and teachers are different and how teachers convey *social justice* to them was different even though there may be agreement of the issues. Brown studied *Black functionalism*, *Black liberalism*, *Black nationalism* and *Black critical theory*. African American male teachers serve as role models for students corresponding to the educational impact that they provide.

Epitomes for Students

Okezie (2003) noted the importance of African American male teachers filling the need for role models and being a factor in the performance of minority students. By demonstrating that African American males can serve in other roles other than some of those that they have been, according to Lewis (2006), African American males serve as role models. Chmelynski (2006) referred to those that are in favor of male teachers serving as male role models for boys, considering that some come from households where adult males are not present. Thus, Rettig and Khodavandi (1998) and Kunjufu (1986) mentioned the relationship between teachers of different backgrounds and minority students.

Smith et al. (2004) noted that the way some African American males view components related to education as not being beneficial to their own personal growth. A major issue in America is addressing the educational needs of the African American male according to Brown and Butty (1999). According to Irvine (1988), the African American community missed out on a role model when black principals were released during earlier years. Rettig and Khodavandi (1998) emphasized the value of minority students having minority teachers present. The potential support for African American students provided by African American teachers is on the decline due to the low number of African American teachers according to Alexander and Miller (1989). “The most salient and frequently acknowledged contribution Black teachers make to the learning and development of Black pupils is in functioning as role models and positive examples of accomplishment and success” (Alexander & Miller, 1989, p. 47).

Brown and Butty (1999) mentioned the connection between African American male students and teachers by the influence of one level of education such as college is affected by the previous one being high schools. Alexander and Miller (1989) mentioned how African American teachers can assist African American learners when it comes to specific characteristic associated with them. According to Cooper and Jordan as cited in Fashola (2005):

To be more specific, an experienced and effective teacher of any racial background is more preferable for Black male students than an ineffective teacher of African American decent. However, having stated this, Black male teachers perhaps have several important advantages in educating Black boys. These advantages include, for example, modeling appropriate behavior, strategic use of shared knowledge, and in some cases, common social experiences. The rapport that Black male teachers establish with Black male students through their common cultural heritage can be maintained in the face of social class differences. Therefore, in addition to raising the overall quality of the school through comprehensive reform, the value- added dimension of being exposed to good teachers who are Black males might be a factor in raising the success rates of Black male students (p. 11).

Thomas-El and Murphy gave Thomas-El's story in their book, "I Choose to Stay." Thomas-El and Murphy (2003) provided insight on his career path in education. Thomas-El turned down the opportunity for a promotion because of his dedication to his students. Thomas-El mentioned that he may be the only role model that some of the children have. Kunjufu (1986) referred to scenarios based on teachers from different

cultures having difficulty connecting with African American students. For some, it is their first experience of being exposed to cultural components of another race. According to Rettig and Khodavandi (1998), *middle-class white teachers* are put in positions to identify with a population they are unfamiliar with or it may just be different. Also, minority students do not make the connection with flourishing because they do not see minorities in school who could be considered role models (Rettig & Khodavandi, 1998). Gordon (2000) stressed that scenarios from the past may lead some to feel that having teachers instruct students of the same race may alleviate unjust treatment due to characteristics of African American children not being understood. Gordon (2000) found:

Advocacy for race-matched teaching grows in part out of fear that teachers from other backgrounds, Whites in particular, will not provide equitable education to Black children. There is an assumption based on historical realities, that African American children's behavior and demeanor might be misunderstood and that this ignorance will result in unfair treatment of Black children. (p. 69)

Addressing Diversity

Irvine (1988) noted the significance of African American teachers on white students, as well, in regards to exposure to diversity that exists in the world. This also assists in how they perceive individuals outside of their own race. According to Irvine, African American and Caucasian students may have had a connection with a black teacher who has served as a role model. Smith et al. (2004) mentioned it is beneficial for not only African American, but other people from other backgrounds to have African-American male role models. Rettig and Khodavandi (1998) expressed the importance of

understanding issues related to minorities in a *cultural, racial, and linguistic* perspective and not just the relationship of minority teachers to students of an identical group.

Lewis (2006) stated there are different justifications for retaining and recruiting African American male teachers when considering the changes of the educational system. King (1993a) noted the African American teacher provides students with insight and other components other than just representation. According to Lomotey (1997), students need to be able to relate to the content of curriculum and this can be done by recognition of differences such as race and gender. Ladson-Billings (1994) mentioned the trouble that beginning teachers have teaching minorities when entering their districts due to a lack of understanding of their backgrounds.

Summary

According to Lewis (2006), reasons for retaining and recruiting African American males are numerous due to the changes in school systems. Nevertheless, Ingersoll and May (2011) stated that the number of minorities that go to college and graduate is limited and the portion that does may not necessarily go into teaching because other options exist. Shure (2001) noted that the lack of minority representation can have an effect on whether or not other minorities enter the field. Graham and Erwin (2011) referenced the lack of information that pertains to African American male teachers and how they are placed into a larger category when looking at factors that cause resistance in men from entering the field of education.

Ingersoll and May (2011) noted the diverse growth of students has not been matched by the teaching force. In addition, Ingersoll and May also stated minority students do not have the opportunity to see role models with similar ethnic backgrounds.

Douglas, Lewis, Douglas, Scott, & Garrison-Wade (2008) stressed that African American students are being taught by individuals with backgrounds different from themselves now more than ever.

Alexander and Miller (1989), mentioned the shortage of African American teachers and how it is viewed across the nation, however, it has a greater significance in the some areas such as the southeastern area of the country because of the ratio of African American teachers in comparison to the students. In addition, according to the results, Dee (2005) stated a teacher's perception of a student ability to perform, can be impacted by the students' gender, race and ethnicity, however, the findings show the data is influenced by the socioeconomic status of a student and in a particular region, the south. According to Gordon (2000), a shortage of teachers came into play when teachers left their communities for other opportunities, which may not have been by choice, and this also affected the number of role models and the issues related to African American class status during previous time periods.

Okezie (2003) found the small number of African American male teachers is evident in urban settings because of the difficulty of connecting with students that are culturally different and also from different generations. According to the study by Bianco et al. (2011), one of the things mentioned by the interviewed students as a reason for the shortage of African American male teachers was not seeing them in the classrooms. According to Alexander and Miller (1989), peers, in some cases, serve as the only sustainment amongst young African Americans. Robinson, Paccione, and Rodriguez (2003), stated that the number of role models are so low that the influence is limited.

Jones (1999) noted how the shortage of African American teachers affects students at different education levels. Thompson (2004) noted that African American teachers can have similar cultural perspectives and similarities with African American students that may not be existent with teachers that are not African American, however, this does not guarantee their presence will be more effective than that of a teacher of another race. Jones (1999) mentioned that African American teachers can also contribute by being of assistance in scenarios dealing with cultural issues that may exist between African American students with Caucasian students and school staff. Irvine (1988) noted:

Teaching is no longer one of the few occupations that lead to middle- class status for blacks. Black students' role models are more likely to be business executives in Fortune 500 companies, not school teachers or principals. Further-more, the low pay of teachers is a disincentive. Also of concern are unwieldy school bureaucracies with their many rules and regulations that govern teachers' and students' behavior. (p. 505)

Finally, King (1993a) pointed out the obstacle that is faced when attempting to provide programs for minorities is the need to have programs that promote the opportunity for minorities to be successful in high school and college. King also stressed these same students should be recruited into teaching and retained in the field. Okezie (2003) noted the significance of male role models, particularly taking into consideration the home environment of some children.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Chapter III contains information about the design of the study, the participants involved in the study, the instrument used for the study, the reliability and validity of the instrument, the procedures used for the study and how the data were analyzed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to answer the following three research questions: (1) What factors have contributed to African American male elementary teachers' decisions' to remain in the field of education? (2) What changes can be made to improve on the retention of African-American males in elementary education? (3) What factors cause African American male elementary teachers to desire to leave the field of education?

Design

The study was conducted using qualitative methodology. Interview questions developed by the researcher and panel of experts were used for the study. Interview questions were parallel to the research questions that guided the study. The study was conducted to analyze factors that contribute to the retention and possible attrition of African American male elementary teachers. Documents related to the study included IRB approval letter (Appendix A), Permission letters (Appendix b), and the Instrument(Appendix C).

This study was conducted by the researcher. Upon the completion of the literature review, the researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with participants who

meet the requirements of the study. Data were collected using qualitative methods through interviews, analyzed by transcribing the data, coding the data according to themes, and finally reported in a narrative format. According to Patten (2009), qualitative research is used to find themes with participants and the researcher uses interview questions with flexibility used to obtain the most data possible.

Participants answered a total of approximately (additional questions are included for clarity where applicable) twenty-three questions. The questions (Appendix C) were read to the participant by the researcher in. The researcher used qualitative methods to analyze and interpret the collected data. The results of the study were used by the researcher and any other individuals that may find the data relevant and beneficial.

Participants

The ten participants used in the study were selected by using convenience sampling. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006), “In convenience sampling (also called available sampling) a group of subjects is selected on the basis of being accessible or expedient” (p. 125). The participants had various backgrounds. Participants’ ages, number of years’ experience, educational background, and other factors were different among the participants. The researcher located African American male elementary teachers, both with limited experience and with multiple years of experience in teaching.

This sample of participants used for the study was taken from one southeastern state in the United States. Ten African American participants were selected based on availability, cooperation to participate in the study, and accessibility. Participants were

not identified by name or school affiliation. Each participant was referred to by an alternative name assigned by the researcher.

Participants used in the study were selected according to specific criteria. The participants in the study were African American males in one southeastern state in the United States that currently teach in an elementary school. The researcher located the participants initially through professional contacts and individuals that the researcher knew on a personal basis. The sample that was used for the study represented African American male elementary teachers. The sample size was chosen due to the small number of African American male elementary teachers and the availability of qualified participants.

Instrument

The instrument (Appendix C) used for the study was designed by the researcher and critiqued by a qualified panel. Based on the review of literature, the researcher developed interview questions to gain in depth answers from the participants. Probing questions were listed under some of the questions for scenarios that seek further elaboration on the part of the participant. The researcher used those questions at his discretion. The questions used allowed the researcher to collect data relevant to the research questions. Questions used for the study consisted of questions relating directly to the research questions. The questions used for the interview also included demographic information and background information about the participants.

In order to decrease the possibility of unbiased data, the researcher compiled a panel to assist in the structuring and organization of the interview questions. A three member panel analyzed the interview questions to make sure that the questions addressed

the topics related to the research questions. The three member panel consisted of the researcher (Panel Member One), a member of the Curriculum and Instruction faculty and staff of The University of Southern Mississippi (Panel Member Two), and a former administrator from one state in the southeastern United States (Panel Member Three).

Panel members were selected based on their backgrounds and willingness to assist in the development process of the interview questions. All panel members have served as administrators. The experience provided by the panel members assisted the researcher in developing interview questions that covered the information that was required. Panel members were contacted by phone, e-mail or face to face contact. After the panel members reviewed the interview questions and made changes, the researcher restructured the interview questions to those specifications.

Reliability and Validity

The validity of the instrument was validated by the selected panel. Panel members critiqued and made necessary adjustments to the instrument. The researcher obtained the assistance of another individual to assist in coding the data. Panel members were selected based on their backgrounds that enabled them to provide an influential perspective on the questions.

Procedures

Contacts were made through current or former practitioners in the field of education and non-professional contacts. The researcher made initial contact with the participants by telephone or e-mail. The researcher and participants met in a location and time that is convenient for the participant.

Before data were collected by the researcher, permission from the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board was requested and given. After receiving confirmation and permission from the Institutional Review Board, the researcher scheduled times to meet with each participant and begin collecting data. Interviews did not take place during the work hours of individual participants.

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board of The University of Southern Mississippi to collect data, (Appendix A) the researcher contacted participants via telephone. Telephone conversations were used to gather information to conduct the initial interview. The researcher asked participants what date and time that was convenient for them to participate in the interview. Finally, the researcher developed a system to conduct interviews so that there was not any conflict between interview dates and times.

After the participants agreed to participate in the study, the researcher provided them with a written letter of consent prior to the collection of data. The permission letters (Appendix B) were mailed to each participant prior to the interview. Each of the ten participants received a letter explaining their rights as a participant including the right to withdraw from the study at any time with no explanation if desired.

The participants were informed that their names would not be used in the study. Participants were informed that the interview was confidential and all data collected would be stored in a safe and discreet location. Thus, the researcher emphasized to the participants that they would remain completely anonymous. No information regarding the individual participants would be used. The participants would not be identifiable by any references or terminology used by the researcher.

Each participant was interviewed face to face at the location and time of his choice. The researcher used a digital recorder to record the interviews. A backup recorder was used along with the digital recorder. The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with the participants. Interviews took place in an environment that was convenient for the participants.

Interviews took no longer than 60 minutes. The study did not take more than sixty days to complete. This procedure took place as the participants answered the questions read by the researcher. The researcher listened to the responses of the participants carefully. If the responses required more detail, the researcher used “probing” questions to elicit a more thorough response. Upon completion of the interview, the researcher presented each participant with a gift card valued at no more than twenty-five dollars for their participation in the study. Follow up interviews were used in scenarios that needed elaboration or clarity. Participants were emailed several of the questions and responses from the interview to validate the discussion.

The researcher transcribed the data upon the completion of all interviews. The data were transcribed to hard copies. Once the process of transcribing the data had been completed, the researcher thematically coded the data for interpretation. The researcher fulfilled the task of coding by looking for emergent themes in the data. Coding, according to Merriam (1998), takes place when data are assigned representation so that they can be identified later on. An additional individual coded one of the interviews to ensure the validity of the instrument.

Analysis

Qualitative methods were used to analyze the data collected by the researcher. The researcher recorded the responses provided by the participants using a digital recorder. The researcher analyzed the responses provided by the participants and look for themes to develop in the data. Data were transcribed and coded into several categories according to emergent themes. The categories were based on the interview questions and their relationship to the research questions for the study. Findings were discussed in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Chapter IV showed the results of the study. An introduction was given followed by research questions, a description of the sample, descriptive data, table, narrative of the participants, overlapping findings, emergent themes and subthemes ancillary findings and a summary.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What factors have contributed to African American male elementary teachers' decisions' to remain in the field?
2. What changes can be made to improve the retention of African American males in elementary education?
3. What factors cause African American elementary teachers to desire to leave the field of education?

Description of the Sample

The participants in the study were African American males. The education levels of the participants ranged from Bachelor's degrees to Masters. Six of the participants held Masters degrees and four held bachelor degrees. Only two participants had taught grade levels below the third grade. The majority of the participants taught between fourth and sixth grade. The average of the participants was 35.5. Youngest participants were each 26 and the oldest 47. Average years of experience were 8.9 years. The least years of experience was two years with the most being fourteen years.

Table 3

Participant Descriptions

Participant	Grade Levels Taught	Degree	Age	Years of Experience
Alvin	4, 5, 6	Masters	36	13
Brandon	5	Masters	32	8
Chase	3	Bachelors	44	10
David	3, 4, 6	Bachelors	26	4
Edward	5,6	Masters	37	14
Frank	4	Masters	34	10
George	6	Bachelors	47	6
Heathcliff	P, 1,2,3,4	Bachelors	26	2
Ian	5, 6	Masters	34	9

Table 3 (continued).

Julian	K, 1, 2, 3	Master	39	13
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Descriptive Data

Alvin

Alvin is a thirty-six year old African American male. He has taught fourth, fifth and sixth grade. With his thirteen years of experience, Alvin has obtained a bachelor's degree, master's degree and is currently working on a master's degree not in education. The researcher selected Alvin to participate in the study and knew him prior to the study. The interview took place in Alvin's home. This setting was quiet and without any interruptions throughout the interview. The television was playing, but did not lend itself as a distraction throughout the interview.

Alvin stated that he has remained in the classroom because of the necessity of giving positive role models to children. Alvin mentioned the images that kids sometimes see can be negative. When asked about leaving the teaching profession, Alvin stated that he had considered leaving the profession and that there was not any specific component that would cause him to change his mind. He has the outlook that once his mind is set to make that transition, that there is not anything that can influence him differently. Alvin feels that at some point, he will need a change in career.

There is a chance that if Alvin left the classroom, he would remain in the field in another avenue of teaching, although he stated that he is considering an athletic advisement career. The reasons this participant gave for considering a career change was

because he enjoys athletics and would like to work with athletes in an academic advisement capacity. He presently coaches and this is a goal that he wants to embrace.

When asked about reasons for leaving the field, Alvin mentioned frustrations with kindergarten through twelfth grade education and the amount of work it takes in comparison to the actual financial compensation. He discussed how the state did not give components time to work and how it ultimately affects the students. Alvin feels, in regards to African American males leaving the field, that the problem is not necessarily with African American males leaving the profession, but more so with getting them to enter the profession, initially. Alvin responded he thinks that most African American males who enter education are going into the areas of secondary education or physical education.

Alvin's future goals consist of him becoming an academic advisor on a collegiate level. Five years from now, Alvin sees himself teaching, but also as an athletic director. When asked about why he entered education, specifically elementary education, Alvin stated that he wanted to coach. However, Alvin felt that the job market was better for him if he majored in elementary education.

When discussing the reasons for the shortage of African American male elementary teachers, Alvin emphasized money and the impact that it has on the shortage. He talked about the desire of individuals who go to college to get paid "the most amount" of money. Alvin did make a reference to the benefits associated with being in education, but the discussion went back to the notion that other professions have more of a financial edge.

Alvin did consider counseling prior to choosing elementary education, but what caused him to change his mind was that he felt that being a counselor would hinder him from coaching. This participant noted that his most rewarding experience was working with a student to pursue his education and seeing that individual graduate from college.

Alvin felt that school systems can go to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to recruit African American males. Unfortunately, he does not think that systems use this approach to employ African American males. Alvin was not sure if adjustments could be made on the state or national levels to improve this recruitment.

Alvin did not feel that there was a stigma attached to the Black male when he chose to be an elementary teacher. He did say, however, that he could visualize a stigma being more in K through six, as opposed to seven through twelve. When asked about the increase in child molestation in the nation, Alvin did feel that it has impacted males and not just African American males. Alvin did mention how he feels that people are intimidated by African American males, specifically ones that are educated. Thus, Alvin discussed that this makes you aware of what is going on around you, particularly with female students.

This interview with Alvin posed the question of how students and parents viewed him as the teacher of their children. He stated that looking at it as a whole, parents and students had a positive outlook on him specifically single mothers, who have you Black males, are enthusiastic about him being their child's teacher. Alvin did feel that the opinion of the students and parents played a role in his decision to remain in or leave the field of elementary education. Finally, Alvin referenced when students and parents tell

him the impact that he had on them that it gives him a reason to remain, however, if the reactions were negative, it would make his perception lean towards leaving.

Brandon

Brandon is an African American male elementary teacher with eight years of experience. He is thirty-two years old and has experience teaching fifth grade. Brandon also holds a master's degree. The researcher knew Brandon prior to the study, however, did not realize that he was an elementary teacher. The researcher was informed of Brandon's career status by another participant. The interview with Brandon took place in a relatively quiet atmosphere. Some background activities did exist, but they did not serve as a distraction during the course of the interview. It was not overly crowded. It was in a town with a university and a lot of the people were on laptops or reading.

Brandon remained in the classroom as a teacher because of his feelings towards teaching and also he felt that he was being able to serve as a role model. This participant mentioned the limited number of African American males in his particular system and the need for students to see someone as a role model, particularly, when individuals that are on television or someone in the community that may not provide the best example for students.

Brandon stated that he has not intensely craved to leave the classroom, but chances are available. He mentioned that it is whether or not you want to travel that particular path. Brandon does, however, believe that he will leave the classroom to go into administration in an effort to influence student success. This teacher does not feel that he will leave education but go into another position as an administrator. Brandon spoke about his passion for the field of education and teaching.

When asked about reason for considering a career change, Brandon mentioned the financial aspect of it. Brandon mentioned the salaries of teachers from the low end to the upper end. He mentioned the money that other professions make and how they those professions have higher earnings compared to teachers. However, Brandon stated that if he left, the reason would be not having fulfillment on the job. This participant noted that when going to the job was not bringing about happiness, he would desire to leave. Hence, Brandon would feel that he was not making a beneficial contribution.

The only situation that Brandon mentioned in regard to a negative impact on his perception of teaching was related to administration. He talked about how the perception of the administration and the perception of the teacher in relation to the students' best interest may be different. Finally, Brandon stated how perceptions of administrators may be impacted because of not being in the classroom for a while.

Brandon thinks that African American males leave the field because of money and not seeing opportunities for advancement in the field. In the future, Brandon plans on going into administration and serving as an adjunct at a university.

This teacher entered the field of elementary education because his advisor suggested elementary education. He was undecided as far as a major and decided to try teaching out. He discussed his passion that developed for it and how seeing the students learn encourages him to stay. Brandon never considered going into another area of education, initially. He feels that the shortage of African American male elementary teachers is the perception that is associated with a men going into the field. Brandon mentioned how the field of education has been dominated by women but, men have

entered the field over the years. Thus, Brandon mentioned how men perceive the field of education as a field embarked upon by a majority of women.

Engineering was a field that Brandon considered prior to deciding on elementary education, but he changed his mind. Brandon mentioned his two most rewarding experiences are a “celebration” that his grade has each year to recognize students prior to them going to the next grade. He mentioned all of the people involved and the happiness that is exhibited. In addition, Brandon finds attending graduations of his former students to be landmark achievements and to be very rewarding.

When discussing what systems can do to recruit the Black male in elementary education, Brandon feels that school districts should seek candidates and also link with universities in an effort to achieve this. He mentioned how this can be done by incorporating job opportunities with the assistance of the universities. Brandon stated how the universities and schools systems could benefit from this. When asked about can adjustments be made from the state or national level to improve recruitment efforts, Brandon felt that the same model would help. Thus, he recommends universities to have programs and ask them to pilot these programs. Finally, Brandon mentioned monitoring these programs to determine the effect.

Brandon does believe that there is a stigma attached to the black male, if he chooses to be an elementary teacher. He believes that this stigma is the perception that people have of education being a field with a dominance of women. Brandon did not suggest way to remove that stigma, but referenced the challenges that face males and black males with removing that stigma actually happening. He also believes that the stigma is more prevalent in the lower grades because of the nurturing involved there and

the perception that men are not able to do that. Brandon discussed the impact that child molestation has on black males and how it has given another rationale for them not entering the field.

Brandon talked about how the students and parents view him as the teacher of the children. He gave a mixed response from his experiences. This teacher discussed how the parents were “a little bit taken back” at first, but as time went on he has become to be looked up to in a positive perspective in the system and the school. Brandon also feels that the opinions of his students and parents play a part in this decision to remain in or leave the field of elementary education. He provided examples of how the students and parents have showed their opinions of him. To conclude the interview, Brandon emphasized the importance of African American male teachers.

Chase

Chase is a forty-four year old African American male with a Bachelors in elementary education. He has ten years of experience and has taught third grade. The researcher selected Chase as a participant through mutual acquaintances. Chase and the researcher met in Chase’s home. We sat down at a table and had not interruptions throughout the interview.

Chase remained in the classroom as a teacher because of the influences that the children need. He mentioned being a role model as being a male and also a Black American. Chase also mentioned that he likes the interaction with the kids. Chase has, however, considered leaving the teaching profession. He talked about not having any incentives like stipends that coaches get. When asked if he left the classroom, would he remain in the field in another position, Chase responded that he would go into the

vocational area and teach culinary arts. However, if that teaching area was not an option, he does not feel that he would. This participant does not feel that he will be in the elementary classroom for much more time, though.

Chase named several reasons or motives for considering a career change. He mentioned pay, the work, stigmas, abuse of children, and also parents. Chase references the pay scale and also how the workload has increased, but he cannot remember the last time a raise was given. This teacher talked about people questioning a teacher's sexual orientation and whether it was worth it. Furthermore, Chase also mentioned the lack of appreciation from parents.

When discussing reasons or factors that he would leave, Chase brought up the demographics and also student performance. Chase referenced the commute that he makes daily to get to and from work. He also mentioned the lack of motivation that the children have and the lack of interest by some of the parents. Thus, Chase's overall reasons would be to get closer to his home and increase the odds of achievement in the classroom.

Chase was asked about anything that may have had a negative impact on his perception of teaching. His answer was yes and he proceeded to go into detail. Chase discussed his perception of discipline in comparison to the school systems' perception. He emphasized his belief that kids should behave appropriately. Chase stated that parental situations and also conflict with co-workers was an issue with him. Finally, Chase explained a specific scenario where some resentment was displayed by a co-work because of a particular position that he was assigned which involved negative comments made by the coworker.

Chase thinks that African American males leave the field of education for different reasons. In fact, Chase mentioned it was difficult to get African American males to enter the field. He discussed African American males and their desire to drop out of school, as well as the lack of mentors that they have. Chase said that once you are able to get African American males into college, it is about getting them into education which he felt was due to the work load and the pay. He also mentioned the lack of appreciation that some teachers receive. Facing some of the same stigmas that African American males had as students themselves, is also a problem they may encounter in a teaching career. In addition, Chase believed that when African American males chose an elementary career, they were perceived as being “soft” or their sexuality could be questioned.

Chase plans on going back to school to go into culinary arts. He speaks passionately about the culinary arts and is hopeful about his school district incorporating such a program, if not he may still look at his options. However, he might not change careers because of his age. He also mentioned how the economy may play a role in his the decision about staying in the elementary classroom. Chase mentioned the challenges of continuing in the career and that he does not have the energy and also the demands are increasing. He is unsure if he will be “able or be willing” to remain in the field. Chase explained that a number of his family members were in education and they influenced him, as well as, there were options that existed earlier for employment in the town that he is from. Chase spoke about the job security associated with education and how that has changed, now.

Chase’s response to why he decided to enter education, specifically elementary education, was due to his stature. Chase took into consideration his height when deciding

to become an elementary teacher. He felt that the children would be more likely to respect him as an adult without him having to use intimidation tactics. Therefore, Chase mentioned how the bigger kids talk back and the conflict that may arise because of that. He does not think he would do well with the older kids, with the exception of his vocational plan. All in all, Chase believes that those students in vocational education would be taking the class out of interest, therefore, create less discipline problems.

Chase thinks that the shortage of African American male elementary teachers centers on money, the stigmas, lack of mentoring and lack of recruiting. This teacher mentioned a particular program that he had heard of that assists Black males in relation to the field, but he noted that there were not that many programs out there that he was aware of. Chase mentioned that he did not believe that the shortage of black males in elementary education was even something that the majority of people are aware of.

Prior to deciding on elementary education, Chase did consider other fields. He stated that he had changed majors approximately three times. Chase considered business management, aerospace studies, and the Air Force. He eventually decided on teaching because he believed that he would have the opportunity to teach regardless of whether or not he lived in his home or moved away. Additionally, Chase mentioned family members that were in education. This provided Chase with the opportunity to have people to talk to and find out things about the profession.

Chase's most rewarding experience has been touching lives and having an effect of children. He recounts one particular student that started with a less than positive note and how he had patience with the child. This child eventually made a positive turnaround. Chase talked about the background of some of the children in his school and the

challenging lives that they live. He feels that it is rewarding for him to see in person, the outcome that he has on the children. Chase mentioned how challenging the job is, but that he still goes home and prepares himself for the next day.

Chase noted several ideas for school districts to recruit the Black male in the field of elementary education. He stressed districts could be aware of what is happening in the actual schools which could lead to recruiting the right people, train and certify them and provide incentives, so that these teachers remain in the field. Chase also believed that if more African American men visited schools, it would give them a perspective on it. He emphasized the significance of knowing what is going on in the schools and the values of having African American males.

Chase stated that adjustments can be made from the state or national level to improve recruitment efforts. He does not feel that politicians are aware of what goes on in schools on a daily basis. He mentioned the importance of preparing teachers. For instance, Chase thinks that the colleges or states need to effectively prepare teachers and offer them support once they get in the field in order to keep them in the classrooms. Additionally, Chase mentioned issues related to the curriculum and how improvements can be addressed there, as well. He emphasized how people that are making decisions are out of touch.

Chase believes that there are some stigmas attached to the Black male if he chooses to be an elementary classroom teacher. He referenced himself and some of the possible stigmas that may have been associated with him due to assumptions because he is not from the area that he teaches in presently. Chase spoke about how others compare

himself to his mother. Chase makes cakes, as well as teaching and he referenced how this may be perceived as feminine.

This participant discussed some of the problems some people may have with an African American elementary teacher and having a white girl in the class. He emphasized how he treats all children the same and avoids hugging in most cases. He talked about how he feels like he is just "babysitting" sometimes. Chase references his belief to the pay and how people can speak to him inappropriately at times. He emphasized again the importance of black males in the classroom and how if they are present, it could alleviate some of the stereotypes.

Chase does not know if there is a stigma more prevalent in K-3 more so that in grade four through six. He does not know of many black males who teach in the elementary setting, as he does. Chase talked about the lower grades, K through 3 having younger children and the presence of more nurturing, as well as, how that is associated with "as a woman's job." He mentioned how grades four through five children (at his school) are more independent.

Chase does feel that the increase in child molestation has impacted the black male and his choice of a career in elementary education. He discussed the incidents that he had seen dealing with inappropriate behavior which showed him that it is more prevalent than before. He mentioned other situations on television that normally would not associate with a black male. Chase feels that these scenarios and news contribute to black men not wanting to teach. He emphasized being professional. Thus, Chase teaches with his classroom door open. He feels that it may help ease some tension from parents.

Chase believes that the children and parents view him as “a strong person.” He spoke about how he is there for the children and the awareness that their parents have of that. Chase feels that he has a good relationship with his parents. Chase noted that the opinion of his students and parent play a part in his decision to remain or leave the field of elementary education. He related an example of how parents want their children to be in his class and the positive reactions that the children give him.

To conclude the interview, Chase added some additional comments. He expressed his desire to have more black males in elementary education. Chase mentioned that he had thought that he was the only one in the field, however, he did meet some other guys. He discussed the representation of other ethnicities and questioned why there was the lack of black males. Chase referenced his need to be there for the children. He spoke about how it is to be the only male and black male at his school, because another male had left. Chase mentioned how he works with the children that are sent to him. Hence, he says that he tries ways to reach the children and does not let it stress him. Chase discussed making good and bad choices while discovering whether choices were right or not. Chase said that he ignores the stereotypes and tries to help the kids. This participant noted that he realizes the issues that students have and he can relate to them.

David

David is a twenty-six year old African American male with four years teaching experience. He has taught third, fourth and sixth grade. The researcher selected David as a participant through contact with another participant. David has a Bachelor’s degree. The interview took place inside of a restaurant selected by David. A table near the rear of the restaurant provided an environment to conduct the interview with the least amount of

distractions. With the exception of the waitress, the interview took place with limited distractions.

David has remained in the classroom because he believes that children need the management that an experienced male can offer them. He also feels that it is his responsibility as a member of the community and a parent to help children and steer them in a satisfactory direction. When asked about whether he has ever considered leaving the teaching profession, David responded, "Yes." He says that he has considered leaving to pursue a career as a physical therapist. David stated that he was aware of the economy and understands the impact that a change such as this would have on his family.

David noted two things specifically, on a follow up interview that would increase his desire to remain in the classroom. Developing more positive classroom experiences and an increase in salary were the two components. David mentioned that these changes would increase his desire to remain in the classroom. If David leaves the elementary classroom, he would remain in the classroom as a physical education teacher or a counselor.

When asked about specific reasons or motives for considering a career change, David discussed four areas with money being at the top of the list. David also stated the dilemmas and issues associated with parents, co-workers, and the students. As far as reasons or factors for leaving the field, David mentioned pursuing something that he really was interested in doing, specifically, an area dealing with physical health. He discussed parents and students when asked about anything that may have had a negative impact of his perception of teaching. The issue with parents was that they sometimes do not realize or accept the behavior problems that their children may exhibit in their

absence. David feels that he goes to work and does what he is supposed to do while he is there. He mentioned how every situation is not the fault of the teacher. Thus, David also emphasized the problem of working with children and convincing them not to exhibit disrespectful behavior.

David believes that African American males leave the field because of different reasons: the work environment, specifically co-workers, administration, and the students. David discussed that many of his co-workers are Caucasian and he reference how uncomfortable he has felt in some scenarios asking his co-workers for assistance. Finally, he talked about expectations of where an individual may want administration to be and that he was concerned with the students' behavior, particularly disrespect.

When asked about his future professional aspirations, plans or goals, not in an elementary classroom, David said that he was debating between being a head football coach and becoming physical therapist. This participant stated that he has been involved with sports and he also enjoys working with physical health and helping people.

David was asked what made him decide to enter the field of elementary education. He answered by discussing how people in college said that because he was a black male, he would get a job. However, he never considered going into another area of education other than teaching. The question was asked about the reason for the shortage of African American male elementary teachers, David basically responded by discussing three areas which were: African American males not going to college, patience and creativeness.

David mentioned that African American males from the area where he grew up are not going to college. He also does not think that many males have the patience when

it comes to young students in the classroom environment. David also mentioned the level of creativeness associated with being an elementary teacher. He talked about some of the things that you have to do and how men do not usually engage in some of those things.

David did consider another profession prior to deciding on elementary education. He wanted to be a psychiatrist. David basically allowed other people to influence his decision not to pursue that field. Consequently, he was told about the education needed for that particular career, as well as, he was convinced that he needed to go to school and then get a job.

David's most rewarding experience has been how students react to him in a positive manner outside of school. It makes him feel that he has made a difference. David said that one scenario that has made him appreciate his decision to become an elementary teacher is one particular student that wrote him note telling him that he is the reason that he comes to school.

David feels that school systems need to go to Historically Black Colleges in an effort to recruit the African American male in the field of elementary education. He emphasized how Historically Black Colleges are institutions where African American males can be found. He also mentioned using workshops to inform them. David believes that adjustments can be made from the state or national level to improve recruitments by allowing African American males to know their worth and not disguising it.

David thinks that there are some stigmas attached to the African American male if he becomes an elementary teacher like he may not be "all the way truly fully a man." He referenced that the stigma can be addressed by recruiting real male teachers who are passionate about teaching. David thinks that the stigma is more prevalent in the lower

grades, K through three. He mentioned the creative side of elementary teaching and all that it entails, such as: tying shoes or wiping noses. However, some of those duties, according to David, can put a male teacher in a bad situation.

David does think that the increase in child molestation has impacted the African American male in regards to entering the elementary education field. He emphasized how you cannot show love for students because of the way things are today. David says that most of his parents, particularly African American parents who have African American sons, are very positive. He stated that the majority of the students were not an issue, with the exception of many of them not wanting to be disciplined. David did mention some negativity from some parents. He felt that some of his parents are racist and present a problem. David said that those type of parents have not been a consistent occurrence. He also discussed the disdain that he has for being talked to inappropriately.

David did state, however, that the opinions of the students and parents did not play a part in his decision to remain in or leave the field of elementary education. As far as the students are concerned, he mentioned the significance of test scores and how it showed that learning was taking place. Concerning the parents opinions, they may make him debate if the field is for him or not, but they really do not make a difference.

To conclude the interview, David believed that that there is need for more African American males in the elementary school classrooms. He mentioned the lack of respect that African American males have for Caucasian females. David also feels like school systems do not necessarily address the needs of African American males in regards to their betterment.

Edward

Edward holds a master's degree and has been teaching for fourteen years. He is a thirty-seven year old African American male that has taught fifth and sixth grade.

Edward was selected as a participant through a mutual acquaintance. The interview with Edward took place in his home in the living room. The setting was quiet and free of any distractions.

Edward has remained in the classroom as a teacher because he likes doing it. He stated that as a child he wanted to be a teacher. Edward said that he never thought about leaving teaching and that it is something that he wants to do. Edward did not name any incentives, benefits, or expectations. He referenced that vacation time and pay are not influences. However, Edward stated that if he leaves the classroom he would remain in the field as a reading or math coach, in curriculum and instruction, or an instructional assistant. When asked if there were specific reasons or motives for considering a career change, Edward simply mentioned more money as the sole indicator for considering a change.

Edward responded to the question about the reasons or factors to cause him to leave with one word...MONEY. He mentioned several different components in response to whether he had had any discouraging incidents in regards to teaching. He mentioned lack of parental support, dishonest students, lack of administrative support in reference to the dishonesty of students and the *bureaucracy of the system*. In addition, he elaborated on this explaining that people can obtain a position but they are not able to successfully serve the position or job.

Edward believes that African American males leave the field of education because there are *too many women involved*. Edward elaborated on his perspective by saying that there are many women making decisions and there is frustration that he feels about that. Additionally, Edward discussed the male perspective on raising children and handling different situations in comparison to how women handle them. He mentioned all of the feelings involved and the lack of things being “concrete” or supported by evidence.

Edward’s future plans include doing something on the collegiate level. He mentioned that he could have this change and still be able to teach. Five years from now, Edward says that he would still probably be in the school system, but coaching and he would also like to be working at a university part-time. Edward entered the field of education, specifically elementary education, because of his experiences growing up. He felt that he had some elementary teachers that were not good at all. Thus, Edward said that he thought that he could do a better job with children than that. This participant also never considered going into another area of education other than teaching.

Edward was asked what was his opinion for the reason for the shortage of African American male elementary teachers and his response was simply..... “PAY.” In the follow up interview, Edward discussed how other guys that he had talked to in other fields mentioned the pay as a deterrent from entering the field as well. Edward did not consider another profession prior to elementary education.

Edward’s most rewarding experience was coming in contact with former students after they graduated from high school. He mentioned how rewarding it was for them to remember things that he had done and things that he had said. When asked what school districts need to do to recruit the Black male in the field of elementary education, Edward

stated that they should have more men in certain positions to recruit men. He mentioned if administrative positions and human resources were men then one could actually be able to talk to other men. However, he did mention with a lack of men already existing, that it would be challenging to get other men into the field. All in all, David stated the number of men that are present are not being used to fullest potential.

Edward feels that adjustment can be made from the state or national level to improve the teacher recruitment efforts by loan repayments, moving incentives, and supplemental job to increase the salaries. When asked if there was a stigma attached to the black Male if he chooses to be an elementary classroom teacher, Edward did not think so. He referenced all the ones that he actually knows are each different. Additionally, Edward did not feel that a stigma was more prevalent in K-3 as compared to grades 4-6.

Edward thinks that the increase in child molestation in the nation has greatly impacted the black male and his choice of a career in elementary education. He discussed how it causes one to distance himself to avoid any accusations and insulations. Edwards stated that his students and parents view him in a positive perspective as their teacher or the teacher of their children. He mentioned the great feedback that he gets from parents. Edward noted that the only time that he may have an issue is when a student is new or a parent does not know him. Finally, Edward also stated that the opinion of his students and parents does not play a part in his decision to remain in or leave the field of elementary education.

Frank

Frank is a thirty-four year old African American male with ten years of experience. He has taught fourth grade and has a master's degree. Frank was selected as a

participant through another participant in the study. However, the researcher knew the participant previously. The interview took place inside of a bookstore at a small table towards the front of the building. The setting was cohesive for the interview to take place.

Frank remains in the classroom as a teacher because he chooses to serve as a role model for the students. Frank also mentioned that he remains in the classroom because of the smiles from the children and listening to their different experiences.

Frank has considered leaving the teaching profession for more money. He also emphasized how important it was for all children to receive an education and are treated fairly. Frank would also remain in the field as a part time adjunct. He emphasized how much he enjoyed teaching. He also stated that there are no specific motives or reasons for a career change. According to Frank, he if leaves, the reason would be more money. He said that an increased salary would actually be the only reason he would leave.

When asked if he had any incidents, obstacles, or challenges that have discouraged him or had a negative impact on his perception of teaching, Frank replied that he had not. Frank thinks that African American males leave the field of education because of how demanding and exhausting elementary school teaching is.

Frank plans to go back to school and get his Ed.S. or Ph.D. Five years from now he plans on still being in the education field and at the same time be near completion of a funeral director license. Frank stated there are two reasons that made him decide to enter the field of elementary education; his uncle and his male elementary teacher. Frank remembers when he was younger that his uncle would come home and have time off in the summer. Frank's male elementary teacher was also good role model in education that stood out to him.

According to Frank, he never considered going into another area of education other than teaching. Frank stated that the reason for the shortage of African American male elementary teachers is because he believes that it is not something that one can just decide to do. He thinks that teaching is something that comes from within. Thus, Frank thinks that the shortage has come about due to the numerous requirements of being a teacher.

Frank considered going into the military prior to deciding on elementary education, as a career. However, his parents changed his mind. Frank did say that being a teacher was something that he always wanted to do. His most rewarding experience was being nominated for teacher of the year at his school. Frank did have a scenario that made him appreciate his decision to become an elementary teacher. For instance, one of his students brought a snake to school for show and tell. Frank told the story about what happened that eventually led to him taking the child home. When they arrived at the child's home, no one was there. Apparently, the child's mother had not returned home yet. At that moment, Frank realized then that he really needed to be there for his students.

In order to recruit African American males in the field of elementary education, Frank thinks that school systems should show the positive and rewarding side of the field and emphasize the significance of having a African American male present. Frank thinks that adjustments can be made from the state or national level to improve recruitment. When asked about if there is a stigma attached to the African American male if he chooses to be an elementary teacher, Frank had to come back to this question. He thinks that that you do not often see male teachers in the lower grades, he would not say for sure

if that was for a certain reason. He did mention discipline problems in the upper grades and how males are seen more in those grades and that they have an influence there.

When asked about the impact of child molestation on the African American male entering elementary education, Frank thinks that it has caused African American males to not want to enter the field. He gave a scenario of one of his friends who was falsely accused of inappropriate behavior and the consequences that followed.

Frank's parents and children view him in a very positive light. He referenced how the parents perceive him as being an individual they can trust with their children. Frank also feels that the opinion of his students and parents does matter in relation to his decision to remain or leave the field. Frank talked about how parents want him to go to the next grade level with their child. He mentioned how the parents and kids perceive the teacher, in this case, Frank.

The question on whether or not there is a stigma associated with the African American male who goes into elementary education and how can it be corrected was repeated. Frank replied that he felt that part of him believed it was and part of him believed it was not. He said in order to remove that stigma, the education system has to be revamped. In summary, Frank emphasized that it was important as individuals who make decisions about education should take time to look at things from the perspective of the teacher, as well as, they should know that it is a process to get into those positions including having an educational background.

George

George is a forty-seven year old African American male with a 4-year degree. He has taught sixth grade and this is his sixth year teaching. The researcher selected George

as a participant though another participant in the study. George is also retired from the military. The interview took place in a restaurant near the back of the room at a table. There were limited distractions throughout the interview.

George has remained in the classroom because he enjoys math and also likes kids. The main reason that George stated the he has remained in the classroom as a teacher is because of the limited number of African American male, or male, elementary teachers. He discussed the opportunities that a male has to move into the area of administration and how that relates to him. George has considered leaving the profession. He said that the only incentive that keeps him there is the impact that he has on children from their accomplishments to their appreciation. When asked if he would remain in the field in another position if he left the classroom, George responded yes, however, he emphasized that he enjoys what he is doing and “I’m pretty much going to stay in the classroom.”

The reasons or factors that would cause George to leave are the workload and the low pay. George mentioned that the educational field has not received a raise for some time. He compared other career fields to education as far as pay is concerned. All in all, he stated how behind the education field was in comparison to others. George noted that his main reason for leaving would be financial, if it became an issue in relation to him taking care of his family.

When asked if he had any incidents, obstacles or challenges that have discouraged him or had a negative impact on his perception of teaching, George referenced the lack of parental support. George mentioned the environment that some kids come from and the tendency of parents to “fuss” or “fight” as a specific challenge. George also feels that African American males leave the field of education because they do not initially go in

with the intention to stay in the classroom. George noted that the classroom can be used as a means of obtaining something else like coaching or administration.

George's future professional plans include possibly going into administration. He plans on completing ten years in the classroom and then making a decision as to whether he will take the administrative path or remain in the classroom. Upon retirement from the military, he entered the field of elementary education, because he wanted to enter a field which would give him the opportunity to work with children, while also allowing him to help people. The choice came down to nursing or education and he said that something pushed him in the direction of education. He did not consider going into another area of education besides teaching.

George gave his opinion of three overall responses for the shortage of the shortage of African American male elementary teachers. He stated that pay, recruitment and not seeing the representation of African American teachers as a student as three reasons. George reminisced over his days as a student and told the story of how he had a limited number of male teachers in during his time in school. He stated that children do not see African American males, they see females therefore do not see it as a career option. Additionally, George thinks that African American males are being recruited as coaches and other things and not to be classroom teachers.

George did consider another profession prior to deciding on elementary education. As stated earlier, George was considering nursing at the same time as elementary education, however, the benefits of going into education outweighed those of going into the nursing field. He did mention that the pay was less, but he could touch

more lives and had more available time. The most rewarding experience for George was the overall appreciation that he has been given by the children.

One specific scenario that has made George appreciate his decision to become an elementary teacher is one particular student who had planned to drop out of school. The student had decided that he would survive without an education. About three years later, George saw the student and he had a different perspective on education. This student was then trying to graduate and remembered some of the things that George had told him.

George thinks that school districts can do three things to recruit the Black male in the field of elementary education, such as: use the ones that are in the field, allow them to stay in the field, and use encouragement. George emphasized “exposure” and the impact it would have on other African Americans. Secondly, George believes that administration takes males out of the classroom and they should allow them to stay there longer. Third, George noted that African American teachers that are in the field need to let children know about the positive aspects of the field. He mentioned different programs and ideas that may assist in recruiting such as visiting colleges. George also feels that African American males need to “join the bandwagon” and actually look into the field as a possibility.

George believes that adjustments can be made from the state or national level to improve recruitment efforts. He thinks that promoting positive things, implementing scholarships, and utilizing retired administrators and educators. Therefore, George stated that these retired educators could be liaisons to communicate with kids and using mentor programs to give insight into the educational field.

George thinks that there is a stigma attached to the Black male if he chooses to be an elementary teacher. Two stigmas mentioned were that African American males are lazy and the stigma associated with being a teacher which was “if you couldn’t do anything else than be a teacher.” George discussed the stigma associated with Black males and how they do not want to be labeled a “nerd” or “geek.” He thinks that having incentives for being in different academic organizations and attempting to alleviate the perception that is associated with achieving academic success would help in removing that stigma.

George discussed how decisions are made in regards to jobs based on race and sex. George referenced how in the education field, females will get hired over a male if it is an elementary job. George was asked about if there is a stigma present, is it more prevalent in K through three more so than four through six? George actually stated that he did not know of any African American males that taught K through 3. He did, however, state that he thinks the perception of the lower grades is that you have to do things that African American males are not necessarily associated with doing.

George thinks that the increase in child molestation in the nation has had a negative impact on the Black male and his decision to enter the career of elementary education. He emphasized how it is perceived when a African American male does certain things in comparison to a white male or white female such as putting your arm around a child. George also mentioned males not being present in the homes and the “negative publicity that males get.” He discussed how he handles his classroom and the guidelines and rules that he enforces. Additionally, George talked about how children are treated like adults by some people and also their excessive exposure to things.

George was asked about how students and parents view him as the teacher and the teacher of their children. He responded by saying that for disciplinary reasons many single parents want their child in the room of an African American male, but it is different with white children. Many parents want their child moved from the African American male's class prior to classes beginning. George does state that the opinion of his students and parents does play a part concerning his decision to remain in or leave the field of elementary education. Finally, George reemphasized exposure and how he communicates with his students the importance of making good grades.

Heathcliff

Heathcliff is a twenty-six year old African American male with a bachelor's degree. He has taught P through fourth grade and has two years of experience. The researcher knew the participant prior to the study. The interview took place in a book store at a small table. We could see outside, but there were not out of the ordinary disturbances outside of the normal happenings of a book store.

Heathcliff has remained in the classroom because of the need for kids to have a role model to look up to. He enjoys that responsibility and giving the students a perspective on life and school. Heathcliff has considered leaving the profession due to the changes that are being made in his particular state as far as personnel decisions that are being made like releases and also the pay. He does enjoy teaching and is passionate about it. The cutbacks and the pay are the two areas that he referenced, as concerns.

Heathcliff mentioned that if he leaves the classroom, he would remain in the field in special education. He has considered getting his masters in special education and he realized that there is a great need in that area and also employment opportunities. When

asked about if there are specific reasons or motives for considering a career change, Heathcliff said that continuing his education could put him in the position to earn more money in another field, but he emphasized how much he enjoys his career.

When asked if he leaves, what would be the reasons or factors, Heathcliff responded explaining the situation with him being the only African American male in the school and how sometimes he was used to deal with discipline scenarios with the minority students. However, he did not have a problem with it and embraced it as a challenge. Heathcliff stated that he did not really have incidents obstacles or challenges that discouraged him or had a negative impact on his perception of teaching. He has had an overall positive perception dealing with administrators, parents and the staff, even though there have been times when things were not necessarily positive.

Heathcliff thinks African American males leave the field of education because of expectations that they may have prior to entering the field, going into it for the money and realizing that they do not have the passion for it. He stated that he is not sure why they leave, but those are some possible reasons. Heathcliff noted that his own future professional aspirations plans or goals include special education, physical therapy, and orthopedic therapy. Heathcliff entered the field of education, specifically elementary education because of helping younger kids and molding them. Heathcliff stated that he did consider administration at one point, but decided that it was not what he wanted to do.

Heathcliff believes that the shortage of African American male elementary teachers is due to the environment that some African American men grow up in. He discussed that being a teacher is not necessarily considered “cool” and does not come at the top of the list of career options, as children are growing up. Heathcliff talked about

young boys ambitions of playing sports for a living. He personally decided on teaching because of the benefits and working with the kids. Hence, Heathcliff stated that he really does not know why they decide not to choose teaching as a career.

When asked if he considered any other profession prior to deciding on elementary education, Heathcliff explains that he thought about business management. Upon further investigation into it, he decided to go into education because there were obstacles he discovered for going into business and he realized there were several benefits in education, so he changed his major. When asked about his most rewarding experience, Heathcliff discussed reaching out to some of the kids that other teachers did not want to interact with. Some of the kids had negative labels, but he was able to gain their trust. He saw these students make transformations into more positive kids.

Heathcliff actually had a specific scenario that made him appreciate his decision to become an elementary teacher. There was a young child who was crying one day while leaving his P.E. class, he found out later that the child wanted a hug. That scenario, according to Heathcliff touched him.

Heathcliff was asked what systems need to do to recruit the Black male in the field of elementary education. Heathcliff mentioned having more diverse staffs could help. He spoke about his own personal experience of being the only black male in his school. When asked if adjustments could be made from the state or national level to improve recruitment efforts, he replied that the question was tough and asked for it to be repeated. Heathcliff was not sure about it. He did not have an answer for that one.

Heathcliff did not feel that there is a stigma attached to the Black male if he chooses to be an elementary classroom teacher. He mentioned, however, that there may

be some stereotyping and pressure. However, Heathcliff stated that one has to have everything in order, then things would work out. Heathcliff was consistent with his perspective when asked if there is a stigma attached to the Black male in elementary education, is it more so in K through 3 more so than grades 4 through six.

Heathcliff thinks that child molestation in the nation has impacted the Black male in relation to choosing a career in elementary education. He mentioned the restrictions that are placed on these teachers. Consequently, Heathcliff stated that it keeps African American males away from schools because they do not want to be stereotyped in relation to molestation.

Finally, Heathcliff discussed that he had a multitude of support from parents and that he thought that the kids liked him immensely. His support from many parents was positive. Heathcliff thinks that the opinion of his students and parents does play a part in his decision to remain in or leave the field of elementary education. This participant mentioned his first parent conference and how he felt prior to the conference. He was nervous but it turned out well. Heathcliff noted this scenario in relation to him feeling good about that parental support. Therefore, Heathcliff emphasized the need for more black men, particularly in the elementary setting to provide kids with a minority figure.

Ian

Ian is a thirty-four year old African American Male with a masters in elementary education. He has taught fifth and sixth grade. He has nine years of experience. Ian was selected by the researcher through a mutual acquaintance. However, the researcher knew Ian prior to the study. Ian and I met for his interview in a location of his choice. It was a

house that provided us with a setting conducive to conduct the interview. We both sat down in the selected area and began the interview.

Ian was asked why he remained in the classroom as a teacher. He responded by stating that he is comfortable in the field and acknowledged the challenges of the job and the influences of the kids. Ian actually has considered leaving the teaching profession based on income. The benefits have kept him in the field such as the work schedule and insurance. If he leaves the classroom he would remain in the field in a driver's education or physical education position. When asked if there are specific reasons or motives for considering a career change, Ian responded that "the main reason would be financial reasons." He stated that that would be the only reason he would leave.

When addressing attrition, Ian was asked if he left what would be the reasons or factors. He responded by saying besides the financial aspect, the behavior of the kids could be a reason to change careers. Ian referenced the behavior problems with kids and how things have changed. In addition, he noted that the education system appears to take the side of the parents so the support of the teachers is in question in different scenarios. Ian was asked about incidents that may have had a negative impact on his perception of teaching. He referenced a situation in his school system where some of his friends had gotten into trouble and how the situation was handled in comparison to a Caucasian. He noticed a difference with the African Americans as to how it is publicized but he did not see the same treatment with the Caucasian.

Ian was asked why he thinks African American males leave the field of education. He thinks that it is financial. Ian says that they are not able to support their families. His future plans are to go into administration or become a head coach. Five years from now,

he envisions himself as a head coach at a high school. Ian actually entered the field of education indirectly. He explained that coming out of high school, he had not really had the discussion with a counselor about careers or goals. When he went to college he was playing football and still did not have the discussion with anyone about what he should do. He was taking courses, however, and eventually met with the counselor. The university counselor told him that if he went into elementary education that he would be on time. Ian did not consider going into another area of education other than teaching, however, he said that he should have studied physical education.

Ian thinks that the shortage of African American male elementary teachers is due to two reasons: money and unawareness. Ian discussed how African American males do not understand the significance of having an African American role model. He mentioned the single parent moms and how some young men do not have anyone to look up to.

Prior to deciding on elementary education, Ian did consider another profession. He thought about engineering and computer science. However, a family member (his sister) alarmed him about the classes that he would have to take. Ian's most rewarding experience is the reaction that he gets from students years later, as well as, kids asking him if they can be in his class, which shows him that he had an effect on those children. He mentioned how he teaches life lessons in class along with math and science. Thus, Ian teaches the kids fact from fiction. This participant has had a scenario that has made him appreciate his decision to become an elementary teacher. He talked about one of his students who had an unfortunate situation and how he was called over to her house during that time. Ian said that this was years after she was in his class. Therefore, it was important to him to see what effect he may have had on a child in that manner.

Ian thinks that school systems need to start early when looking at recruiting the Black male in the field of elementary education. Ian discussed demonstrating the positive perspective and the importance of the career when kids are in high school. He mentioned reinforcing the idea that Black males are needed in the school systems. Ian also thinks that adjustment can be made from the state or national level to improve recruitment efforts. Additionally, Ian mentioned more compensation in such as the form of benefits or improved retirement.

Ian believes that there is a stigma attached to the black male if he chooses to be an elementary classroom teacher. He thinks that people and men feel that you have to be tender or warm in order to do the job and that the men should be P.E. teacher or coach. To help remove that stigma, Ian thinks that they should be informed about the obligation of the job and what it requires. He also mentions that this informing them should take place early like students' freshman year.

Ian gave his opinion on whether or not the stigma was more prevalent in grades K through 3 more than in grades 4 through six. Ian feels that it is because of the age of the younger kids. He mentioned that you do not see many men in those lower grade levels. Thus, Ian thinks that men are more prone to teach the upper grades because they do not have to deal with "babysitting" the younger kids.

Ian thinks that the increase in child molestation in the nation has had a negative impact on the black male and his choice of a career in elementary education. He feels that it is a reason why men stay away from the field. Ian discussed how situations arise and how a teacher can be made to appear one way that is not true. Ian talked about scenarios

with female students and the positions that men are subject to. He stated that this problem is with all men, though.

Ian has a very positive relationship with his parents and kids. He did state that there are some instances when things do not go the way students or parents want them to, the kid's side is taken. Ian does feel that the opinion of his students and parents play a part in his decision to remain in or leave the field of elementary education. He mentioned the behavior of the parents and students towards him and that if those experiences were negative, then they may make him question what he was doing. Therefore, Ian discussed the topic of elementary education in relation to African American males. He talked about exposing them to the positive facets of the field and also treating them fairly.

Julian

Julian is a thirty-nine year old African American with a masters degree. He has thirteen years of experience and has taught kindergarten, first, second and third grades. The researcher selected Julian as a participant through another participant in the study. The interview with Julian took place in a fast food restaurant. It was before noon, however, not excessively congested. Besides the pressure washing that took place, everything else in the establishment was normal for the environment. Some side conversations from the distance and other noises did not cause an interruption or distraction during the interview. We did, however, relocate to another table once the pressure washing became louder. Our first choice of seats was beside the door.

Julian has remained in the classroom because he wants to be a role model to other black males so that they can see the possibilities that exist for them to accomplish certain goals. Julian mentioned another reason for him remaining in the classroom was the

“perks.” Julian stated how important it was to be able to spend time with his family and the education field allows him to do that. Julian has, however, considered leaving the teaching profession. One of the issues that Julian mentioned for leaving was pay. He feels that he could be paid more considering his time in college and his experience. He thinks that teachers are not compensated well in comparison to other professions. Julian believes that compensating teachers better financially is one incentive needed.

If Julian leaves the field of education, he would remain in the field as an administrator, however, leaving the field all together is a possibility. He mentioned going back to school, law school, or something different. Julian said that he could see himself leaving the classroom in the next five years possibly. He responded to the question about if there were specific reasons or motives for considering a career change for two reasons: compensation and the lack of respect for teachers. Julian discussed how he has noticed the respect for teachers has declined in the United States. Additionally, he also mentioned how teachers are respected more in other countries and he noticed it when he has students from other countries in his classes. Furthermore, Julian also mentioned the lack of respect for teachers that some parents exhibit.

Julian was asked if he leaves, the teaching field what would be the reasons or factors. He said that lack of respect and pressures that have been placed on teachers are reasons and what teachers have to do in relation to what they are paid. He mentioned how a lot of pressure is placed on teachers and there is the accountability issue. When asked if he has had incidents, obstacles or challenges that have discouraged him or had a negative impact on his perception of teaching, Julian did. He explained how he was perceived by others when he first started teaching because he was an African American male in

elementary education. He referenced the apprehension of parents and how after eventually becoming established in the community, things improved. This is one reason why he stays in the field to be a positive representation for the students and the community.

Julian thinks that African American males leave the field of due to education job related issues, because of lower salaries and pressures. He referenced actually teaching kids and the patience that it requires to do the job. Julian brought up the point “Am I really getting paid enough to deal with what I gotta deal with you know?” Additionally, Julian stated that outside pressures are involved such as the community not accepting you.

Julian’s future professional aspirations plans or goals include going back to school and pursuing a doctorate and also going into administration. However, he does not close the door to options outside of the education field if something arises. Five years from now Julian sees himself as an assistant principal or principal at an elementary or high school.

Julian entered the field of elementary education indirectly. He said that he always had ambitions of teaching. This participant noted that he got in through a “nontraditional way.” He had a bachelors in business and heard about a teaching position. Going back to school was something that he wanted to do so he asked if he could be hired for a position with the understanding that he was going to go back to school. He mentioned that he had taken some education courses already. Thus, Julian talked to a superintendent and was granted employment that just happened to be an elementary position. His first teaching appointment was as a kindergarten teacher.

Julian did not consider going into another area of education other than teacher because he was not familiar with what other areas existed. At this point of the interview, we changed the table due to some excess noise. It was a smooth transition, though. Julian was asked what is the reason for the shortage of African American male elementary teachers? His response was stereotypes. Julian explained that society has a perception of elementary teachers and black males are not part of that vision. He talked about tearing down those stereotypes as far as what an African American male can achieve.

Julian did consider another profession prior to deciding on elementary education. He was actually in management and enjoyed it. However, it came down to him being able to spend more time with his family

Julian's most rewarding experience in education has been the success of his students. Julian explained the feeling that he received from watching the students that he taught his first year in education graduate from high school and accomplish other milestones such as receiving scholarships. One scenario that has made Julian appreciate his decision to be an elementary teacher is the appreciation protruded by students and parents. Julian mentioned children returning saying how they enjoyed the experience in his classroom, as well as, the parents.

Julian thinks that school systems need to be vocal in regards to recruiting Black, males, by offering scholarships and signing bonuses to recruit the black male in the field of elementary education. Julian believes that schools need to say exactly who they are looking for and also offer signing bonuses because it is done for critical needs areas sometimes. He also mentioned that scholarships should be offered. Julian does believe that adjustments can be made from the state or national level to improve recruitment

efforts. He contends that scholarships or other incentives as options along with simply promoting the field of education are necessities for recruitment.

Julian thinks that there is a stigma attached to the Black male if he chooses to be an elementary classroom teacher. This teacher discussed the stereotype of the field being dominated by women, which is true. He also referenced that some people may feel that you might be “gay” to go into the field because of its population of women. Although he said that he had not actually heard that, but could detect that it might be a stigma. Julian thinks the way to remove the stigma is to actually see more males in the field.

Julian believes that the stigma leans more in the direction of elementary schools, as far as it being a woman’s field. He referenced the number of black males in the elementary field as compared to secondary. Finally, Julian discussed seeing females at the elementary level and he wanted to change the perception of males not being able to fill the emotional requirement, as being caring or patient, to go into the field.

Julian does see how the child molestation increase in the nation impacts the Black male and his choice of a career in elementary education. He noted how some people have never been around an African American male and what they see on the news may be negative things. He feels that he has to defend African American males and show the positivity associated with African American men.

When asked about how his students and parents view him as their teacher or teacher of their children, Julian responded how difficult it was at first due to the attitudes because of him being a male and an African American male. He talked about how that changed over a period of time for the better. Julian does think that the opinion of his students and parents plays a part in his decision to remain in or leave the field of

elementary education. He says for the most part, the opinions are in a positive way. This participant discussed the appreciation verbalized and the boys' appreciation of a male teacher. The parents' opinions later on in a positive format assisted him in remaining in the field.

Overall, Julian was happy about the topic of African American males being discussed. He stressed the importance of the need for black males for not only African American children but for others. Furthermore, Julian mentioned that it was important for others to be able to see African American males' different perspectives and not just what is on the news.

Overlapping Findings

The ten participants provided data that showed some similarities in their perspectives on the attrition and retention of African American males. Table 4 shows statement examples for research question one.

Table 4

Research Question One Statement Examples

Participant	Statement Example
Alvin	"it's my personal opinion that young black males need black role models particularly at a young age"
Brandon	"I think one of the things I look at is the love that I have number one for teaching"

Table 4 (continued).

Chase	“at my school our children need good support system”
David	“I feel like you know it’s my duty as a parent and just as a person of the community to at least try my best to instill greatness in these children”
Edward	“I wanted to be a teacher growing up as a little boy and it’s just something I like doing”
Frank	“I’m there as a role model to the children as a positive black man that they see on a daily basis”
George	“To be honest with you, I like kids, I enjoy math” “I feel comfortable in the classroom”
Heathcliff	“I come to find out that a lot of the younger minority kids need a minority male figure ”
Ian	“I really find it as a challenging job” “helping the youth the kids molding influencing lives”
Julian	“it’s just to influence I guess other black males”

Table 5

Research Question Two Statement Examples

Participant	Statement Example
Alvin	“I just feel like after so long, I’m going to need a career change”
Brandon	“to date, there’s not been a strong desire for me to leave”
Chase	“because you know you don’t have any incentive like you know in high school coach teachers they can get coaching stipends “they coach, they can get that money to help supplement the income”
David	“change in pay”
Edward	“I have never thought about leaving teaching”
Frank	“ I’ve considered leaving, for more money”
George	“I look at the accomplishments and the thank yous from the kids, it keeps me there”
Heathcliff	“besides the cutbacks and the pay, I’m content with teaching in the elementary setting”
Ian	”I had thought about leaving due to...more so to income”
Julian	“I guess one of the things is of course the pay”

Table 6

Research Question Three Statement Examples

Participant	Statement Example
Alvin	“it’s seemingly we have more work and we’re getting paid less”
Brandon	“I think the primary factor would be umhh lack of job satisfaction”
Chase	“I would probably leave to get closer to home”
David	“to really go out and concentrate on something that I really enjoy doing”
Edward	“Money”
Frank	“More money would be the major reason that you would leave”
George	“overwork, underpay”
Heathcliff	“I was the only black man in my in my whole my whole school out of three males period”
Ian	‘kids not knowing how to be disciplined not knowing how to take criticism”
Julian	“compensation is a little bit different and usually a lot more so that’s one incentive

Emergent Themes and Subthemes

The themes and subthemes from the data collected emphasized several areas relevant to the three research questions. The three dominant themes of the study were “Role Model,” “Recruiting” and “Financial Aspect.” Each of the themes had underlining subthemes that were developed by the analysis of the data. Subthemes included representation, commitment, preparation, mentoring, work conditions and career options. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show the themes and their relationship to the subthemes.

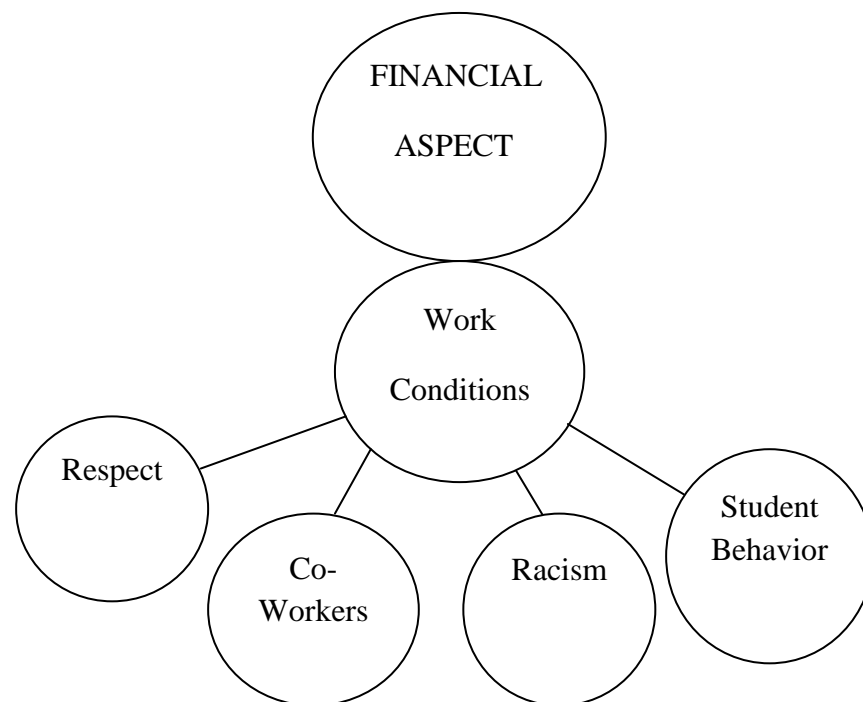


Figure 1. Relationship of Themes and Subthemes.

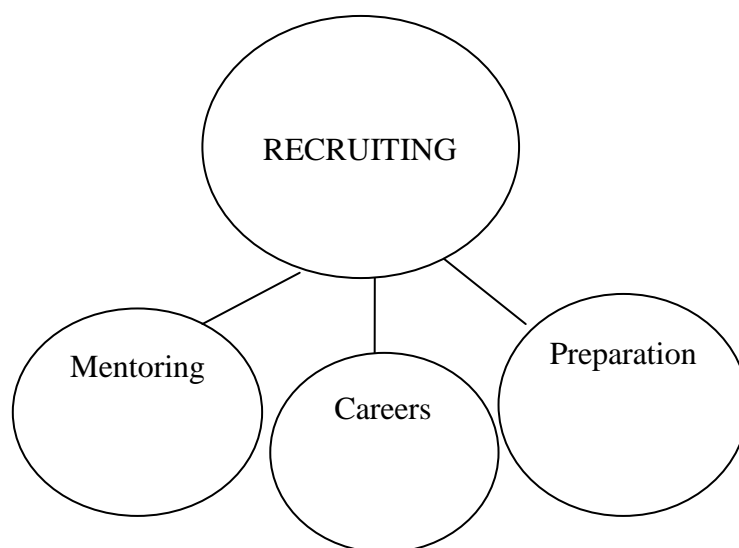


Figure 2. Relationship of Themes and Subthemes.

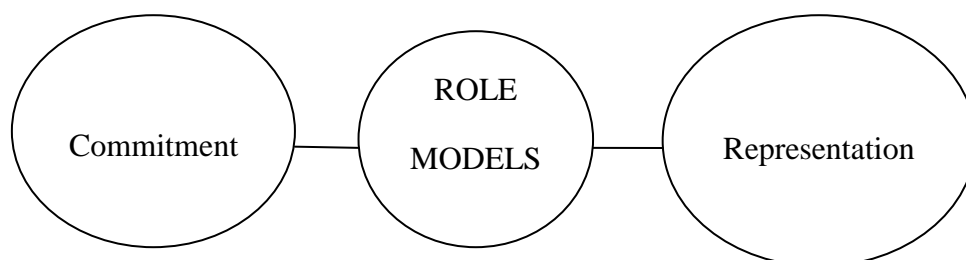


Figure 3. Relationship of Themes and Subthemes.

Ancillary Findings

The role of the media, news, etc. this was discussed by Ian, Frank, Chase, George and other participants was an ancillary finding. The portrayal of the African American male in the media has not been a positive one according to some of the participants. Some of the participants used specific examples of situations where they did not feel that the media gave an appropriate image of African American males. They discussed how this could impact African American male teachers.

Furthermore, other findings were that the participants were passionate about their careers and it was concluded from the data. Additionally, the participants spoke consistently across the board about the enjoyment and satisfaction they received from helping students.

Summary

The participants remained in the classroom for the children to serve as role models, because of the absence of African American male elementary teachers, or for the children. Some of the participants remained for the benefits, schedule, the enjoyment of teaching and the responses from the students. One participant mentioned that he was comfortable in the profession. Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory was relevant throughout the study. A variety of participants discussed intrinsic and extrinsic factors and how they played a part in the attrition and retention of African American male elementary teachers.

Eight of the participants have considered leaving the teaching profession. Responses varied when addressing if there were specific incentives, benefits, or expectations that would increase their desire to remain as an elementary teacher. Julian, Ian, George, Frank, David, and Chase who mentioned how high school level coaches and teachers can get stipends to assist with their income, all referenced money in some facet. Alvin stated that when he was ready to leave that he did not think that there was going to be anything to change his mind about it. Ian mentioned benefits and George also mentioned the smiles from the kids, Frank wanted a fair education for the children, while David referenced more positive experiences.

Money and work related issues were the overall dominant themes as to reasons or factors why the participants would leave. Money was mentioned by six participants. Participants also discussed pursuing other goals, kids' behavior, respect, pressure and faculty as other reasons. In addition, Chase stated that he had to commute to work. Some participants discussed administration, student behavior, parents, co-workers, unfairness and stereotypes as incidents that have discouraged them or had a negative impact on their perception of teaching.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Chapter IV consists of the discussion of the topic and research questions, limitations, recommendations and a summary of the study. Through the analysis of data, the perceptions of ten African American male elementary teacher emerged. In content analysis, themes and sub-themes emerged. The qualitative study gave the perceptions of some African American males in relation to the three research questions: (a) What factors have contributed to African American male elementary teachers' decisions' to remain in the field? (b) What changes can be made to improve the retention of African American males in elementary education? and (c) What factors cause African American elementary teachers to desire to leave the field of education?

Discussion of Research Question One

What factors have contributed to African American male elementary teachers' decisions' to remain in the field?

Role Models, Representation and Commitment

A variety of literature has referenced the lack for African American male teachers. The data offered the perspectives of the ten participants involved in the study. The factors that were most consistent and stood out were *Role Model*, *Finances* and *Recruiting*. Being a *role model* for students was the most repetitive factor that came into discussion.

The participants emphasized the importance of being there for the students and the impact of their presence in the classroom. King (1993b) discussed participants from a study that communicated the lack of role models as a reason that they entered into

education. This vision was reinforced by the participants in this study. Robinson, Paccione and Rodriguez (2003) mentioned the limited impact of role models because of the low numbers.

The participants expressed the need to be role models and be present for the students. The need for African American male teachers to fill the position as role models had been presented in literature related to the topic. King (1993b) mentioned that participants had one important reason for entering the field of education which was the *lack of good role models in their own youth*. According to Alvin, *young black males need black role models*. Alvin expressed the need for African American males to be viewed in a positive light in contrast to what is seen on videos or in the media. Thomas-El (2003) felt the need to be a role model to his students, also. Tillman (1992) reflected on his experiences as being a role model to sons of single mothers.

In addition, Brandon mentioned remaining in the classroom to serve as a role model and also noted the limited number of African American males in his system. Brandon stated that, "I think overall the impact that black male teachers can have in the classroom is exponential." David discussed how his experiences help guide the children. Bianco, et al. (2011) noted the need for teachers who can identify with African American males. Okezie (2003) stated the significance of African American teacher being role models and being a component in the performance of minority student.

Frank responded to why he has remained in the classroom by discussing his position as a role model for the children. Julian expressed his perspective on the importance of being a role model and showing a positive image. Heathcliff expressed how children at the elementary level need a minority figure to look up to. He also talked

about molding and educating young children. Heathcliff mentioned being a role model to kids is something that he enjoys. George talked about a scenario in which he impacted a child's decision on staying in school. African American teachers can have a positive effect on the performance of minority students and be role models according to Okezie (2003).

Representation

Representation is one area of concern when analyzing the lack of African American male elementary teachers. Shure (2001) referenced the lack of minority representation and how that can impact the number of minorities that enter the field. George also talked about growing up and not seeing a lot of African American male teachers in school. He stated that this is one reason why they do not enter the field. Ingersoll and May (2011) noted that minority students do not get to see role models with similar ethnic backgrounds.

Bianco et al. (2011) mentioned that interviewed students referenced one reason for the shortage of African American male students was not seeing them in the classrooms. Chase discussed having more African American males would allow the platform to see African American males in a more positive way. Ian referenced the positive impact that he has had on kids. Ian mentioned influencing the lives of the youth (role model). Ian talked about the reason for the shortage of African American male elementary teachers was partly because of them not understanding the importance of having a *black role model* because of single parent moms. Ian mentioned later in the interview the need for African American boys to have a positive African American

figure. Heathcliff stated that if schools had more minorities, then African American males may feel more comfortable in the setting.

Edward expressed the issue with school system recruiting African American males in the field because there are not that many already to use to recruit others. Frank talked about how you do not see male teachers in the earlier grade levels. George referenced his own personal experiences with not seeing a lot of males in the classroom. He thinks that is why a lot of African American males do not teach because they do not see a lot of African American males in the field, so they do not go into it.

George thinks that if more African American males are teaching in the classroom, this will cause more African American males to enter the classroom. Thus, George mentioned the important of exposure in a later part of the interview also. Shaw (1996) stated how students can benefit from having teachers of different cultures. Shure (2001) noted the growing minority population in the U.S. and that the small number of minority teachers will decrease the chances for minority students to have the opportunity to have role models with things in common. According to Dee (2004) students could connect to teachers of the same race which could affect students' outcomes in a positive manner.

Irvine (1988) noted the importance of black teacher to white students and diversity and the perception of people outside of their own race. Smith et al. (2004) mentioned the importance of having African American male role models to people of all backgrounds. Rettig and Khodavandi (1989) talked about not seeing minorities in school as role models.

Commitment

When looking at factors that cause teacher to stay in the field, the feeling that teachers get from it, is one of the most significant. Many of the participants expressed the positive feelings that they get from their interaction with the students. Some of the scenarios ranged from seeing students years later, attending former students graduations, or just the feedback that is given from the students during instruction. Two examples are responses from participants, Heathcliff and George.

Carr (2009) noted that intrinsic rewards are important to African American teachers, according to research, because of their hope to influence students. Alvin referenced the rewarding experience that he had inspiring a kid to go to college and seeing that kid graduate from college. He also talked about parents and children returning and telling him the difference that he made and the impact that that had on him.

Edward expressed how “it’s just something I like doing.” Frank mentioned his passion for teaching and the love that he has for it several times during the interview. George suggested that one of his reasons of remaining in the classroom is because he likes kids. He said the only incentives that keep him there are the smiles from the kids and knowing that he has had an impact. Heathcliff, throughout the interview, expressed his passion for teaching.

Lewis (2006) had two research questions, one was related to what was used as far as recruiting an individual into the profession. *Helping young people* and *contributions to humanity* were two of the responses. The second question was centered on what kept an individual in the field. One of those responses was *contributions to humanity*. Brown and Butty (1999) conducted an analysis that showed the *sole significant predictor* of

African American males' educational choices was *motivation to teach*. King (1993b) discussed data collected on the question in relation to what attracted participants to becoming a teacher and 83% noted *the opportunity to work with young people*.

Discussion of Research Question Two

What changes can be made to improve the retention of African American males in elementary education?

Preparation and Mentoring

Hill and Barth (2004) listed factors that may contribute to teacher leaving which included preparation. Like so, Darling-Hammond (2003) noted factors that can persuade teacher, in the beginning stages, in certain schools to leave that school or the field of education, preparation and mentoring were two of those factors mentioned. Preparation was discussed by Chase and Ian. Ian mentioned starting the process at an early time and showing the importance of helping younger kids. King (1993b) noted that participants mentioned issues with preparation. Lewis (2006) referenced data and concluded that mentoring and career growth opportunities could be used. George and Chase referenced mentoring in their interviews.

Recruiting and Retaining

Alvin felt that there is a problem with African American males entering the field. Participants were asked in Lewis (2006) about what districts could do in regards to recruiting African American males and one of the responses included giving better benefits and working conditions along with higher salaries. George thinks that African American males are not recruited for the classroom, but for coaching and other things. Alvin also mentioned that systems could visit HBCUs for recruitment. Brandon

mentioned utilizing universities. King (1993a) mentioned having programs that provide minorities with the chance to be successful in high school and college. King also mentioned recruiting and retaining these students. Lewis (2006) participants mentioned that family members played a role in them entering education.

Discussion of Research Question Three

What factors cause African American elementary teachers to desire to leave the field of education?

The participants in King (1993b) referenced the factors that may discourage minorities from entering the field, may assist in selecting the field of education including the financial aspect, improved work conditions and addressing issues related to recruitment and prestige. In comparison, the participants mentioned stereotypes, stigmas, administration, parents, student behavior were all mentioned as well throughout this particular study.

Financial Aspect

The financial perspective of the field of education was one widely discussed across the board throughout the collection of data. Teacher attrition and finances have been topics referenced simultaneously according to researchers (Farber, 2010; Kersaint et al., 2005; Lewis, 2006). Kersaint et al. (2005) mentioned that financial components, according to data, may be a factor as to why teachers leave the profession. Fairclough (2007) mentioned the limited pay that teachers received and things that they had to do with that.

According to Alvin, the work load has increased, but the pay has decreased when discussing reasons to leave the field. Alvin also stated that the reason for the shortage of

African American male elementary teachers is money. He feels that they are not going into the field because of the salaries. Brandon talked about finances and how that is a big motive for changing careers and leaving the field. Kunjufu (1986) referenced how men had left the profession due to cost of living increases. George stated that his sole reason for leaving the profession would be if he could not financially take care of his family. David mentioned pay as a reason or motive for considering a career change. Waldron (2010) referenced a teacher in regards to the low salary and how people have to take care of their families.

George referenced the “underpay” and how that would be the only reason for him leaving. He also mentioned the shortage of African American male elementary teachers is connected to pay. A study conducted by King (1993b) referenced that salaries were more significant to males when compared to females.

Heathcliff talked about individuals entering the field for money and eventually leaving and also that other career options would lead to more money. Smith et al. (2004) study showed that money, with other factors, was the top element of consideration when considering teaching by participants. Edward mentioned on several instances throughout the interview issues with pay. He stated that that would be his only consideration for a change in career. All in all, Edward thinks that the reason for the shortage of African American male elementary teacher is pay. Edward discussed in a follow up interview that guys outside of the field expressed concern about entering the field because of pay.

Frank mentioned his only possible reason for leaving would be money. Julian referenced pay in comparison to other professions. When discussing motives of a career change, compensation was mentioned by Julian. He also mentioned comparing the pay as

to the work that has to be done. When asked about African American males leaving the field, compensation came up in the conversation again. In a study conducted by Greenlee and Brown in 2009, according to most of the teachers financial incentives would provide teachers working in schools with high minority populations or high low incomes motivation to remain in that school.

Work Conditions

Work conditions, directly or indirectly, came up throughout the interviews. When analyzing work conditions, several elements fall under this category including. Alvin mentioned the increase in work demands. Viadero (2008) discussed that some studies have provided information that show that working conditions may be more significant in the discussion of retaining and recruiting teachers.

Brandon mentioned “lack of job satisfaction” as the main reason why he would leave if he chose to. Darling-Hammond (2003) mentioned that surveys showed work conditions have an impact on whether teacher leave or stay.

Brandon believed that when it is no longer enjoyable, he would want to leave because he thought he would not be effective. David talked about how he was not comfortable asking co-workers for assistance in some situations working around a lot of Caucasian teachers. This was one reason he thought that African American males leave the field.

Edward expressed issues involving parents, dishonest students, administrative issues and system bureaucracy. George mentioned the high expectations in the field. Julian referenced what has to be done as a teacher in comparison to what salaries are paid. Chase mentioned the increase in work load over time.

Respect Co-Workers

Participants in King (1993b) mentioned lack of respect, co-workers, and lack of prestige as reasons why some minorities may not enter the field. David contended that the disrespect of children in his experience. George discussed the lack of respect that some students may have for males and teachers due to the absence of male role models in the home. Julian referenced the lack of respect for teacher and education in this country. Chase mentioned an incident with another co-worker and “little remarks” and some resentment from a situation.

Kane and Orsini (2003) referenced disincentives for people of color going into the teaching profession which included lack of respect connected with teaching in the perspective of some people. King (1993b) mentioned how males responded to other factors as higher than females including *by the professional prestige they expected in teaching* and *by the amount of control they expected to have over their own work* and how this may be related to why males move into administrative positions and coaching.

Behavior

Kunjufu (1990) noted how behavioral issues of students caused resistance to persons going into the field. David expressed his displeasure with the disrespect of children and its connection to why African American males leave the field. Ian talked about the behavioral issues with kids and how they are being raised differently. Chase mentioned the conflict of his idea of discipline and the contrast that it has with the school system. Smith et al. (2004) mentioned discipline issues as reasons for not wanting to teach.

Racism

Brandon mentioned how it was when he first began teaching and how parents were “a little taken back”, but things got better over time. Fairclough (2007) noted that discrimination limited career choices. David discussed how he believes that some of his parents are racist and there is nothing that he can do to please them. George referenced how he thinks that race and gender plays into hiring staff Julian mentioned when he first started teaching the apprehensiveness that he received and how it eventually evolved.

Career Options and Growth

Brandon mentioned two reasons why he thought that African American males leave the field. One of the reasons was individuals not seeing the opportunity for growth in that particular career. Garibaldi (1989) noted the awareness of young people in relation to career growth opportunities. George thinks that some individuals enter the classroom with expectations of going into something else and using the classroom to get there.

Alvin, for example, considered going into counseling. Ingersoll (2001) discussed data that revealed, when looking at the turnover of teachers, pursuing different careers and job satisfaction were more momentous than retiring. When Kunjufu (1990) communicated with African American Students about selected a career, the financial element was of significance. King (1993a) mentioned that African American students may make career decisions based on modifications of families' financial and educational component.

Smith et al. (2004) study revealed that half of the participants did not envision entering the field and teaching was not the first option for a career by any of the

participants. Cole (1986) noted the limited options of African Americans in earlier years and that almost half of the educated African Americans were in the field of teaching.

Comparing Career Fields

When comparing teaching to other fields, Grissmer and Kirby (1987) expressed that retaining teachers can be affected in an encouraging manner by benefits, work conditions, and pay. Brandon mentioned the pay in comparison to other careers and the difference in pay. George made the comparison between the educational field and others and how far behind the educational field is in regards to money.

Limited Promotion of the Field

Gordon (2000) conducted interviews that showed over half of the teacher interviewed did not encourage teaching as a career. Frank pointed out that school systems need to show the rewarding side to the field in order to recruit the African American male in the field of elementary education. George mentioned that he thought that African American teachers should let children know how exciting it is to be a teacher. Ian referenced that African American males should be showed the rewards of the field more so than the negatives.

Ingersoll and May (2011) noted the limited number of minorities that go to college and graduate and those may not go into teacher because of other options. David brought up how individuals in the area that he grew up in are not attending college which directly affects the number of male teachers.

Limitations

1. The study was limited to one state.
2. The study was limited to a specific population.

Summary

The participants in the study were African American males. The education levels of the participants ranged from Bachelor's degrees to Masters. Six of the participants held Masters Degrees and four held Bachelor Degrees. Only two participants had taught grade levels below the third grade. The majority of the participants taught between fourth and sixth grade. The average of the participants was 35.5. The youngest participants were each 26 and the oldest 47. The average years of experience were 8.9 years. The least years of experience were two years and the most was fourteen years.

Recommendations for Future Research

The study gave the perspective of African American males on factors that contribute to the retention and attrition of them. The study was limited to a specific state and a specific population. In order to gain a different point of view and additional data, the following are suggested studies for future research:

1. Compare African American Male retention and attrition data to other genders and ethnicities.
2. Compare practicing African American male teachers to former teachers who have left the field or gone into other realms of education.
3. Compare elementary and secondary African American male reasons and factors.

APPENDIX A

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION



INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
118 College Drive #5147 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Phone: 601.266.6820 | Fax: 601.266.4377 | www.usm.edu/irb

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 12050807
PROJECT TITLE: African American Male Elementary Teachers' Perceptions on Factors that Influence their Retention and Attrition: A Qualitative Study
PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation
RESEARCHER/S: Lemanski Chante' Walker
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education & Psychology
DEPARTMENT: Curriculum, Instruction, & Special Education
FUNDING AGENCY: N/A
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval
PERIOD OF PROJECT APPROVAL: 05/16/2012 to 05/15/2013

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chair

APPENDIX B

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

AUTHORIZATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH PROJECT

Participant's Name _____

Consent is hereby given to participate in the research project entitled, "African American Male Elementary Teachers' Perceptions on Factors that Influence Their Retention and Attrition: A Qualitative Study." All procedures and /or investigations to be followed and their purpose, including any experimental procedures, were explained by Lemanski Walker. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected.

Lemanski Walker explained to me that he will ask me a variety of questions in regards to the topic and my answers will be recorded. I understand that I have received information about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected. This study is being conducted to determine what factors contribute to the retention and attrition of African American male elementary teachers. The procedures for this study will include interviews collected from a variety of perspectives. Interviews will not exceed sixty minutes.

The opportunity to ask questions regarding the research and procedures was given. Participation in the project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. All personal information is strictly confidential, and no names will be disclosed. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided if that information may affect the willingness to continue participation in the project.

Questions concerning the research, at any time during or after the project, should be directed to Lemanski Walker at (601) 336-7072. The project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Rose Jones. This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.

A copy of this form will be given to the participant.

Signature of participant _____ Date _____

Signature of person explaining the study _____ Date _____

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Probing questions will be used in cases where elaboration is necessary to obtain in-depth responses. The use of probing question is left to the discrepancy of the researcher

Demographics

1. Ethnicity (Race)
2. Gender
3. Education Level (Degrees)
4. Grade Levels Taught
5. Age
6. Years of Experience

Retention

7. Why have you remained in the classroom as a teacher?
 - a. Is there a particular reason or reasons that you have continued to remain in the classroom as a teacher?
8. Have you considered leaving the teaching profession? If so, are there specific incentives, benefits, or expectations that would increase your desire to remain as an elementary teacher?
9. If you leave the classroom, will you remain in the field in another position?
 - a. Are there specific reasons or motives for considering a career change?

Attrition

10. If you leave, what would be the reason(s) or factor(s)?
 - a. Have you had incidents, obstacles or challenges that have discouraged you or had a negative impact on your perception of teaching?
11. Why do you think African American males leave the field of education?

General

12. What are your future professional aspirations, plans, or goals?
 - a. Where do you envision yourself five years from now?

13. What made you decide to enter the field of education, specifically elementary education?
 - a. Did you ever consider going into another area of education other than teaching?

14. In your opinion, what is the reason for the shortage of African-American male elementary teachers?
 - a. From your perspective, do you think the shortage has come about for a specific reason?

15. Did you consider another profession prior to deciding on elementary education?
 - a. If so, what caused you to change your mind?

16. What has been your most rewarding experience?
 - a. Have you had a scenario that has made you “appreciate” your decision to become an elementary teacher?

17. What do systems need to do to recruit the Black male in the field of elementary education?
 - a. Can adjustments be made from the state or national level to improve recruitment efforts?

18. Is there a stigma attached to the Black male if he chooses to be an elementary classroom teacher? If so, what would help in removing that stigma?

19. If in your opinion there is a stigma attached to the Black male in elementary education, is it prevalent in grades K-3 more so than in grades 4-6? Be specific in your response.
20. How has the increase in child molestation in the nation impacted the Black male and his choice of a career in elementary education?
21. How do your students and parents view you as their teacher and /or the teacher of their child(ren)?
22. Does the opinion of your students and /or parents play a part in your decision to remain in/leave the field of elementary education?
23. Do you have any additional comments to add to the discussion?

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