A Study to Determine the Influence African-American Male Teachers Have on Improving Academic Success Among African-American Male 4th and 5th Grade Students at Jacox Elementary School

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A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE INFLUENCE
AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE TEACHERS HAVE ON IMPROVING
ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE
4th and 5th GRADE STUDENTS
AT JACOX ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Research Paper
Presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the College of Education
at Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
The Master of Science in Education Degree

By
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June 1998
This research paper was prepared by J. Frederick Braswell under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz in OTED 636, Problems in Education. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment for the requirements for the Master of Science in Education degree.

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7-17-98

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Very little progress has been made in countering the problems facing the African-American male student in public schools. Statistics nationwide show the disparity between the Asian-American, European-American, and the African-American male student. It is a phenomena that has been given a considerable amount of media coverage, but minimal funds or serious attention. The “crisis,” as many African-American educators would call it, has shown a dramatic increase in African-Americans not attending colleges or universities over the past twenty years and does not show signs of improvement.

Unlike the war on gangs, drugs, or crime, little or no emphasis has been placed on the interventions required to educate African-American males to academic success. It is believed that more of a gallant effort has been given to save the American eagle or spotted owl than there has been to a serious long-term commitment to assisting one of American’s most at risked groups. The lack of commitment is prevalent on a federal, state, and local level. Funds and programs designated to assist minority (or underachieving) students are often frowned upon or seen as being not politically correct, particularly in the post Reagan-Bush era which emphasizes self-reliance or self-preservation.

Most school administrators, teachers, and African-American parents agree that one of the key problems is a lack of African-American role models in the public school system. Superficially, this problem appears to have a very simple solution. Hire more African-American male teachers to serve as role models and a daily testament to
academic success. However, contrary to the latter, the number of African-American male teachers has decreased consistently since the Civil Rights Act of the 1960’s. As a result, huge budgets are approved to build more prisons and expand law enforcement units nationwide. This appearance gives America a reputation that it is more popular and economically sound to incarcerate than to educate. More frightening is the speed for which this new approach has over-taken the country in the past ten years. The latter has put many African-American educators and social leaders in a frenzy to prevent the African-American male from being seen as a menace to society and ultimately a more productive, well equipped (economically and socially) member of the workforce. As it stands, this project must begin early, preferably before the 6th grade, with positive role models provided in every aspect of life.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine the influence African-American male teachers have on improving academic success among African-American male 4th and 5th grade students at Jacox Elementary School.

Research Goals

In order to guide this study to determine the influence African-American male teachers have on improving academic success among African-American male 4th and 5th grade students at Jacox Elementary School the following questions were considered:

1. Do students at Jacox Elementary School perceive that there is a significant difference between African-American male students who have African-American male teachers?
2. Do African-American male students prefer teachers of the same ethnic group and gender?

3. Is there a significant difference between the number of African-American males suspended and placed in detention compared to the overall student body at Jacox Elementary School?

4. Does the number of African-American male teachers at Jacox Elementary School demonstrate a balance in hiring practices?

**Background and Significance**

The increasing number of African-American males in the penal system vice the education system raises an intense, yet unanswered question as to why African-American male students are not achieving academic success and ultimately going on to higher education. The debate of cognitive inferiority, separate but not equal, and lack of motivation are no longer supported. However, new questions are arising in the quest to answer the reason why more African-Americans male students attend parole boards than do college graduations. Jawanza Kunjufu, a educational consultant, believes that academic failure among African-American males can best be attributed to the fact many African-American boys have not had the opportunity to experience a male teacher who looks like them and can identify with their day-to-day real life situations (Kunjufu, 1988).

For many African-American male students, their first extensive relationship with a teacher of the same sex and ethnic background may not occur until he/she is in high school. This late experience or exposure still may be solely in the form of a high school coach or physical education teacher. By this time, more damage than good is said to be done to the African-American child’s self-image to a point of irreversibility. Therefore,
the crucial years of experiencing an African-American male teacher as a role model has been completed negated. This phenomena affects both African-Americans males and females as well as it denies European-Americans and Asian-Americans an opportunity to see these role models excelling in areas other than sports, music, and the television industry.

It is this researcher's belief that white Americans would not allow their child to go kindergarten through sixth grade without having a teacher of the same race. However, it is this researcher's belief that they would pack their bags and move from suburb upon suburb to ensure that this very phenomenon did not occur. Therefore, the significance of this problem is paramount to the African-American community if changes are to be made in who educates African-American male students and to what extent. The latter is not meant to call for segregation, but a more realistic portrayal of African-American leaders in the role of educators and leaders. The need for recruitment is long overdue and should carry with it the same emergence that the war on crime, gangs, AIDS, and cancer, in addition to a well supported financial backing. This should be especially true among African-American educators. Morgan (1996) suggests that it is important for African-American males to have role models. The challenge African-American males face is creating role models of smart Black males who can help other little boys to want to be like them. Dr. Eric Abercrombie, Director of the African-American Cultural and Research Center and the Office of Ethnic Programs and Services at the University of Cincinnati created the "Black Man Think Tank" in 1993 which has become a mecca for Black male academicians concerned with addressing the issue of Black males students. He further suggests that Black males first and foremost need to become secure with who
and what they are all about to understand the value of their own culture so that they can contribute and give back (Morgan, 1996). Furthermore, as long as Black men are under-represented in the educational system, then simple arithmetic tells us that they [African-American males] will be over-represented elsewhere- in the armed forces, in prisons and jails, or on the rolls of the unemployed. Since the armed forces are shrinking, that leaves only two places. Therefore, it becomes in the self-interests of the whole society that Black males participate in the work force and the educational system in particular (BI Statistics, 1996).

Limitations

This research paper was limited to the current 4th and 5th grade enrollment at Jacox Elementary School including special education students. For the purpose of consistency, no students, teachers or principals outside of the Jacox Elementary School were surveyed or interviewed.

Assumptions

During this study, the following assumptions were made:

1. The enrollment records and ethnic classifications of the administration personnel and the teachers of the class in question at Jacox Elementary School were complete and accurate.

2. No substitute teachers of other ethnicity were used to increase or alter the number of African-American males listed as full time teachers.

3. All African-American male students were in attendance based on local domicile vice busing.
4. The students surveyed were not aware of this study or the survey questions asked prior to the actual time of the survey.

5. This survey was available to a sample group without reservation or bias in reference to religion or socio-economic status.

**Procedure**

This study was conducted by using a single survey form. The survey was directed using ten-questions and administered to a group of forty randomly selected African-American male students at Jacox Elementary School. The survey questions were directed in reference to their perception of whether or not African-American male teachers influenced academic success among African-American male 4th and 5th grade students at Jacox Elementary School and assessed the need for more African-American male teachers at their respective school. The information collected was tabulated and presented with tables and discussion as a descriptive study.

**Definition of Terms**

The following definition of terms used within this study and have been presented for reader clarification and understanding.

1. Equal – having the same quality, measures or value as another.

2. Racism – the notion that one's own ethnic stock is superior.

3. Discrimination – to act on the basis of prejudice, to differentiate.

4. Busing – to transport to achieve racial integration.

5. Prejudice – an adverse judgement or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge or examination of the facts.

6. Socio-economics – issues related to social and economics factors.
7. Bias – an uninformed or unintentional inclination.

8. Stereotype – a person, group, event, or issue considered to typify or conform to an unvarying pattern or manner, lacking any individually.

9. Suspend - to bar for a period from a privilege, office or position, usually as punishment.

10. Detention – the state of being detained, especially a period of temporary punitive delay.

11. Role model - a person who serves as a model in a particular behavioral or social role for another person to emulate.

**Overview of Chapters**

This study was undertaken to determine specifically if the presence of African-American male teachers increased or played a significant role in the improvement of academic success among African-American male students at Jacox Elementary School. Chapter I provided an introduction, statement of the problem, and the goals that guided this study, as well an overview of the procedures used. Furthermore, Chapter I addressed the limitation, assumptions, and definitions that related to this study.

Chapter II provides a review of relevant historical and current literature. Chapter III elaborates on the specific methods and procedures used to collect the data. Chapter IV reports the results of the research. Chapter V summaries the findings, draws conclusions, and provides recommendations.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

One of the most troubling problems in urban education in the United States today is that African-American children, particularly males, have been categorically underserved by public schools. Disproportionately large numbers of African-American boys in our nation's inner-city schools are expelled, suspended, relegated to special education programs, and subsequently left with fewer personal resources than their European-American peers. A combination of political, economic, and sociological factors contribute to the inability of teachers, schools, and school systems to uniformly promote educational success among African-American children (Murrell, 1995).

How schools structure students' opportunities to learn has been shown to influence academic achievement (Epstein & Maclver, 1992). Educational experiences often serve as antecedents to many of the social and economic ills students' face later in life. Thus, inequities in schooling experiences have potentially broad consequences for students' future educational attainment, employment, and family relations. Access to academic experiences through curriculum, teachers, and other school activities is of particular importance for students such as African-American males, who are already marginalized in school settings (Finn & Cox, 1992; Sanders & Reed, 1995).

The evidence points to several unique academic and social challenges faced by African-American males, namely, their disproportionate number of suspensions and expulsions, relatively poor scholastic performance, tendency to avoid academic engagement and competition, and decreasing college attendance rates (Davis, 1994).
One revealing study reports that only 2% of African-American males enrolled in the public secondary school system of a large Midwestern city achieved a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a four-point scale, while more than three-fourths of Black males in that system were performing below average (Leake & Leake, 1992). The lag in academic performance is seen by some researchers as a function of Black males' inability or disinterest in fulfilling their roles as conventional learners in school settings (Holland, 1989). Furthermore, many scholars believe that negative school experiences and outcomes for students are often products of school contextual and structural factors that limit learning opportunities, especially for Black males (Davis, 1994).

Because schooling contexts are often cited as important sources for gender learning and development, considerable attention has been directed toward understanding gender differences in schooling. Central to this effort has been the investigation of the effects of gender on schooling experiences and achievement (Davis, 1994). However, race and ethnicity also circumscribe as Delpit (1988), Fordham and Ogub (1986), note, school experiences and opportunities, yet the intersection between gender and race in these contexts is often overlooked in the educational research literature.

Typically, schools have been conceived as having two primary functions: (1) promoting and structuring the intellectual development of students; and (2) socializing young people for their roles and responsibilities in society. However, current thinking is that schools are falling short of these goals, especially for African-American males. One reason commonly mentioned for the alienation and poor academic performance of some Black males is that they perceive most schooling activities as feminine and irrelevant to their masculine identity and development (Holland, 1989). Gender-role socialization that
encourages and rewards Black males for not achieving academically has also been placed at the core of this crisis (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). The differences in role expectation are reflected in differential academic performance and effort. Thus, Black males are seen as both victims and participants in their own educational demise. Black males have suggested gender-exclusive school environments as a measure to reverse the disproportionate rates of school failure experience. Others contend that the increased presence of committed and successful Black male adults in educational settings is essential for enhancing Black boys’ academic and social development and countering inappropriate sex-role socialization and maladaptive masculine identity (Davis, 1994).

Cultural Incompatibility and Classroom Discourse

Increasingly, teachers whose background is middle-class and mainstream are being called upon to promote both conceptual understanding and communication skills among urban school children of color. Preparing teachers to work effectively across boundaries drawn by cultural, racial/ethnic, and class differences continues to be a problem (Murrell, 1994). However, as most students in U.S. public schools are increasingly children of color in urban settings, the stakes are high with regard to finding ways of providing these students with teachers who can promote their learning, development, and intellectual growth (Murrell, 1994).

Classroom learning is a social process requiring considerable communication, coordinated action, and common understanding (Murrell, 1994). Recent ethnographic research findings demonstrate how cultural and social class differences influence educational outcomes. Most findings suggest that differences in the way the social context of the classroom is construed by mainstream teachers, in contrast to students from
historically marginalized groups (e.g., African-American, Native-Americans, and Hispanic-Americans), often results in diminished academic success for the students. These same studies provide examples of culturally shaped perspectives, behaviors, and abilities of non-mainstream communities including those African-Americans, Mexican-American, Native-Americans, and Pacific-Islanders (Murrell, 1994).

The growing ethnographic research reveals how cultural incompatibility diminishes school success of culturally non-mainstream children in mainstreamed schools and has provided the impetus for efforts aimed at transforming current pedagogical practices. Fordham and Ogbu (1986) forcefully argues that cultural and language differences between African-American children and mainstream culture are insufficient to account for the diminished quality of the childhood school experience. He reminds us that culturally linked perspectives, abilities, and ways of knowing do not exist in a vacuum and that the historical, political, and economic fortunes of an ethnic or cultural group determine the extent to which their cultural and linguistic distinctiveness from mainstream American culture becomes an educational disadvantage. For African-Americans specifically, the ability of the cultural incompatibility concept is voided because multiple conceptions exist regarding what constitutes African-American culture. Moreover, even if there were a single, agreed-upon conception, no culture or cultural form exists in unaltered form; rather, they almost always arise out of contact or contestation with other forms. Similarly, many of the cultural differences that create problems for children of particular ethnic or cultural groups arose out of their contact with the dominant culture engendered by public schooling. Among these differences,
which are called secondary cultural differences, are those that emerge as opposition and resistance to the dominate culture (Murrell, 1994).

Additionally, Fordham and Ogbu (1986) found that academically talented African-American high school students, either tacitly or explicitly, avoided manifesting characteristics they associated with “acting White” in an effort to remain culturally “Black.” Unfortunately, for these students, many of these characteristics, rather than being seen as a positive attribute, were often found to be the minority among African-American males and not necessarily a popular characteristic. Other aspects of “White” behavior associated with academic success were attributes such as class participation, compliance with teacher requests, or turning in homework. All are forces that may negatively influence academic success among African-American males.

**Race, Gender, and Trustworthiness**

Because race and gender plays such a significant role in the way that some African-American male students view mainstream Non-African-American teachers, there is reason on this researcher’s part to believe that some attention should be given to race, gender, trustworthiness and how each or a combination the three may impact African-American male students. Duncan & Kalfeisch (1996) found that people were more trusting of ingroup [dominate culture] members than outgroup [minority culture] members. These findings are attributed to the distortions that occur in the perception of ingroup and outgroup members. There is a demonstrated bias for the in-group which supports the belief that ingroup members are more virtuous, moral, and trustworthy. It could be that the perceived threat created by outgroup members enhances both the positive beliefs about the ingroup and negative beliefs about the outgroup. This argument
would be consistent with Bourhis' (1994) discussion of the go-defense function of stereotypes and prejudices. Similarly, Brownlow & Zebrowitz (1990) have found that social dominance consists of both positive affects towards the ingroup and negative affects towards the out-group. Bourhis (1994) found that for European-Americans there was a desire to be superior over African-Americans. Social dominance orientation (a desire to control) was greatest in males in high-status groups such as European-American males. This social dominance historically has led to inequitable exchanges involving minorities (Duncan & Kalfeisch, 1996). For the European-American female, the race/gender intersection creates a similar pattern. The African-American male is perceived as the most threatening because he is farthest from the European-American female. His "blackness" and maleness are direct opposites of her whiteness and femaleness. Additionally, he is more powerful physically, which feeds the historically planted fear that Black men want to rape white women (Duncan & Kalfeisch, 1996).

Duncan & Kalfeisch (1996) examined this fear in her examination of European-American women's attempts to deal with the effects of race in their lives. Many of these women discussed their fear of Black men and how that fear was established. These women cited conversations with parents and peers as providing a basis for the stereotype of black men as rapists, savages, and derelicts. Furthermore, these stereotypes provided yet another example of a legitimizing myth used to support anti-miscegenation [mixed marriage/relationship](Duncan & Kalfeisch, 1996).

The depth and degree to which race, gender and trustworthiness play into the education process of African-American males in the American school system are not clearly known and require further study. However, this could be a key element in trying
to understand the multiple complexities centered around the lack of African-American male success in academia and society in general. Implementation of a single "cure all" component is not suggested. However, more African-American educators and social leaders are suggesting that a homogenous approach may be the solution.

**Immersion Program as an Option for Educating African-American Males**

As enrollments in urban schools across the United States have become increasingly characterized by African-American male students who are educationally at risk, the need to address the specific educational problems of these students is finally being acknowledged by educational leaders and policymakers (Sanders & Reed, 1995). With this acknowledgement has come a call for educational approaches that are designed specifically to meet the needs of African-American males. One such approach being implemented in several urban school districts across the nation is the establishment of immersion schools; that is, schools that provide a curriculum and related experiences for African-American male students that are distinct and different from the curriculum and experiences provided for other students (Sanders & Reed, 1995).

The establishment of African-American male immersion schools has received national attention and has generated much controversy. However, the central issue has been the question of whether the establishment of such schools is tantamount to segregation (Sanders & Reed, 1995), rather than whether such schools are more effective in promoting the educational progress of African-American male students than traditional schools. Limited attention has been given to examining the effectiveness of immersion programs as compared with traditional programs even though such information would seem to be essential to determining whether the establishment of immersion schools
"may be one way of creating an atmosphere in which African-American male students can concentrate and learn" (Sanders & Reed, 1995).

In a recent study conducted in Wisconsin (African-American Task Force, 1990), the state acknowledge the fact that the "economic and social well-being of African-Americans in the entire state is inseparably linked to the quality and vigor of Milwaukee's elementary, middle, and secondary schools. In urban Milwaukee, as is the case nationwide, young African-American men are more likely to end up in trouble with the criminal justice system than in college as "poverty, drugs, violence, and hopelessness pervade the streets and communities of our urban centers" (African-American Male Task Force, 1990). While African-American male students make up 26.6 percent of Milwaukee's total student populations, they make up 50 percent of all students who are suspended and 95 percent of all students expelled. Of the 5176 African-American males in grades 9 through 12, more than 75 percent have grade point averages of less than 2.0 on a 4.0 grading scale (African-American Male Task Force, 1990; Leake & Leake, 1992).

In an effort to address the particular educational needs of African-American males, the curriculum of the school was planned to be Afro-centric in nature and to stress self-pride, self-esteem, and self-worth. The school remained opened to all students in the area, but the major emphasis of the new curriculum was directed toward meeting the needs of African-American male students [K through 5] (Sanders & Reed, 1995).

Seven key elements of the African-American Immersion program distinguished it from traditional schools (Sanders & Reed, 1995). They were:

- Institution of a male mentoring program
- Rites of Passages Activities which fostered fraternal-like male bonding
• Tutorial Assistance
• Afro-centric curriculum in addition to the city’s district curriculum
• Incorporation of “families” concept
• Strong emphasis on student management and family intervention
• Special requirements for teachers assigned (18 semester hours in African-American studies.

At the fifth grade level, students attending the immersion school exhibited a higher level of intellectual achievement responsibility than did students attending the traditional school. This finding suggested that with respect to fifth-grade students, the immersion school may be more effective than the traditional school in fostering students’ personal responsibility for their intellectual and academic achievement. However, no significant differences were found between the immersion and traditional school students in intellectual achievement in any other grade levels nor were there any significant differences at any grade level in attitude toward school. These finding suggest that in terms of fostering a more positive attitude toward school and higher self-esteem, the immersion school may not be any more effective than the traditional program (Sanders & Reed, 1995).

At both the middle and high school levels, school experiences and personal practices were found to be the major determinants of success for Black males. Good study habits and attendance were shown to yield positive results for these students in terms of achievement, grades and engagement. Black males who spend more time on homework and attend school regularly also perform better academically and are more engaged in their schooling (Davis & Jordan, 1995).
Remediation, retention, and suspension were all shown to be negatively linked to academic failure among African-American males in middle and high school. In addition, extra-help delivery mechanisms (tutoring) and disciplinary sanctions are viewed as both symptoms and causes of failure. Blacks male students generally are placed in remedial classes or retained in grade because their performance is less than where is should be, or at least because it lagged behind that of their cohorts. Furthermore, the precarious relationship that many Black males have with schools and teachers is often further strained by a perceived, and often real, personal alienation (Davis & Jordan, 1995)

Summary

The review of literature presents a broad spectrum of information related to the academic success of African-American male students. Several issues have and must be explored and studied further. The pattern of relationships discovered in the review of literature offered intriguing information that should be reanalyzed and compared across ethnic/racial and gender groups to assess where the largest gaps lie. Educational programs and administrative actions aimed at addressing these issues must be studied carefully to identify strategies that work, instead of building upon the list of symptoms that plague the African-American male student.
CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The problem of this study was to determine the influence African-American male teachers have on improving academic success among African-American male 4th and 5th grade students at Jacox Elementary School. In order to gain pertinent data, it was necessary to survey the relevant population. In this chapter, the methods and procedures for conducting the survey will be discussed. These include the population, instrument design, method of data collection, administration, statistical analysis and summary.

Population

This study was divided into two parts. The first part was to determine the influence African-American male teachers have on improving academic success among African-American males. The population for this study was 40 African-American male 4th and 5th grade students.

The second part of this study was a statistical analysis of the teacher demographics at Jacox Elementary School. This analysis was based on ethnic background and gender. The population for this part of the study consisted of the total number of 51 teachers. An additional statistical analysis was conducted in reference to the number of African-American males (4th & 5th grade) suspended compared to non-African-American male students.

Instrument Design

In order to collect data to meet the needs of the study, an instrument was designed to address information related to the goals of the study. A ten question “Student
Survey/Questionnaire” form was designed (Appendix A). The second part of this study used no instrument.

The instrument provided for the collection of data to answer the research questions of this study which were:

1. Do students at Jacox Elementary School perceive that there is a significant difference between African-American male students who have African-American male teachers?

2. Do African-American male students prefer teachers of the same ethnic group and gender?

3. Is there a significant difference between the number of African-American males suspended compared to the overall student body at Jacox Elementary School?

4. Do the number of African-American males teachers at Jacox Elementary School demonstrate a balance in hiring practice?

**Methods of Data Collection**

The data concerning the first part of the study was collected from the Student Survey/Questionnaire form. The guide used in this part of the study is located in Appendix A. The second part of the study (Appendix B) was collected from the Jacox Elementary School counselor. It consisted of the total teaching faculty for the entire school. The faculty demographics were obtained by Mrs. L. Green, with the permission of the school principal, Mr. Edward Johnson. Using the faculty statistics, it was possible to determine the number of male and female teachers as well as ethnic background/origin. An additional part of the data collection consisted of the total number
of school suspensions for the 4th and 5th grade. This data was provided per Mrs. Green and is found in Appendix C.

**Administration**

The survey was administered by 7 teachers at Jacox Elementary School. Each teacher was assisted by Mrs. Green, the school counselor. Upon completion of the individual surveys, the responses were compiled and analyzed. Tables were designed and indicated the number of students surveyed and their response selection. The second part of the study was compiled solely on the basis of statistical analysis and required no administration.

**Statistical Analysis**

Basic statistics were used to analyze the data obtained in both parts of the study. The first part of data was then analyzed to obtain overall percentages of African-American male students and their perception of African-American male teachers influencing academic success. The second part of the study was a statistical analysis of the Jacox Elementary School teacher demographics and suspension ration of African-American male students.

**Summary**

This chapter outlined the method and procedures used in the research study. To determine the influence African-American males teachers have on improving academic success among African-American male 4th and 5th grade students at Jacox Elementary School, a survey was designed, completed, and analyzed. The data collected is presented in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The problem of this study was to determine the influence African-American male teachers have on improving academic success among African-American male 4th and 5th grade students at Jacox Elementary School. In this chapter, data resulting from a survey of pertinent information is presented in table form. The second source of data used in this study is the Jacox Elementary School teacher demographics, based on gender and ethnic origin.

Explanation of Tables

Table 1 compares the survey responses against the survey criteria. Out of the 40 students sampled from the Jacox Elementary School 4th and 5th grade student body, 37 (92%) rated having an African-American male teacher as very important or important. Three (8%) of the surveyed rated having an African-American male teacher as not important.

TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Non-Important</th>
<th>Prefer a non-African-American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 compares the survey responses in reference to how many students have had an African-American male teacher. Out of the 40 students sampled, 38 (95%) stated that they had never had an African-American male teacher.

**TABLE 2**

Students who have had/have an African-American Male teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Students who have had Or have and African-American male teacher</th>
<th>Students who have never had an African-American male teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 compares the survey responses in reference to how students felt about seeing more African-American male teachers at Jacox Elementary School. Of those surveyed, 36 (90%) responded strongly agree or agree.

**TABLE 3**

Student rating on wanting more African-American Male teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 compares the survey responses in reference to each student’s perception of whether or not African-American males are suspended at a higher rate than non-African-American students. Thirty (75%) of the students sampled responded strongly agree or agree.

**TABLE 4**

Students who perceive African-American males are Suspended At a higher rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 compares the survey responses in references to whether or not an increase in the number of African-American male teachers would assist in the prevention of African-American male students dropping out of school. Thirty-three (82%) of the students sampled responded strongly agree or agree.

**TABLE 5**

Students who perceived an increase in African-American male teachers Would assist in the prevention of African-American male dropouts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 compares the survey response in reference to whether or not students see African-American male teachers as positive role models. Thirty-eight (95%) of the students sampled responded strongly agree or agree.

**TABLE 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 presents the summation of total numbers of students (4th and 5th grade) suspended during the 1997-1998 academic year. The data was obtained from the school records and is sub-divided into two categories of male/female and by grade.

**TABLE 7**

4th and 5th grade Students Suspended during the 1997-1998 Academic Year at Jacox Elementary School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>African-American</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: 3 male students suspended twice during the same academic year*
The data in Table 7 demonstrated a significant difference in the number of African-American male students suspended in comparison to the overall student body. Of the students suspended at Jacox Elementary School, African-American males constituted 79% of the out-of-school suspensions.

Table 8 is the demographics breakdown of the Jacox Elementary School teaching faculty. The total number of African-American male teachers are included in these figures. To date, Jacox Elementary School has only one African-American male teacher and one European-American male teacher. Table 8 and Figure 1 presents this pictorially.

**TABLE 8**

Jacox Elementary School
Teacher Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origin</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European-American Male</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European-American Female</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American Male</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American Female</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 51

*Note: denotes of Hispanic or Indian origin
Figure 1
When asked if more could be done to recruit/hire more African-American male teachers, 39(97%) responded strongly agree or agree. Only one student responded “somewhat agree.” Question number nine of the survey addressed the issue of whether or not students perceived non-African-American teachers as less empathic to the needs of the African-American students? Of those surveyed, 24(60%) responded as strongly agree or agree. The final question of the survey asked “if students felt that African-American male students were treated the same as other students at Jacox Elementary School.” Of those surveyed, 28(70%) responded as strongly agree or agree.

Summary

In this chapter the findings of the research survey and statistical data were discussed. Table 1-6 illustrated the survey statistics presenting the number and percentage of selections categorized to the survey criteria. Table 7 outlined the specific numbers and percentages of students suspended during the 1997-1998 academic year. Table 8 provides pertinent information in reference to demographics of African-American male teachers at Jacox Elementary School.

In the following chapter, the data obtained was summarized, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations on how this data can be further used were discussed and outlined.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The problem of this study was to determine the influence African-American male teachers have on improving academic success among African-American male 4th and 5th grade students at Jacox Elementary School. The findings were collected using a Student Survey/Questionnaire form, the Jacox Elementary School Student Suspension data, and Faculty demographic data for the 1997-1998 academic year.

In order to guide this study, the following questions were considered:

1. Do students at Jacox Elementary School perceive that there is a significant difference between African-American male students who have African-American male teachers?

2. Do African-American male students prefer teachers of the same ethnic group and gender?

3. Is there a significant difference between the number of African-American males suspended compared to the overall student body at Jacox Elementary School?

4. Does the number of African-American male teachers at Jacox Elementary School demonstrate a balance in hiring practice?

An instrument design in the form of a survey/questionnaire was created and administered to a random sample of forty 4th and 5th grade male students, and administrative raw data was obtained from the school’s counselor to answer the research
goals and to the determine the extent of the problem. The findings from the student surveys and administrative data were presented in table form.

A review of the literature associated with this topic revealed that lack of African-American male teachers in the academic setting has deprived African-American male students of positive role models. Over the past 30 years the changes in the dynamics in which the African-American male sees himself has transformed from a once segregated “crisis” to a more recent “at risk phenomena” for not academically succeeding. The industrial period and information age has brought forth fewer African-American male teachers now than during the pre-Vietnam era. Although this timeframe is not considered to be the most triumphed time for the African-American, it is a period in which “separate may not have been equal,” but the number of African-American male educators were at a all time high (Black Issues, 1996).

Conclusions

Based on the findings discovered in this study, the following conclusions may be made concerning each of the research goals.

1. Do students at Jacox Elementary School perceive that there is a significant difference between African-American male students who have African-American male teachers?

2. Do African-American male students prefer teachers of the same ethnic group and gender?

The findings suggest that 37 out of 40 (92%) students find having as African-American male teacher as “Very Important” or “Important.” Only 8% of those surveyed felt that having an African-American male teacher was “not important.” The majority of
the students surveyed (92%) said they would like to see more African-Americans male teachers and 82% stated that they felt that an increase in African-American male teachers would assist in the prevention of African-American male student dropout rate.

3. Is there a significant difference between the number of African-American males suspended compared to the overall student body at Jacox Elementary School?

The findings suggest that African-American males are suspended at a significantly higher rate than African-American females. Of the total number of student suspended, African-American males constituted 78%. African-American males were also given fewer warnings and suspended for more frivolous infractions. The data collected compares student surveys in reference to each student’s perception of whether or not African-American males are suspended at a higher rate than non-African-American male students. Seventy-five percent of those sampled responded “strongly agree” or “agree,” and the statistical raw data and percentages support the sample surveyed.

4. Does the number of African-American male teachers at Jacox Elementary School demonstrate a balance in hiring practice?

Based on the statistical data provided by the school’s administrative office, the number of African-American male teachers at Jacox Elementary demonstrate an obvious void. The school’s demographics are clear indicators that very little has been accomplished in the area of recruiting and hiring African-American male teachers. Currently with only one African-American male teacher on the faculty, students are clearly not being granted to experience the true influence of how African-American male
teachers can improve upon the academic success of African-American male students at Jacox Elementary School.

Recommendations

Based on the findings discovered and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Where current low African-American male teacher numbers are low, administrators should take more of a proactive role in recruiting/hiring African-American male teachers.

2. Create in-school programs which host African-American males in role model professions other than sports and entertainment.

3. Coordinate with local colleges and universities during the early academic years of African-American male education majors to create a pipeline for potential hiring of future teachers.

4. Inservice current teachers and counselors on the positive aspect of having a diverse group of African-American male teachers.

5. In reference to research question number 3 (the African-American male suspension rate), create in-school programs that promotes model behavior and utilize counselors, social workers, psychologist, etc., to help facilitate the whole student vice tackling behavioral issues in an isolated manner.

6. Promote culturally diversity in every aspect of the educational spectrum. This includes academic success and minority teacher and administrative role models.
7. Far short from using the quota system, evaluate the demographics of the student body and the faculty in terms of numbers and true diversity.

8. Utilize parents, grandparents, and other relatives to reinforce the positive African-American male parent, businessman, or educator.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES
Appendix A
Jacox Elementary School
Student Survey/Questionnaire

1. How would you rate the importance of having an African-American male teacher?
   (A) Very important
   (B) Important
   (C) Not important
   (D) Prefer a Non-African-American

2. Have you ever had an African-American male teacher?
   A. Yes
   B. No

3. If you have had an African-American male teacher, did you find him:
   (A) More understanding and supportive
   (B) About the same as other teachers
   (C) Less supportive and understanding than other teachers
   (D) Did not notice a significant difference

4. Would you like to see more African-American male teachers at your school?
   (A) Strongly agree
   (B) Agree
   (C) Somewhat agree
   (D) Disagree
   (E) Strongly disagree

5. Most African-American males see African-American teachers as positive role models.
   (A) Strongly agree
   (B) Agree
   (C) Somewhat agree
   (D) Disagree
   (E) Strongly disagree
6. Do you think an increase in the number of African-American male teachers would assist in the prevention of African-American male students dropping out of school?

(A) Strongly agree
(B) Agree
(C) Somewhat agree
(D) Disagree
(E) Strongly disagree

7. Do you feel that more could be done to recruit/hire African-American male teachers?

(A) Strongly agree
(B) Agree
(C) Somewhat agree
(D) Disagree
(E) Strongly disagree

8. Do you feel African-American male students are suspended at a higher rate than non-African-American students?

(A) Strongly agree
(B) Agree
(C) Somewhat agree
(D) Disagree
(E) Strongly disagree

9. Do you feel that non-African-American teachers are less empathic to the needs of the African-American student?

(A) Strongly agree
(B) Agree
(C) Somewhat agree
(D) Disagree
(E) Strongly disagree

10. Do you feel that African-American male students are treated the same as other students at your school?

(A) Strongly agree
(B) Agree
(C) Somewhat agree
(D) Disagree
(E) Strongly disagree
Appendix B

Jacox Elementary School
4th and 5th Grade Out-of-School Suspension Data

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<th></th>
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<td>5th</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Female</strong></td>
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<td>5th</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>00</td>
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</table>
### Appendix C

**JACOX ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>White Male</td>
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<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Male</td>
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<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Female</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

| **Total**       | **51** |            |