

Old Dominion University

ODU Digital Commons

Educational Foundations & Leadership Theses
& Dissertations

Educational Foundations & Leadership

Fall 12-2022

Hiding In Plain Sight: A Phenomenological Exploration of Black Male Educators in School Leadership

Jeryl Kimbrough-Scott

Old Dominion University, jerylscott50@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/efl_etds



Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#), and the [Educational Leadership Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kimbrough-Scott, Jeryl. "Hiding In Plain Sight: A Phenomenological Exploration of Black Male Educators in School Leadership" (2022). Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Dissertation, Educational Foundations & Leadership, Old Dominion University, DOI: 10.25777/5hjf-0t32
https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/efl_etds/297

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Educational Foundations & Leadership at ODU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Educational Foundations & Leadership Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ODU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@odu.edu.

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF BLACK MALE
EDUCATORS IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

by

Jeryl Kimbrough-Scott
B.A. August 1989, Molloy College
M.S.Ed. 1996, Hofstra University
Ed. S August 2009, Old Dominion University

A Dissertation Proposal Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
December 2022

Approved by:

Steve Myran (Director)

Jori Beck (Member)

Felecia Commodore (Member)

ABSTRACT

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF BLACK MALE EDUCATORS IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP.

Jeryl Kimbrough-Scott
Old Dominion University, 2022
Director: Dr. Steve Myran

With the changing landscape of America's K-12 student population becoming a myriad of ethnicities, the importance of diversifying school leadership is critical to reflect the varying groups represented in the student population. Khalifa et al. (2016) and Talbert-Johnson (2006) attest that the development of culturally responsive programs is necessary to address the needs and experiences of a diverse population. Similarly, the premise of teacher preparation programs that are predominantly white and middle class need additional initiatives to better prepare candidates in working with diverse populations (Browne-Ferrigno, 2011; Carpenter & Diem, 2013; Ford et al., 2020; Hampton et al., 2008; Khalifa, 2012; Schaffer et al., 2104; Sleeter, 2016; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Urick & Bowers, 2013).

Given this need to address the changing landscape of the student population, I argue that it is important for school systems to ensure school leaders are reflective of the population that is served. However, the pipeline of minority leaders in school leadership is disproportionately underrepresented based on race and gender (Gooden, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Shields & Hesbol, 2019; Williams & Loeb, 2012; Young & Laible, 2000). Based on this disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) in school leadership, there is a need to give scholarly attention, in particular to Black Male school leaders (Bass, 2019; Bass & Alston, 2018; Lomotey, 1987; McClain, 2016; Sims et al., 2021; Smith, 2021; Tillman, 2008). I argue that by amplifying the lived experiences of Black Male Educators through a phenomenological study will evoke a positive change towards diversity, equity, and inclusivity

in school leadership in which there is a staggering disproportionality of educational equity (Henderson, 2015; Palmer & Louis, 2017; SASS, 2022; Shields & Hesbol, 2019; Thompson & Thompson, 2000). Further, through amplifying the voices of the lived experiences of Black Male school leaders, the contribution of these leaders will add to the educational literature a counter-narrative to the demographics and statistics (Atwood & Lopéz, 2014; McClain, 2016) to understand the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in K-12 school leadership through their lived experiences and provide a counter-narrative to the white patriarchal images that have plagued Black Males and Black Male masculinity. Through the concept of intersectionality that frames this phenomenon, a post-structuralist (Attridge et al., 1987) lens reinforces the notion of intersectionality that otherwise runs the risk of adding a white normative layer to the dominant paradigm of leadership. That is, post-structuralism asserts that the normative practices that have dominated the field are social constructs shaped by hegemonic Eurocentric norms – not definitive truths. As such, the history of Black Education, Colonialization, and Critical Race Theory explain contradictions to the grand narratives of the dominant managerial paradigm that perpetuates the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership. Further, I argue that you cannot emancipate the knowledge of BIPOC individuals without advancing the knowledge of the experiences of BIPOC individuals. Given this rationale, the significance of integrating epistemic outlooks and perspectives through poetry, art, lyrics, and literature highlight a powerful tool of getting to the problem of the study that can be obscured simply by academic treatment. To this point, embedded in this study are not only rational empirically grounded perspectives, but

boundless segments of poetry, art, lyrics, and literature that disrupt the normative epistemic perspectives on school leadership.

Copyright, 2022, by Jeryl Kimbrough-Scott All Rights Reserved.

This is dedicated to the black male leaders in my family. The black male whose has established a work ethic and a concept of family. The decedents of one of the five Native Tribes. The name Choctaw will once again be resurrected. To the narratives untold of a history untold of the native people in which these male leaders defended family and community in a time where the views of Black Indians were documented through stories that faded with the perspective of Hollywood productions of a great nation. Coming up through the segregated and brutal south of Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama your resilience to be a strong leader was evident in not by what you said, but what you did. First, to my dad, John, I never really understood how you put the family on your back and made life happen for us. You must have had many stories to tell that I only wish that I could pen to show the world how you were an educator with no formal degree. To my sons (Mark, Sean, and Evan), daughters (Toni and Jeanette), son-in-law (Damien), and daughters-in-law (Lilly & Trecee), watching you raise your children and teach them is pure joy to my heart. I watch each of you grow to be mature young men and women that are strong, gifted, and black. To my grandchildren. Memo's babies (Raymond, Amiya, Ziaire, Malaya, Caiden, Carmelo, Star, Mark, & Kobe). I love all you more than words can express. Yes, all of you (Maxwell & Makhai). You are my boys and I want you to know that the world may not be kind to black males, but you each have a strong father that will guide you along the way. To my precious granddaughters, I am so proud of your fathers. They are and will forever be a strong role model for you, never settle for less than you deserve. To my niece and nephew (Alicia and Justin) thank you for being a part of Aunt Pie's journey. Forever will you remember 21 Willow and all of the great times shared with Auntie. To my niece and goddaughter Melani. I am so grateful to witness the becoming of Mel. Now that you and Desahun have your own family and sons, I admire how DD is with you and the boys. Let him continue to lead his family.

You make me proud Paul Bunyan. You make me proud in how you take care of Mrs. Bunyan and the baby bunyans. Remember you both are young, gifted and black! To my sisters, Jodi, and Jan, it is never a dull moment in our conversations. We have been on this journey together for a long time. To my baby cousin Dr. Aaron Johnson, you are an inspiration to me. Never stop telling your story. To my brother from another mother, Stoney. You are what is missing in the world today, a hard-working, multi-job, task master, family man. You are what speaks to being a black male educator is all about because of your life skills training that you share with all young people that cross your path. You and Linda epitomize what love, friendship and marriage is all about. I see how you watch your son Leon blossom into fatherhood with baby Sophia Jeanette. Leon & Leah has significant role models. I appreciate our longevity together. We need more of the Uncle Stoney's in the world. And, to my mother, Jeanette, I have been a handful all my life.

There are many Uncles I never knew, cousins I did not name and friends that are not forgotten. You are each part of my evolution. I have loved the metamorphosis of a butterfly. I have admired the full transformation and its spiritual meaning. Now, it is time for this Choctaw Butterfly to fly. I pay homage to my heritage and roots that were stripped away from my ancestors due to the massive slave trade, enslavement, and segregation of my people. I stand on the shoulders of these giants who lie in unmarked graves disrespected and made to feel devalued and inhumane. Your lineage hears your cries. Your daughter touches your tears with every stroke of the keys, my heart yearns as your soul endured irreprehensible acts of cruelty. However, the Choctaw Butterfly has come through to be the voice of the four Rory sisters, to be the messenger of our people as I rise up and take my rightful place on the throne of equality. This is our time.

~Khadijah-Jerrell Jewel of a Nation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to:

-Dr. Steve Myran for your impressive guidance and unwavering dedication to me on this Journey. You have challenged me to be a better writer and you made sure my research would be valuable to the field of education.

-I especially thank the rest of the committee (Dr. Jori Beck and Dr. Felecia Commodore) for being a great asset in this process.

-Dr. Owings, Dr. Sanzo, and Dr. White for having the time and patience with our cohort. You all continued to push me to be a better writer and you reminded me of why this topic chose me.

-My family. Your patience over these last few years was invaluable. I have said “no” to many things, especially if it was on Thursday! Now, I can say “maybe” too many of your requests.

-My employers. In every situation I learned. I learned how to lead and how to follow. I learned how to advocate for my students and my school environment. I learned how to use my career to improve the lives of young people that I have met over the last three decades in this field. Not a day goes by that I do not say, “If I do what is right for kids, then I am doing what is right.”

-My friends near and far. It is amazing the path that life takes you. However, it is more amazing to have friends that do not mind being a part of your journey. #TurnUpCrew

-Finally, to the Black Male Educators. Your story, your narrative, your life, your quest matters.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
Chapter	
I Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Purpose of the Study	18
Central Research Question.....	20
Theoretical Framework	24
Significance of the Study	29
Definition of Key Terms	33
Organization of the Study	35
II Literature Review.....	37
Intersectionality and Post-Structuralism	38
History of Black Education.....	43
The Colonialization of Education Leadership	49
Critical Race Theory	53
Tenets of Critical Race Theory	55
III Research Design and Methodology	59
Purpose of the Study	59
Overview of Research Method	61
Phenomenology	61
Phenomenological Inquiry	63
Hermeneutics	65
Idiographic	65
Research Design and Rationale	66
Data Sources	67
Purposeful Sampling	69
Participants	70
Data Analysis/Analytic Technique	71
Role of Researcher	74
Strategies of Trustworthiness.....	75
IV Findings	
Overview	78
Discussion of Findings	81
Stage I: Interview Protocol and Grouping.....	79
This is Our Story: The Explication of the Lived Experiences of Black Male Educators in School Leadership	84

The Magnificent Seven	85
Pseudonym and Description of the Participants	86
Interview Explication	89
Question 1:	91
Question 2.....	99
Question 3:	108
Summary	117
V Discussion	
Overview	118
Restatement of the Problem	118
Summary of Methodology.....	118
Summary of Findings	119
Composite Summaries and Gestalt Synthesis of the Findings	126
Theoretical Implications.....	127
Implications for Practice	132
Limitations of the Study	132
Recommendations for Future Research	134
Conclusion.....	135
References	140
Appendices	
Appendix A. Study Consent Protocol	166
Appendix B. Email Protocol	168
Appendix C. Black Male Educator Semi-Structured Interview Protocol	169
Appendix D: Interview Questions.....	170
Appendix E: Outline of Hegemonic Structures and Counter-Hegemonic Human Actions.....	171
Curriculum Vita	172

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Chronology of Blacks and Educational Equality	11
2. Demographics of Human Subjects	71
3. Ontological and Procedural Explication	73
4. Criteria for Judging Research.....	75

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Burning of a Negro School	4
2. The Freedman's Bureau Depiction of a Negro Male	5
3. 1963 March on Washington	7
4. Poem: "Lord, why did you make me Black?"	15
5. Framework of the Study	38
6. Letter to Miss Buchanan	47
7. Poem: "I know why the caged bird sings"	51
8. Four Quadrant Critique to Oppression	57
9. Explication of Data from Transcripts	82
10. Notecard Display to Group Themes	83
11. Overarching Model: Hegemonic Structures and	
12. Counter-Hegemonic Human Actions	114

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right.”

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The above quote from Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, exemplifies the position in which I take in this study, that is, to purposefully and intentionally emancipate the knowledge and experiences of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) by capturing the written and oral histories that have been suppressed by dominant normative epistemic notions. This position may not be popular in scholarly writings, but my conscience tells me it is right. Similarly, in this work, I embed poetry, art, literature, and lyrics as an emancipatory means of studying the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in K-12 school leadership. Based on this, in this study, I examine the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in K-12 school leadership, but moreover, the experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership in a colonized educational context. In this chapter, I will outline the purpose of the research and the importance of the study and establish central research questions to include sub-questions that will inform the research project. To ensure proper clarification of terms, I will use part of a glossary of anti-racist terms whose definitions seek to establish a common contextual usage of each term and intentionally use historic terms such as Negro or Black as this historical premise is necessary to capture the terms used to identify African-Americans in literature, letters, and graphics.

Additionally, I will intentionally capitalize the term Black Male Educator since the rarity of positive literature exist about Black Male Educators in school leadership. I will posit this term, Black Male Educators (BMEs) as an addition to educational literature. I will frame this study through the theoretical lens of Intersectionality, anchoring this lens within a post-structuralist

framing as I examine the history of education from the Black perspective, the colonialization of educational leadership, and Critical Race Theory (parsons et al., 2011). Additionally, with a variety of research on equity, diversity, and inclusion surfacing to address social justice norms, but little research on equity, diversity, and inclusivity of Black Male Educators in school leadership, I will provide supporting ideologies of these concepts as it relates to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in K-12 school leadership. Finally, I will provide a statement of positionality and include any bias and limitations to the study as well as findings and a summary of the study.

Statement of the Problem

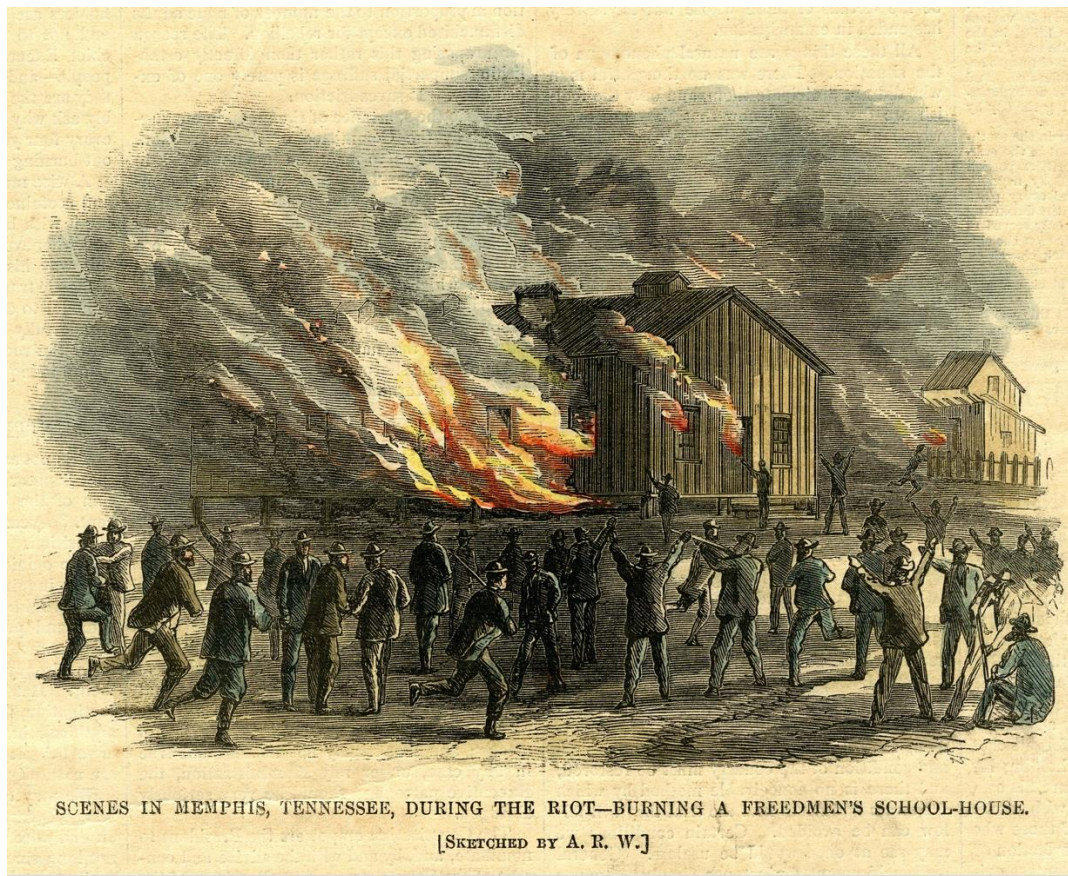
The struggle for an education for African-Americans is deeply rooted in the Black experience as cited in the autobiography, *“Up From Slavery”* by Booker T. Washington (1901) whose story was reprinted and copyrighted by Simon and Schuster (2012). In this text, Washington, a Black Male, outlines the struggle for an education as he stated:

One day while working in the coal mine I happen to overhear two miners talking about a great school for coloured people somewhere in Virginia....it seemed to me that it must be the greatest place on Earth...I resolved to go to that school...I was on fire constantly with one ambition, and that was to go to Hampton [Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute] (p. 24)

The foundation of this text grounds the history of inequalities in education faced by African-American males. Washington’s work focused on a rebuttal to the notion that African-Americans were stupid and incapable of civilization (Washington, 1901). Considering the impact that Booker T. Washington had on equality in education based on his writings, interviews and recordings, Washington’s work was written to address the victimization and cruelty towards

“coloreds” (Washington, 1901 p. 34). One can see, that like Washington, I argue that many Black males have been on a quest for equity, diversity, and inclusion in their educational pursuit to counter coloniality and the deficit thinking about Blacks and more specifically Black Males.

Given the above historical premise, Negroes have fought for educational and social justice amid a violent history of incendiarism, murder, intimidation, and epistemic violence that has been captured by images that portray hatred and heinous violence towards Negroes quest for educational equity (Figure 1). Historical images such as the burning of a Negro school (Waud, 1966) is an example of how this deficit thinking towards Negroes foregrounds racial tensions in which oppressive and fatal actions were faced by Negroes. In the educational context, this is particularly important as the othering of those subordinate to the Eurocentric coloniality (Bhattacharya & Kim, 2018) obliterates any trace of those outside these norms – what some scholars have called *epistemic violence* (e.g., Galtung, 1969; Teo, 2010; Spivak, 2014), that is the hostile subjugation of the knowledge and legitimacy of the “other” as a means of domination.

Figure 1*Burning of a Negro School*

Deemed controversial by white journalists and black activists, performer Bob Dylan sang a tribute entitled, *“Only a Pawn in Their Game,”* to pay tribute to the assassination of Civil Rights Activist, Medgar Evers. As Dylan (1963) stroked the string of his guitar at the 1963 March on Washington and sang the following lyrics, “...A finger fired the trigger to his name....He’s only a pawn in their game...With his fist in a clinch...to hang and to lynch...to kill with no pain...He’s only a pawn in their game...” Similarly, to these fatal actions towards Negroes in which Dylan (1963) explored in lyrics, the portrayal of Negro males was captured in the paper *The Freedman’s Bureau* (Artist unknown, 1866), that claimed, “an agency to keep the Negro in Idleness at the expense of the white man”, with dehumanizing characteristics (Figure 2).

To this point, due to the negative perceptions and portrayals of Blacks and Black Males in literature and imagery, this study provides a counter-narrative to these viewpoints and perceptions, which I argue validates and supports the purpose of this study. Taken together with the long history of racism in the United States that has led to a racial identity crisis (Helms, 1994), the impact of racism (Genao & Mercedes, 2021; Goldberg, 2008; Hotchkins, 2016) and violence towards Black Males that has been rooted in American civilization, the concept of coloniality emerges to define the epistemic injustices faced by Black Males. These power dynamics that were supported by laws and statutes further oppressed the Black race. As such, Negroes that dared to resist oppressive rules and laws were met with terminal consequences known as extrajudicial killings¹ (lynchings). In 1939 songstress Billie Holiday recorded a profound song in which the focus were lynchings (Lynch, 1712) of Negroes in the Jim Crow era.

Verse 1

Southern trees bear a strange fruit
 Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
 Black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze
 Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

Verse 2

Pastoral scene of the gallant south
 The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth
 Scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh
 Then the sudden smell of burning flesh

Verse 3

Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck
 For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck
 For the sun to rot, for the tree to drop
 Here is a strange and bitter crop

Given these profound lyrics, and the victimization of Negroes, I argue that the jolt of this song is noted for the injustices faced by Black Americans. As such, the nature of these lyrics and

¹ Extrajudicial killings or lynchings can be further explored in speeches such as “The Making of a Slave” by Willie Lynch (1712) that was published by BN Publishing 2009.

epistemic injustices that permeated in America, were supported by multiple laws and Supreme Court decisions (Table 1) that prohibited Blacks from opportunities of equality. Taken together with poetry, art, and literature, musical genre is not ambiguous, but an additional thread to navigate the stories of Blacks, which offer a plausible explanation of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Based on the above, one can see how coloniality was met with resistance during the eras of Segregation, Integration, and Civil Rights as a revolution against the “*status quo*” and inequalities faced by Blacks in a white dominant society (Gilley, 2017; Mashau, 2018; Taylor, 2018; Wright, 2022).

As such, this revolution against the “status quo” became the catalyst for change against discriminatory practices and inequalities faced by Negroes and catapulted civil rights activists to immobilize through the Civil Rights Movement. Given this platform, the historic 1963 March On Washington (Figure 3) in which the subject matter of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke was related to racial inequalities faced by Negroes (Adelman, 1963).

Figure 3

1963 March on Washington



The famous “*I Have a Dream*” speech conceptualizes racism and the shameful conditions in which the Negro was forced to abide by as grounded in the history of slavery². Such conditions such as brutality, murder, lynchings, and the vile actions that are documented in media coverage of Civil Rights actions foregrounds the problem of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership as Black Males were the targets of macroaggressions and microaggressions that impacted their human rights and educational progress (Hotchkins, 2016; Sims et al., 2021). I build an argument that this speech by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C., which became known as the speech that changed the course of American history, anchors this study as discriminatory practices towards Blacks and Black Males contribute to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. As such, I argue that the opening excerpt of the “*I Have a Dream*” speech captures the realities faced by Blacks and Black Males in society and in education:

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material

² Slavery was a legal institution of enslaving mostly Africans for human servitude. Slavery is a bondage in which the property of other persons. Details and the condition of slavery is extensively written in texts, media, and images.

prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So, we have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

To this point, in this study, I use poetry, art, literature, orations, and musical genre to provide a counternarrative to what has been otherwise published of the imagery of Negroes from a white patriarchal perspective. Such documents provide an authentic experience and perspective that conceptualizes the conditions in which Negroes were oppressed by the dominant white majority. As such, purposefully and intentionally embedding these resources in this study amplifies the treatment of Negroes, capturing a fuller account of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators that may be glossed over in conceptualizing the phenomenon of the disproportionate underrepresentation of this minority group in school leadership.

Given this history, Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire stated: “Through their continuing praxis, men and women simultaneously create history and become historical-social beings” (p. 43). Taken together with the quote from Freire (Darder, 2018), the lyrics from Billie Holiday, the oration from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and images of dehumanizing portrayal of Negroes, I argue that the history of court decisions and laws placed Negroes at a disadvantage in society and education. Such Supreme Court decisions were challenged by men and women as these men and women created a historical praxis of songs, speeches, letters, and texts to challenge legalized institutional and structural racism. Given this, Kirk and Goon (1975) examined societal problems that stemmed from *Plessy v. Ferguson* for integration and advancement of Blacks. To further this point, historian and journalist Carter G. Woodson (1933) expressed the problem of inculturation of Blacks through his writings in “*The Miseducation of*

Negroes.” Such writings provide a thesis of Black people’s conditioning of inferiority in which Woodson (1933) stated:

When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will find his 'proper place' and will stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary (p.31)

I argue that this statement that interjects inferiority from the Negro mindset and power dynamics from a white patriarchal society provides an additional and critical layer to understanding the problem of Blacks to include the impact of an anti-black society and conditioning of the Negro people. I submit that such prose gives credibility to this conditioning of the marginalized community and that oppression, and an epistemic framing provides context in which an oppressed mind can be conditioned to remain subjugated. To this point, I argue this conditioning creates a ripe mindset that fears retaliation and consequences from dominant regimes. Given this, I argue that much of the conditioning of the Negro people is causal to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Opposing white, normative, neo-managerial structures and academic literature, as well as a horrific past that has been documented in images, articles and writings detail the experiences of Blacks in society and in education. I argue that this concept of self-advancement in society and education has been a quest for Black Americans and particularly Black Males. As one can see by the above anchoring of this study, Blacks have fought against race and racism in which laws and statutes that victimized and profiled Negroes as second-class citizens in which Supreme Court cases (Table 1) provide a chronological history of race and racism by the dominant white majority (Tillman,

2004). As seen in Table 1 below (adapted from Harley, 1996), Blacks faced inequalities in educational rights through Jim Crow rulings and other Supreme Court cases that denied equitable educational rights to Blacks in schooling due to segregation and discriminatory practices.

Table 1

Chronology of Blacks and Educational Equality

YEAR	CASE	SIGNIFICANCE
1857	Dred Scott, Plaintiff in Error v. John F.A. Sanford	The Supreme Court denied Blacks citizenship which led Blacks to be treated as second class citizens
1865	Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands	The first black schools were established. Howard University trained and graduated attorneys who overturned <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i>
1865	Black Codes	Public school segregation begins. Blacks were barred from serving on juries and testifying against Whites.
1866	Civil Rights Act of 1866	Civil Rights protection granted to all people in the United States.
1868	The 14 th Amendment to the Constitution is ratified	Overturned the <i>Dred Scott v. Sanford</i> decision. All persons born in the United States are citizens and cannot be deprived life, liberty, or property. Equal protection is granted under the law.
1873	Slaughterhouse Cases	Segregation in public schools was deemed to be a state right.
1875	Civil Rights Act of 1875	Discrimination in public places is prohibited.
1883	Civil Rights Cases	The Civil Rights Act of 1875 is overturned. Private individuals and

		businesses can discriminate. Public school segregation is imminent.
1887	Jim Crow	Racial segregation and separation are entrenched in the American culture.
1896	Plessy v. Ferguson	The separate but equal doctrine is established.
1899	Cumming v. Board of Education of Richmond County, State of Georgia	The distribution of public funds for public education was at the discretion of school authorities.
1908	Berea College v. Commonwealth of Kentucky	Interracial instruction is forbidden at all schools and colleges in the state.
1909	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Founded	Mission was founded on the principles to eliminate lynchings and to fight social injustice through the legal system.
1935	The NAACP challenges segregation in graduate and secondary schools	The formulation of a legal strategy to challenge the separate but equal ruling.
1938	State of Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada	An attempt was made to equalize Black schools versus integrate the schools.
1948	Sipuel v. Board of Regents of University of Oklahoma	The ruling of being denied entrance into law school based on race was unconstitutional.
1949	Briggs v. Elliott	This case was consolidated into the Brown v. Board of Education case
1950	Sweatt v. Painter	The Supreme Court ruled that the University of Texas failed to provide a separate but equal education for a black student, Herman Sweatt
1950	McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents	It is unconstitutional for a student to sit in a separate space as it interferes with the ability to engage in discussion and

		exchanges with other students in order to learn the profession.
1950	Bolling v. Sharpe Set in Motion	This case was consolidated with the Brown Case. The case in Washington DC was not applicable because DC did not recognize the 14 th amendment
1951	Brown v. Board of Education filed	February 28 the case was filed
1951	Davis v. Prince Edward County filed	This Virginia case was consolidated with Brown.
1951	Brown v. Board of Education to Trial	A three-judge panel attests that no discrimination exists in Kansas schools when comparing the Black schools to the White schools.
1952	Ruling of Davis v. Prince Edward County, VA District Court Ruling	Separate but equal is found to be acceptable.
1952	Bundling of Brown v. Board Cases	The Supreme Court would hear all five cases that were bundled under Brown. A separate ruling was granted in Bolling v. Sharpe due to the 14 th amendment not applying in the District of Colombia.
1953	President Eisenhower nominated Earl Warren as interim Chief Justice	Justice Warren would eventually deliver the unanimous ruling in the Brown v. Board case
1954	Supreme Court Rulings (May)	Plessy v. Ferguson is overturned. Racial segregation in the District of Colombia public schools is a violation of the fifth amendment. State sanctioned segregation in public schools was a violation of the 14 th amendment. Many southern states adopted resolutions that

		declared the Court's decision null and void.
1954	Brown II decision (May)	Desegregation of schools is ordered to all states.

Considering these historic rulings, scholars such as Urlick and Bowers (2014), Tillman (2004), and Rivera-McCutchan (2021) detailed challenges faced by Blacks for educational equity. As such, the timeline of historic events (Table 1) is foundational to the problem of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Given these rulings and court cases, the Black experience is highlighted to bring voice to academic literature regarding the complexities in equity, diversity, and inclusivity in society and education for Black Males. Secondly, the significance of a quote from Marcus Garvey that is emphasized in Charles Siefert's (1938) statement from the pamphlet, *The Negro's or Ethiopian's Contribution to Art*: "A people without knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots" (p. 31). Therefore, by bringing light to these historical rulings and past histories of the (mis)education of Negroes, I argue that providing a historical perspective of the quest for an education of marginalized people is the root that is planted in this study so that the counter-stories of Black Male Educators in school leadership provide a narrative told by Blacks as opposed to being told by oppressive regimes of structural racism.

To this point, I argue that this knowledge of past histories are societal and educational stigmas in historical context in which the term Negro, Black, and African-American has been equated with the dehumanization of marginalized people. Questions related to Blackness, inferiority, and subjugation have been written and examined through metaphorical analysis from poets such as Angelou (1969) and developed in works from poets such as Ebo (1994). Such literary works (Figure 4) are evocative in drawing imagery of blackness to the study that helps

define the racial discourse to give humanizing knowledge to minority groups (Genao & Mercedes, 2021).

Figure 4

Poem Lord, why did you make me Black

Poem of Reflection by RuNett Nia Ebo (1996)

Lord, why did you make me Black

Lord, Lord,

Why did You make me Black?
Why did You make me someone
The world wants to hold back?

Black is the color of ***** clothes;
The color of grimy hands and feet.
Black is the color of darkness;
The color of tire-beaten streets.

Why did you give me thick lips,
A broad nose and ***** hair?
Why did You make me someone
Who receives the hatred stare?

Black is the color of a bruised eye
When somebody gets hurt.
Black is the color of darkness.
Black is the color of dirt.
How come my bone structure's so thick;
my hips and cheeks are high?
How come my eyes are brown
and not the color of the daylight sky?

Why do people think I'm useless?
How come I feel so used?
Why do some people see my skin and think I should be abused?

Lord, I just don't understand;
What is it about my skin?
Why do some people want to hate me

And not know the person within?

Black is what people are "listed",
When others want to keep them away.
Black is the color of shadows cast.
Black is the end of the day.

Lord, You know, my own people mistreat me;
And I know this just isn't right.
They don't like my hair or the way I look
They say I'm too dark or too light.

Lord, Don't You think it's time
For You to make a change?
Why don't You re-do creation
And make everyone the same?

(God answered)

Why did I make you black?
Why did I make you black?

Get off your knees and look around.
Tell Me, what do you see?
I didn't make you in the image of darkness.
I made you in the Likeness of ME!

I made you the color of coal
From which beautiful diamonds are formed.
I made you the color of oil,
The black-gold that keeps people warm.

I made you from the rich, dark earth
That can grow the food you need.
Your color's the same as the panther's
Known for (HER) beauty and speed.

Your color's the same as the Black stallion,
A majestic animal is he.
I didn't make you in the Image of darkness

I made you in the Likeness of Me!

All the colors of a Heavenly Rainbow
Can be found throughout every nation;
And when all those colors were blended well,
YOU BECAME MY GREATEST CREATION.

Your hair is the texture of lamb's wool
Such a humble, little creature is he.
I am the Shepherd who watches them.
I am the One who will watch over thee.

You are the color of midnight-sky,
I put the stars' glitter in your eyes.
There's a smile hidden behind your pain
That's the reason your cheeks are high.

You are the color of dark clouds formed
when I send My strongest weather.
I made your lips full so when you kiss
the one you love they will remember.

Your stature is strong; your bone structure, thick
to withstand the burdens of time.
The reflection you see in the mirror...
The Image looking back at you is **MINE!**

When considering the works of Angelou (1969) and Ebo (1994) the question of blackness permeates in this study and gives identity (Omi & Winant, 1993) to Blacks, not as a problem, but as a reflection of a spiritual awakening of acceptance of self. To this point, this spiritual awakening in which the Sovereignty of God by Pink (2016, p. 76) responds to the great purpose for which the world and the human race was created found in Proverbs 16:4, that state, “The Lord hath made all things for Himself” and in Revelations 4:11 state, “Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.” To this point, all things were created,

and the acceptance of self and this basic truth manifest in reflective imagery of Blackness in which poet Mychal Wynn (2020) penned:

I am the Black Child

I am special, ridicule cannot sway me

I am strong, obstacles cannot stop me

I hold my head high, proudly proclaiming my uniqueness

I hold my pace, continuing forward through adversity

I am proud of my heritage

I am confident that I can achieve my every goal

I am becoming all that I can be

I am the Black Child

I am a Child of God

Based on these spiritual reckonings and poetic descriptions, studying the phenomenon of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership is predicated on the stories and lived experiences of Black Male Educators reduction of dissonance and revelation of confidence.

Purpose of the Study

“If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life.

With confidence, you have won even before you have started.”

Marcus Garvey (Jamaican Political Activist)

Given the above quote and spiritual and poetic text, Black Male Educators in school leadership is the focus of this study, which seeks to delve into the lived experiences of Black Males and their journey towards school leadership. As such, the purpose of this study is to explore this phenomenon and examine Black Male Educators in their journey towards school leadership. I argue that the degree of confidence in which Marcus Garvey wrote is perhaps a tool

which Black Males embrace to navigate the educational system in which very few Black Males are represented.

Some research has focused on the role of Black Males as teachers and their impact on student achievement, other research has focused on Black Male Educators leading Urban schools, and some research has focused on Black Male teachers and leadership preparation programs. Although this literature is useful, it is outside of the scope of examining the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership in which there is a staggering disproportionate underrepresentation.

A secondary purpose of this study is to consider the framing of Intersectionality through a post-structuralist lens that by itself cannot move forward in the academic literature, and in the world of practice with buried and disregarded Black positionalities and perspectives. That is, the question of disproportionality and underrepresentation speaks to micropolitics of “fit” within the normative Eurocentric and managerial climate (Tooms et al., 2010), and the need for a post-structural analysis of the multiple related constructs and can offer insight on this phenomenon. Given this positionality, the history of Black education moves beyond enlightenment, allowing the nature of truth and experiences from a post-structuralist (Fox, 2014) view to challenge the dominant archetype.

With many ethnic identities to consider, in this research, “Black,” “BIPOC,” and “African-American” will be Black Male Educators whose self-identification is of African-American diaspora. The ethnicities to include Caribbean, Haitian, and Jamaican will be considered of African ancestry for the purpose of this study and not separated as a sub-group.

Central Research Question

“In a bull fight after being brutalized while making innumerable charges at the movement of a cape, there comes a time when the bull finally turns and faces his adversary with the only movement being his heaving bloody sides. It is believed that for the first time, he really sees the matador.

This final confrontation is known as the moment of truth.”

Excerpt by Bobby E. Wright from *The Psychopathic Racial Personality* (1975 p. 3)

This excerpt that has been rephrased in writings from Dr. Maulana Karenga (1993 p. 463) considers the urgency in which the future of Black people is at a crossroads of past behaviors (innumerable charges at the movement of the cape) and present truths (bloody sides). As such, the metaphor of the bull represents Black Americans at the crossroads facing an adversary of destruction. This crossroads in which Karenga (1993) conceptualizes as an educational culture change and the self-development of Blacks to be independent thinkers and liberators in a white system of education, provides a nuanced concept of the exploration of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership. As such, this study of Black Male Educators in school leadership is open to an examination in a plethora of ways based on the “bull” metaphor. Yet, this study of this phenomenon is explored with a narrow focus to explore the “brutality” in which the “bull” endured through the “matador” of a social system of epistemic injustice to identify the central research question in which a “bloody” past raises awareness to “finally confronting the truth.” This truth, which is reflective in the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership offers a means for exploring what is known and unknown of the “cape of the matador” that has carefully and strategically evaded the “bull” from achieving positions as a school leader. These stories, told through phenomenological research methods, explore the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership, as a means to refute the negative characteristics and stereotypes that have been historically associated with Blacks inferior and ignorant portrayal (Punch & Oancea, 2014).

To this point, given the historic context of racism, bias, and inequality towards Blacks, the central research questions seek to explore the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership and examine these stories to shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership from the perspective of Black Males. Given this context, these stories seek to disrupt the narratives told by colonizing forces such as neo-liberalism, managerialism, and structural racism that have often whitewashed their stories, or not even spoken of them. Sub questions to the central research question will explore equity, diversity, and inclusivity in the current educational system and the impact on Black Males journey towards K-12 school leadership. In short, what are the lived experiences of Black Male Educators on their journey towards K-12 school leadership and how do these experiences and perspectives inform an understanding of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

To this point, while in New York, abolitionist and orator, Frederick Douglas (1857) delivered a speech that coined the phrase, “If there is no struggle, there is no progress.” I argue that the voices of Black Male Educators and the historic actions to dismantle racism amplified in the struggle for educational equity is instrumental in the progress of this minority group as their past, present, and future experiences are emancipated through this study. As such, the central research question underpins the purpose of this study to not only emancipate the voices and experiences of the study participants, but I argue to liberate other Black Males who may have been silenced by historical conditioning of Blacks.

Considering this central research question, several ancillary questions emerge to help further educational scholarship on the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Given the metaphor of the bull and the matador, what are the societal and educational

adversaries that cause the staggering gaps in the percentages of BIPOC individuals who lead schools? How can the lived experiences of the participants in the study contribute to an additional understanding of this phenomenon? In other words, an authentic understanding of the experiences of Black Male Educators is necessary to guide scholarly discussion on an otherwise muted vantage point. Given this, activist and feminist, Audre Lorde (1984) quoted, “*Your silence will not protect you.*” The use of this quote as it relates to the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership removes the silence of the perspective of this marginalized group and gives a space for their stories and perspectives to be amplified to contribute to scholarly discussion that offers an understanding of this phenomenon. Further, the lived experience and voices of Black Male Educators is a platform to give voice to and emancipate the knowledge of this group so that their stories and experiences anchor future research on the exploration of the phenomenon of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership?

Given this explanation of the purpose of exploring this phenomenon, I will use several research questions as a guide to understand the participants lived experiences in their journey towards school leadership. As a way to gain an understanding of the phenomenon, qualitative researchers use questions that prompt a response from the participants and explore behaviors and settings as a means to approach the phenomenon and uncover complex interactions in time and space (Glesne & Peshkin (1992 p. 7). More specifically, I draw from the phenomenological research tradition due to its focus on explicating the lived experiences of the research subjects.

Through this liberating experience as a researcher, I became the main instrument to ask questions and interact with the participants through a focused means of being open to the nature of discovery through the interview. Through this liberation, I remained connected to the

academic structure of conducting an interview, yet I used the concept of prompts for the sub-questions instead of a rigid protocol. By doing this, instead of numerical questions that offer an order, I prompted the participants and allowed for the free flow of information to unfold in the response so that the participants explanation was not in a quantitative order. To this point, to keep the interview from running afoul, the linear protocol used, was modified so that scaffolding of the sub-questions leveraged the process to ensure that the participant's lived experiences were not quantified, but explored and explicated.

Research Question and Sub-Questions

**“It is not the answer that enlightens, but the question.”
Romanian-French Playwright, Eugène Ionesco in *Découvertes* (1970) Quoted in *Choosing the Future: The Power of Strategic Thinking* (1977 p. 15)**

**“The key to wisdom is this – constant and frequent questioning, for by doubting we are led to question, by questioning we arrive at the truth.”
Philosopher, Peter Abélard (retrieved September 2022)**

Questioning is a process in which I argue each quote enlightens and allows for truth to be derived. As such, as part of gaining an understanding of this phenomenon, sub-questions are embedded in the interview as prompts to conceptualize the phenomenon of this study. The prompts explored are designed to validate the participants sphere of experience and ensure that the participant's lived experience is accurately captured. As such, the sub-question prompts stem from the central research question. These prompts are statements to support the central research question of: What are the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in their journey towards school leadership? How can these experiences shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership?

As such, the framework of phenomenology is a focused means for understanding the individual's lived experiences thereby identifying poignant moments and events in shaping these

experiences (Clandinin, 2006; Connell & Clandinin, 1990; Haydon et al., 2018; Karpa, 2021; McCabe & Van de Mierop, 2001; Penner & McClement, 2008; Qutoshi, 2018). A phenomenological study is a process by which I as a phenomenologist, identify a process of interviewing participants, yet I acknowledge that participants are human subjects. As such, an authentic understanding of the lived experiences from the human subject are concerned with the content of consciousness. Given this philosophical framing, the open-ended questions and prompts in this study are intended to navigate through the participant's experiences and allow for the emergent experience of the subject to foreground a personal experience that is boundless yet structured to understand the phenomenon.

Theoretical Framework

**"For while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard. There is not any other tale to tell, it's the only light we've got in all this darkness."
James Baldwin (Sonny's Blues)**

Considering the above quote from writer, James Baldwin, tales should be told that shed light on a phenomenon - in this study, the phenomenon of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Given this focus, Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 2006 & 2015), a term coined more than thirty years ago by scholar and feminist Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, provides a focused lens to anchor this study. The concept of Intersectionality, whose origin is rooted in the disadvantages faced by Black women in law and civil discourse (Edwards, 2022; Sircar, 2022) is an appropriate theoretical anchor to the study. Intersectionality provides a focused way of framing this study through race and gender in which this theory not only impacts females but impacts Black Males in the current anti-black society.

As such, emerging tensions of Intersectionality are evident in professional norms that seek to maintain sameness of identities to the white-male middle class archetypes (Edwards,

2022). Based on these archetypes, the experiences and perspectives of marginalized groups involve systemic oppression and inequalities that are connected through power dynamics of socially constructed structures (Velez & Spencer, 2021; Robey, 2020). As a product of the history of education written and actualized from a managerial, hegemonic, and white male perspective, the intersubjective agreement of those in power has create a normative structure which is nonadaptable, “designed to perfect their existing practices and standard operating procedures” (Skrtic et al., 1996, p. 145).

Moreover, I apply the concept of Intersectionality through a poststructuralist lens deconstructing and challenging the intersubjective norms of the field. Specifically, I draw together perspectives from the History of Black Education, the Colonization of educational leadership, and Critical Race Theory as analytic tools designed to more substantively explore the field’s embedded normative structures to reveal the hegemonic patterns of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership. Taken together these theories offer a means of framing the phenomenon of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership, highlighting the normative Eurocentric, hegemonic, and neo-managerial basis of the traditional educational leadership paradigm.

Given this structure, Intersectionality plays a significant role in opportunities for Black Males who may be impacted by power dynamics of a patriarchal regime. Given Intersectionality takes into account overlapping identities, the complexity of Black and Male are identities that are explored in this phenomenon in which I submit that Black Males face prejudices. As such, the intersecting factors that empower and oppress Black Males are factors such as race and gender. Inspirational speaker, Audre Lorde’s (1977) speech, “The Transformation” that was delivered at the Lesbian and Literature panel of the Modern Language Association meeting includes this

excerpt: “I have come to believe over and over again, that what is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal, and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood.” In addition to this poetic statement that conceptualizes the theoretical lens of Intersectionality by Crenshaw (1991). Nallari (2011) states in a script on Intersectionality, “Intersectionality asks us to examine the places where we are marginalized but it also demands that we examine how and why those of us who are marginalized can in turn exercise marginalization over others. It demands that we do better by one another so that we can be more powerful together.” (p.2) Crenshaw’s examination of Intersectionality is a way of thinking about identity and its relationship to power. Given this framing, Intersectionality offers a focused way of understanding the identities of Black Male Educators and how power dynamics of a white normative rational order is a pattern of oppression that explicitly intersect and interjects exclusionary practices for Black Males. As such, through this existing framework, discriminatory practices and experiences is front and center to the struggle against patriarchy and racism.

Lee (2012) framed Intersectionality as a valuable tool to understand discrimination and disadvantage in public relations. Further, Lee (2012) cited Collins (1990) and Crenshaw (1991) in that Intersectionality explores contextual dynamics of power that address structural disadvantages that are not captured by inequalities. Given this framing of the theoretical lens of Intersectionality, Carastathis (2014) advanced this theory through the conceptualization of systems of oppression, which is not a singular binary process, but a convergence of an integration of race, gender, and power.

Given the above, consideration is given to the theoretical lens of Intersectionality, although this lens is known in feminist movements, I apply Intersectionality to the exploration of this phenomenon of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership. I argue

that a co-construct of oppressive power dynamics that impact the women's movement is tied into the exploration of similar oppressive dynamics towards Black Males by the matrix of domination of white males. Folklorist and author, Zora Neal Hurston penned the literary work from *How it Feels to be Colored* (1925 p. 29), "Sometimes, I feel discriminated against, but it does not make me angry. It merely astonishes me." Similarly, to Hurston, the discriminatory actions towards Blacks and the thread of Intersectionality through this study is a theoretical lens that anchors the often hidden and obscured stories of societal and educational inequality towards Blacks in an unflinching way.

Based on the phenomenon being studied, I explore how Intersectionality is manifested in educational leadership that has been co-opted by colonialism that can be seen in everyday schooling through a form of institutional and structural racism which is an explicit element of the colonizing forces which Intersectionality explores. To this point, Sircar (2022, p. 903) submits that, "Intersectionality can be and must be put to more imaginative use in spatiotemporal settings that are far removed from its' moment and first inception." Given this, I argue that Intersectionality as a theoretical framework to this phenomenological study of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership provides an interpretive lens in illuminating the voices from the field of Black Male school leaders. As such, poet Cleo Wade (2018 p. 122) provided imagery to causes of when one hears, listens, and sees the world through learning.

**what to do with what we learn
by Cleo Wade**

I did not come
into this room
to see the world
through your eyes
I cannot do that

I came here
 to listen
 not merely
 with my ears
 but with
 my heart
 tell me your
 story
 and may
 I leave
 Loving more
 and knowing better
 may I leave here
 carrying you in my spirit
 as I walk out of
 this room
 and into
 another

Given this, I argue that Intersectionality provides a lens to see, hear, and listen to defined moments of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership and their perspectives. Further, I argue the framework of Intersectionality is part of a shared community of Black Male Educator's reality and the commonality of their experiences through a shared existence of being both Black and Male.

Based on the underpinning of the theoretical lens of Intersectionality through a post-structuralist framing, I additionally embed Critical Race Theory to focus the perspective of Black Male Educators by examining issues of race from a critical perspective – that is an exploration of racism as embedded in our organizational and social structures. Taken together with the history of education from the black experience, colonialization, and Critical Race Theory, these frameworks were further explored in this study to ground the phenomenon of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

Significance of the Study

Given the above, the history of racism and oppressive actions towards Blacks, is a foundational cause of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership as compared to white male school leaders (Bass & Alston, 2018; Gooden, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Henderson, 2015; Turner & Graverholz, 2017; Khalifa, 2012; Tooms et al., 2009; Young & Laible, 2000). As such, this study will provide a counter-narrative to the history of education to reflect the Black Male perspective. This study will incorporate the Black Males' journey towards K-12 school leadership for the purpose of informing practices that embed equity, diversity, and inclusivity of Black Males in leadership positions.

I argue, as more research on Black Males in school leadership emerge, this study serves as an anchor and a mechanism of change to bring about social justice actions to advance future studies of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership in which there is a disproportionate underrepresentation in K-12 education (Palmer & Louis, 2017; Shields & Hesbol, 2019; Thompson & Thompson, 2018). Considering the focus of this study was aimed at Black Male Educators in school leadership, additionally, this study can serve as a voice for equity, diversity, and inclusivity in multiple ways. First, it contributes to scholarly discussions regarding Black Male Educators in school leadership that is a change in basic assumptions of the white male middle-class stereotype of school leaders. Second, this study adds to academic research for social justice factors that perpetuate coloniality towards marginalized people and offer an exploration to dismantling colonial structures in K-12 schools. Third, this scholarship transitions theory into practice for a more equitable workforce.

Published in 1978, author Maya Angelou wrote "Still I Rise." This literary work is esteemed as a triumphant declaration to rise and overcome any negative stereotypes and

conditioning that seeks to silence the voice of Blacks. As such, I argue that this literary work supports the emancipation of Black Males in school leadership as the stories of their journey towards school leadership is significant and a personal declaration of “rising” from an oppressive past to present opportunity of educational progress as a K-12 school leader.

Still I Rise

You may write me down in history

With your bitter, twisted lies,

You may trod me in the very dirt,

But still, like dust, I'll rise

Does my sassiness upset you?

Why are you beset with gloom

'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells

Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,

With certain tides

Just like hopes springing high,

Still I'll rise

Did you want to see me broken?

Bowed head and lowered eyes?

Shoulders falling down like teardrops,

Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?

Don't you take it awful hard

'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines

Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,

You may cut me with your eyes,

You may kill me with your hatefulness,

But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?

Does it come as a surprise

That I dance like I've got diamonds

At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame

I rise

Up from a past that's rooted in pain

I rise

I'm black ocean, leaping and wide,

Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear

I rise

Into daybreak that's wondrously clear

I rise

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,

I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

I rise

I rise

I rise.

Taken together with graphic, artistic, lyrical, and poetic expression, I argue that the significance of this study as penned by Angelou's "Still I Rise" is a redemption of historic treatment faced by Blacks. To this point, this study explored a heuristic phenomenon of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership that was used to gain an understanding to of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership which is part of the central research question.

I argue that the nature of marginalized people's rejection of systems of racism are conceptualized as a significance of this study based on the history of education from the Black experiences that are presented in this study. To this point, the significance of this study is a "call to action" for other Black Male Educators to rise above normative systems of oppression, coloniality, and mindful conditioning, to recognize a past truth, but to move forward amid the stripes of injustice to inform policy in hiring practices, challenge leadership preparation

programs, and to contribute to scholarly writings from the lived experiences and perspectives of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

Definition of Terms

Throughout this study of the lived experiences of Black Males in school leadership, several terms emerged in the literature. Each term, while significant in and of itself, will be referenced in the study. However, the terms will not be overly analyzed in the exploration of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. By offering complimentary vocabulary, these terms, taken from an internet-based anti-racist vocabulary, promote a better understanding of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators by creating and defining common vocabulary to promote verbiage for justice and racial equity.

To this point, as I highlight language that tends to be discriminatory, it is critical to include this language within this discourse to enhance the conversation and to provide a common contextual language that is documented in historical literature, art, and poetry. Further, the deliberate use of such terms is not intended to cause confusion, hostility, or controversy, however, the terms are intended to evoke emotions so that the Black experiences and perspective of Negroes, Blacks, or African-Americans are more fully captured in this study. Below is an anti-racist glossary that was adapted from a larger and more comprehensive list at racialequitytools.org (2013).

Anti-Racist Glossary

Anti-racism is the practice of actively opposing racism in all aspects of life. This includes politics, economics, culture, and society.

Anti-racist: A person who actively practices anti-racism.

Ally: A person who makes an intentional decision to understand, empathize, and act in support of others. **Allyship** is not an identity. It is a lifelong journey of commitment and practice.

Allyship is an informed, consistent, and empathetic practice to uphold a culture of inclusion.

BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The term is intended to acknowledge that not all people of color (POC) face the same levels of injustice. By listing out Black and Indigenous, the term emphasizes that people from these specific communities face different, and often more severe, forms of injustice and oppression. Some members of racial and ethnic communities oppose the use of this term as it suggests a uniform experience among all people who are not white and perpetuates the belief that people who are not white are intrinsically different or alien.

Black Lives Matter is an international movement formed to address systemic racism and violence against Black people. The Black Lives Matter Global Network was founded in 2013 after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin.

Institutional racism is defined as racist policies and practices built into organizations and institutions, such as schools, the legal system, and law enforcement.

Intersectionality recognizes that identity markers such as race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, and religion, do not exist independently of each other. Each of us has a myriad of identities, and those identities overlap and intersect in dynamic ways. The effects of bias, prejudice, and disadvantages may be compounded by overlapping identities. Understanding intersectionality is to understand the variety of privileges and/or forms of oppression that one may experience simultaneously at any given time.

Micromessages are small, subtle messages we send and receive verbally and non-verbally. They can be negative or positive. **Microaggressions** are negative and can cause exclusion, while **microaffirmations** are positive and can encourage feelings of inclusion.

Privilege is the set of advantages, entitlements, and benefits granted only to a person or group of people exercised to the exclusion or detriment of others. Some who experience such privilege do so without being aware of the discrepancies in experiences, access, or opportunities.

Systemic racism, sometimes referred to as structural racism, encompasses the overarching system of racial bias across all aspects of our society, including history, culture, politics, and economics. All other types of racism, such as interpersonal and institutional racism, emerge from systemic racism. For example, redlining was a system that limited Black people's access to home ownership, locking them out of a major pathway to wealth—an economic disadvantage that can take generations to dissipate.

Unconscious bias, or **implicit bias**, is a preference for or against a person or group that one is not aware of having, but nevertheless is communicated through language and behavior. We can counteract and mitigate our unconscious biases by recognizing how they affect others and making the effort to change our language and behavior.

White privilege is the unearned set of advantages, entitlements, and benefits granted specifically to white people over other racial groups, which is reinforced throughout many societal structures

Organization of the Study

This study is organized to embed poems, orations, images, and literature to immerse the reader in evocative story telling in which mere academic treatment can obscure. APA formatting guidelines don't provide adequate guidance for capturing the power of these evocative forms of knowledge and as such I take some creative and intellectual liberties in presenting these forms of

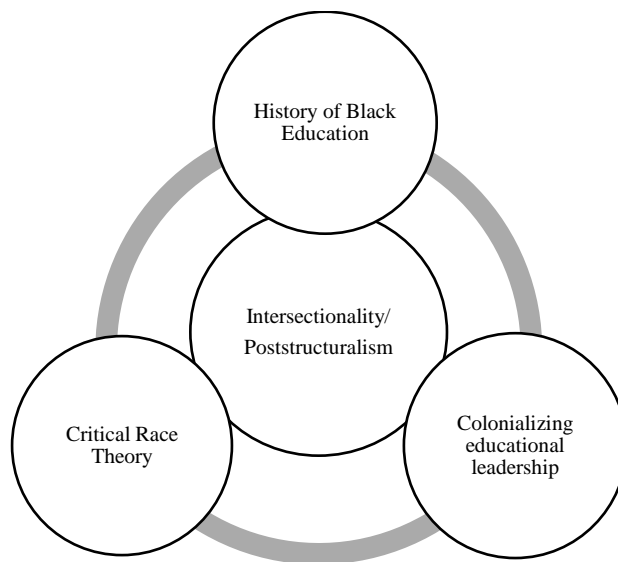
cultural knowledge outside of strict APA standards. The study will explore the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership through a phenomenological approach to understand the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership through the lived experiences, voices, and perspectives of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL, EMPIRICAL, AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

***“Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever.
For the yearning for freedom eventually manifests itself.”***
Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., *Letters from a Birmingham Jail*,

The above quote from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., which was written while being imprisoned, provides an opening statement in seeking emancipation from oppression from a dominant majority. As such, the concept of not remaining oppressed forever is foundational to the purpose of this study. Grounded in this outlook, the purpose of this study is to advance the field’s understanding of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership through the voices, lived experiences, and counter-narratives of those who directly experience this phenomenon, which is Black Male Educators in school leadership, and to prompt greater discourse, discovery, praxis, and transformation of the ideology of the construct of educational leadership.

Three key experiential themes anchor this study of the lived experience of Black Male Educators in school leadership. These are a) the history of Black Education, b) Colonialization of Education Leadership and c) Critical Race Theory. I use Intersectionality and post-structuralism as a unifying framework (Figure 5); as a means of drawing the related theories together for the exploration of this phenomenon in which race and gender shape the phenomenon being investigated (Carastathis, 2008, 2014; Crenshaw, 2006, 2015; Fuller et al., 2019; Nash, 2008; Niesche, 2011; Olssen, 2002; Peters & Nash, 2021; Velez & Spencer, 2018).

Figure 5*Framework for the Study***Intersectionality and Post-Structuralism**

Here, intersectionality and poststructuralism (Dillet, 2017; MacKenzie & Porter, 2017; Pramanik, 2015) offer a means of identifying the hegemonic structures embedded in the intersubjective and normative practices that have dominated the field of educational leadership that privilege some while marginalizing others. These structures represent systems of oppression that are at the heart of discriminatory actions faced by Blacks. As briefly discussed above, the disproportionality and underrepresentation of Black males in school leadership speaks to the micropolitics of “fit” within the normative Eurocentric and managerial educational climate (Tooms et al., 2010). In this way, this central element of the framework opens greater possibilities for explicating this phenomenon. To further this point, Woodson (1933) wrote “...the Negro cannot develop sufficiently...” (p.65) due to what he called a capitalist impossibility of the Negro, that is a history that discredits the Negro as a capable person and an

educational system that has relegated them to subordinate roles and is designed to subjugate. This distorted history of Black people has caused “the neglect of Afro-American history and distortion of the facts concerning Negroes in most history books, deprived the black child and his whole race of a heritage, and relegated him to nothingness and nobodiness” (Woodson, 19, p. 8). Moreover, this carefully curated and hegemonically motivated history is specifically designed to replicated itself and reproduce inequity and subordination. W.E.B. Dubois (1903) further explored the existence of the Negro when stating, “the existence of Black people in America has been viewed as a problem.” (p.7) Dubois (1903) questioned humanity when he took exception in asking “How does it feel to be a problem?” Such questioning applied to Black males are reflective in the historical continuum of the lives of Black Males in America (hooks, 2004; Neal, 2005; Reese, 2004).

While each of these scholars examined the plight of Black men in America and argued for genuine equality, throughout history, the quest for equity, diversity, and inclusivity in society and education for Blacks and more specifically Black Males, have been rivaled with statutes and laws. These documents that prohibited equality were written in American history by white males in which equality and humanity of Blacks have been questioned (Harman et al., 2020) and the creation of an understanding of unity is met with resistance. Given the historic and epistemic violence (Galtung, 1969; Teo, 2010) towards Blacks in their pursuit of freedom and equality in society and education, both in the United States and in the Eastern world, an essential element that is often glossed over as it relates to colonialization, is the notion of education being an industrialized system (e.g., Mann 1891;Warder, 2015), the historical perspective of the struggles of Blacks in both society and in education (e.g., Anderson, 1988; Gooden 2012), and how these

manifest themselves in the inequalities faced by Negroes that prohibited them from receiving an equitable education (e.g. Maroto & Pettinicchio, 2022; Noguera 2017).

This historically rooted conceptualization of learning and education as being only reserved for whites (Smith, 2021) infiltrated the public education system prior to and including the “separate but equal” Jim Crow era (Borosan 2017; Gooden 2012) and has served as a form of systemic and epistemic violence (e.g., Galtung, 1969; Spivak 2015; Teo, 2010) that is manifested in the hostile subjugation of the knowledge and legitimacy of the “other” as a means of domination. Here the term *violence* is used to highlight that structures that perpetuate inequity and social injustice can be understood as a form of violence (Galtung, 1969), that is the hostile denial of the basic human right of knowledge and legitimacy. The dominance of a normative white Eurocentric perspective as the foundation upon which all other knowledge claims are assessed, “turns all others into bit players or loiterers without intent on the stage of the world history, either too lazy to do anything ourselves or always late and running behind to catch up with Western modernity” (Martin & Dowson, 2009; Pillay, 2015, para. 11).

Such legalities that perpetrated segregation continued in the praxis of dysfunctions for Black people. Thus, based on these rulings and laws, Blacks faced an overt and covert education system that lacks cultural relevance, demonstrates racism and bias, and omits the perspective of Black people’s quest to learn and know (e.g., Bell, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1992; 1995). Given this long history of racism that foregrounds contemporary work in education, the theories explored here help penetrate a colonized and violent history towards marginalized people. As such the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership exist. Similarly, as Washington (1908) and Woodson (1933) shared in their experiences from the coal

mines to college, so must the voices of the Black Male Educator's experiences towards school leadership be embedded in scholarship. I argue that these stories must be told.

I ascribe that these perspectives of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators amplify a counternarrative to the dominant paradigm and each story will contain the antecedent to bias and prejudice based on deficit views of black men. Through this, the experiences of Black Males in school leadership will no longer be exclusionary, but will contain meaning and understanding for equity, diversity, and inclusivity to create a more ethical and diverse perspective of truth from Black Males in the field of education.

In this chapter, I review literature for the purpose of analyzing the phenomenon of Black Male Educators in school leadership to add to the educational literature and research related to the underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership. Using phenomenology, I seek to amplify the voices, perspectives, and experiences in school leadership by both being Black and Male. I also take position that due to historic inequalities in education, the history of social justice and racism in educational laws and Supreme Court decisions contribute to the underrepresentation of Black Males in the teaching profession which may directly correlate with percentages of Black Males in K-12 school leadership (Fant, 2017; Dimock, 2007).

With K-12 education understood to be female and white (Hollingsworth & Dude, 2009; Lanier et al., 2022; Terosky, 2013), I ascribe that the phenomenon of Black Male Educators in school leadership is an essential contribution to the literature. As such, highlighting and amplifying the voices and viewpoints of Black Male Educators speaks to the rationale of why studying Black Male Educators in school leadership is important. Given this viewpoint, this study is intended to contribute to the academic literature of the perspectives of Black Male Educators in school leadership. As such, because of the paucity of literature on the lived

experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership, the benefits of exploring this underrepresented group will seek to decrease the stereotypical literature, images, and writings of Blacks often created from a white perspective.

Lastly, while there is rich literature on Black Male Educators in the teaching capacity and their impact on Black students, urban education and literature surfacing to assist white teachers in preparation programs for teaching in urban schools, to focus solely on this aspect diminishes the perspective of Black Male Educators in school leadership (Browne-Ferrigno, 2011; Carpenter & Diem, 2013; Ford et al., 2020; Hampton et al., 2008; Schaffer et al., 2014; Williams & Loeb, 2012). Similarly, as research on urban education is reflective of studies regarding the appointment of Black school leaders, the sphere of urban education reflects a prism of research that is not intended to be the cornerstone of this research (Milner, 2008; Milner & Howard, 2004; Milner & Lomotey, 2013). Therefore, much of the literature will focus on the plight of Negroes, Blacks, African-Americans [Males] in a historical continuum that will provide major points of emphasis of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership through the lived experiences of Black Males.

Based on the above, first, I will examine the history of education through the Negro experience. I will examine the education of Blacks through a history that contained physical and epistemic violence that foregrounds the phenomenon of the underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. I argue that through examining this history of the complexities of the quest for educational equality for the Negro and the impact in which the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision of *Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* has had on educational equality, a chronology will be revealed that may have been ignored but is evident in an unflinching way of framing this phenomenon. Then, I will examine colonialism of

educational leadership. Some have argued that leadership has been co-opted by colonialism that can be seen in everyday schooling. However, a form of institutional and structural racism is an explicit element of the colonizing forces. Taken together with the theoretical framework from historian and philosopher, Michel Foucault, coloniality concerns are particularly relational with human sciences to be more dyadic than reductive (Alcoff, 2008; Castro-Gómez et al., 2021). Finally, I will examine the literature on Critical Race Theory that offers a focused lens for examining the issues of race from a critical perspective - the voice, experiences, and perspectives of Black Males in school leadership. This is an exploration of racism as embedded in our organizational and social structures that lead to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

History of Education: The Black Experience

“To bring the two races together in the social intimacy of a classroom will not come easily to the South. This newspaper, as its readers know, believes in segregated schools. We believe also in abiding by the law. However, if the court would consent to a more moderate program of integration, the prospect of preserving public education in the South would be immeasurably improved...But the court should not misunderstand or underestimate the depth of resentment this opinion will create among a people who feel they have been wrongly imposed upon.”

Richmond News Leader (1973)

The above statement comes from an article in the *Richmond News Leader* newspaper cited by Pratt (1992 p. 3) in *The Color of Their Skin: Education and Race in Richmond Virginia 1954-89* as documentation of the history of public education and the complications of equity in schools. Given the origins of public schooling under the American democracy and the establishment of “common schools” promoted by reformers for the purpose of promoting cohesion across social classes (Kober et al., 2020) this documentation highlights the mass resistance of educational equality enforced by whites towards Blacks. To this point, the history of the United States as it relates to the education of schooling has been a contortion of stories

based on the white perspective and written from the perspective of whites that negated the experiences of Negroes.

Public schools, since Horace Mann, were designed as an industrialized conglomeration to prepare whites for factory work. Although the history of schooling is reflective of the one-room schoolhouse to civilize immigrants, this schooling was deemed proper for the wealthy. However, the education of the Negro (African-Americans or Blacks was not the term used during this historical time) was met by resistance, chaos, and violence. Between 1861 and 1876, former enslaved Africans were insistent on receiving an education (Aguayo, 2018; Ward & Robinson, 2017). Along this historical timeline, blacks were aided in the pursuit of educating their own through the assistance of Northern White missionaries. These missionaries assisted southern blacks in building schools, hiring teachers, and securing textbooks. However, the response to the demand for access to education since the collapse of slavery was violent. Incendiarism, murder, and intimidation were commonplace. Negroes suffered at the hands of Whites for racial justice in education through the burning of schools (Figure 1) and other insidious behaviors of whites who were against the education of Negroes. Boundaries that existed between freed Blacks and whites was indicative of the racial divide that encompassed the hatred of Negroes and their pursuit towards an education. However, several schools survived many heinous acts so that Negro students, Negro teachers, and Negro leaders eventually were educated in Black schools. Although literature of the time represented Negroes in a derogatory manner (Figure 2), Blacks continued to thrive in education and in society amid racial injustices, slurs, and violence.

Negroes fought for educational justice amid a violent history. Nearly one hundred years after the Civil War of 1861-1865, in 1954, a landmark decision was made. The historic ruling of *Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* ruled that the United States laws of

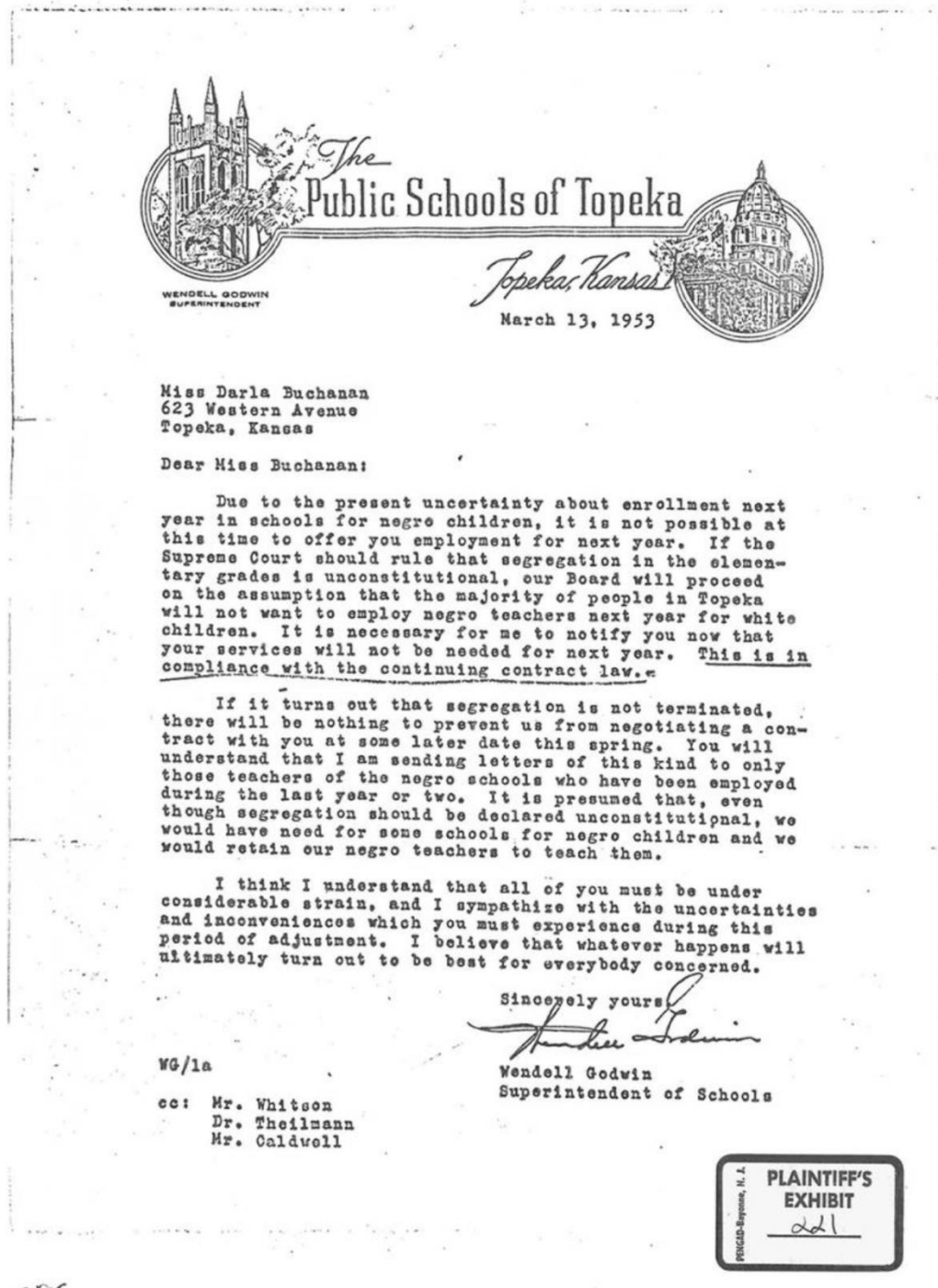
establishing racially segregated public schools was unconstitutional. Prior to the Brown decision, Negroes were educated in schools that primarily served their community. Thus, the teachers, students, and leaders of the school were members of the community in which the school was built. Black teachers, like all blacks, were considered inferior and they were not allowed to instruct white students as they were only permitted to teach in all black schools (Milner, 2008; Milner & Howard, 2004). Although integration was lawful, the consequences of the Brown ruling was detrimental to black teachers and black leaders (Newby, 1999). Tillman (2004) and Pettigrew (2021) identified the unintended consequences that was a result of the Brown decision to include the firing of highly educated Blacks and the closing of Black institutions due to the mandated integration.

Prior to the 1954 Brown decision, Blacks attended schools for Blacks. Their teachers and the school leaders were Black. These Black educators were seen as the cornerstone of the community (Tillman, 2004). The Black educators were the liaison between the Black community and the white community (Tillman, 2004; Walker, 2001). The Black educators ruled their schools with compassion and care (Bass, 2019). The Black educators in the segregated educational system not only provided the opportunity for learning, but the Black educators also brought awareness to the Black culture, Black history, and placed emphasis on the stability of the Black community (Tillman, 2004).

Bell (1980) discussed how the history of the Brown decision crippled the Black community. According to Bell, the racial inequalities that Negroes experienced from the emancipation of slavery through the 1950s permeated through the Southern states. Mass resistance to the law in 1954 also permeated the educational system. As such, Curry (2008) cited Bell's (1980) reports in his commentary on integration and segregation was that the ruling

greatly impacted the Black community. This impact was identified in research from Tillman (2004) in the 1956 Southern Manifesto which provided insight into how racism and racist decisions by the dominant white majority caused the demise of the Black educator. Social action decisions caused white educators to be subject cross-over teachers (Tillman, 2004; Young & Laible, 2000). Tillman (2004) cited Etheridge (1995) noting factors that contributed to the loss of jobs due to the Brown decision to include cross-over educators. After the court rulings and amid racial tension, these cross-over educators were assigned to teach in Black schools, yet Black educators were not offered employment (Tillman, 2004; Walker, 2001). In April of 1953, the *Topeka Daily Capital* reported a 'purge' of black teachers in anticipation of the forthcoming Supreme Court ruling (Dudziak, 1987). Highlighting the human cost of this purge of Black teachers was the letter to Miss Buchanan (Figure 6), which documents the spiraling decline of the socio-economic status of Negroes due to the loss of employment (Tillman 2004).

Figure 6

Letter to Miss Buchanan³

3 A 1953 letter from the superintendent of schools advises a black teacher that she won't be retained if segregation is ruled unconstitutional. (Records of District Courts of the United States, RG 21, NARA-Central Plains Region [Kansas City])

Pratt (1992) identified power dynamics of whites who opposed the law of integration that contributed to racial tensions faced by Black Americans after the 1954 Brown decision. Tillman (2004) noted gaps in the literature from 1954 through 1970 regarding Black school leaders that I argue are related to the gaps in educational literature regarding Black Male Educators in school leadership. Although Tillman (2004) provides evidence of the impact of integration for Black women which was job loss, little is known about the loss of jobs for Black Male Educators, particularly those in school leadership. However, Tillman (2004) cited Hooker (1971) and Coppin (1972) on a social action ruling from a claim of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) regarding the underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in schools. This claim addresses the need for Black educators to “cross-over” to white schools, similarly as white educators would “cross-over” to Black schools.

Given the need to educate students, Pratt (1992) provided documentation from Richmond, Virginia in which many white school attempted to rezone attendance lines or close rather than integrate. Pratt (1992 p. 67) inserted the 1972 decision from Judge Robert R. Merhige Jr, a United States District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia as an excerpt of this quotation indicates:

“A Board of Education simply cannot permit a segregated situation to come about and then blithely announce that for a Negro student to gain attendance at a given school all he must do is live within the school’s attendance area. To rationalize thusly is to be blinded to the realities of adult life with its prejudice and opposition to integrated housing.”

Given this racial tension of integration and power dynamics of the white majority’s resistance to the Supreme Court’s decision that determined separate schools was unconstitutional, Bell (1980), Bracy (2015), and Tillman (2004) determined that the Civil Rights Movement and Civil Rights

Activists became an impactful organization of people that led events to support and uphold the new law and offer support of transitioning Black students into schools through integration. As such, similar challenges for integration were addressed in scholarly writings from Urick and Bowers (2014), Tillman (2004), and Rivera-McCutchan (2021).

Further, through the examination of the timeline of events (Table 1) that led up to the 1954 Brown decision, this historic decision is significant in equality and fair treatment in education for minorities. Based on this equal and fair treatment for Blacks, Marcus Garvey emphasizes Charles Siefert's (1938) statement from the pamphlet, *The Negro's or Ethiopian's Contribution to Art*, as Garvey used a metaphorical analysis of Blacks with a tree. Garvey further developed this metaphor by stating that people must know their past histories in order to thrive and grow, similarly as trees must have roots that anchor their trunks and provides nourishment for growth. Therefore, I contend that educational practices and discriminatory actions that were justified for hundreds of years are a root cause of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership. This exploration of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership will provide an understanding of this disproportionate underrepresentation.

The Colonialization of Education Leadership: The Caged Bird

“We demand an end to the war against Black people. Since this country’s inception there have been named and unnamed wars on our communities. We demand an end to the criminalization, incarceration, and killing of our people.”
Movement for Black Lives, U.S.A.

There has been a long history of apartheid type violence on American soil towards Blacks (Maldonado-Torres, 2016; Steyn, 2004). This violence and the “war” in which the Black Lives Matter Movement (Chase, 2017) identify are related to injustices in society faced by Blacks. As such, colonialism and decolonization reflect concepts used by scholars and social activists to

examine racial dynamics that have been and continue to be perpetrated against minorities in an effort to postulate the dehumanization of these ethnic groups (Castro-Gomez et al., 2021; Comaroff, 2001; Gilley, 2017; Maldonado-Torres 2016). When considering the purpose of this study, coloniality, as a power structure, describes racial hierarchy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). The notion of decolonization provides a provoking lens in which inequalities and hegemonic epistemologies emerge in political literature from Africa to America (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). Similarly, the decolonization of Black people is devised to re-constitute the meaning of 'being' as a social thinker which slavery and imperialistic viewpoints dehumanized a race through a system of social order (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2009). Within the context of coloniality and decolonization Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) offered these clarifying definitions:

Colonialism: Is a historical process for the invasion, conquest, and exploitation of human resources; the patterns of power of one people over another

Decolonialization: Withdrawal of colonialism and the struggles to do so; the dismantling of the relationship between power and race. (p.187)

Given the historical reference of coloniality and decolonization, this study is grounded in this global history of racism and provides a foundational premise to the struggles of Black Males seeking social justice that has penetrated society and the education system. Further, such accounts of racial injustice and inequalities towards Blacks are embedded throughout the disciplines that confront the dehumanization of colored people. As such, Angelou (1969), penned a "coming of age" auto-biographical poem (Figure 7) in which a victim of racism and prejudice during the Civil Rights Movement, embraced the quest to prevail amid societal norms that gave the author an inferiority complex. The theme within the poem is lauded as an expression of a person struggling to overcome obstacles that prevent growth. This metaphorical analysis through

poetry conceptualizes the plight of Blacks and the racist experiences that perpetuated within the United States.

Figure 7

Poem: I know why the caged bird sings

I know why the caged bird sings

A free bird leaps on the back

Of the wind and floats downstream

Till the current ends and dips his wing

In the orange sun's rays

And dares to claim the sky.

But a BIRD that stalks down his narrow cage

Can seldom see through his bars of rage

His wings are clipped and his feet are tied

So he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill

Of things unknown but longed for still

And his tune is heard on the distant hill for

The caged bird sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze

And the trade winds soft through

The sighing trees

And the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright
Lawn and he names the sky his own.

But a caged BIRD stands on the grave of dreams
His shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
His wings are clipped and his feet are tied
So he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with
A fearful trill of things unknown
But longed for still and his
Tune is heard on the distant hill
For the caged bird sings of freedom.

To this point, Goldberg (2008) contends that the experience of racism without being racist is a liberal construct that dehumanizes marginalized people due to the privatization of organizations that can use “membership” or “private” for exclusionary practices, thus the metaphor of the caged bird exists. In the educational administration and school leadership context, neo-managerial norms are ill-equipped to hear the voices of equality in society and in education, what is seen in everyday education is metaphorically symbolic of Blacks experiencing institutional and structural racism as a caged bird. This explicit element of a “caged bird” is not merely rhetoric, but represents colonialism (Mignolo, 2007) and is present in the traditional educational leadership paradigm.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory provides a lens to understanding the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership by amplifying the voice, experiences, and perspectives of this minority group that will advance scholarly discussion of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership. The Abron-Gyaman people from the Ivory Coast (Republic of Côte d'Ivoire) recite to their village an affirmation to speak truth (Myers, 1991):

“Every word is the word;
the word is easy
and difficult.
He who would speak
must speak clearly
and must speak the truth” (p. xi)

Given this recitation to speak truth, this study will use the framework of Critical Race Theory to hear the voices from the field of Black Male Educators in school leadership and their spoken truths, perspectives, and experiences through their lived experiences in society and in the educational context.

Based on this, the history of a segregated education and whitewashed literature in academia, Critical Race Theory provides counter-narratives through the experiences of marginalized peoples, such as Black Male Educators, who disrupt and dismantle deficit thinking towards the education of Black Males. Additionally, Critical Race Theory is a lens that offers a perspective to understand the phenomenon of equity, diversity, and inclusion of Blacks in a system in which these perspectives from minorities are unearthed. Delgado and Stefancic (2001)

state, “Critical Race Theory concerns itself with studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power.” (p. 71). Through Critical Race Theory a dialogue is revealed that provides a context for Black Males to give voice to their pursuit of equity, diversity, and inclusion towards their journey into K-12 school leadership.

Ladson-Billings (2021) provides insights to what Critical Race Theory is not, providing a perspective from which all races can conceptualize this theory. To this point, Ladson-Billings offers an explanation of the principles of Critical Race Theory that identifies race as socially constructed. Taken together with the above, Ladson-Billings regards the structure of race, in which affirmative action addressed as a conduit for those of a different race, creed, or color be given the same treatment as non-Blacks. Given the above, in this section I will conceptualize Critical Race Theory and explore the tenets of Critical Race Theory to conceptualize this study through this lens.

In this section, I will provide an explanation of what Critical Race Theory is and is not and include two tenets of the framework that will conceptualize the lens in which the voice of Black Male Educators in K-12 school leadership will position itself in this work. By providing a perspective of counternarratives from BIPOC individuals, the dismantling of cultural bias (Ladson-Billings, 1995) seeks to disrupt deficit thinking towards Black males.

As such, the origin of Critical Race Theory was conceptualized under the guidance of Derrick Bell (1980) and other legal scholars in which this framework was used in legal research (Crenshaw, 1995). Decuir and Dixson (2004) derived that Critical Race Theory was in response to the failed Critical Legal Studies (CLS) of the 1970’s. Thus, Critical Race Theory is a framework that challenged race and law (Bracey, 2015).

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) introduced Critical Race Theory in education as a powerful theoretical framework in education designed to reveal the impacts of colonialism and offer counter-stories that reveal the hegemonic and systemic structures of our colonial history that are needed on the quest for educational equity (Bracey, 2015; Lynn & Adams, 2002; Lynn et al., 2013). As such, Critical Race Theory conceptualizes inequities of endemic and systemic racism that were perpetuated towards Black Americans (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Here we can see the conceptual thread from the literature on Critical Race Theory that challenged the dominant paradigm of a school leader (Crenshaw et al. 1995). Further, bringing structure to Critical Race Theory, a number of scholars have identified the foundational tenets of the theory. Here Delgado and Stefancic (2001) identified six tenets, while scholars such as Neo (2021) and Hartlep (2009) state there are five tenets or major components of Critical Race Theory.

Tenets of Critical Race Theory

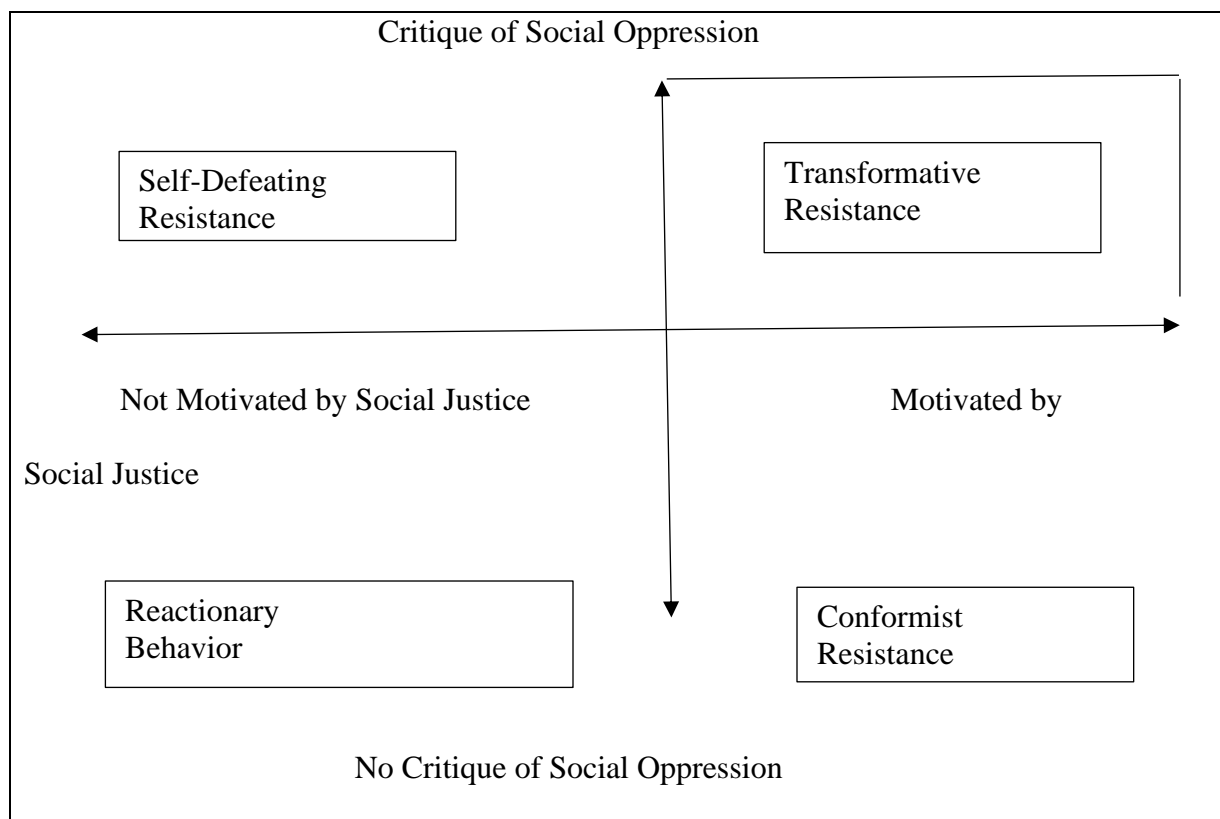
***“To be human is to have a collection of memories
that tells you who you are and how you got there.”
Rosecrans Baldwin***

Anchoring the above literary work as an alternative text to preface the tenets of Critical Race Theory, is intentional as this quote by author Rosecrans Baldwin identifies the nature of being human as a focus of this quote is on the memories that provide an insight to the existence of being human. Given the above, the tenets of Critical Race Theory support this study of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership individually and pluralistically. Taken together with Delgado and Stefancic’s (2001) six foundational tenets of the Critical Race Theory framework, the origin and history of Critical Race Theory is rich in affirmative action policies in which radical strides were made to equalize educational opportunities for minorities.

More importantly, the emergence of Critical Race Theory is helpful in illuminating educational research (Alexander, 2006) through story-telling and counter-storytelling from the perspective of the participants in this study. Given these approaches to expanding the scholarship of Critical Race Theory, this study will use Critical Race Theory to delve into the sphere of these biographical stories and take a closer look at the phenomenon that will inform the central research question. Given that Critical Race Theorists derive at the components in a varying manner, for the purpose of this paper, I will focus on counter-story telling and experiential knowledge in examining the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership to shed light on what can each story tell about the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership through the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

Counter-storytelling and Experiential Knowledge

The counter-stories of Black male teacher candidates in white programs have been gathered by several researchers including Sleeter (2017) who cite Amos (2016) research with four teacher candidates of color. In Amos's research, isolation, and the feeling of being described in curricula and data analysis as "other" suggest the experiences of these teacher candidates. This research is not intended to minimize the research of black male teacher candidates, but on the contrary, to provide an insight into racism and challenges when attempting to offer a minority perspective (Sleeter, 2017). Further, Martinez (2020) used Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) concept of resistance (Solórzano & Bernal, 2001) in which the four-quadrant critique of social oppression (Figure 8) is founded on the belief that through individual counter stories social change will exist.

Figure 8*Four Quadrant Critique of Social Oppression*

We can see how this conceptualization of a counter-story highlights the perspective and experiences of Black Male Educators whose counter-stories provide a narrative that intends to advance scholarship and add to academic literature from these marginalized perspectives. Using such counternarratives from Black Male Educators, the counter-story tenet from Critical Race Theory provides an invaluable lens from those who have experienced oppression and cultural bias.

Nieto & McDonough's (2009) opposition to the white majority realities of deficit thinking towards Blacks is critical in recognizing these and other problems of practice in preparation programs, curriculum, and pedagogy. Yet, the exploration of this phenomenon

through the experiences of Black Males, question majoritarian stories (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Sleeter (2017) contended that “white worldviews deny or mask racism.” (p. 96).

Considering this, experiential knowledge seeks to amplify the voices and perspectives of the minority to reveal the unheard knowledge spoken from those who experience inequality.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

This study is important to contribute to academic literature a perspective from Black Male Educators in school leadership to shift the paradigm of a traditional leadership stereotype of being white and male. The purpose of this study is to explore this phenomenon and produce useful research to the significance of the Black Male Educator's lived experiences and perspectives in their journey towards school leadership. This study informs equitable hiring practices, administrative preparation programs, and contribute to scholarly writings an under-explored topic from the perspective of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

This study began out of a curiosity of a personal experience in an administrative preparation program in which I was denied entry into a cohort. I began to take classes on my own and prepare for the examination that would provide me with a "pass" from the ISLLC⁴ examination. However, this personal experience goes beyond the examination itself, it was at the moment in time of the examination, that the cohort that I was denied entry was also present to take the exam. My curiosity and inquisitive nature led me to see that there were no Black Males in this cohort and only one Black female from a group of more than fifteen. Surely, I thought to myself, that a school district of this size had many Blacks that submitted an application for the cohort. Yet, my prodding led me to a numerical inquiry. This inquiry was to count how many Black Male school leaders were in this school division that served a majority of minority students. This staggering number caused me to identify with Zora Neale Hurston as she once stated, "research is formalized curiosity." Here is where my curiosity emerged, to use this

⁴ ISLLC examination presents six standards for candidates on an assessment. [ISLLC Standards Summary \(rafaeltejada.com\)](http://rafaeltejada.com)

phenomenological research method to explore the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership from the lived experiences, perspectives, and voices from Black Male Educators in the field.

Given this, in Chapter 1, I posed a central research question to explore the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership. The purpose of this question was to examine what these stories and experiences could tell us about the phenomenon of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. I also identified how poetry, art, literature, and lyrics provide an alternative means of explicating and understanding this phenomenon that mere academic treatment could obscure or overlook.

As such, I reviewed scholarly articles and literature regarding Black Male Educators, Black Male Teachers and their impact on Black Male students, Urban Education, and a chronological examination of Supreme Court decisions in which Blacks were the cornerstone of these cases. These articles were found through using Google Scholar, ERIC, and Emerald Insights. Given this exploration in the literature, three themes emerged that formed the basis of this study. The three themes were the History of Education from the Black Experience, Colonialism, and Critical Race Theory. Each theme was further explored through Intersectionality with a post-structuralist lens.

When it became necessary to ensure a common contextual language was utilized to ensure proper exploration of this phenomenon, I developed an anti-racist glossary that provided this common contextual language for the study, not to cause anger or hostility, but these key words were utilized in various amalgamations in order to detect and search literature from various databases. Given this, EBSCO, Google Scholar, ProQuest, ERIC, and the Old Dominion University Library were utilized to gain access to educational journals. Taken together with

access from Academia and Emerald Insights, full text versions of scholarly articles and dissertations were acquired.

Through this inquiry and iterations of discovery in the research, I derived the theoretical lens of Intersectionality as the framework of this study. Chapter 2 explored the theoretical framework of Intersectionality. Through Intersectionality, I provided a post-structuralist viewpoint to shape the framework and include an understanding of the History of Education from the Black perspective, Coloniality, and Critical Race Theory as a framework of exploring the phenomenon of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

Overview of Research Method

Research methodology includes the process and method by which a researcher obtains information about the phenomenon that is being studied (Creswell, 2007; Edwards & Skinners, 2009) providing the researcher an opportunity to gather multiple sources of data. As such, phenomenology is based on the approach to explore little known factors of a phenomenon. Using phenomenology and bricolage (Bernstein, 1991; Rogers, 2015; Wibberley, 2012) provides the researcher with a meta-text to inform and enhance meaning through visual and literary alternatives (Yardley, 2008) and from a different epistemological perspective (Suri, 2012). As such, I thread bricolage within the phenomenological exploration as a salient feature of phenomenology.

Phenomenology

One of the most important features of phenomenology is that it is not a rigid method; instead, it offers sound ontological guide posts to assure rigor trustworthiness (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Groenwald, 2004; Marshall 1985), facilitating the emergent nature of qualitative inquiry (Douglas & Moustakas, 1985), and recognizes that our social lives are constructed by those who

live it; “we are creative interpreters of our surroundings and experiences and through our interpretations and actions, we make sense of our worlds and give meaning to our existence. In this way, people do not passively conform to social norms: we are ‘agents’ who interpret our experiences and actively give meaning and assign order to our existence. Understanding this meaning and order is the primary focus of the phenomenologist” (Adams & Myran, 2021).

Through the use of Phenomenology, varying methodological processes draw from four shared concepts of phenomenology: description, reduction, imaginative variations, and a composite description of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). First, description, a rich detailed description of the phenomenon that amplifies the voices of those who have first-hand experience of the phenomenon being studied. Second is phenomenological reduction, which is the balancing act of looking for patterns, themes, and relationships while at the same time staying open to emergent understandings based on voices of the research participants (Cabot, 2016; Moustakas, 1994). Third, imaginative variations offer a means for the researcher to seek alternative framings and perspectives to unearth the complex structures of the themes identified. Finally, the phenomenological researcher creates a composite structural description, which pulls together the rich and detailed descriptions of the participant’s experience of the phenomenon along with the data reduction intended to reveal the essences of the phenomenon being researched, which “seeks to grasp and elucidate the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people” (Patton, 2002 p. 482).

Given that I am concerned with the experiences of the research participants (Smith & Nizza, 2021, 2022; Plano Clark et al., 2013), I am interpreting this phenomenon through key features of interpretative phenomenological analysis through meaning making and sense-making of each key experiences. As such, I draw an understanding from existing terminology that

includes exploratory notes, emergent themes, and subordinate themes and to use an emergent and parallel terminology of exploratory notes, experiential statements, and personal experiential themes. Each of these key features are part of the interpretative phenomenological (Larkin et al., 2006; Larkin et al., 2011) analysis that includes Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, and an Idiographic claim. Given this, each of these thematic approaches will be explored in the analysis.

Phenomenological Inquiry

Phenomenology embraces a voice. It hears the voice as a key component to a lived experience. Phenomenology neither negates the voice or hears the voice as irreprehensible or non-existent. Phenomenology opens the door for understanding, inquiry, and vulnerability of an experiences so that the object of consciousness is gained in the free expression of self. A phenomenological study is not linear, but, provides a complex analysis of the participants lived experiences in which is only as in depth as the participant is willing to share. Further exploration of a phenomenon can lead to more questions about an individual, thus this contributes to additional scholarly discussions. As such, the possibility of endless complex exploration begins in the journey of engaging in the life experiences of a participant that becomes free of judgment and assumptions. Given this key human experience, phenomenology offers a means for the Black Male Educator to be freed from a silenced past that was captured in lyrics by Reverend Milton Brunson who sang:

I'm free.

Praise the Lord, I'm free.

No longer bound.

No more chains holding me.

My soul is resting.

It's just a blessing.

Praise the Lord, hallelujah, I'm free.

To further add to the point of phenomenology, the participants opened the interview with a sense of relief in which the interviews appeared to be a journey of discovery, appreciation, and validation of who they are as Black Males and through amplifying their stories a larger contextual insight is driven by reflection and liberation. As such, participant Miles Morales stated during the interview the joy of releasing some of what was hidden in his mind. To this point, Miles Morales stated: “I could not share this with anyone, most people saw me with a smile on my face and they did not know what I went through.” Mile Morales further stated, “I am so glad that I shared this with you, I am older now and I do not have to hide the fact that I watched my dad sit on my mom and beat her and I saw blood down her face....I connect with my students on a personal note, and they know this about me.”

Similarly, Eli King stated, “When I tell my students I am adopted and struggled with no one wanting me and my siblings because I was found in foster care, they know I am no different from them.” Based on these responses, my awareness to a culturally known fact in the Black Community of silencing your emotions was clear during the interviews. The ever presence of ‘masculinity’ and ‘silence’ permeated as the participants appeared to be grappling with the questions during the interviews, yet a natural evolution occurred when the participants unearthed a suppressed truth and allowed the divulgence of free-flowing facts that appeared to both evoke an emotional memory and a freedom of memory bondage that appeared to have been silenced for many years.

Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics (Tlotstanova & Mignolo, 2009) is getting at the interpretation of the experience, it is “The phenomenon of care in its totality is essentially something that cannot be torn asunder” (Heidegger, 1962/2008, p. 104). The etymology of care is derived from the Old English word *caerian* meaning “*anxious, to feel concern or interest*” (Mobley dissertation, p. 120). Given this definition, my interview was a balance of inquiry seeking and caring for the person behind the story. This experience in the interpretation after the interview is the research of making sense of the participants experiences while gaining an appreciation for human subjects claim. As an additional thread to this sense making, the exploratory methodology is prescriptive but an epistemic underpinning of the truth and the creation of knowledge from the participants lived experience. Knowing this, actor Idris Elba stated, “It is difficult to free people from the chains they have been brainwashed to revere.” Taken together with truth and eloquent wording, Eli King during his interview stated, “Truth tellers do not always reap the benefit of their hard work.” Eli King also stated, “A lot of time we are talking into the winds, the disrespect, the microaggressions, never really get addressed. Why are our experiences not valued? That is the hubris and arrogance of whiteness in America, which is to tell me what I know and provide me with historically unsound statements and gives control like Geppetto to our every move.”

Idiographic

Given the above, the idiographic claim in research is an analysis of the individual in the study by each case and only across the participants in the study. As such, with each of the participants being from my professional and personal network, it was imperative that the study was from their lens and not autoethnographic. Yet, I did not hide behind my positionality, but I used it in this study as an extension of my own struggles and journey towards school leadership,

not as an alternative to bracketing (Tufford & Newman, 2010), but as a pivotal lens to see and embrace the full story through an understanding of someone else's story. Given this, the identification of convergent and divergent themes became the process that was important in aligning the analytical strategies used to these epistemic underpinnings that did not adhere to the surface level norms of a given theoretical tradition.

As such, a composite summary of the participants emerged as the study transformed to capture an inquiry to a phenomenon, but also became transformative as I engaged in this study to be equally vulnerable, truthful, and transparent as my participants have been. As each of the lived experiences were magnificent collectively and individualistically, it became clear that my inundation with finding purposeful meaning and climbing into this arena of truth through the voices of the individuals in this study would be captured by clustering and identifying the overall nuance of who this group of Black Male Educators in school leadership were. Given the above, the Magnificent Seven emerged as a promise to step into a memory through their lived experiences and to use these experiences to shed light on a phenomenon that is silenced as poet Amanda Gorman state in *The Hill We Climb*: "That is the promise to glade, the hill we climb if only we dare it, because being American is more than a pride we inherit—It's the past we step into, and how we repair it."

Research Design and Rationale

Given each of these precursors, I conducted a phenomenological study on the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership to gain an understanding of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Given the purpose of this study, a phenomenological approach was identified as being most appropriate. First, phenomenology seeks to understand the social and psychological phenomena from the

perspective of the people who directly embedded in that phenomenon (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). Second, phenomenology offers a particularly focused means for understanding the individual's lived experience thereby identifying poignant moments and events in shaping these experiences (Clandinin, 2006; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Haydon et al., 2018; Karpa, 2021; McCabe & Van De Mieroop, 2021). As such, a phenomenological exploration of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership was used to further explore this phenomenon.

Data Source

This study used purposeful sampling (Benoot et al., 2016; Duan et al., 2014; Kalu, 2019; Palinkas et al., 2015; Suri, 2011) to gain and understanding of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in K-12 school leadership that is explored below. Further, the goal of this study is to identify participants whose lived experiences qualify them with experiential knowledge (Bell, 1980) related to the exploration of this phenomenon (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). Through the exploration of this phenomenon, this study used the stories of the participants as a means to understand the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in K-12 school leadership through the lived experiences and perspective of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Central to this point regarding the study of the phenomenon, as the researcher, I interviewed participants until data saturation was reached (Groenwald, 2004).

Given this, the participants in this study are Black Male Educators in school leadership, the recruitment process for the study included asking the participants to be willing to be included in the study through multiple modes of communication to include texts, phone calls, and emails. Additionally, there was the submission of the IRB for the study of human subjects. The IRB protocol is a process that ensures the work involving human subjects are ethical and consensual

as well as not in violation of any age or protected participants classification. I acquired my research participants by enacting my personal and professional network of educational leaders that are Black and Male in school leadership. I sent email correspondence to this personal and professional network and provides a brief summary of a request to conduct an interview. Next, I followed up the email with telephone contact to my professional and personal network of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Given this plan, I invited this personal and professional network of Black Male Educators in school leadership to provide additional names of Black Male Educators in their network that could contribute to this study. This additional selection process is snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is a process that allows the participant being interviewed an opportunity to recommend another participant that could provide additional insights and detail to the phenomenon.

Given this process, my goal was to have access to Black Male Educators with varying backgrounds and experiences in school leadership. Each of the candidates selected also had experiences as a teacher prior to their leadership role. It was imperative that my access to these leaders would not conflict with their daily operations as a school leader, thus my access to these leaders often included but not be limited to communication through telephone dialogue, text, and online conference tools. After the initial contact with each individual to request permission to submit their names for participation in the study, I begin to start the interview process (Lowes & Prowse, 2001) after approval of the dissertation proposal by the committee. The interviews for the participants ranged from in person, to phone interviews that lasted a minimum of sixty minutes. Each interview was recorded and was prefaced by the consent from the IRB protocol. For the recording I chose to use a cassette recorder with an attached microphone and each cassette tape was labeled with the date, time, and name of the participant. I chose to use the

cassette recording to analyze the text of each participant. Additionally, I created an excel sheet with cells to highlight key words, terms, factual references, ideologies, and impact towards leadership journey for data analysis and coding at a later date.

The factors that contributed to the selection of my participants for research were based on the participants being Black Male Educators in school leadership that were part of my personal and professional network. This network of participants stems from my professional role as a school leader, my background and birthplace. The importance of selecting participants from different ages and backgrounds was designed specifically to contribute to my research of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership. Further, the selected participants range in the K-12 educational spectrum included elementary, middle, and high school level leaders, with one of the participants, at the time of the study, accepting a promotion to central office K-12 school leadership. In addition to using IRB consent protocols, I provided pseudonyms of Black Male superheroes to conceal the identity of the participant. The usage of pseudonyms was vital so that the success of this study allowed for honest and forthright responses to the questions. Further, the interviews were taped. However, prior to the interview being recorded, each participant was told that a redaction of personal information and statements would allow for authenticity, comfortability, and security so that questions can be answered openly and honestly.

Purposeful Sampling

My initial contact with the participants was through an email (Appendix A) that followed with a verbal conversation regarding my interest in studying Black Male Educators in school leadership for my candidacy as a doctoral student. I chose each participant's based on their role as a school leader in K-12 education and due to being a part of my personal and professional

network. This criteria used for selecting the participants created a bias in part due to my familiarity with each of their schools. Further, I was employed in three of the school systems similar to my human subjects. Also, this bias from the selection criterion is acknowledged as a black female educator whose journey towards school leadership could lead this study to an autoethnographic framework. However, my role is to gain a gestalt understanding of this phenomenon and recognize my bias and not bracket my bias.

As such, to provide security and confidentiality of the Black Male Educators in this study I assigned a pseudonym for each participant by using the name of a Black superhero (Mandek, 2020; Tyree and Jacobs, 2014; Scott, 2006) and I provided demographic and educational attainment information of each human subject (Table 2).

Participants

The participants in this study were Black Male Educators in school leadership. I identified each participant from my personal and professional network. Because I only studied Black Male Educators in school leadership, the participants were school leaders in the Eastern region of the United States to include the Northeast and the Southeast.

For the purpose of this study, the criteria for selecting the seven participants were each participant is a Black Male Educator in school leadership in the Eastern Region of the United States from my personal and professional network. Given these criteria, four of the participants were principals, two were assistant principals, and one was a central office school leader which was a recent promotion from being a school principal. Additionally, five of the participants had earned doctoral degrees, one participant was completing doctoral studies, and one participant was beginning doctoral studies.

Table 2*Demographics of Human Subjects*

Name	Years in Educational Leadership	Type of School	Educational Attainment	Current Position
Luke Cage	12	Urban	Doctorate	Central Office
Virgil Hawkins	10	Suburban	Doctorate	Principal
Eli King	2	Suburban	Doctorate	Assistant Principal
Miles Morales	4	Rural	Doctoral Program	Principal
John Stewart	13	Urban	Doctorate	Principal
Sam Wilson	4	Urban	Doctoral Program	Assistant Principal
David Zavimbe	8	Urban	Masters	Middle Level Leader

Data Analysis/Analytic Technique

“Meaning is created when the object as it appears in our consciousness, mingles with the object in nature: what appears in consciousness is an absolute reality while what appears to the world is a product of learning.”

Clark Moustakas *Phenomenological Research Methods* (1994 p. 27)

As described by Eddles-Hirsch (2015), the phenomenologist is concerned with the “analytical and descriptive experience of a phenomenon by individuals in their everyday world” (p. 251), what Creswell (2013) called the “lifeworld” of the people being studied (Creswell, 2013). The phenomenologist does not seek to measure or explain behavior, but seeks the authentic voices of the participants, creating space for them to define the nature of their own experiences (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015).

Phenomenologists recognize that human experience of the everyday life is a valid way to interpret the world (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015), and reject that truth exists independently of our experience of it, but rather, that our experiences in the complex and dynamic world define how we make sense of our realities. A key distinction between general quantitative methods and phenomenological research is that it is specifically interested in understanding the essence of a given phenomenon from the perspective of participants who have experienced it (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). The focus is on the interrelationship between the contexts the research participants live in and their experiences therein – that is the meaning of the phenomenon itself is drawn from those who live it (Kim & Merriam, 2007).

Grounded in these methodological principles, I utilized the following analytic technique in this study. Drawing from Adams and Myran's (2021) hybrid approach, I use both Moustakas' (1994) heuristic analytic process and Hycner's (1999) five steps of explication (data analysis). This approach broadly takes a heuristic approach that considers the following:

1. Immersion: knowledge and involvement within the phenomenon being studied
2. Incubation: creating space for discovery, developing deeper awareness, understanding, intuitive or tacit insights
3. Illumination: actively engage in developing, expanding, and clarifying the above insights
4. Explication: reflectivity
5. Creative synthesis: Bringing the above together to show the patterns and relationships
6. Horizontalization: Understanding the phenomenon as a whole (Adams & Myran, 2021)

Some phenomenologists avoid the concept of data analysis and use the term *explicitation* instead (Hycner, 1999; Murtisari, 2016) due to the implications that analysis requires the breaking of the phenomenon into parts and the resulting loss of holistic meaning. The term *explicitation* suggests

a contextual understanding to keep the phenomenon whole (Hycner, 1999). With reference to the broad heuristic outlook outlined above, this study utilizes Hycner's (1999) five steps as guidance for the analysis, or explication of data. As such, the five steps of analysis are:

1. Phenomenological reduction
2. Delineating units of meaning
3. Clustering of units of meaning to form themes
4. Summarizing each interview
5. Composite summary

Guided by this ontological framework, my phenomenologist mind-set was assumed as I explored this phenomenon through iterations of discovery, organization, refinement, meaning making, and summarizing using Strauss and Corbin's (1998) three levels of analysis: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (See Table 3) (Hadley & Myran, In-Press). This provides an ontologically guided process that support an evolving coding structure designed to bring the lived experiences of the research participants into sharper focus, while supporting the emergence of a holistic and ecological valid picture of the phenomenon.

Table 3

Ontological and Procedural Explication Design

Phenomenological reduction	Open coding
Delineating units of meaning	Axial coding
Clustering of units of meaning to form themes	Axial coding
Summarizing each interview	Selective coding
Creating composite summaries	Selective coding

Role of Researcher

While some forms of phenomenology seek to address the challenges of bias by seeking to become a detached observer (LeVasseur, 2003), many contemporary qualitative researchers hold that eliminating or reducing bias is not possible. In fact, these scholars highlight that it is counterproductive to the goal of rigor and trustworthiness (e.g., Eddles-Hirsch, 1995; Gregory, 2019). Instead, these scholars emphasize that phenomenological findings are co-created in consort between participants and researchers, and that rigor and trustworthiness are dependent on the researcher owning their positionality in a way that allow them to be reflective about how their potential biases may shape their engagement with the research participants and their stories (Lowes & Prowse, 2001). Thus, “bracketing one’s lived experience – whether theoretical, experiential, or mediated through popular culture – cannot be quartered off for the purpose of studying a population” (Gregory, 2019 p. 8).

I take the position that as a phenomenologist, I interpret experiences and actively assign meaning and order to our existence through the four concepts of phenomenology that is embedded in the research. As such, I consider myself to have had a transformational experience as I moved from being a student to a scholar. As a researcher and a thinker, I have internalized this work to gain a gestalt understanding of this phenomenon. Given this position and my life experiences as an educator, a mother to sons, and a daughter to a Black Male, my positionality is clear, to not be a detached observer, but to be transparent in this exploration of this phenomenon and capture the voice of the participants as the 44th President of the United States of America, Barack Obama stated, “One voice can change a room...your voice can change the world.”

Strategies of Trustworthiness

Many qualitative researchers reject the concept of validity as it represents a fundamentally different philosophy of science and epistemic orientation. They reject the basic realist assumption that there is a reality external to our perception or experience of it. As such, they argue for different standards for judging the quality of research (Table 4) – what some call trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Hays and Singh, 2012; Patton, 2002).

Table 4

Criteria for Judging Research

Traditional Criteria for Judging	Alternative Criteria for Judging Qualitative Research
Quantitative Research	Often referred to as Trustworthiness
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Conformability

Given the above table of the criteria for judging both quantitative and qualitative research, we can see how the component of each research criteria captures the fundamental principles of the significance of a research methodology (Bredo, 2009; Howe, 2004, 2008, 2009). As such, Northcote (2012) citing Lincoln and Guba (1985) “the problem of how to evaluate quality of qualitative research is not a new phenomenon.” Knowing this, how to evaluate the research is often referred to as trustworthiness. For the purpose of this study the areas of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability will be explored.

To this point researchers must determine how to evaluate their research. As such, Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified credibility as “capturing the fundamental nature of the phenomena based on the lived experiences of the participants.” (p. 126). When grappling with ontological

and educative authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), the researcher examines the subjects through, a) member checking, b) audit trail, and c) by being an auditor. Each of these areas demonstrate a researcher's endeavors to design the research project. For example, I used member checking to evaluate the problem or the phenomenon and ensured the honesty of the research procedures. The qualitative strategy of audit trail involved me establishing the findings that were based on the participants responses instead of my own biases (Sanders, 2003; Shosha, 2012). Finally, as an auditor, I evaluated the data for accuracy.

Similarly, the component of transferability in trustworthiness conceptualizes thick descriptions (Patton, 2002) and triangulation. This highlights what Marshall and Rossman (1995) describe for transferability "describing a phenomenon, the context it takes place in and the participation with enough detail that readers can assess the transferability of the findings to similar populations or context" (p. 117). To this point, transferability includes direct participant quotes and the use of multiple data sources (triangulation) that support the development of the themes such as interviews, document analysis, member checking, field notes, extemporaneous notes, reflexive journaling, etc.

Taken together with dependability and confirmability, the role of the researcher considers positionality in a paper in which the complexities and challenges of epistemological beliefs (Hofer & Pintrich, 2002; Parker & Lynn, 2002) can conflict and blur the study. Given this, one can see the conceptual thread in which dependability and confirmability run across the literature. Dependability addresses the consistency and replicability of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) I was able to explicate the data based on the findings from the data and make sure that the findings from the data is reflective of the participant's authentic experience. Further, dependability is achieved through triangulation, audit trails, memoing, and auditors (Patton, 2002). Knowing this,

confirmability in this study was assured through the thick and rich data obtained from the research participants and multiple-step analytic process that captured the participants unique voices and stories (Lincoln & Guba, 1995).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

“We need more light about each other. Light creates understanding, understanding creates love, love creates patience, and patience creates unity.”

Malcolm X

Overview

For this phenomenological study, the semi-structured interviews were the primary source of data collection. The participants were supplied a consent form (Appendix B) and agreed to be recorded for the purpose of exact transcription of the interview. Each participant was given the choice of receiving the audio transcription of their interview and each participant were told the security of the transcriptions would be aligned with the IRB protocol. The interviews were scheduled to last a minimum of an hour with a maximum of four hours in one single session. Interview protocols consisted of allowing the participants to schedule a time that was convenient for the interviewee/participant and providing an option for follow up questions to be asked during the interview (Appendix D).

The findings from this study are aligned with the three key experiential themes of the study from chapter two that are a) the history of Black Education, b) Colonialization of Educational Leadership, and c) Critical Race Theory. First, the exploration of this phenomenon through race and gender shape what is being investigated (Carastathis, 2008, 2014; Crenshaw, 2006, 2015; Fuller et al., 2019; Nash, 2008; Niesche, 2011; Olssen, 2002; Peters & Nash, 2021; Velez & Spencer, 2018). The history of education through a brutal and harsh reality through capitalists’ impossibilities of the Negro discredits the Negro as a capable person in an educational system (Woodson, 1993 p. 65). Further, the distorted history of Black people has caused a neglect of this marginalized group in most history books and has deprived the Black child of a heritage and relegated the Black child to nothingness and nobodiness (Woodson, 1993

p. 8). Knowing the documented and historic treatment of Blacks that prohibited equality in society and in education (Gatlung, 1969; Teo, 2010), the pursuit of equality in society and education is met with colonizing forces in an industrialized system (Mann, 1891; Warder, 2015) that manifested in the inequalities in education (Anderson, 1988; Gooden, 2012; Maroto & Pettinicchio, 2022; Noguera, 2017) faced by the participants in this study.

Legalities that perpetuated segregation continued in the praxis of dysfunction for Black people through overt and covert racism that caused the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership. The quest to know and learn (Ladson-Billings, 1992; 1995) impacted the Black Male in their educational capacity as Blacks were indoctrinated into learning of a white-world by white teachers and school leaders. Such indoctrination continued in the participants sphere of experiences as there was no representation of a Black Male until middle school.

Further, the alignment of this study with the literature is that the physical and epistemic violence faced by Black Males foregrounds this phenomenon in Chapter Two and in the findings as the findings indicate that the Black Male continued to face complexities related to educational advancement in their schooling due to biases and microaggressions (Browne-Ferrigno, 2011; Carpenter & Diem, 2013; Ford et al., 2020, Hampton et al., 2008; Schaeffer et al., 2014; Wells & Crain, 1994; Williams & Loeb, 2012). Knowing this, the alignment with Critical Race Theory (Bell, 1980) provided a focused means for the participant's voice to be amplified through the exploration of racism and race in social and educational structures. With such a violent history of race, racism, and inequalities faced by Blacks, Critical Race Theory provided the lens to understanding the Black experience. Further, these findings from the study recognize that K-12 education serves students from all ethnicities. As such, the Black students need Black teachers

and Black administrators prior to their middle school experiences. This study is important because it sheds light on realities faced by Black students lack representation not only in educators, but also in curriculum context that they learn. This study contributed to academic literature by addressing what needs to happen in the praxis of education and why.

Given the above explanation of findings, the following provide an analysis to the interview protocols and grouping, the pseudonym explanation of the participants, the explication of interviews, and the explication of the interview findings. As I read the interview questions, the emergent themes from the questions are provided to align the interview questions with the literature from Chapter two. In this part of the findings, the emergent themes and sub-themes in the findings are further aligned in the distillation of findings that are anchored in the literature from chapter two.

Stage I: Interview Protocols and Grouping

In this stage of data collection of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership, I interviewed Black Male school leaders using a semi-structured interview protocol. Each interview lasted a minimum of sixty minutes with a maximum of four hours for one interview. Throughout the interview, the natural conversation in the interview was not obstructed by a numerical and linear order.

Discussion of Findings

**“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see...”**

John Newton 1779 (Christian Hymnal)

Written in 1772 by English Anglican clergy and poet, John Newton, the popular Christian hymnal⁵ is created as a result of Newton rejecting the slave trade. The epitome of this hymn is captured in Black churches as Gates (2021, p. 183) identified a pivotal moment of this hymn as the former President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, raised a ‘tradition’ of the Black church as the eulogist for Reverend Clementa Pinckney.⁶ Obama (2015) rendered the lyrics of “Amazing Grace” which draws a parallel with the participant’s “lost” voice that through this revolutionary study is “found.” Given this, the findings from this study are presented as a parallel of Christianity, in which Newton was inspired from his own firsthand experiences. As such the participants of this study and their individual experiences are found to be an inherent story that embraces self, hope, and understanding of self to leverage the normal human capacity of knowing. Taken together with the lyrics of this hymn as a historical and contemporary liberation, the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership provide a transformation to what is ‘seen’ as a school leader through embracing the voices from the field of the Black Male Educators.

Given the above, I present findings from the interviews of the participants through this phenomenological exploration. The nature of phenomenology and the emic and etic perspectives were significant in this study for capturing a life history of the research participants. An emic and etic approach to studying individuals with common characteristics was used (Capaldi & Proctor, 2000; Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). That is, emic perspectives highlight the insider perspective of those with direct experience of the phenomenon while etic perspectives are framed as the outsider’s perspective – what some scholars have defined as the difference between espoused beliefs and beliefs in action – that is what people say and what people do (Cohen, 1994). As

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazing_Grace

⁶ Clementa C. Pinckney. (2022, June 15). In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clementa_C._Pinckney

such, the relevance of exploring cultural and linguistic nuances within the interviews, paying attention to the varying emic and etic perspectives captures these accounts to bring about past perspectives and nuances in the dialog with the participants. The explicitation of data is part of the process in which the experiential statements, exemplar quotes, and exploratory notes from the interviews of the participants were extracted through a line-by-line review of the transcription of the audio recordings (Figure 9).

Figure 9:

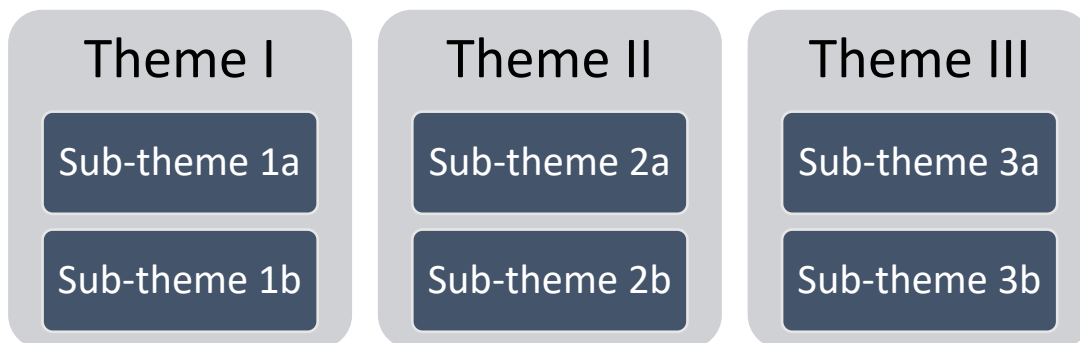
Explicitation of Data from transcripts



At this point in the analysis, the grouping of themes into categories was created (Figure 10) by using notecards and arranging these note cards in a nonlinear way to better capture the interrelationships in this process of discovery and in seeking a gestalt understanding of the transcription.

Figure 10:

Note Card display to group themes



This process was repeated for each interview question and occurred multiple times for each question. As each participants transcription is reviewed this explication of data was a discovery of new insights and new questions that was explored and reviewed as themes and sub-themes emerged through this process. Knowing this, I listened to the recordings and re-read statements from the interviews that offered significant finding for this study. I reviewed the significant findings from the interviews by identifying themes and patterns that emerged in the interview. From the focused questions and prompts, a pivotal construct of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership involved sense-making, in which this discovery process led to my own tension between hopelessness and hope. This discovery of my own positionality afforded me the opportunity to ‘get inside’ of these stories that created a strange cognitive dissonance of my reality as a researcher.

As such, I present an analysis of the interviews where I wrote detailed descriptions of the interviews, triangulated the statements to identify common threads, and embedded quotes from the interviews which is the first step in the analysis process (Moustakas, 1994). I ensured that selected statements are verbatim to what the participant stated in the interview (Moustakas, 1994

p. 95). The stories and lived experiences of the participants were captured in the ensuing details that will seek to explore the central research question of the study, what are the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in their journey towards school leadership? How can these experiences shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership?

**“This is Our Story: The Explicitation of the Lived Experience of
Black Male Educators in School Leadership”**

The participants in this story are individuals who collectively spoke of faith and spirituality and hope as part of their narratives. To understand this phenomenon, I too became an interwoven spiritual co-laborer of these experiences, not to minimize the lived experiences of the participants, but as a vulnerable and interconnected person with their stories as they unfolded. The glimpse into the lived experiences of the participants became my responsibility to shed light on this phenomenon in which, as a Black female educator, I often reflected on how that allowed me to connect with the participant and not solely possess a cold view reality independent of my own experiences of being Black. To this point, lyricist and composer, Frances Jane Crosby’s⁷ (1873) Christian hymn “Blessed Assurance” consumed my thoughts as the opening verse of the chorus of this song is: *“This is my story, this is my song.”* As I grappled with this connection to each participant, their stories became unfettered as the interview unfolded.

Therefore, in the phenomenological journey with the participants, the narratives of the participants became sensitive and even evoked an emotion that I noticed was immediately suppressed by each Black Male. They each provided their story to assist in the investigation of the phenomenon of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school

⁷ Fanny Crosby. (2022, August 31). In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fanny_Crosby

leadership, yet each of these stories was anchored in a tone of masculinity, strength, and power that I equate to ownership and taking their rightful place in society.

Knowing this, the “Magnificent Seven⁸” have substantial meaning to me personally and professionally. First, on a personal note, my mother’s seven grandchildren are affectionately called “The Magnificent 7” in which she has them portrayed in pictures and images throughout her home. Then professionally, my career started in the seventh month. Also, the birth of my daughter who is now deceased was on the seventh day and finally, my father, the patriarch of our family, died on the seventh day in the seventh month. With this in mind, the participants in this study, the Magnificent Seven, reflect a revolutionary and captivating identity to the lived experiences of each of the participants. Hidden in this message of seven in which the storyline from this screen play has seven characters protect a small village, these seven participants of this phenomenological exploration are protectors of their truth, protectors of their lived experiences as Black Male Educators, and protectors of their voice as a counternarrative to an otherwise suppressed story in scholarly writings.

The Magnificent Seven

Given the above, each of the participants in the phenomenological exploration of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership were given a pseudonym that reflected a key persona derived from the interview. The pseudonyms that I selected were the names from Black Superheroes (Scott, 2006). I chose the names of Black Superheroes as the concept of a Superhero is someone who defends others, and their true identities are often masked or hidden. Based on this, each participant identity is hidden, similar to a Superhero who exists in

⁸ The Magnificent Seven. (2022, October 3). In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Magnificent_Seven

the mainstream of a community, virtually unknown. Given this, the title, *Hiding in Plain Sight* conceptualizes this masked identity of each participant.

Additionally, the emergent insights describe an interpretive phenomenological analysis that is expressed with the participants, yet each participant's unique life experiences are varied and irreducible. This dynamic allows for explication to balance my insights through phenomenological reduction as the collective findings and observations provide me with a schema of individual expressions. Given this, I provide a brief description of each of the participants that supports sense-making of the phenomenon being studied.

Pseudonym and Description of the Participants

Luke Cage

Luke Cage is a Black Male Educator who has an earned doctorate, and he lives by this mantra, "Don't let no stop you. No, only means not now." Coming from a two-parent household with both parents being educators, he explained that he transitioned into education as a substitute teacher and that his advanced degree experiences were online and that he did not know the other races of the classmates. As an addition to his mantra, he concluded, "my parents told me to finish what I start."

Virgil Hawkins

Virgil Hawkins is a Black Male Educator who has an earned doctorate who shared that his mother and father ensured the sense of 'village' for his success which is how he embraces being unapologetically Black. This dominant expression characterizes his ability to navigate in settings that some would find fearful, as he is known in these spaces as 'lovingly feared' because he had access to both "street" persons and "professionals." Virgil Hawkins considered this phrase, "my intergenerational and lifelong purpose should not always receive it but to give

it.” Further, his motto of ‘Each one, teach one’ comes from a spiritual awareness from the ‘Science’ or Five-Percenter also known as the Five-Percent Nation⁹.

Eli King

Eli King is a Black Male Educator who has an earned doctorate. An empowering quote from him is “I’m the me I didn’t have” which is and has been his natural drive to recreate what was not given to him in his academic and professional career. Coming from a single parent household in which he and his siblings were adopted after being in foster care, Eli King shared that his mother [foster] is the only mother he knows and that she was his Queen until her death. With an emphasis on the pride, he speaks on when he shared a memory of his mother, he says that he watched his mother work and thought that her presence in [union] meetings that he attended inspired him. An inspirational experiential statement is, “My mom had a beautiful smile and I watched her in these meetings [union] be enamored by the group. She spoke with knowledge, and she was charismatic, I knew I wanted to be like her.” Eli King stated, “I didn’t have a bad childhood, I just didn’t have anyone teaching me that looked like me.”

Miles Morales

Miles Morales is a Black Male Educator doctoral candidate. Miles Morales stated that he survived childhood trauma by picking up a ball [football and basketball]. He indicated that he did not start on the path to become a teacher, but through his love of sports and coaching, an opportunity arose where he stated, “he [a mentor] threw the ball on the court, and I picked it up.” This quote referenced his acceptance into an administrative cohort as he shared, “I’m what they didn’t have” as he spoke of his students as a classroom teacher and in his current role as a school leader.

⁹ Five-Percent Nation - Wikipedia

John Stewart

John Stewart is a Black Male Educator who has an earned doctorate whose inspirational word is, “Go beyond. Excellence is your norm.” As a young Black child in a large urban city, and being reared in a single parent home, he was able to attend a small private college, in which he states, “there were only about fifty of us, from the same urban project attending this university, and you know what [chuckles], we were from the same projects.”

Sam Wilson

Sam Wilson is a Black Male Educator doctoral candidate who lives by the quote from rapper Tupac Shakur’s song released in 1993, “Keep Ya’ Head Up.” Although he is from a single-parent household, he attended an historical Black College and University (HBCU) because of his good grades in high school and being in the IB program. He shared, “I changed my major to elementary education and my professor said, oh my gosh we have a Black man, I promise you, you will have a job the day you graduate.”

David Zavimbe

David Zavimbe is a Black Male Educator who has an administrative degree and is a middle level school leader. He states that, “Every journey does not have the same path.” Having had very stern parents who took education seriously he shared that he went into the military after a football injury. Although he had not originally planned to go into education, but through helping someone’s children, he enrolled in school and started the process of becoming a teacher. He explained “I am not a teacher, yet...” as he recalled, “at one time teaching was a respected profession and he wanted that respect.”

Stage II: Explication of the Interviews

Interview Explication

The interviews were conducted with a focus on the central research question of “what are the lived experiences of Black Male Educators and their journey towards school leadership? How can these experiences shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership? Each interview began with a statement of appreciation in which I believe set the tone for the interview. Having the need to follow a formal protocol of stating the purpose of the study and the IRB protocol, I provided this formal information, but I threaded this with an “I too am a Black Educator” statement, that in my opinion was a platform for uniformity and comradery of the purpose of this study, yet also a disclaimer of my bias in the study of this phenomenon.

Having this bias in the study and needing to establish an opening statement for the interview process, I discussed the purpose of this study as a way to lift the voices and experiences of each participant as a means of establishing their place in a historical context through this scholarly writing. Further, I shared that through the amplification of their voice in this study, a close in the academic literature gap would be an extension of this study. To this point, the following excerpt from what is often known as the Black National Anthem, “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing,” by James Weldon Johnson¹⁰, is a powerful and iconic hymn that is known as a history lesson, a rally cry, and even known as a pledge to fight injustice:

Lift every voice and sing, Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise

¹⁰ James Weldon Johnson. (2022, September 9). In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Weldon_Johnson

High as the list'ning skies,
 Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
 Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
 Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
 Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
 Let us march on till victory is won.

Given the above, in this phenomenological study of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership, the voices that I intend to lift are those of Black Male Educators in school leadership. These biographical stories of the journey towards school leadership are a combination of historic events as told by the participants, past, present, and future experiences, and a hope of victory for a new day of what constitutes a school leader.

Each interview question provides a response from the participants of the central research question of a) What are the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in their journey towards school leadership and b) How do these experiences shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership? While some phenomenological traditions use the term *explicitation* in place of analysis (Hycner, 1985; Jehensen, 1973; Lowes & Prowse, 2001), which avoids the connotations of analysis as the breaking the whole into its composite parts and the potential loss of the holistic context of meaning, this idea of explicitation provides an overarching ontological framework for guiding the discovery process and to maintain a holistic and contextual focus. As such the idiom “can’t see the forest for the trees” usage is intended to advise people of not being inundated with trivial details and fail to see the bigger picture. However, a counter statement for the purpose of this study is to ‘see the forest because of the trees’ so that the intricate details are a collective

anchoring to the bigger picture. As theoretical physicist Albert Einstein stated, “We can only see the forest when we get out of the trees! Sometimes you have to get out of something to see beyond what lies directly before you.”

This study is a phenomenological exploration of Black Male Educators in school leadership. This study intended to explore the central research question a) What are the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in their journey towards school leadership? b) How can these experiences shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership?

Given the above, the interview question responses will use Hycner’s (1985) five phases of explication that provides a pragmatic framework to navigate the space between discovering collective meaning without missing the forest for the trees. In fact, an extension of this saying is that phenomenological explication of data is designed to understand the forest *because* of the trees. These elements are as follows: (1) phenomenological reduction, (2) delineating units of meaning, (3) clustering of units of meaning to form themes, (4) summarizing each interview, and (5) creating composite summaries.

Question 1: Tell me about yourself, particularly your experiences as a Black Male in your K-12 school experience

This question was designed to begin the conversation with each participant’s individual experiences. It was further designed to ensure the participant was able to generate responses from a familiar topic, themselves, that would springboard to other details of past experiences, present experiences, and future experiences as a Black Male in school and the journey towards school leadership.

This K-12 experience divulged collective themes from the participants, but also included family dynamics that were unintended to evoke a vulnerable emotion from the participants. This humanistic vulnerability began to be suppressed at the initial question of the interview, but a shift happened during the interview that evoked a memory of the participants past that was unintended to cause silence, a deep-breath, and then the emergence of truth. As such, responses of this question included the following:

Luke Cage stated that both of his parents were educators who insisted that he gave 100% in everything that he did. Similar to Virgil Hawkins, Luke Cage identified a sense of community as a strength in his upbreking. Both Virgil Hawkins, David Zavimbe, and Luke Cage are from a two-parent household, in which they both stated were cornerstones to their success. Virgil Hawkins highlights this family foundation as having a “community” that was insistent on his success as he recalled, “he stayed with his grandparent so that he could pursue an acting and dance career early on... this arts program was transformational because school was half-dance and half-academics.” An additional statement from this participant was shared in this manner, “We would walk with our teacher to museums and shows, I think we could have caught the bus or the train, but walking enriched our lives.” With distinct upbringings of a northern and southern experience, each participant character was shaped by the feeling of a community and parental stability.

David Zavimbe stated he was from a stern military home in a mid-western southern state. He stated that school was not a choice and that his mother held an associate degree, and his father was military. He recalled being in an all-black school with all black teachers with the exception of a few white teachers as he shared, “this is just how it was.”

Eli King, Miles Morales, Sam Wilson, and John Stewart expressed a close-knit family as part of their K-12 experiences. However, Sam Wilson stated that his mother worked many jobs to care for him and his siblings. Sam Wilson also stated that he was much older than his younger brother and sister and he often had to assume the role of their caregiver. Sam Wilson is from a Southern Urban community, and he recalls going to multiple elementary schools. This instability that he identified was because his mother was just “doing what she could to take care of them.”

Contrary to Sam Wilson’s single-parent experience, Miles Morales stated, “His mother and father was there, but his father was abusive and left the family.” He recalled how he enjoyed “visiting my grandfather” but he never got to see him professionally as a principal, because he would only visit one or two times per year. This outspoken participant shared his experience that he identified as a ‘hidden trauma’ that he experienced as a student. Miles Morales stated that he escaped this homelife “with a basketball and a football.”

Hailing from a northern urban multi-dwelling housing project is John Stewart who shared “the projects was his family.” He stated that everyone knew everyone and that the “kids from his projects went to the same school and went to the same small Catholic College.” John Stewart stated that “Excellence was the norm” in which his mother, a single-parent instilled in him.

As a historian, Eli King provided a cultural relevant timeline to his upbringing. Eli King stated, “I was born 13 years after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.” He shared this significance because he said, “my whole life I tried to validate who I was. I thought no-one wanted me, you know because I was adopted, me and my brother and sister were in foster care, but my queen, my adoptive mother gave me validation that I saw growing up from all white female teachers.” Being surrounded by educators as his Aunt and his cousin were both educators, he shared that he did not have a bad childhood. However, as he revealed his mother’s

segregated and abusive childhood having been spit on and harmed, has taught him to not see all people in a manner of evil and abusive. As such, Eli King shared that a [Jewish] man provided him with supports particularly in his job search.

Given the above individual and collective K-12 educational experiences, this phenomenologist began an analytic process that was designed to explicate underlying units of meaning framed within the ecological and lived context of the phenomenon under investigation (Groenwald, 2004; Hycner, 1999). As such, by listening and identifying meaning from the voices of the participants in its most rudimentary and unstructured form provided me with a framework to organize the transcripts and exploratory notes to capture these experiential statements. Further, this discovery process in open coding, is a process of reading, re-reading. And combing over transcripts sentence by sentence and line by line in search of answering “what is this about?” As such, “the conscious, effortful opening of oneself to the phenomenon as a phenomenon emerged” (Keen, 1975, p.38).

To further explore the K-12 experience, the participants naturally spoke of family and home life structures that were foundational in their school experience. Given this, a collective and unified voice emerged from each participant. This collective and unified voice allowed for the delineation and extraction of meaning from the statements that illuminated in the phenomena (Hycner, 1999). I examined and refined these units of meaning and as a result deeper patterns and relationships emerged (Moustakas, 1994). As such, a collective theme of the K-12 experience regardless of location, ethnicity, and socio-economics of the family was that the participants identified there were no Black Male teachers in their schools until the participant reached Junior High School/Middle School.

Luke Cage stated, “there were no black males until Junior High School and that principal was formerly a PE teacher.” John Stewart echoed this statement by saying, “the only black male was the custodian, not that custodian isn’t an honorable position, but I did not see any representation of me as a teacher.” Sam Wilson shared that “the only Black Male was a middle school Math teacher... being in the IB program, there were no Black teachers teaching those classes and mostly my teachers were white and female – oh except, the tech teacher, he was Black.” Miles Morales had a similar experience with Sam Wilson as he stated emphatically, “Not only were there no Black teachers, I, was the only Black kid!” A continued expression of this oneness was when he shared,

“Huh, I was the only Black kid in the gifted class, I don’t know how I got there or who recommended me and, my academic trajectory changed when I got put in gifted, but, I had to listen, I had to listen to what the counselors told the white kids to do and I made sure I did the same thing and took the same classes. If they were told to take Latin, I took Latin. Not because they avoided me, but I guess they just did not ask me about my choices.”

Miles Morales also shared that there was only one Black female teacher in gifted education as he stated, “Wow, I’m thinking back and you know, I didn’t even realize that black teachers did not teach the gifted classes. I had only one Black female teacher in my entire gifted program.”

Eli King expressed his thoughts regarding his education in a female dominant K-12 experience. Eli King stated,

“I know why there were no Black teachers, it’s because of how there is a systemic control of power. Let me reverse engineer this. Is this conditioning or choice? A white woman has validated your existence. Black boys value white womanhood. The power of

psychology and conditioning and so Little Susan will want to date Jamal. There is power in having certain figures in front of the classroom. If you mix little Susans in with little Jamals then you create a system where Susan will want to date Jamal and then idolize the Black Man or Woman as their hero. So this is why I did not have any Black Males was the pool of applicants low, was there overt and covert racism? Just like when I was a teacher, I had been there 15 years and there was no other Black person, man or woman in the school, 15 years and you could not find one?"

Eli King also shared that he felt he was not as smart as his brother or other kids when he stated,

"I remember feeling like I was stupid or something and I told the teachers something like that because I was not as smart as my brother and the teacher said, don't ever say that, you just learn differently. And learn differently I did, I learned and kept climbing to learn more and now I have a BA in History and Adolescent Education, an MA in Liberal Studies and History, a Post Masters Certificate in Educational Leadership and Doctorate in Education."

Having said this, the K-12 experience and the teaching experience from Eli King seemed unique until I re-read the transcript from Sam Wilson. Sam Wilson shared the following,

"I remember, I had no Black teachers. I went through my entire elementary school experience with no one that looked like me. When teachers asked me what did I want to be when I grew up, I hated this question because what would I aspire to be, certainly not a teacher or in a school there was no desire, no one taught me. You know, I think some people are afraid to have a Black man teach their kids. I think it is because they do not

know how to interact with a black man. They are always approaching me in a condescending way.”

Further, Virgil Hawkins shared that his experience with a Black Male teacher was not until Junior High School. Virgil Hawkins from a large metropolitan area stated that Black Males in the school was the PE teacher who was also the coach. Miles Morales, David Zavimbe, and Luke Cage also identified a Black Male PE teacher and coach as one of the only Black Males seen upon entry into middle school.

Luke Cage stated, “the PE teacher was the only Black Male and he became the principal.” David Zavimbe stated, “the PE teacher was my god-father and the football coach.” Miles Morales stated, “the football coach was the Black Male and maybe a History teacher.”

Hearing the sentiment of each participant in the study led me to review the transcripts again to make sure that this phenomenon was actually reiterated with each participant. This process of discovery took place with several rounds of open coding as I looked for emergent patterns and structures. I was seeking to ensure that the collective response was authentic in each interview, and I questioned if this was an emergent theme in order to find meaning to an otherwise individual and independent code. As such, this was a nuanced fact that was discovered of no Black Male teacher until Junior High School or Middle School.

As such, this emergent theme led me to an additional discovery in which I revisited the question related to the history of education from the black experience as a factor that leads to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. With the collective response of ‘no Black Male’ teachers until Junior High School and/or Middle School, I carefully examined this question of the history of education to determine if there were any emergent patterns in the response from the question. As such, the exploration of the Black Male

Educators in School Leadership represents a larger ecological context (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994) whose membership must be fully heard.

As a researcher, it was clear that the essence of ‘blackness’ permeated in each interview through the heard and subtle meanings of ‘blackness’ and ‘pride’ of their past, their present and their future. Knowing that my positionality of Blackness was not bracketed during the interview process, a commonality of shared pride through the lyrics from the 1968 James Brown song, “Say it Loud – I’m Black and Proud” offered an identity that resonated within the responses of the participants:

Look here
 Some people say we got a lot of malice
 Some say it's a lotta nerve
 But I say we won't quit moving
 Until we get what we deserve
 We've been 'buked and we've been scorned
 We've been treated bad, talked about
 As sure as you're born
 But just as sure as it take two eyes to make a pair, huh
 Brother, we can't quit until we get our share
 Say it loud (I'm Black and I'm proud)
 Say it loud (I'm Black and I'm proud)
 One more time, say it loud (I'm Black and I'm proud)
 I've worked on jobs with my feet and my hands
 But all the work I did was for the other man

And now we demand a chance
 To do things for ourselves
 We're tired of beating our heads against the wall
 And working for someone else
 Say it loud (I'm Black and I'm proud)
 Say it loud (I'm Black and I'm proud)
 Say it loud (I'm Black and I'm proud)
 Say it loud (I'm Black and I'm proud)

Question 2: In your educational experience, describe how the history of education (the Black Experience) impacted you in your journey towards school leadership.

Given the above lyrics, the history of education from the Black experience was designed to define an experience through 'blackness' and 'pride' in each participant's journey towards school leadership. This 'blackness' and 'pride' comes from the interviews as one of the participants stated, "I am unapologetically Black." This participant stated, "I am a Black man, and I do not hide my blackness, how could I, because when I wake up, I am Black, when I go to bed, I am Black, and when I look in the mirror, I am Black." Another participant stated this 'blackness' and 'pride' in this manner, "it must be nice for a white man to have a suit, because they can go anywhere and appear to be credible. When I put on a suit, I am just a Black man in a suit, but I am a proud Black man in a suit."

Knowing this, the participants educational experience that impacted their journey towards school leadership unfolded through thoroughly combing through the transcripts to find meaning of each experiential statement. Through this inquiry, the collective theme of the journey towards

school leadership provided divergent and convergent themes in which the history of education (the black experience) was met with silence during the interview and then an explanation of a personal experience with schooling. The above lyrics “we won’t quit moving until we get what we deserve” supported this exploration of past inequities of the participant’s experiences.

David Zavimbe shared that through his time in the military, there was subtle evidence of racism that he just “dealt with” that he never noticed in his K-12 school experience. He also identified that his schooling experience was “all black kids in an all-black school” which is similar to where he is working. His first choice as a career was not in education. Understanding the tension with questioning in phenomenology, the researcher must know when to ask supporting questions that prompts for more detail and when to allow the participant to choose not to answer questions. As such, the question related to the history of education was avoided and a response was given related to his school that he attended as a Black Male child was an all-Black school.

Sam Wilson switched his major to education and that is how he became a teacher. He recalled his professor statement, “you are a Black Male, I promise you will get a job.” Although this initial job was in teaching, he stated that he did not necessarily experience racism, but maybe biasness [not explored further]. However, he did emphasize that the large urban school system where he works is a majority minority student populated school system and yet he is the only Black Male assistant principal with only one elementary principal being a Black Male and one high school principal being a Black Male.

Miles Morales is a career switcher who was in sales and coached. Through this coaching, he stated that he went into education. However, the history of education from the Black

experience was not prevalent as he explained how his coaches “*poured into him*” when no one else did. This is his reflection:

“The coach who is the superintendent created an opportunity for me and I hope that everything that I have done since has made him feel like that was worthwhile for taking a risk on me, people talk about it, but he was a man of his word as I like to say, he threw the ball on the court, and I went and picked the ball up and made something happen.”

He recalled not experiencing any overt racism as identified by the researcher when posing the question on the history of education through the Black experience, but he stated that covertly there were instances when he was expected to fail, but he did not as he shared the following:

“This [white]teacher assumed I was not prepared and said I was going to go first, and I do the presentation and she is blown away, she was trying to set me up, and I was able to handle this because I was already ready, we are often given them the way out such as if I am expected to fail, I am going to fail, but I was wired different.”

Luke Cage expressed how cautious he was to not identify race as the reason for him not having an administrative opportunity in the large urban school system where he started working. However, he did emphasize there was a ‘good ole’ boys’ system’ in which he explained the following:

“My mother was a guidance counselor, she trained a person and when the job opened up, he [the trainee] got the job.” “It was clear that this was because [the person] went golfing with the administration and he was promoted, and my mom didn’t even get an interview.”

“She has since left [the school system] and I know this was not fair, but can I call it racism, I am very careful about this.”

As such, Luke Cage stated that he knew ‘all too well’ how the story goes as he mentioned this story with his experience in doing multiple jobs as a substitute, then a teacher, then a department chair, but not given the opportunity to move into administration in [the school system]. Luke Cage explained that when he left [the school system], he made sure to not hold anyone back who wanted to learn and to move into administration because of the oppressive experiences that he had. He shared this statement, “I am firm believer that God opens doors for a reason, on his time and not on my time.” “Your path goes where it goes.”

Another career switcher, Eli King stated that he was working multiple jobs to climb his ladder of success, “I have been very introspective and intuitive my whole life.” “Climbing and working two different jobs.” This statement was a response to his journey into leadership and if any historical factors of the black experience impacted his journey. Eli King shared this thought as he faced a covert system of racism and microaggressions:

“A white man with a suit will get the opportunity. I have five college degrees and a doctorate, and it is a struggle to get an administrative position. This other guy is groomed and tapped; he did not have to go through the process.”

During this interview, he explained through an evocative lens of systemic and systematic racism that impacted his journey towards leadership that stemmed from the history of education from the perspective of being Black in America. Eli King made a declaration regarding this question as he said,

“There is a systematic approach in racism that have led to systemic issues. Racial lines were authorized and separated us due to Plessy versus Ferguson, Dred Scott, whites did not have to find out if we were intelligent. Your perception comes by looking at us (a

skin tone difference) and then a person can...a person can create in my mind who it is I think you are based on who I have been programmed to know you to be.”

In addition to this response, he offered this exploratory statement to the problem-posing question of historic factors that may have influenced the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in School Leadership by saying,

“I can create laws customs and norms that can control how I then treat you and what opportunities you have in society.” “We have a landscape of complete debauchery and heinousness, because American history is that, and we lie, and we teach the greatness of it we teach by the perspective of the victor and not of the victim.” “We don't talk about the bad because it makes us look bad. Racism is so buried into the consciousness of the people. They are outlawing the real of teaching history in states like Florida and Texas because what it will do it will awaken the white masses to do the right thing and racist have a real interest in maintaining status quo.”

Further, these experiences were shared as he exclaimed the following, “The stain of American racism and slavery still has far reaching implications into today. That is why there is a lack of me and you in educational spaces and places.” To this point, examples were provided of how his mother experienced rape, torture, and murder as a woman raised in the South, who escaped this brutality and migrated north. He thoughtfully and evocatively shared these thoughts that were formulated to him through his mother’s experiences:

“I saw this group of people as wicked, and I characterized them based on how they took race and used them as the thing in society that could remove others that did not look like them from achieving in society. You have generations and systems of racism (prejudice + power) in Prejudice + Institutional Power to decide someone’s life outcomes. There is

this institutional power and there is this limited pool to welcome blackness into many spaces.”

Similar to Eli King, Virgil Hawkins journey into leadership was an expression of Black pride and community activism prior to going into education. Through this indoctrination as a ‘five-percenter’ and being a part of ‘The Nation’ in which beliefs were shared and the community centered his upbringing. This centering evolved and the perception of racism and “all whites are racist” changed with his faith as he shared,

“There is this concept of ‘being adopted.’ The community that we grow up in is interconnected. All of these experiences help shape who I am. You are, you are navigating spaces, people, and places. What drives me is that they coated me with love, my parents centered me. The school was set up for me to fail, but they refused to allow me to fail.”

Additionally, to this experience, was the statement from Virgil Hawkins as he breathed life into his experience by stating,

“I’m the recipient of, man, INCREDIBLE, family upbringing, my parents, my mentors, I was so taken care of in so many ways, I have to do this, it is beyond paying it forward and backward, it is my oxygen to do it the way I got it.”

To further explore Virgil Hawkins identity with “The Nation” I posed exploratory questions that asked him to share his meaning of his experiences and Virgil Hawkins offered this:

“My High School was, well, I became a five-percenter, this was centered on Black man as God and White man was the devil. I struggled with the holism of throwing them all in that band. When I would have a negative experience with white people, then there is always one white person that would save them and I said see, that is what I mean, I

struggled with putting all of them in this band based on the five-percent teachings. They not all of them, some but most, but not all.”

As such, Virgil Hawkins pathways of experience towards school leadership was an expression of overt and covert racism that he indicated through his transformational faith as he calls it metaphysical Christianity from the Unity Church which “balances my spirituality, religious and spiritual backgrounds.”

After hearing each of these statements and using probing questions related to the history of education from the Black experience, I am reminded of an inscription that was written to me as I was the recipient of the text, “No Broken Bones” by Denise Howard (2008). This inscription stated:

“In this journey called life, we sometimes face many things such as the rain, stars, storms, and the sun. You may have seen some bruises, but you as the strong queen that you are can sit or stand and say...No Bones Broken.”

As an avid reader, I quickly scurried to one of my many towers of books that were originally arranged by genre, but over time this arrangement succumbed to my re-reading for personal interest or to locate a statement that I needed as I prepared for professional meetings. Knowing that each of these statements provided a deeper exploration into the lives of the participants, I realized that this text, a realistic account of a Black person navigating through the realities and struggles of life in which these often-harsh realities vanish or are suppressed in the psyche of the mind. Knowing this, an earmarked section of the book immediately became the area that caught my attention. The chapter, “Tragedy But Not Death” (Howard, 2008 p. 146) reminded me of how the participants may have experienced an unconscious bias and their family structure either shielded them from a racist past or shed light on real experiences. Nevertheless, each participant

experienced a tragedy, but have overcome this tragedy and not succumbed to it, they each may have scars, they each may have been impacted by not having a Black Male teacher, no representation in the schools, and not given an opportunity, but they each have “No Bones Broken” in which this is a travesty, but not the final story.

Knowing this, my bias in this study needed to shift to return to the transcripts to re-read the transcripts and shift the notecards to determine what is this story of the participants saying to me as a phenomenologist once again. I needed keep with the structure of explication of data and look across the transcripts to see what emerged. In keeping my research committed to the voice of each participant, the collective response from the participants of their path into education as a career switcher yielded a sub-theme from their experiential statements regarding the history of education from the Black experience. To this point, John Stewart stated, “we were all from the same projects” “we began to do what we saw, and there was no exposure to anything else.” He recalled how there was no representation in the teaching field, and he shared a memory of how he “ventured” into special education when he attended the small Catholic College in which all of his friends attended as well. “I wanted to go higher, I wanted to do more...a drive is my internal flame that needs to be nurtured.” Although this internal flame must be nurtured, it became evident that the participants allowed their unique story to unfold based on the comfortability of them sharing their experiences.

As a phenomenologist, it then becomes my responsibility to fill in gaps based on the heard and unheard transcriptions or the seen and unseen gestures, silence, and movements of the participants during the interview. As such, phenomenology is challenging as the tension between sharing the experience and a memory can evoke unintended emotions in the participant. At a time such as this, the interview is paused and then a regrouping occurs with another question that

is not so sensitive in nature. Knowing this pivotal point in the interview, I breathed and asked the participant if they were ready to move on to something that caused less vulnerability. However, I must note that this was a pivotal time in each of the participants as their tonality and voice inflected. One participant's eyes looked up in the face-to-face interview and similarly, one participant was using his finger and touching the desk in making as he made a key point. Both physical gestures were an extension of a Black Male whose passion and care came forth not just in the words spoken in the interview, but in the actions of affirmation.

Given the above emotional component of the interview, I changed the subject to discuss the journey towards school leadership. This question of the journey towards school leadership consisted of being in an administrative preparation program. Having various geographical locations in the Eastern region of the United States, each participant identified the same experience, and this was being the only Black Male or one of two other Black Males in the leadership preparation program. Virgil Hawkins stated, "there were only three Black Males in one school, but at [university] I was the only one." David Zavimbe's experience was similar as he recalled, "there were only two out of thirty-two people in that class, me and [name], I remember that." John Stewart, Sam Wilson, Luke Cage, and Miles Morales all echoed the same statement as being the only Black Male in a doctorate course, undergraduate, and/or graduate course. However, Luke Cage and Sam Wilson shared that through taking online doctorate level classes, they were not certain who else was a Black Male based on the program having modules and no face-to-face interaction. Knowing this staggering disproportionate underrepresentation in the courses that the participants took to achieve an advanced degree for school leadership, the question regarding their opinion as to why there is a disproportionate underrepresentation of

Black Male Educators in school leadership yielded a response that centered around opportunity for advancement and being ‘invited’ to the table based on knowledge.

Question 3: In your opinion, what factors contribute to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership?

“When we don’t see us, every day working with us in classes it is hard for us to aspire to be something. We see pro-athletes that are black, we see artist being successful, this is what black youth aspire to be.”

Miles Morales(Quote from Interview)

Given the above quote from a participant in the interview, this participant expressed a range of unexpected emotions as he responded to the question related to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. This participant spoke with a firm belief and passion for what constitutes a diverse educational system. However, the participant’s voice timbered with a hope and desire for Black Males success in areas other sports and music. Similarly, Eli King expressed concern regarding not seeing “us” in the classes as he shared the following reality in this response: “they are not getting the applications from us, really, what comes first the chicken or the egg. You have ignored this population and people have come through the educational system and have not seen themselves, they are going to think this is a place not for them.”

Further Eli King stated, “You know my name [states name] will get me in the door, but when I am there, they see 260 pounds of muscle.” He further states, “...then I’m told well Dr. [name] you need more experience, or you had a phenomenal interview but...” This statement was further explored, and I was told that the school system that he was employed in as a teacher did not give him the opportunity to advance, thus he applied to another system and was hired as an assistant principal.

Luke Cage expressed this lack of opportunity in this manner, “I was department chair, I had two masters and applied for positions and would not get an interview. I was being told that my principal did not want to lose me.” Luke Cage stated that this lack of opportunity led him to apply to another school system where he was hired as an assistant principal. Similarly, David Zavimbe stated that “You need to have a promise of growth.” He expressed how there were no mentors in the schools to help any Black teacher. He also shared this epiphany as he said, “My voice did not sound like others, and I was a big guy so maybe they thought I was too dominant.” Virgil Hawkins offered this response, “Black folks have not had the best experience with school. Most people in education go towards it or if my experience was so terrible, I want to shift it.” He also shared that “I am unapologetic about this, I come from firsts, and to have [school system] not hire any other person of color since me is a reflection on who they want in their classrooms.” Sam Wilson shared the following, “I don’t see anyone in the field, so why would I want to be in the field.” John Stewart claimed, “there is no representation. Although a janitor or a cook is a good job, why would I aspire to be an educator?” Miles Morales also offered this perspective, “We get labeled so much and we are not able to be in academics, especially if you are athletic, if you are a black kid that can run and jump, but not a black kid that can think. My journey was to prove that I can do more than just run and jump.”

Given the paucity of representation in their K-12 educational experiences as well as their collegiate, graduate, and for some postgraduate or doctoral experiences, I questioned the why, why do you think the history of inequalities and racism plagues a post-modern day reality of diversity in school leadership? Additionally, I posed the question of what drives you and or what has impacted you to keep going in spite of no representation, a lack of opportunity and maintaining dignity and hope through this process. What began as a probing ancillary question,

evoked an emotional response that is captured in the word, hope. The participants each expressed how there is a reality that they face daily when they awake, this reality is that they are Black, and according to Eli King, “no suit can hide my Blackness, I shared with a colleague one time, it must be nice owning a suit [as a white male] because you are never questioned about what you know or what you bring to the table, it is expected that you know, even when you don’t.” Similarly, Virgil Hawkins stated, “I must always come better than others, because my suit can’t mask my identity, I am a Black man and that is what I see every morning when I wake up.” John Stewart offered these remarks, “there is sometimes a mirror in play, and this mirror only reflects [in leadership] what they want to see, and you know, I’m not that man in the mirror.” Yet, the participants identified how ‘hope’ of what could be for education and educators centers their path.

Sam Wilson said it in this manner,

“I don’t know, I guess I keep going because society is not used to seeing Black men who are smart, competent, who are leaders that are educated and can do the same job if not better than other people who do not look like us in a school setting.”

HOPE

Luke Cage shared his thoughts as he stated,

“You have to grind and wait your turn. With opportunity comes responsibility, but we must understand as Black Males that we must put in the work...and sometimes as the saying goes, another man’s trash is another man’s treasure.”

HOPE

David Zavimbe thoughts were,

“A school can make you or break you. I guess I am not broken, but I know that some opportunities didn’t come my way. I guess every journey does not have the same path. You start to learn and observe how people handle themselves in certain situations, you learn the new terms and research, but someone needs to give you a chance even if you don’t look like them.”

HOPE

Eli King provided the following explanation,

“Slavery was hell for Black people, and we are still dealing with the residual effects of it. Black people are tired, we are tired of waiting, we are tired of hearing hold on and wait your turn, how long is too long? What was I hoping for when the reality before me showed that I can be super educated and still denied an opportunity. So, I had to be more strategic and more didactic in my pursuit. I was quiet and didn’t tell anyone but my wife what I was doing, because I was not willing to be befallen, so I moved and operated in silence.”

HOPE

Virgil Hawkins defined this by stating,

“I am grateful and fortunate that I was around folk who really understood those principles and they had their own sense of self and their own spirituality and they knew who I was and why I was coming as I navigated the streets, I could be in professional settings and there is a distinction in the streets when people know you intend to do them no harm, I

was just that dude, I was an advocate for speaking truth and action amid a dysfunctional system of oppression in which we, Black and LatinX people are in.”

HOPE

Knowing this, neither their intellect nor eloquence “tapped” the participants as a school leader, but the hope for an opportunity was countered with layers of unjust treatment and hidden privilege by others coupled with social constructs that limited their advancement in obtaining a school leadership position. As such, this pattern of a lack of opportunity, no representation, oneness, and the hope to be seen beyond ones ‘blackness’ was a pattern that was expressed in the interview responses. Taken together with outward facing privileges in which epistemic justice is far too simplistic to capture, the 44th President of the United States of America and the first Black President of the United States of America stated in his best seller, *The Audacity of Hope* (Obama, 2016),

“I began to harbor doubts about the path I had chosen; I began feeling the way an actor or athlete must feel when, after years of commitment to a particular dream, after years of waiting tables between auditions or scratching out hits in the minor leagues, he realizes that he’s gone just about as far as talent or fortune will take him. The dream will not happen, and he now faces the choice of accepting this fact like a grown-up and moving on to more sustainable pursuits, or refusing the truth and ending up bitter, quarrelsome, and slightly pathetic.” (p.4)

To this point and to further advance the theme of lack of opportunity, no representation, oneness, and the hope to be seen beyond one’s blackness is expressed further (Obama, 2016)

“Old habits die hard, and there is always a fear on the part of many minorities that unless racial discrimination, past and present, stays on the front burner, white America will be let off the hook and hard-fought gains may be reversed...when I look at what past generations of minorities have had to overcome, I am optimistic about the ability of this next generation to continue their advance...for most of our recent history, the rungs on the opportunity ladder may have been slippery for blacks...” (p.248)

Knowing this impact of a ‘slippery’ opportunity for most minorities, having the fortitude to endure and persist ‘in spite of’ these opportunities in which were denied for many reasons, the social construct that limited each of these Black Males in their journey towards school leadership became an emergent insight in the study. To this point, I recognize inherent balance in the phenomenological explication of the data, where each research participant experiences is unique to them, while at the same time, these unique experiences can be understood within the collective experiences of the research participants within the larger ecological context. In this way, there is a healthy tension between the unique individual and their interactions with others in social context. As such, through working with experiential statements, the structure, order, and connections at the individual level provided units of meaning within the themes that unfolded and these connections offered new insights and wonderings that connected me to each case.

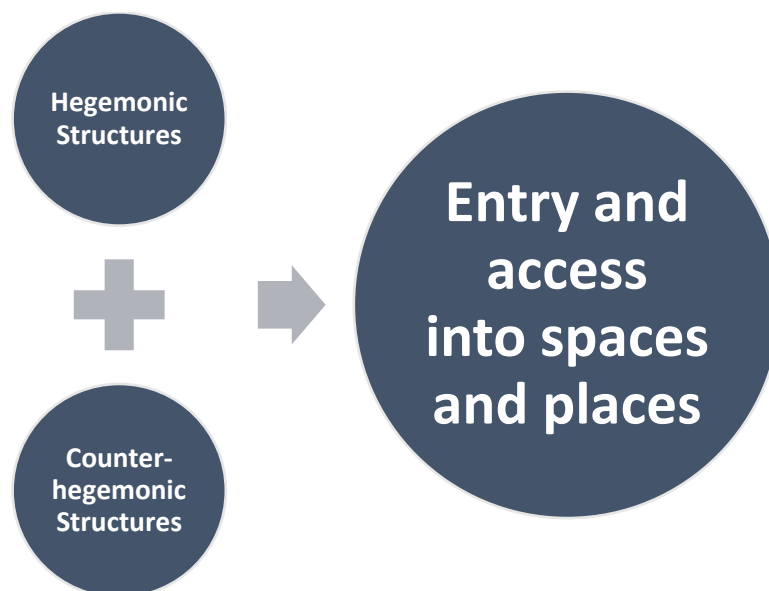
Through the explication of data, I created composite summaries of each interview and then sought to discover the forest *because* of the trees and create a gestalt synthesis of the cross-cutting themes that connect the insights gain by exploring the individual research questions and research participants. Here I identified two competing cycles; one of recurring patterns of experience with structural and systemic racism and epistemic violence, and one that might be thought of as counter-hegemonic human action – that is expressions of hope, commitment, and

faith, and making a backdoor to what had otherwise been closed to them in the face of these hegemonic structures (Appendix E).

Each of these sub-themes were explored as I navigated, in concert with the participants innate pursuit to thrive and strive for educational acceptance at the table of credibility. This epistemic violence may not be physical, but when an assault is on one's credibility and decisions are based not on a person's ability, the innate human action, in which the participants described through spirituality, hope, passion and pain drives this human action and fuels a flame to gain access to an otherwise restricted field in school leadership. As such, these actions are explored with the promise of the spirit of hope, commitment, and faith and having access and gaining entry to the field through the persistent Hegemonic Structures and Counter-Hegemonic structures (Figure 11).

Figure 11

Overarching Model: Hegemonic Structures and Counter-Hegemonic Human Actions



Given the above, the hegemonic structures that were identified included a) subtle overt and covert structural and systemic racism. This hegemonic structure is explored in the following manner. First, unconscious, and implicit bias is a structure in which the participants identified when being told to have more experience, yet others were hired with fewer years and less experience. Additionally, the participants indicated that upon entry into an interview, their dialect or stature caused an unintended reaction in which one participant described as “two-hundred and sixty pounds of muscle” and another participant described as “not sounding like what they wanted.” Additionally, such microaggressions were evident when the participants shared instances of their credibility being questioned.

Next, structural systems of racism occurred when collectively the response was not having any Black Male teachers in their primary educational experience. Shared by one of the participants in the study is that this structural racism is designed to keep Blacks from being in front of the classrooms as by doing this a Black mind is conditioned to only see whiteness in these spaces and places. As such, a sense of not belonging is infused in the psyche of Black students.

This lack of role models as primary educators is a type of conditioning in which additional structural systems of microaggressions thrive in the recruitment process of Black Males into the teaching profession. This lack of opportunity as a teacher directly impacts the underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership. Knowing this, structurally, systems in education continue to offer Eurocentric training in which these norms and practices need to evolve to be more didactic and inclusive.

Following these hegemonic structures is epistemic violence. My findings from this study captured by a quote from a participant who stated, “...rape, torture, murder...” as part of an

explanation to a research question. As these words resonated and were shaped beyond the written text on a page through a hegemonic structure of epistemic violence, this historical account of slavery is prevalent in the misunderstanding of the Black Male. This expression of epistemic violence as an attack on a person's credibility is equivalent to an attack on a person's physical body. Knowing this, the epistemic credibility of knowledge is based on the perception of what has been shown in historic images of Black Males (Figure 2) in which centuries of oppression and enslavement is what Pratt (1992) identified as a challenge in addressing the realities of indoctrination of prejudice:

“A Board of Education simply cannot permit a segregated situation to come about and then blithely announce that for a Negro student to gain attendance at a given school all he must do is live within the attendance area. To rationalize thusly is to be blinded to the realities of adult life with its prejudices and opposition to integrated housing.” (p. 67)

I have an admiration for these words and the truth spoken with the context of the news regarding the 1954 *Brown vs the Board of Education* decision in Topeka, Kansas that declared segregated schools being unconstitutional. Yet, I question whose truth and whose ‘realities’ are credible in this statement? As the reality of the Negro people at this time was a segregated, brutal, and harsh reality in which epistemic violence solidifies this notion of ‘who is credible’ and whose perspective is this credibility viewed?

Knowing this, the counter-hegemonic human action surfaced in the explication of data from the interviews. These counter-hegemonic human actions were based on ‘being what they did not have’ as the collective response of the participants in this study. Anchored with spirituality, hope, and a commitment to be ‘the beacon of light’ as a sense of advocacy for self and others, this human action explored a spiritual connection that was laced with passion and

pain of what has been endured in their unapologetic ‘blackness’ that permeates in speech, dialect, stature, and knowledge. One participant stated, “I was not only a Black boy who could run and jump, I was a Black boy who could think.”

Summary

In this chapter, I provided interview responses from the participants. these responses from the participants became an opportunity for me to learn about the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership and the journey towards school leadership from the perspective of Black Male school leaders. Through this study, I learned about perceptions, stereotypes, overt and covert racism towards Black Males that create potential barriers and challenges for the advancement of Black Males in the K-12 educational system. As such, this study’s importance provides a perspective from Black Male Educators in school leadership that identify key points and themes that emerged from the interviews, line-by-line transcriptions and insights of individual and composite nuances related to the phenomenon. I used a phenomenological approach that offered the participants autonomy in their response to the central research question so that the study design authentically captures the lived experiences of these Black Male Educators in which this academic writing is revolutionary in the inclusion of poetry, quotes, and lyrics to balance the different perspectives and allowed for the analytic process to be given equal weights in the findings. Given the above, in the next chapter, I will summarize this phenomenological study, discuss theoretical implications for future research, implications for future practice, limitations of the study, and I will offer recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Overview

This is a phenomenological study of Black Male Educator's journey towards school leadership that explored the lived experiences of seven Black Male Educators in school leadership. Through amplifying the voices of these Black Male Educators in school leadership, their individual experiences will contribute to the understanding of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

Restatement of the Problem

This study sought to explore these lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership as there is a staggering deficit of Black Males in school leadership in school divisions in which the participants are employed and throughout the United States of America. This study seeks to amplify the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership so their voices and perspectives as a Black Male in school leadership fully captures the unique stories of the research participants and that the reduction of data through explication allows for the phenomenon, in its own space with a specific meaning be viewed by the researcher (Keen, 1975).

Summary of Methodology

Given the above, the explication of data from the transcripts of the participants is designed to be read and re-read in the line-by-line analysis of the interviews with careful attention given to details, insights, hesitations, and emotions in which emergent themes surfaced. In the process of re-reading transcripts that were guided by the central research question and ancillary questions, the exploratory notes developed into experiential statements or what is

generally called qualitative research codes. To this point, these codes capture the pithy interpretation of statements from each participant. These statements from the interviews narrow the lived experiences of the participants and formalize the emergence of individual responses coupled with communal responses regardless of the participant's geographical location of collegiate schooling, home-life upbringing, and journey towards school leadership.

As such, the study framed an epistemological assumption, that is assumptions about the nature of truth and how knowledge is created. It became evident that these epistemic underpinnings did not adhere to surface level procedural norms of a given tradition, but instead evoked the emotions and vulnerabilities of the participants to shed light on an otherwise muted vantage point. Knowing this, as the researcher, I was guided by the process of moving from the particular ideographic analysis of the individual to a shared phenomenological interpretation by committing to the principles of understanding each participant's point of view. This psychological focus on personal meaning-making in the context of the interviews allowed me to be a co-collaborator of the truth yet maintain an applied flexibility according to the analytic task (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005). These iterations of discovery in inductive form (Smith, 2007) allowed me to maintain a commitment to understanding each participant's point of view while making sense of the experiences of the phenomenon.

Summary of Findings

The findings from this study indicated an alignment to the literature from chapter two. This alignment to the literature anchored the study and provided an understanding of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership through the exploration of the lived experiences of Black Males in school leadership.

The summary of the findings from Chapter IV emerged after a process of sense-making and the triangulation of the participant's semi-structured interview. By using open ended questions, the participants who a part of my personal and professional network answered the questions and provide statements from their lived experiences during the semi-structured interview. I examined each statement, and I identified significant statements that I clustered into themes that would further codify and ground each exemplar quote or statement (Moustakas, 1994).

Through the process of shuffling and re-aligning notecards, I used the research questions to capture exemplar statements and quotes from the interviews. I then asked questions related to their personal K-12 educational experiences, regarding plausible reasons for the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership, how has the history of education impacted their journey into school leadership, and their experiences in their own administrative preparation program. I then synthesized these data from the individual interviews to generate a composite structural description of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). With the semi-structured interviews not flowing a linear pathway as phenomenology is complex and there are different forms and aspects to draw from, the narration that I heard provided constructs of epistemological positioning that emerged through a heuristic approach. Through carefully and purposefully developing the nature of the problem, the participant's reflections provided a retort to the central research question, while offering a position to inform the gaps in academic literature that reveals this problem that has evolved due to the exploration of this phenomenon.

Interview Question One

Tell me about yourself, particularly your experience as a Black Male in your own K-12 experience. All of the participants gave their own information about their K-12 experience.

The participants primarily emphasized that they did not see or have Black teacher or school leader until Junior High School or Middle School. Each participant shared that this experience was common in their K-12 experience. The participants also responded to a probing question regarding their educational leadership journey and their collegiate experience. Six of the seven participants were career switchers. The participants also stated that they were the only Black Male in their collegiate experience. One participant stated that there were a few other males [white] but that he was the only Black Male.

Each of the interviewed participants, spoke of a family structure that kept them safe from harm within the neighborhood, safe from overt racism, and safe within the school structure in which they lived. This safety that the participants spoke of manifested in a spiritual realm as the participants emphasized that the family had a spiritual connection that provided a structure of belief in hope. One participant, Luke Cage, stated, “What God has for me is for me...not in my time, but in his time.” As this question was responded to, another theme emerged related to the family structure. The participants all acknowledged that there was a sense of an ‘extended’ family that included the neighborhood, coaches, and a person that was the catalyst for change in their trajectory of educational advancement. One of the participants stated, “If it was not for this professor, I would not have gotten the job as a teacher, he made a phone call, and the rest is history.” Each participant was adamant that in their experience in K-12 education, there was no Black Male representation in the school. Knowing this, the participants each stated that this lack of representation was a reason for them to be “what they did not have.” Similar to the above lack of representation, the participants who shared their leadership journey also stated that they were not given an opportunity. The lack of being given an opportunity was a theme that emerged from each participant regardless of age or geographic location.

Finally, in this question, the cross-gutting theme of hope emerged. The participants provided exemplar quotes with a similar response to grappling with the past memory yet being hopeful in a shift to the administrative preparation process and teacher recruitment process that will seek and retain more Black Males in education, thereby having a pool to move into leadership.

Interview Question Two

In your opinion, what factors contribute to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership? This question had several themes that emerged from the data concerning challenges that contribute to this disproportionality. These themes included a lack of Black Males being recruited into the teaching profession, a lack of opportunity for the Black Male who is hired as a teacher, a lack of training, a history of misunderstanding Black Males and their credibility of knowledge.

The theme of the lack of Black Males in the recruitment pool was based on the participant's administrative role and seeking candidates of color to fill vacancies in their school. Three of the participants stated that the candidate pool does not have teaching candidates. Two of the participants stated that Black Males are not being encouraged to go into education. This lack of encouragement to pursue education is based on not seeing any representation of Black Males in the field. Two of the participants shared that those Black Males who are in education are Health and Physical Education teachers and athletic coaches. These two participants stated that these males are comfortable in their job and coaching. This comfort keeps them in the school, but they do not choose to pursue administration.

All participants shared that there was a lack of opportunity for advancement due to inequalities that have been faced in interview practices and hiring protocols. One participant

claimed that his name and resume would advance his candidacy for a school leadership position, but upon entry his tall frame and defined body structure was a barrier to him securing a position. However, this same participant stated that he, like four other participants searched for employment outside of where they were teaching and was given the opportunity to become a school leader. Based on this, five of the seven participants had to apply outside of their school system for an administrative position. Two of the participants secured a leadership position after several trials of being overlooked and told, “you are not ready, or you need more experience.” This statement also conceptualizes an experiential statement by the participants in which there was a lack of training and being given opportunities was a cyclical wheel of a lack of getting an opportunity due to not being given an opportunity.

Lastly, all of the participants shared that their credibility was in question. The participants stated that if their credibility is in question, then a novice Black Male teacher’s credibility is also in question. One participant shared that the concept of hiring was reflective of who school systems choose to put in front of their classrooms. Another participant viewed credibility and defined it as, “Not being able to show that you can run a school more effectively than others.” Another participant noted how his five degrees did not warrant him credible because he can’t mask his skin tone.

Interview Question Three

In your educational experience, describe how the history of education (the Black Experience) impacted you in your journey towards school leadership. This question prompted a theme to emerge that centered around hope. Two participants explored this question in-depth and provided a historical perspective on racism and slavery in which one participant stated, “slavery was hell...” Another participant echoed the sentiments of this participant and he

stated, “we are still dealing with the residual effects of bondage, Jim Crow, and segregation.”

The other participants did not exclusively name a direct linkage to the history of education but did speak on bias and microaggressions that were faced in their pursuit of school leadership.

Each participant did express exemplar quotes as a hope for why they are in this position of school leadership in spite of a racialized past. One participant stated, “I’m the beacon of light for this community.” This participant stated that he grew up in the rural town that he currently works in, and he is seen as the hope of the community. Another participant shared, “I always kind of wanted to be what I did not have.” This participant shared that he believes he is the advocate for those students who were like him who grew up in foster care and may have felt hopeless. This participant stated that he is comfortable with sharing his story, because it is his platform to what happens when you continue to hope. Two other participants shared how they would like to see a change in teacher and administrator preparation programs. They both believe that in order for a change to occur, this must take place in school systems.

The lyrics from the song by Sam Cook “*A Change Is Gonna Come*” capture the sentiments of the participants in this study. Released in 1965, the following song emphasizes the participant’s sense-making of change and hope for the future of Black Males in education.

I was born by the river, in a little tent

Oh, and just like the river

I've been running ever since

It's been a long

A long time coming

But I know a change gonna come

Oh, yes it will

It's been too hard living
But I'm afraid to die
'Cause I don't know what's up there
Beyond the sky
It's been a long
A long time coming
But I know a change gonna come
Oh, yes it will
I go to the movie
And I go downtown
Somebody keep telling me
Don't hang around
It's been a long
A long time coming
But I know, a change gonna come
Oh, yes it will
Then I go to my brother
And I say, brother, help me please
But he winds up, knockin' me
Back down on my knees
Oh, there been times that I thought
I couldn't last for long
But now I think I'm able, to carry on

It's been a long
A long time coming
But I know a change gonna come
Oh, yes it will

Composite Summaries and Gestalt Synthesis of the Findings

The above lyrics anchor findings of this study that I explored through a cycle of structural and systemic racism and epistemic violence.

This cycle framed my findings as the themes such as hope, access, and opportunity resonated during the explication of data from the interviews. Each of these sub-themes were explored as I navigated, in concert with the participant's innate pursuit to thrive and strive for educational acceptance at the table of credibility. This epistemic violence may not be physical, but when an assault is on one's credibility and decisions are based not on a person's ability, the innate human action, in which the participants described through spirituality, hope, passion and pain drives this human action and fuels a flame to gain access to an otherwise restricted field in school leadership. As such, these actions are explored with the promise of the spirit of hope, commitment, and faith and having access and gaining entry to the field through the persistent hegemonic structures by their own counter-hegemonic human action (Figure 11).

These interconnected attributes of the participants in the study resonated as their entry into the field may not have been a typical process and their seat at the table may have been laced with thorns, but access...they did, and sit they are! Knowing that these career switchers transitioned into education in a variety of ways as their paths may have not started in the same manner, but their goal was aligned, and that goal was, "to be a representation of what I did not have." Not only was this a goal but through overcoming systems and structures of covert racism

and microaggressions, the collective stories of ‘The Magnificent Seven’ is an opportunity to advance scholarly research through a spirited, literal, and artistic construct.

Theoretical Implications

The above conceptualization of the overarching model of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic structures for this research is more than a depiction of hope, opportunity, and access in educational spaces and places for Black Males. This model can advance scholarly research as other research is often ahistorical. Yet, I propose there is a need for scholarly research to embrace human interactions and history, not as a separate entity, but as an integral interconnected aspect of what makes human beings, human. By embedding poetry, images, lyrics, and literature this problem-posing tool can contribute to and be embraced by evocative story telling from one’s personal experience in which each person is shaped and defined by the history as they know it, the truth as they speak it, and the experiences as they live it. As such, I can’t imagine this study or other phenomenological studies to take shape without history, spirituality, and defining experiences that are interconnected with the participant. Each of these entities are not a separate part of human experience, but a viable and relevant part of a human experience. These are areas in which this study contributes to scholarly research and can become a vanguard of pushing phenomenological scholarly research into this area.

Knowing this, some research and scholars create an appearance of rigor through standards of practice and rule out, or overlook history, art, literature, poetry, and lyrics, yet as an evocative layer to phenomenological research of the lived experiences of human subjects, this change in academic writing is a unique angle brought to phenomenology as an opportunity to contribute to advance scholarly research. Given the unique angle in this study, the following sub-themes emerged in the study: hope, spirituality, access and opportunity, passion and pain. Each

of these seemingly unmeasurable actions were foundational as the individual and collective responses from the participants.

Hope

What is hope? How does one define hope? This characteristic from a social justice angle is an internal spark that fuels a person to be persistent amid epistemic injustices and microaggressions that are both overtly and covertly demonstrated. Wikipedia¹¹ defines hope as “an optimistic state of mind that is based on an expectation of a positive outcome with respect to one’s life or the world at large.” Given this definition, each of the Black Males in this study expressed an optimistic outlook as they embodied the action of “being what they did not have” as this optimism is based on the expectation of a positive outcome in their careers not because of their life and their Black experience, but in spite of their life and Black experience.

Spirituality

What is spirituality? How do you define spirituality? This sense of existentialism is as complex as the individuals whose stories embodied this study. This same spirituality was not defined nor overly-emphasized yet subtle nuances of spirituality surfaced within each story. Such symbols of this spirituality were stated with “What God has for me is for me” by one of the participants. Additionally, another participant shared that many things were not “said” in the atmosphere as not to corrupt what he was doing. This participant also stated, “I moved in silence.” This statement is a cultural expression that is often heard in Black families. Knowing this and hearing this expression is also rooted in slavery when runaways, “moved in silence” to avoid capture, avoid being returned into enslavement or suffer a finite judgement of death.

¹¹ Wikipedia is an online source that provides definitions.

Access and Opportunity

What is access and opportunity? How does one get access and have an opportunity? The access to spaces and places is not a revolutionary idea, but it is a dilemma that Black Males have faced in places and spaces in the educational arena. To this point this theme emerged as the participants collectively noted that there “were not Black Males” either in their elementary experience as a student or in their collegiate experience with the participants “being the only one” in their classes. This theme emerged across the generational (age) differences of the participants, across the geographical locations of the participants, and even across the family structure of the participants. Each of the participants shared that they were not able access certain positions and how they were not given an opportunity even though they had advanced degrees and demonstrated exceptional performance and longevity in their school systems.

Also, this covert denial of access and opportunity to lead a school was manifested in the participant’s shared knowledge of ‘not looking like’ or ‘sounding like’ what their resume indicated. One participant shared, “my resume gets me in the door” and another participant commented, “I am not even invited to the table, so how can I show who I am?” This theme is defined in the personal narratives of the participants.

Passion and Pain

This study found that all of the participants possessed a strong and masculine characteristic in which their inflection and tonality during the interviews were extensions of their dynamic and authentic personalities and character. The passion in which each spoke of being “a beacon of light for the community” or even “the oxygen” characterizes the passion that each Black Male Educator brought to the study. However, interwoven within the passion was a painful reminder of “not being smart enough” or “I masked who I was with a smile” or “I guess

that is just how it is.” Being vulnerable in this moment allowed the true nature of these Black Males to be reflective in this somewhat painful past that through an innate flame that burned for them to persevere, they did, in spite of any adversity either overtly or covertly experienced. As previously stated, these unique angles that have been brought about in this study create a compelling argument to advance scholarly research.

To further this point, the main contribution of my research is to gain an understanding of the intersectionality of the participant’s actions and their conditions of academic attainment as a condition for systems to evoke change in practices related to equity, diversity, and inclusion in all areas of educational spaces and places. In looking at the contributions of the participants in this study, I was able to make connections with lyrics from McFadden and Whitehead (1979) *Ain’t No Stopping Us Now* as a context of the lived experiences of these Black Male Educators in school leadership in which a portion of the lyrics are:

Ain't no stoppin' us now

We're on the move!

Ain't no stoppin us now!

We've got the groove!

Ain't no stoppin' us now

We're on the move!

Ain't no stoppin us now!

We've got the groove!

There's been so many things that's held us down

But now it looks like things are finally comin' around

I know we've got, a long long way to go, and where we'll end up, I don't know.

But we won't let nothin' hold us back, we're putting ourselves together, we're polishing up our
act!

If you felt we've been held down before, I know you'll refuse to be held down anymore!

Don't you let nothing, nothing, stand in your way!

I want ya'll to listen, listen, to every word I say, every word I say!

Ain't no stoppin us now!

We're on the move!

Ain't no stoppin us now!

We've got the groove!

Ain't no stoppin us now!

We're on the move!

Ain't no stoppin us now!

We've got the groove!

I know you know someone that has a negative vow, and if you're trying to make it, they only
push you aside.

They really don't have, nowhere to go.

Ask them where they're going, they don't know.

But we won't let nothin' hold us back, we're gonna put ourselves together, we're gonna polish up
our act!

And if you've ever been held down before, I know you'll refuse to be held down anymore!

Don't you let nothing, nothing, stand in your way!

I want ya'll to listen, listen, to every word I say, every word I say!

Ain't no stoppin us now!

We're on the move!

Implications for Practice

There have been studies conducted on the impact of Black Male Educators on student achievement. There are also studies on Black Masculine Care in Urban Schools. A few studies have ventured into case studies of Black Male School leaders. These case studies are studies of Black Male leaders who lead a predominantly white K-12 institution and/or case studies on a Black Male school leader's impact on teacher retention. The majority of these studies are also qualitative in nature, and some are mixed-methods studies. There are very few phenomenological studies of the lived experiences and perspectives of Black Male Educator's journey towards school leadership that will shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

Limitations of the Study

This study is the study that will provide valuable insights into the lived experiences of Black Males Educator's journey towards school leadership and how their experiences shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership, but moreover provide an authentic angle of truth and realities in which history, poetry, art, literature, and lyrics offer a perspective of human experience in which mere academic treatment unintentionally redacts this vantage point. Each of the participants in the study have individual and collective experiences and each have brought to this study a realistic truth that was navigated through emotions of purpose and pain. These expressions of human experiences that are identified in this study are an authentic expression of complexities and challenges from the perspective of Black Male's educational advancement. These stories come from their own

personal K-12 experiences of having no Black Male representation as a teacher or leader until Middle School or Junior High School and these stories extend this K-12 experience to K-16 as the Black Males in this study were the only Black Male in advanced studies. Given this staggering deficit of Black Males in the educational arena, the study identified how systemic and structural racism in education design contributes to the systematic failure to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion in the educational arena.

Further, this study contributes to academic and scholarly literature on potential changes that can be in the recruitment and retention of BIPOC individuals in the field of education, equitable hiring practices for administrative positions, and recruitment and retention in administrative preparation programs.

When systems are recruiting in the field of education, it is necessary to ‘level the playing field’ for BIPOC individuals by ensuring that their resumes are a reflection of their work. I am of the opinion that names on the resumes should be removed and that the Human Resource office should maintain confidentiality of this name until the time of the interview. In this manner, an effort to protect the applicant whose name may reflect a cultural identity is protected.

Similarly, upon the BIPOC candidate being hired a concentrated effort must be given to provide on-going professional development for the hire, particularly if the employee is placed in schools that are known to be hard to staff. Further, retention practices by the system should afford the employee with mentors who provide professional guidance for the support and retention of the BIPOC employee.

As candidates are hired and retained, an effort by the school system of equity and diversity in the administrative preparation program should include a requirement of current building principals to recommend diverse candidates for this program. No longer can principals

“be afraid to lose” a Black teacher, because this teacher provides support to students in multiple ways, but a principal should be required to identify and recommend candidates for programs to advance diversity in the workplace particularly for those candidates who would like to remain in the division that they are employed in as a teacher.

Recommendations for Future Research/A Distillation of Findings

The ‘Magnificent Seven’ have taken on an identity in which their narratives are a landscape and pathway for additional scholarly research on the lived experiences of Black Male Educators. These masked identities in which each participant’s ‘superhero like’ characteristics divulged an evocative declaration of truth from the perspective of these Black Males. Despite their commitment to be the defender of truth, the advocate for family and community, and the protectors of their own identity as Black Males, each participant expressed the notion of ‘being what they did not have’ which was the representation of a Black Male Educator in a person’s K-12 school experience.

These narratives move beyond the scope of academic writing and scholarly research, this phenomenological study became transformational and a liberating journey for me as a researcher and I might imagine for the participants. I say this because during the interview, I used caution and an innate sense of collective responsibility to research the phenomenon, but to realize the vulnerability of a human subject. As such, tension within the memories of the Black Males were evident during the interview when an escalated voice permeated through the context of what was said, not as a what may be known by non-Blacks as an aggressive tonality, what I heard was passion and pain of a truth and reality. This passion and pain from their memory that transcended space, place, and time afforded each participant to breathe life into an otherwise suppressed and distant memory of hope and healing through a ‘story.’ I dare say ‘a story’ as these experiences

are more than ‘a story’ but these experiences are real-life from real men who provided a reality in which many only have a surface level knowledge. As such, I catapulted with the participants as a conjoined twin, sharing this space, place and time to be a sojourner of this truth, hope, and reality in which poetry, art, lyrics, and literature also became a co-collaborator of these authentic experiences.

Given this, there are several steps that can be taken by the academic world and K-12 school systems to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workspace, particularly addressing the Black Male Educator’s journey towards school leadership and address the challenges of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership. First, more attention and effort need to be in collegiate recruitment efforts of Black Males into the field of education to include training and coaching for interviews, resume writing, and experiences that will make the Black Male a sought-after candidate. Second, a viable mentor program for the Black Male Educator within the teaching profession so that the Black Male teacher is given opportunities and experiences in leadership roles within the school system. Finally, a strategic plan for minority applicants in a leadership cohort or administrative preparation program. By doing this, the curriculum, application, and training is not a linear list of requirements, but a strategic program specifically designed for minority candidates that will cover culturally relevant pedagogy to enhance the opportunity for placement in leadership roles at the completion of the program.

Conclusion

When I first started this research, I had recently retired as a middle school principal from an urban school system in the southeast region of the United States of America. Although my role as principal has changed, what can never change is my skin color. I am Black. I have always

felt that my experience as a Black female was neither one of the best nor one of the worst as I moved through the educational maze seeking advancement. My resume provided skills and additional responsibilities related to my leadership capacities, yet I too was invited to interview in certain places but was denied an opportunity to a position. I too was told, “I’ll interview you, but I can’t give you the job.” Hearing this sparked an internal flame to persist amid a treacherous education system that identified who is ‘tapped’ and who is overlooked. Hearing this also was a devastating blow to my psyche of ‘worthiness,’ ‘why,’ ‘what to do next’ for my professional career. I too have watched others advance further than me although I trained them during my tenure in education, yet, I too did not become bitter, but kept hoping for this opportunity in which I am certain was due to my skin and my strong dialect. I too had to become very strategic and identified areas whereas I had to ‘code switch’ to further advance my career and ‘own my blackness’ while displaying how articulate I am and how I can advance the vision and mission of the school system. I too, had hope. Published in 1926, “*I, too*” by Langston Hughes is a poem in which Hughes describes a ubiquitous racial oppression that degrades Black Americans.¹² This poem’s significance has been an extension of the Black experience as these same truths are even expressed at the time of this study.

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

¹² “I, too” by Langston Hughes can be found on Wikipedia.

And grow strong.
 Tomorrow,
 I'll be at the table
 When company comes.
 Nobody'll dare
 Say to me,
 "Eat in the kitchen,"
 Then.
 Besides,
 They'll see how beautiful I am
 And be ashamed—
 I, too, am America.

Similar to many researchers, this study has been a professional and personal endeavor. Yet, unlike many researchers, this study has been transformational as I identify myself as a phenomenologist who has developed a drive and passion to explore related phenomena that will advance scholarly research on equity, diversity, and inclusion in the educational system and workforce. Having the framework of phenomenology from Husserl (Al-Saji, 2010; Dowling, 2007) and Heidegger, my lens of inquiry is developing as I quench my thirst of studying things from a person's point of view. In my three decades as an educator, I believe that every experience has prepared me for this pivotal point in my academic career. I believe that my transformation and steadfast commitment to the study has allowed me to 'launch' into an ethos to gain an understanding of lived experiences that can be captured in scholarly articles to close the equity gap.

Further, my participants have allowed me the freedom to share space and time in their lives as an entity of their lived experiences to transform educational practices that can be more inclusive for a diverse population. Also, I feel liberated. I feel liberated in that the reality and the truth of these lived experiences from Black Male Educators have allowed me to own my positionality independent of my own story, yet collective of the experiences from the participants.

Throughout this process, I have been given the freedom to be expressive and revolutionary in this phenomenological research as I embedded art, poetry, literature, and lyrics in the study as mere academic treatment alone could mute the voice of the lived experiences of the Black Male Educators. To this point, I have been liberated to and encouraged to question any tensions in which the participants amplified in which a complex narrative, an overlapping racial tension, and family histories existed not just in the context of these experiences, but in the psyche and buried memories of the participant's realities.

I am honored to be able to navigate through these memories with "The Magnificent Seven" as they each became the conductor of a train of insights, experiences, and positionality. I am honored to have reflective praxis and insights living in a variety of geographic locations that allowed my journey in this study to capture the eloquence and artistic expressions from the participants as a masterpiece of truth and reality. As a reader and now a scholar and co-laborer in the academic world, I am reminded of a few books that I have read and that I will re-read whose titles are instrumental in the navigation of these lived experiences of this study. Written by Robert A. Pratt (1992), *"The Color of Their Skin: Education and Race in Richmond Virginia 1954-1989"* is a compact text that depicts a story of integration. *"Now Is Your Time,"* written by Walter Dean Myers (1991) is a text whose introduction offers these words,

“The African-American experience cannot be told in one story, or even a hundred, for it is a living experience, ever changing, ever growing, ever becoming richer. Events of the past cannot change, but they can change in our perception of them, and in our understanding of what they mean to us today. What we understand of our history is what we understand of ourselves.” (p. ix)

This introduction is a resounding statement of this study, *Hiding in Plain Sight: A Phenomenological Exploration of Black Male Educators in School Leadership*. This introduction offers a lens in which the narratives and exemplar quotes of the participants are a collection of story, after story, after story of a lived experience that must be explored.

References

- Adelman, B (1963). *Martin Luther King delivers the "I have a dream" speech from the podium at the March on Washington*, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>
- Aguayo, D. (2018). Dismantling Racism in Public Schools Using Critical Race Theory and Whiteness Studies. *Urban Education*, 54(5), 764–771.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085918783822>
- Al-Saji, A. (2010). Bodies and sensings: On the uses of Husserlian phenomenology for feminist theory. *Continental Philosophy Review*, 43(1), 13–37. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-010-9135-8>
- Alcoff, L. M. (2008). Caliban's Phenomenological Ontology. *The CLR James Journal*, 14(1), 9-25.
- Alexander, H. A. (2006). A View from Somewhere: Explaining the Paradigms of Educational Research. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 40(2), 205–221.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9752.2006.00502.x>
- Amos, Y.T. (2016). Voices of teacher candidates of color on white race evasion: ‘I worried about my safety!.’ *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 29, 1002 - 1015.
- Anderson, J. D. (1988). *The education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*. Univ of North Carolina Press.
- Angelou, M. (2011). *And Still I Rise: A Book of Poems*. Radom House, New York (Original work published 1978)
- Angelou, M. (2008). *“I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings.” Level 6*. Penguin. (Original work published 1969)

- Attridge, D., Geoff Bennington, & Young, R. (1987). *Post-structuralism and the question of history*. Cambridge University Press.
- Atwood, E., & López, G. R. (2014). Let's be critically honest: towards a messier counterstory in critical race theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 27(9), 1134–1154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2014.916011>
- Barack Obama. (2008). *The audacity of hope*. Text.
- Bass, L. R. (2019). Black Male Leaders Care Too: An Introduction to Black Masculine Caring in Educational Leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 56(3), 0013161X1984040. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x19840402>
- Bass, L., & Alston, K. (2018). Black Masculine Caring and the Dilemma faced by Black Male Leaders. *Journal of School Leadership*, 28(6), 772–787. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461802800604>
- Bell, D. (2003). Diversity's distractions. *Colum. L. Rev.*, 103, 1622.
- Bell, D. A. (1980). Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest Convergence Dilemma. *Harvard Law Review*, 93(3), 518–533. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1340546>
- Benoot, C., Hannes, K., & Bilsen, J. (2016). The use of purposeful sampling in a qualitative evidence synthesis: A worked example on sexual adjustment to a cancer trajectory. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-016-0114-6>
- Bernstein, B. (2003). *Class, codes and control: The structuring of pedagogic discourse* (Vol. 4). Psychology Press.
- Bernstein, R. J. (1991). *Ethics After Babel*.

- Bhattacharya, K., & Kim, J.-H. (2018). Reworking Prejudice in Qualitative Inquiry With Gadamer and De/Colonizing Onto-Epistemologies. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 107780041876720. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800418767201>
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1997). *Qualitative research for education*. Boston, MA, USA:: Allyn & Bacon.
- Borosso, B. from exclusion to inclusion, from judgment to acceptance, and from disability to difference?.
- Bracey, G. E. (2014). Toward a Critical Race Theory of State. *Critical Sociology*, 41(3), 553–572. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920513504600>
- Bredo, E. (2009). Comments on Howe: Getting Over the Methodology Wars. *Educational Researcher*, 38(6), 441–448. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x09343607>
- Brown, J. (1968). *Say it Loud - I'm Black and I'm Proud* [MP3]. Vox Studios.
- Browne-Ferrigno, T. (2011). Mandated University–District Partnerships for Principal Preparation: Professors' Perspectives on Required Program Redesign. *Journal of School Leadership*, 21(5), 735–756. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461102100505>
- Brunson, R. M. (n.d.). *I'm Free* [MP3]. Christian Accompaniment Track.
- Cabot, H. (2016). “Refugee Voices.” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 45(6), 645–672. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241615625567>
- Capaldi, E. J., & Proctor, R. W. (2000). Laudan's Normative Naturalism: A Useful Philosophy of Science for Psychology. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 113(3), 430. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1423367>
- Carastathis, A. (2008). The Invisibility of Privilege: A critique of intersectional models of identity. *Les Ateliers de L'éthique*, 3(2), 23. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1044594ar>

- Carastathis, A. (2014). The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory. *Philosophy Compass*, 9(5), 304–314. <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12129>
- Carpenter, B. W., & Diem, S. (2013). Talking Race: Facilitating Critical Conversations in Educational Leadership Preparation Programs. *Journal of School Leadership*, 23(6), 902–931. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461302300601>
- Carter Godwin Woodson, & Lynch, W. (2009). *The mis-education of the Negro ; and the Willie Lynch letter*. Feather Tail Press.
- Carter Godwin Woodson. (1933). *The Mis-education of the Negro*. ReadaClassic.com.
- Carter Godwin Woodson. (2009). *The mis-education of the Negro ; and, the education of the Negro : Carter G. Woodson's two classic works in one volume, unabridged*. Feather Tail Press.
- Carter Godwin Woodson. (2018). *The mis-education of the Negro*. Createspace Independent Publishing Platform.
- Castro-Gómez, S., Kopsick, translated by K., & Golding, D. (2021). Michel Foucault and the coloniality of power. *Cultural Studies*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2021.2004435>
- Chase, G. (2017). The early history of the Black Lives Matter movement, and the implications thereof. *Nev. LJ*, 18, 1091.
- Clandinin, D. J. (2006). Narrative Inquiry: A Methodology for Studying Lived Experience. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 27(1), 44–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103x060270010301>
- Cohen, L. J. (1989). Belief and acceptance. *Mind*, 98(391), 367-389.
- Collins, P. H. (2017). Intersectionality and epistemic injustice. In *The Routledge handbook of*

- epistemic injustice* (pp. 115-124). Routledge.
- Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, L. (2001). Naturing the Nation: Aliens, Apocalypse and the Postcolonial State. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27(3), 627–651.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430120074626>
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2–14. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x019005002>
- Cooke, S. (1964). *A Change Is Gonna Come* [MP3]. RCA Victor.
- Coppin, F. J. (1913). *Reminiscences of school life, and hints on teaching* (No. 138). AME Book Concern.
- Crenshaw, K. (2014, September 24). Why Intersectionality Can't Wait. *In Theory Opinion: The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-theory/wp/2015/09/24/why-intersectionality-cant-wait/>
- Crenshaw, K. W. (2006). Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence Against Women of Color. *Kvinder, Køn & Forskning*, 2-3. <https://doi.org/10.7146/kkf.v0i2-3.28090>
- Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative* (Vol. 7). Prentice Hall Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Crosby, F. J. (1873). *Blessed Assurance* [Streamed]. Christian Hymnal.
- Curry, T. (2008). Saved by the bell: Derrick Bell's racial realism and pedagogy. *Philosophical Studies in Education*, 39, 35–46.
- Darder, A. (2018). *The Student Guide to Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (pp. 1–191). Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. (Original work published 2017)

- DeCuir, J. T., & Dixson, A. D. (2004). "So When It Comes Out, They Aren't That Surprised That It Is There": Using Critical Race Theory as a Tool of Analysis of Race and Racism in Education. *Educational Researcher*, 33(5), 26–31.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x033005026>
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (1998). Critical race theory: Past, present, and future. *Current legal problems*, 51(1), 467.
- Dillet, B. (2017). What is Poststructuralism? *Political Studies Review*, 15(4), 516–527.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929917712931>
- Dimock, M. (2007). *The Changing Racial and Ethnic Composition of U.S. Public Schools* (pp. 1–6). Pew Research Center.
- Douglass, B. G., & Moustakas, C. (1985). Heuristic Inquiry: The Internal Search to Know. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 25(3), 39–55.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167885253004>
- Dowling, M. (2007). From Husserl to van Manen. A review of different phenomenological approaches. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 44(1), 131–142.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2005.11.026>
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (2005). *The souls of Black folk*. Barnes & Noble Classics.
- Duan, N., Bhaumik, D. K., Palinkas, L. A., & Hoagwood, K. (2014). Optimal Design and Purposeful Sampling: Complementary Methodologies for Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 524–532. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-014-0596-7>
- Dudziak, Mary L. The limits of good faith: Desegregation in Topeka, Kansas, 1950–1956. *Law and History Review* 5.2 (1987): 351-391.

- Dylan, B. (1963). *Only a pawn in their game* [Vinyl]. Sony Music Entertainment.
- Ebo, RuNett Nia. (1996). "Lord, Why Did You Make Me Black?" In *God Has All You Need: Because All You Need Is God?* Self-published through Lulu Distribution
- Edward, K.-L., & Welch, T. (2011). The extension of Colaizzi's method of phenomenological enquiry. *Contemporary Nurse*, 39(2), 163–171.
<https://doi.org/10.5172/conu.2011.39.2.163>
- Edwards, L. (2022). "I'm a PR person. Let's just deal with it." Managing intersectionality in professional life. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 2046147X2210893.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2046147x221089323>
- Etheridge, B. (2022). The Fight for Fair Training: Fair Employment, Defense Worker Training, and the African American Civil Rights Movement in the South, 1940–1945. *Journal of Southern History*, 88(3), 501-538.
- Fant, T. L. (2017). *Black, Male and Teaching: Exploring the Experiences, Perspectives and Teaching Practices of Black Male Teachers* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Nebraska-Lincoln).
- Ford, T. G., Lavigne, A. L., Fiegener, A. M., & Si, S. (2020). Understanding District Support for Leader Development and Success in the Accountability Era: A Review of the Literature Using Social-Cognitive Theories of Motivation. *Review of Educational Research*, 90(2), 264–307. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654319899723>
- Freire, P. (1968). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Fuller, E., Hollingworth, L., & An, B. P. (2019). Exploring intersectionality and the employment of school leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 57(2), 134–151.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/jea-07-2018-0133>

- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*, 6(3), 167–191.
- Gates, H. L. (1993). *Loose cannons: Notes on the culture wars*. Oxford University Press on Demand.
- Genao, S., & Mercedes, Y. (2021). All We Need Is One Mic: A Call for Anti-racist Solidarity to Deconstruct Anti-Black Racism in Educational Leadership. *Journal of School Leadership*, 105268462199304. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1052684621993046>
- Gilley, B. (2017). The case for colonialism. *Third World Quarterly*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2017.1369037>
- Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers : an introduction*. Longman.
- Glossary • Racial Equity Tools*. (2013). Racialequitytools.org. <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>
- Goldberg, D. T. (2008). Racisms without Racism. *PMLA*, 123(5), 1712–1716. <https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2008.123.5.1712>
- Gooden, M. A. (2012). What does racism have to do with Leadership? Countering the idea of color-blind leadership: A reflection on race and the growing pressures of the urban principalship. *Educational Foundations*, 67–84.
- Gooden, M. A., & Dantley, M. (2012). Centering Race in a Framework for Leadership Preparation. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 7(2), 237–253. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1942775112455266>
- Gorman, A. (2021). *The hill we climb : an inaugural poem for the country*. Viking Books For Young Readers, An Imprint Of Penguin Random House.

- Gregory, K. (2019). Lessons of a Failed Study: Lone Research, Media Analysis, and the Limitations of Bracketing. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, 160940691984245. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919842450>
- Groenewald, T. (2004). A Phenomenological Research Design Illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3, 42 - 55.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2(163-194), 105.
- Hammersley, M. (2000). The Relevance of Qualitative Research. *Oxford Review of Education*, 26(3-4), 393–405. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713688545>
- Hampton, B., Peng, L., & Ann, J. (2008). Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions of Urban Schools. *The Urban Review*, 40(3), 268–295. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-008-0081-2>
- Harley, S. (1996). *The timetables of African-American history: a chronology of the most important people and events in African-American history*. Simon & Schuster.
- Harman, H., Bruce, F., Buck, K., Cherry, J., Latham, P., & Russell, D. (2020). *Black people, racism, and human rights* (pp. 1–45). Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons.
- Hartlep, N. D. (2009, October 11). *Critical Race Theory: An Examination of its Past, Present, and Future Implications* (pp. 1–18) [Dissertation].
- Haydon, G., Browne, G., & van der Riet, P. (2018). Narrative inquiry as a research methodology exploring person centered care in nursing. *Collegian*, 25(1), 125–129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.colegn.2017.03.001>
- Hays, D. G., & Singh, A. A. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry in clinical and educational settings*. Guilford Press.
- Heidegger, M., Fried, G., & Polt, R. (2014). *Introduction to metaphysics*. Yale Univ Pr.

- Helms, J. E. (1994). Racial Identity and Career Assessment. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 2(3), 199–209. <https://doi.org/10.1177/106907279400200301>
- Henderson, G. (2015). Leadership experiences of African American male secondary urban principals: The impact of beliefs, values, and experiences on school leadership. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 6(2), 38–54.
- Hofer, B. K., & Pintrich, P. R. (2002). Personal Epistemology: The Psychology of Beliefs about Knowledge and Knowing. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410604316>
- Holliday, B. (1939). *Strange fruit* [Vinyl]. Commodore Records.
- Hollingworth, L., & Dude, D. (2009). Race, Gender, and School Leadership in a State with Shifting Student Demographics. *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership*, 7, 175–194. Educational Administration and Supervision Commons.
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/jwel>
- Hooker, R. (1989). *Hooker: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hooks, B. (2004). *We real cool : black men and masculinity*. Routledge.
- Hotchkins, B. K. (2016). African American Males Navigate Racial Microaggressions. *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, 118(6), 1–36.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811611800603>
- Howard, D. (2008). *No Bones Broken* (pp. 1–158). Upper Room Productions, Inc.
- Howe, K. R. (2004). A Critique of Experimentalism. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(1), 42–61.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800403259491>
- Howe, K. R. (2008). Isolating Science from the Humanities. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 15(4), 766–784.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800408318302>

- Howe, K. R. (2009). Positivist Dogmas, Rhetoric, and the Education Science Question. *Educational Researcher*, 38(6), 428–440. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x09342003>
- Hughes, L. (1958). *The Langston Hughes reader : [the selected writings of Langston Hughes]*. G. Braziller.
- Hycner, R. H. (1985). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. *Human Studies*, 8(3), 279–303. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf00142995>
- Johnson, J. W. (2019). *Lift every voice and sing*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Kalu, M. (2019). Using Emphasis-Purposeful Sampling-Phenomenon of Interest–Context (EPPiC) Framework to Reflect on Two Qualitative Research Designs and Questions: A Reflective Process. *The Qualitative Report*. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2019.4082>
- Karenga, M. (1993). *Introduction To Black Studies* (2nd ed., pp. 1–531). The University of Sankore Press.
- Karpa, J. V. (2021). Narrative Inquiry Methodology and Family Research: An Innovative Approach to Understanding Acquired Brain Injuries. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20, 160940692110217. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211021725>
- Keen, E. (1975). A primer in phenomenological psychology.
- Khalifa, M. (2012). A Re-New-ed Paradigm in Successful Urban School Leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(3), 424–467. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x11432922>
- Khalifa, M. A., Gooden, M. A., & Davis, J. E. (2016). Culturally responsive school leadership: A Synthesis of the Literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 1272–1311. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316630383>

- Kirk, D. H., & Goon, S. (1975). Desegregation and the Cultural Deficit Model: An Examination of the Literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 45(4), 599–611.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543045004599>
- Kober, N., Rentner, D. S., & Ferguson, M. (2020). *History of Public Education* (pp. 1–8). Center on Education Policy.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2021). Critical race theory—What it is not!. In *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 32-43). Routledge.
- Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, B. (1995). Towards a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record*, 97, 47–67.
- Lanier, D. A., Toson, S. J., & Walley-Jean, J. C. (2022). Black Women Leaders: Going High in a World of Lows. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 152342232210996.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/15234223221099664>
- Larkin, M., Eatough, V., & Osborn, M. (2011). Interpretative phenomenological analysis and embodied, active, situated cognition. *Theory & Psychology*, 21(3), 318–337.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354310377544>
- Larkin, M., Watts, S., & Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 102–120.
<https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp062oa>
- Lee, M. R. (2012). Teaching Gender and Intersectionality. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 36(1), 110–115. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684311426129>
- LeVasseur, J. J. (2003). The Problem of Bracketing in Phenomenology. *Qualitative Health Research*, 13(3), 408–420. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732302250337>

- Linda Martín Alcoff. (2008). Mignolo's Epistemology of Coloniality. *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 7(3), 79–101. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.0.0008>
- Lomotey, K. (1987). Black Principals for Black Students. *Urban Education*, 22(2), 173–181. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004208598702200203>
- Lorde, A. (1977). *Transformation* [In-Person]. Lesbian Literature Panel of Modern Language Association.
- Lowes, L., & Prowse, M. A. (2001). Standing outside the interview process? The illusion of objectivity in phenomenological data generation. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 38(4), 471–480. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0020-7489\(00\)00080-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0020-7489(00)00080-8)
- Lynch, W. (1712). *The Making of a Slave* [In-Person]. Colony of Virginia.
- Lynn, M., & Adams, M. (2002). Introductory Overview to the Special Issue Critical Race Theory and Education: Recent Developments in the Field. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 35(2), 87–92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713845285>
- Lynn, M., Jennings, M. E., & Hughes, S. (2013). Critical race pedagogy 2.0: lessons from Derrick Bell. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 16(4), 603–628. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2013.817776>
- MacKenzie, I., & Porter, R. (2017). Drama Out of a Crisis? Poststructuralism and the Politics of Everyday Life. *Political Studies Review*, 15(4), 528–538. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929917712935>
- Maldonado-Torres, N. (n.d.). Outline of ten theses of Coloniality and Decoloniality. *Foundation Frantz-Fanon*, 1–37.
- Mandek, M. (2020, October 26). *Black Superheroes in Media and Popular Culture*. Repozitorij.unizd.hr. <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:162:791533>

- Mann, H. (1891). *Annual reports of the secretary of the board of education of Massachusetts for the years 1839-1844* (Vol. 3). Lee and Shepard.
- Maroto, M., & Pettinicchio, D. (2022). Relational Inequality and the Structures that Disadvantage. *Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Disabilities 2022, Available at SSRN Electronic Journal*, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4088840>
- Marshall, C. (1985). Appropriate criteria for trustworthiness and goodness for qualitative research on education organizations. *Quality and Quantity*, 19, 353-373.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1995). *Designing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Martín Alcoff, L. (2012). Enrique Dussel's transmodernism. *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1(3).
- Martin, A. J., & Dowson, M. (2009). Interpersonal Relationships, Motivation, Engagement, and Achievement: Yields for Theory, Current Issues, and Educational Practice. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 327–365. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308325583>
- Mashau, T. D. (2018). Unshackling the chains of coloniality: Reimagining decoloniality, Africanisation and Reformation for a non-racial South Africa. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 74(3). <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v74i3.4920>
- McCabe, A., & Van De Mieroop, D. (2021). Methodology of narration: What the first thirty years of Narrative Inquiry has revealed. *Narrative Inquiry*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.20137.mcc>

- McClain, D. (2016, June 9). *Black Males Represent Just 2 Percent of Teachers. That's Bad for Students and Black Men*. Slate Magazine. <https://slate.com/human-interest/2016/06/only-2-percent-of-teachers-are-black-and-male-heres-how-we-might-change-that.html#:~:text=Black%20men%20make%20up%20less%20than%202%20percentof>
- McFadden, G., & Whitehead, J. (1979). *Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now* [MP3]. Sigma Sound Studios.
- Merriam, S. B., & Kim, Y. S. (2011). Non-Western perspectives on learning and knowing. *The Jossey-Bass reader on contemporary issues in adult education*, 378-389.
- Mickle, M. R. (2010). *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings, By Maya Angelou*. Salem Press.
- Mignolo, W. D. (2007). Delinking: the Rhetoric of modernity, the Logic of Coloniality and the Grammar of de-coloniality. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2-3), 449–514.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162647>
- Milner, H. R. (2008). Critical Race Theory and Interest Convergence as Analytic Tools in Teacher Education Policies and Practices. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59(4), 332–346.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487108321884>
- Milner, H. R., & Howard, T. C. (2004). Black Teachers, Black Students, Black Communities, and Brown: Perspectives and Insights from Experts. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 73(3), 285. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4129612>
- Mobley Jr., D. (2015). *Difference Amongst Your Own: The Lived Experiences of Low-Income African American Students And Their Encounters With Class Within Elite Historically Black College (HBCU) Environments* (Pp. 1–429) [Dissertation].
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Murtisari, E. (2016). Explication in Translation Studies: The journey of an elusive concept. *The International Journal of Translation and Interpreting Research*.
<https://doi.org/10.12807/ti.108202.2016.a05>
- Myers, W. D. (1993). *Now Is Your Time! The African-American Struggle for Freedom* (pp. 1–292). Scholastic, Inc. (Original work published 1991)
- Myran, S., & Sutherland, I. (2018). Defining Learning in Educational Leadership: Reframing the Narrative. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 55(4), 0013161X1880933.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x18809338>
- Naidoo, R., & Jamieson, I. (2005). Empowering participants or corroding learning? Towards a research agenda on the impact of student consumerism in higher education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 20(3), 267–281. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930500108585>
- Nallari, A. (2011). Louise Chawla (2002), Growing up in an Urbanizing World. *Carnets de Géographes*, 3. <https://doi.org/10.4000/cdg.2389>
- Nash, J. C. (2008). Re-thinking intersectionality. *Feminist review*, 89(1), 1-15.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2013). Why de-coloniality in the 21st Century. *The Thinker*, 48(10), 1–6.
- Neal, M. A. (2005). *New black man*. Routledge.
- Neo, N. (2021, July 10). Five Tenets of CRT: What they say vs. what they mean. *Legal Insurrection*. <https://legalinsurrection.com/2021/07/five-tenets-of-crt-what-they-say-vs-what-they-mean/>
- Newby, J. E. (1999). Book reviews of Forty Years After the Brown Decision/Forty Years After the Brown Decision. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)*, 4(2), 199–201. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327671espr0402_5

- Newton, J., & Cowper, W. (1783). *Olney Hymns: In Three Books....* T. Wilkins, sold also by J. Buckland; J. Johnson, and J. Mathew.
- Niesche, R., & Gowlett, C. (2014). Advocating a Post-structuralist Politics for Educational Leadership. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 47(4), 372–386.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2014.976930>
- Nieto, S., & McDonough, K. (2011). Placing equity front and center revisited. *Studying diversity in teacher education*, 363–384.
- Nizza, I. E., Farr, J., & Smith, J. A. (2021). Achieving excellence in interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): Four markers of high quality. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 18(3), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1854404>
- Noguera, P. (2017). Introduction to “Racial Inequality and Education: Patterns and Prospects for the Future.” *The Educational Forum*, 81, 129–135.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2017.1280753>
- Northcote, M. T. (2012). Selecting criteria to evaluate qualitative research. In M. Kiley (Ed.), *Narratives of Transition: Perspectives of Research Leaders, Educators, and Postgraduates. Education Papers and Journal Articles*, 99–110.
- Oakley, A. (2010). The social science of biographical life-writing: Some methodological and ethical issues. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 13, 425–439.
[doi:10.1080/13645571003593583](https://doi.org/10.1080/13645571003593583)
- Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1993). The Theoretical Status of the Concept of Race. *Race, Identity, and Representation in Education*, 3–10.

- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544. NCBI. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Palmer, E. L., & Louis, K. S. (2017). Talking about Race: Overcoming Fear in the Process of Change. *Journal of School Leadership*, 27(4), 581–610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461702700405>
- Parker, L., & Lynn, M. (2002). What's Race Got to Do With It? Critical Race Theory's Conflicts With and Connections to Qualitative Research Methodology and Epistemology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 7–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040200800102>
- Parsons, E. R. C., Rhodes, B., & Brown, C. (2011). Unpacking the CRT in Negotiating White Science. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, 6(4), 951–960. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11422-011-9349-z>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice* (4th ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Penner, J. L., & McClement, S. E. (2008). Using Phenomenology to Examine the Experiences of Family Caregivers of Patients with Advanced Head and Neck Cancer: Reflections of a Novice Researcher. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 7(2), 92–101. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690800700206>
- Peters, A. L., & Miles Nash, A. (2021). I'm Every Woman: Advancing the Intersectional Leadership of Black Women School Leaders as Anti-Racist Praxis. *Journal of School Leadership*, 31(1-2), 7–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1052684621992759>

- Pettigrew, T. F. (2021). SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND THE PIPELINE OF PRIVILEGE. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 18(1), 1–13.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/s1742058x21000242>
- Pillay, P. (2014). *The Relationship Between Learning Approach, Motivation and Teaching Approach*. University of Johannesburg (South Africa).
- Pink, A. W. (2016). *The Sovereignty of God*. Gideon House Books.
- Pink, A. W. (2018). *Sovereignty Of God*. The Banner of Truth Trust.
- Plano Clark, V. L., Schumacher, K., West, C., Edrington, J., Dunn, L. B., Harzstark, A., Melisko, M., Rabow, M. W., Swift, P. S., & Miaskowski, C. (2013). Practices for Embedding an Interpretive Qualitative Approach Within a Randomized Clinical Trial. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 7(3), 219–242. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689812474372>
- Pramanik, R. (2015). Theoretical Challenges to Marxism: A Review of Main Ideas of Critical Theory, Post structuralism and Post Modernism. *Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(1), 33. <https://doi.org/10.5958/2321-5828.2015.00006.6>
- Pratt, R. A. (1954). The color of their skin: Education and race in Richmond. *Virginia*, 89, 15-16.
- Pratt, R. A. (1992). *The Color of Their Skin: Education and Race in Richmond, Virginia 1954-89* (pp. 1–131). University Press of Virginia.
- Punch, K., & Oancea, A. (2014). *Introduction to research methods in education*. Sage.
- Qutoshi, S. B. (2018). Phenomenology: A Philosophy and Method of Inquiry. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 5(1), 215.
<https://doi.org/10.22555/joeed.v5i1.2154>
- Reese, R. (2004). *American paradox: Young black men*. Durham, North Carolina:: Carolina Academic Press.

- Reid, K., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2005). Exploring lived experience. *The psychologist*.
- Rivera-McCutchen, R. L. (2020). “We Don’t Got Time for Grumbling”: Toward an Ethic of Radical Care in Urban School Leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 57(2), 0013161X2092589. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x20925892>
- Robey, D. (2020, October 2). *The New Physics of Inequality: Compounding Advantage for the rich and Accelerating Disadvantage for the Bottom 60 percent*. <https://inequality.org/authors/derek-robey/>
- Robinson, E. (2010). *Disintegration*. Anchor.
- Rogers, M. (2015). Contextualizing Theories and Practices of Bricolage Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 17(7). <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2012.1704>
- Sanders, C. (2003). Application of Colaizzi’s method: Interpretation of an auditable decision trail by a novice researcher. *Contemporary Nurse*, 14(3), 292–302. <https://doi.org/10.5172/conu.14.3.292>
- Schaffer, C., Gleich-Bope, D., & Copich, C. B. (2014). Urban Immersion: Changing Pre-Service Teachers’ Perception of Urban Schools. *The Nebraska Educator: A Student-Led Journal*, 19, 1–29. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nebeducator/19>
- Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)*. (n.d.). Nces.ed.gov. Retrieved April 28, 2022, from https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/sass1112_2013314_t1s_001.asp?msclkid=c65b3c11bcc111ec848dd6b8bfba4b6e
- Scott, A. B. (2006). Superpower vs Supernatural: Black Superheroes and the Quest for a Mutant Reality. *Journal of Visual Culture*, 5(3), 295–314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470412906071364>
- Seifert, C. C. (1938). *The Negro's Or Ethiopian's Contribution to Art*. Black Classic Press.

- Services, 1996. Eddles-Hirsch, K. (2015). Phenomenology and educational research. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 3 (8), 251-260.
- Shields, C. M., & Hesbol, K. A. (2019). Transformative Leadership Approaches to Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice. *Journal of School Leadership*, 30(1), 105268461987334. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1052684619873343>
- Shosha, G. A. (2012). Employment of Colaizzi's Strategy in Descriptive Phenomenology: A Reflection of a Researcher. *European Scientific Journal*, 8(27), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2012.v8n27p>
- Sims, C. M., Carter, A. D., Sparkman, T. E., Morris, L. R., & Durojaiye, A. (2021). On Black Male Leadership: A Study of Leadership Efficacy, Servant Leadership, and Engagement Mediated by Microaggressions. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 152342232110377. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15234223211037753>
- Sircar, S. (2021). Emplacing intersectionality: autoethnographic reflections on intersectionality as geographic method. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 903–922. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369x.2021.1891865>
- Skinner, J., Edwards, A., & Corbett, B. (2014). *Research methods for sport management*. Routledge.
- Skrtic, T. M., Sailor, W., & Gee, K. (1996). Voice, Collaboration, and Inclusion. *Remedial and Special Education*, 17(3), 142–157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/074193259601700304>
- Sleeter, C. E. (2016). Critical Race Theory and the Whiteness of Teacher Education. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 155–169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916668957>
- Smith, J. A. (2021). *Essentials Of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*. Amer Psychological Assn.

- Smith, P. A. (2021). Black Male School Leaders: Protectors and Defenders of Children, Community, Culture, and Village. *Journal of School Leadership*, 105268462199305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1052684621993051>
- Smith, W. A., Hung, M., & Franklin, J. D. (2011). Racial Battle Fatigue and the MisEducation of Black Men: Racial Microaggressions, Societal Problems, and Environmental Stress. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 80(1), 63–82. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41341106>
- Solórzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. D. (2001). Examining Transformational Resistance Through a Critical Race and Latcrit Theory Framework. *Urban Education*, 36(3), 308–342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085901363002>
- Spivak, G. C. (2014). PREFACE TO CONCERNING VIOLENCE: NINE SCENES FROM THE ANTI-IMPERIALISTIC SELF-DEFENSE. *Film Quarterly*, 68(1), 61–62. <https://doi.org/10.1525/fq.2014.68.1.61>
- Spivak, G. C. (2015). ? Can the Subaltern Speak?. In *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory* (pp. 66-111). Routledge.
- Steyn, M. (2012). The ignorance contract: Recollections of apartheid childhoods and the construction of epistemologies of ignorance. *Identities*, 19(1), 8-25.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview.
- Suri, H. (2011). Purposeful Sampling in Qualitative Research Synthesis. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 11(2), 63–75. <https://doi.org/10.3316/qjrj1102063>
- Talbert-Johnson, C. (2006). Preparing Highly Qualified Teacher Candidates for Urban Schools. *Education and Urban Society*, 39(1), 147–160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124506293321>

- Taylor, J. S. (2018). The Case Against the Case for Colonialism. *International Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 32(1), 19–32. <https://doi.org/10.5840/ijap2018820100>
- Teo, T. (2010). What is Epistemological Violence in the Empirical Social Sciences? *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4(5), 295–303. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00265.x>
- Terosky, A. L. (2013). From a Managerial Imperative to a Learning Imperative. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 50(1), 3–33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x13488597>
- Thompson, D. L., & Thompson, S. (2018). Educational Equity and Quality in K- 12 Schools: Meeting the Needs of All Students. *Journal for the Advancement of Educational Research International*, 12(1), 1–13.
- Tillman, L. C. (2004). (Un)Intended Consequences? *Education and Urban Society*, 36(3), 280–303. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124504264360>
- Tillman, L. C. (2008). The Scholarship of Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, III: Implications for Black Principal Leadership. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(3), 589–607. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308321454>
- Tlotstanova, M. V., & Mignolo, W. D. (2009). On Pluritopic Hermeneutics, Trans-modern Thinking, and Decolonial Philosophy. *Encounters*, 1(1), 1–9.
- Tooms, A. K., Lugg, C. A., & Bogotch, I. (2009). Rethinking the Politics of Fit and Educational Leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 46(1), 96–131. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670509353044>
- Tufford, L., & Newman, P. (2010). Bracketing in qualitative social work. *Qualitative Social Work*, 11, 80-96.

- Turner, C., & Grauerholz, L. (2017). Introducing the invisible man: Black male professionals in higher education. *Humbolt Journal of Social Relations*, 39(39), 212–227.
- Tyree, & Jacobs. (2014). Can You Save Me?: Black Male Superheroes in Hollywood Film. *Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men*, 3(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.2979/spectrum.3.1.1>
- Unknown Artist. (1866), *The Freedman's Bureau!* Library of Congress Rare Book and Special Collections Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA
- Urlick, A., & Bowers, A. J. (2013). What Are the Different Types of Principals Across the United States? A Latent Class Analysis of Principal Perception of Leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 50(1), 96–134. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x13489019>
- Velez, G., & Spencer, M. B. (2018). Phenomenology and Intersectionality: Using PVEST as a Frame for Adolescent Identity Formation Amid Intersecting Ecological Systems of Inequality. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2018(161), 75–90. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cad.20247>
- Wade, C. (2018a). *Heart talk : poetic wisdom for a better life*. 37Ink, Atria.
- Wade, C. (2018b). *Heart Talk: Poetic Wisdom for a Better Life* (pp. 1–212). Atria Paperback: An imprint of Simon & Schuster, Inc.
- Walker, V. S. (2001). African American teaching in the South: 1940–1960. *American educational research journal*, 38(4), 751–779.
- Ward Randolph, A., & Robinson, D. V. (2017). De Facto Desegregation in the Urban North: Voices of African American Teachers and Principals on Employment, Students, and Community in Columbus, Ohio, 1940 to 1980. *Urban Education*, 54(10), 1403–1430. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085917697204>

- Ward, A. (2008). *The slaves' war: the Civil War in the words of former slaves*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Warden, C. (2015). *Modernist and avant-garde performance: an introduction*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Warder, G. (2015). *Horace Mann and the Creation of the Common School*.
[Http://Www.disabilitymuseum.org/Dhm/Edu/Essay.html?Id=42](http://www.disabilitymuseum.org/Dhm/Edu/Essay.html?Id=42).
- Washington, B. T. (2019). *Up from slavery*. First Avenue Editions, A Division Of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc. (Original work published 1901)
- Waud, Alfred Rudolph. (1866). *Freemen's Schoolhouse Burned*. Harper's Weekly, May, 26 1866 - Tennessee State Library and Archive
- Wells, A. S., & Crain, R. L. (1994). Perpetuation Theory and the Long-Term Effects of School Desegregation. *Review of Educational Research*, 64(4), 531–555.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543064004531>
- Wibberley, C. (2012). Getting to grips with bricolage: A personal account. *The Qualitative Report*, 17(Art. 50), 1
- Williams, I., & Loeb, S. (2012, November 12). Race and the Principal Pipeline. *Center for the Study of Education Policy*. Informing and Advancing Effective Policy
- Wojnar, D. M., & Swanson, K. M. (2007). Phenomenology: An exploration. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, 25(3), 172–180. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010106295172>
- Wright, J. (2022). The Deep Roots of Inequity: Coloniality, Racial Capitalism, Educational Leadership, and Reform. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 00(0), 0013161X2110294. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x211029483>
- Wynn, M. (2020). *I am the black child*.

- Yardley, A. (2008). Piecing Together—A Methodological Bricolage. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-9.2.416>
- Young, M. D., & Laible, J. (2000). White Racism, Antiracism, and School Leadership Preparation. *Journal of School Leadership*, 10(5), 374–415.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/105268460001000501>

APPENDIX A

STUDY INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

Study Title

Hiding in Plain Sight: A Phenomenological Exploration of Black Male Educators in School Leadership.

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Jeryl Kimbrough-Scott for her dissertation under the direct supervision of Dr. Steve Myran, a researcher and professor from Old Dominion University. The information provided in this form is to help you decide whether or not you choose to take part in this study. If you choose to take part in the study, a consent form will be provided for you to sign. If you choose not to take part in the study, there is no penalty to you.

Why Is This Study Being Conducted?

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership in which the stories of these Black Males could shed light on the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in K-12 school leadership. I chose this topic for my dissertation to refute the negative stereotypes of Black Males in society. Additionally, I chose this topic to inform scholarship on the experiences of Black Males educational journey in which an ahistorical approach of the individual stories is a contribution to advance scholarly research. Thus, this study is a mechanism for change that seeks to add to educational literature and scholarship the term Black Male Educator (BMEs) as a testament of positive characteristics of Black men that seeks to disrupt and dismantle neo-managerial views of disenfranchised and/or oppressed people.

Why Am I Asked To Be In This Study?

The participants are asked to be in this study because each identify as a Black Male Educator in K-12 school leadership. Simply put, as a Black Male, the participant is an expert on being a Black Male.

APPENDIX B

Good Evening,

I am reaching out to you to thank you once again for being willing to be a part of my study on Black Male Educators in school leadership. I am preparing my documents (IRB) so that I can interview you and collect data on your experiences and perspectives as a Black Male Educator in school leadership. If there is another email that you would like me to use, please respond to this request so that I will have your information, this includes your personal cell phone number.

I thank you once again and I am happy to let you know that this is the last step and then I am done! Thank you for your continued support!

Yours truly,

Jeryl K. Scott

757-681-2819

APPENDIX C

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

My unique crafting of interviews will allow the participant to respond to questions that can often evoke emotions and cause vulnerability in the response. To this point, the semi-structured interview protocol will follow a structure of questions that detail the lived experiences of the participants with the central research question being at the forefront of the interview yet offer an opportunity to listen and hear the experiences that move from a technical analysis to an approach to fully understand the phenomenon (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005). Given this study being a phenomenological exploration of the lived experiences of Black Male Educators in school leadership, the specific sub-questions will emerge through the contextual factors identified in the initial questioning. As such, the researcher is compelled to hear the unabridged biographical accounts from the participants to conceptualize the realities of disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Male Educators in school leadership.

Given this protocol, my opening question will ask the participants to tell me about their lived experiences as a Black Male Educators journey towards school leadership. This framing will keep the interviews in a conversational tone. Given this, the participants can potentially be in a vulnerable state so that as the researcher, I take position that conversational scaffolding will exist to ensure that the participant's lived experience is the focus of the interview to ensure there is an appropriate balance of the emergent scaffolding of a conversation and still provide a structure for the conversation. To this point, I do not want to interfere with responses of the participants, yet I will ensure the foci of the interview remains in place to better understand the phenomenon.

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself, particularly your experiences as a Black Male in your K-12 school experience.
2. In your opinion, what factors contribute to the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership?
3. In your educational experience, describe how the history of education (the Black Experience) impacted you in your journey towards school leadership.
4. How do you think your role as a Black Male Educator in K-12 school leadership impact equity, diversity, and inclusion to shift the paradigm of the disproportionate underrepresentation of Black Males in school leadership?

Appendix E

Outline of Hegemonic Structures and Counter-Hegemonic Human Actions

1. Hegemonic Structures
 - a. Subtle and overt structural and systemic racism
 - i. Bias and Microaggressions
 - ii. Few Black Role models
 - iii. Few Black male role models
 - iv. Black Males not being recruited into the teaching profession
 - v. Lack of opportunity
 - vi. White Eurocentric training norms
 - b. Epistemic Violence
 - i. A history of misunderstanding Black Males
 - ii. Epistemic credibility of knowledge
 - iii. Underlying fear of Black men
2. Counter-Hegemonic Human Action – Being What They Did not Have
 - a. Hope, Commitment, and Faith
 - i. spiritual connections
 - ii. Becoming and being “*what they did not have.*”
 - iii. *A beacon of light* – Advocacy
 - iv. *Passion and Pain*
 - b. Making a Back Door to the Field
 - i. career switchers
 - ii. sports

Jeryl Kimbrough-Scott
Jerylscott50@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Old Dominion University-Norfolk, VA

Doctor of Philosophy-December 2022

Education Specialist-August 2009

Hofstra University-Hempstead, NY

Master of Arts in Education-August 1996

Molloy College-Rockville Centre, NY

Bachelor of Arts-August 1987

WORK EXPERIENCE

Educational Consultant

July 2015-present

Principal and Assistant Principal

July 2004-January 2022

HONORS, AWARDS, PRIZES

2016 Recipient, Leadership Achievement, Richmond, VA

2008 Recipient, Teacher of the Year, Hampton, VA

MEMBERSHIPS IN PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

2022 Member UCEA

2020 Member AERA; Member Kappa Delta Pi International Honor
Society in Education

2015 Member ASCD; VASSP

MEMBERSHIP IN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

Hampton Ecumenical Lodging Program (HELP, Inc.)

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Women Education Leaders in Virginia (WELV, Inc.)

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., National Member

Virginia Eagles Youth Sports Association Board Member