THE MOTIVATORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE MIGRATION OF AFRICAN

AMERICAN EDUCATORS FROM SUBURBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO

URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS

A Record of Study

by

OSTROVA DEWAYNE MCGARY

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 2012

Major Subject: Educational Administration

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,   Gwendolyn Webb-Hassan
Committee Members,   Norvella Carter
                        Virginia Collier
                        Jim Scheurich
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ABSTRACT

The Motivators that Contribute to the Migration of African American Educators from

Suburban School Districts to Urban School Districts. (May 2012)

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M. Ed., Southeastern Louisiana University

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The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceived motivators contributing African American educators' decision to migrate from a suburban school district to an urban school district. The case study approach was used in an effort to capture the participants' voices and the motivators contributing to their decision to migrate to an urban school district after working as an educator in a suburban school district.

The findings from this study will contribute to the existing body of literature by providing national policy makers, state policy makers, local school leaders and school district personnel information to create national, state, and local policy initiatives regarding African American educator personnel. The seven informants in this study were members of a large metropolitan area in the state of Texas and the suburban school districts bordering that metropolitan area.

Since the enactment of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (2001), the achievement gap has been discussed and studied. However, few studies have

investigated African American educator migration from suburban school districts to urban school districts and the strategies used by African American educators to close the achievement gap for African American students who attend those suburban schools left void of African American educators. The interpretational analysis process selected was based on Glaser and Strauss' constant comparative approach to analysis. The constant comparative data analysis generated five major themes of the motivators contributing to African American educator migration: (1) educators migrated to become social change agents, (2) educators migrated for growth opportunities, (3) educators migrated for financial increases, (4) educators migrated due to workplace relationships, and (5) educators migrated due to their perceptions and experiences in their suburban school district.

My findings, based on the context of these seven African American educators, suggest that while the school district as an institution is not responsible or accountable for the African American educators migration, it can provide systems of support and initiatives for African America educators to assist them in overcoming the motivators inside of the school walls that contribute to their decision to leave.

DEDICATION

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;"

Philippians 1:6

This exploratory study is dedicated to God and Him alone, who has saw me through this study.

To my mother: She left me physically on September 18, 1998, but her spirit and prayers have covered me to this very day. She never allowed to me think I could not. She would always say "don't use the word can't because you can." Min. Linda Louise "Lynn" McGary-Austin, I have not arrived, but I have made something of myself. Momma I miss you and I try each day not to forget you. I love you so much, and I am still fighting the good fight.

To my wife: Shondra, thank you. You have allowed me to write and be successful, and you have completed this work also. I sat at the kitchen table on Dewalt, as Alex calls the old house, for many days and nights, but your unwavering devotion has carried me through. I love you Momma.

To my children: Alex, Chris, Donjanae, and Jake. "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, but the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous." (Proverbs 13:22) I hope this work will bless your life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"But the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to compared with glory which shall revealed in us." (Romans 8:18)

First, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for giving me the ability to complete this study. I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Gwen Webb-Hassan, and my committee members, Dr. Norvella Carter, Dr. Virginia Collier, and Dr. Jim Scheurich for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research.

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Initially when the summer of 2007 began I was clueless of what to expect. I met eighteen strangers and I completed the coursework with fourteen brothers and sisters. We are connected forever, and the good times are priceless. We have been through marriages, deaths, births, and almost divorces. I am glad to have met Jim Russell my

White brother, Mindy Peper, Sylinda Howard, Mary Ellen Edge, Karen Rodriguez, Karee Gregg, Wanda Baker, Patty Mooney, Jan Nell, and Robin McGlohn. Also, I want to honor my carpool crew. Cheryl Henry, Robert Long, and Kim Baisley, thank you for allowing me to eat Canes. You three are the greatest carpool crew in the world. We made a pact when we met to complete this doctorate, and we have one more left.

Thanks to the seven educators for allowing me to hear your stories, and share your struggles. I will never forget you.

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To my "Boy", Devon Wells. Dev you took me in with raw talent and a paper bag of clothes. You allowed me to grow into a man and taught me things I would have never learned from a book. I will never ever forget and without you I would have never graduated from SLU.

To my Daddy. You showed me how to be man and I now I able to care for my, family, friends and all those I come in contact with.

Finally, thanks to my family for allowing me to complete this journey. Chris, Donjanae, Jake, and Alex you guys mean the world to me and without you guys I have nothing to live for.

To my wife and best friend thank you for your encouragement and your patience and love. Shondra you are the air I breathe, and without your love and devotion none of this would be possible. You have allowed me to write research and make valuable contributions to society. You are earning this degree also. I need you and you are my rib. I love you!

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

"In order to Lead them, you have to Love them, In order to Save them, you have to Serve them" (Smiley, 2006).

Over fifty years since Brown v. Board of Education Supreme court decision, a plethora of journal articles, books, dissertations, and other publications have documented the need for greater equity, specifically in the field of education (Lewis & Bonner, 2007). To measure the growth of a field such as education, one can count participation, trace development of programs, and funding, note the increase in publications, or document the growth of training programs (Merriam, 1994). The development of education can be traced through looking at the growth of the field's knowledge base (Merriam, 1994). To increase the field's knowledge base of African American educator migration more effort is needed on the part of educational researchers to explore African American educators and workplace relationships. One area to explore is the motivators contributing to African American educators moving, migrating, or selecting to educate students of color in urban school districts. The development of this research can add to this body of knowledge base.

As I searched for existing studies to address the issue of African American educators' movement from various suburban districts to urban school districts, the

_____
This record of study follows the style of *Journal of Negro Education*.

studies were very scarce, but there were extensive studies exploring workplace relationships and African American educators working in urban schools. The scarce educational research on this particular issue prompted me to explore the migration of African American educators to urban school districts.

The purpose of this qualitative research is to explore the migration of African American educators migrating to urban school districts from suburban school districts. I will trace the development or note the increase of this trend in elementary and secondary education. This study will add to the field's knowledge base; the development of education and can be traced through looking at the growth (Merriam, 1994). Unfortunately, many African American students rarely experience teachers who provide culturally relevant knowledge (Wilder, 2000). Our challenge in meeting the needs of the diverse children and youth in general and special education settings is monumental (Webb-Johnson, 2002).

African American as well as White students are deprived of the opportunity to experience diversity because they are seldom exposed to teachers of color who bring wider points of view to the learning dynamic (Wilder, 2000). According to Milner (2010), public school teachers were predominantly White, non–Hispanic (84%) and of the remaining proportion, (7.8%) were African American, (5.7%) Hispanic, (1.6%) Asian American and (0.8%) Native American (Milner, 2010).

There is also a void of African American school leaders according to Evans (2007) and diversity in the principalship is virtually nonexistent, as approximately 88% of this nation's principals are White. African American as well as White students are

deprived of the opportunity to experience diversity because they are seldom exposed to teachers of color who bring wider points of view to the learning dynamic (Wilder, 2000). The shortage of African American teachers was apparent to those who attended private and suburban schools (Wilder, 2000).

The shortage of African American educators in suburban school districts creates a void for African American students with whom they can identify with. Empirical and theoretical literature supports the contention that African American teachers are often more successful than middleclass White teachers in connecting the cultural lives of African American students to school knowledge and in reducing discipline problems (Wilder, 2000).

Are African American students having difficult times achieving success in suburban schools due to African American teachers migrating to urban schools or being urged to pursue employment in urban school districts? African American teachers have been for the most part been steered into teaching in urban school settings (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Urban schools have unique factors and motivators that differentiate them from suburban settings (Zikmund, 1975), attracting some of the more talented and experienced African American educators.

As I began to explore the motivators for migration of African American educators in secondary and elementary education, I will explore and provide evidence to support the dire need of these educators in all geographical regions and educational settings. According to Katsarou (2009) we must categorically indict the 'colorblind' and 'race neutral' edu-speak that is fraught and that centers around problematic notions of

the behavior of youngsters, the achievement gap, and similar deficit metaphors (Katsarou, 2009). Is the knowledge base what we find in books and other printed materials or does it include what people know to be true but have not written down (Merriam, 1994). It is what is produced in research that becomes this knowledge base (Merriam, 1998).

I have explored in my research the dilemma that we face as a nation when it comes to equity in education. Demographic data indicate that 30% of today's public school students are from underrepresented groups, while fewer than five percent of their teachers reflect this cultural and linguistic diversity (Kea, 2003). Educators of color who reflect the diversity of the student body are desperately needed. These teachers serve as role models for all children, bring diverse perspectives to the classroom, and contribute to schools (Kea, 2003). The role models are migrating. What motivates the African American educators' in elementary and secondary education specifically to seek jobs in urban school districts?

Research Question

In conducting this research I sought answers to questions with very little answers reflected in literature. I explored the migration of African American educators and this qualitative study had the following research question:

What perceived motivators contributed to African American educators'

decision to migrate from suburban school districts to urban school districts?

Research is broadly defined as systematic or disciplined inquiry; that is, it is a purposeful, systematic process by which we know more about something than we did

before engaging in the process (Merriam, 1994). I hope after reading this research you will be enlightened and ultimately gain an appreciation for this research and acquire a knowledge base of this national dilemma; the inequities of African American educators in elementary and secondary education. It is my hope the answers discovered to these questions and concerns will somehow create discourse and grab the attention of policy makers, school district leaders, researchers, and other educators.

Rationale

I attempted to answer the question of why there is a migration of African American educators to urban school districts in the field of secondary and elementary education. There are several themes I explored in researching this particular occurrence. I will discuss intergroup conflict, the achievement gap, African American educators as role models, financial incentives, and preparation programs and their ability to adequately prepare, recruit, and retain African American educators in preparation and leadership programs. As stated earlier it is my hope this research have provided suitable answers to my questions. Once again, it is also my aim to create some discourse, and grab the attention of policymakers, school district leaders, researchers, and other educators.

I explored the research questions through the eyes of a critical research theorist. The aims of critical research are enlightenment and empowerment brought about through an educational process that leads to transformative action (Merriam, 1994). In this form of research, the politics of the relationship between the knower and the known assumes center stage; the task becomes a developing methodological approach to involve the

researched in the negotiation of meaning and power and the construction and validation of knowledge (Merriam, 1998).

The critical paradigm is based on German philosophy, more specifically that of Hegel, Marx, the Frankfurt school, and more recently Jurgen Habermas, who has become the most prominent spokesperson of contemporary critical theory (Merriam, 1994). When researchers use the critical paradigm they assume that society and human nature are human constructions that can be altered through people's progressive understanding of historically specific processes and structures (Merriam, 1994). I hope this research will be an altering piece of work for humans and human nature.

Background of Problem

Most prior research has focused on White teachers' experiences of their teaching of minority students (McIntyre, 1997; Ogbu, 1988; Weinstin, Tomlinson-Clark, & Curran, 2004). Students from poor and minority groups face a very uncertain time in U.S. education. Their economic and social conditions are deteriorating with no relief in sight, and the progressive curriculum reforms, if carried out one school at a time, will almost certainly place them at an even greater disadvantage (O'Day & Smith, 1993). Our gravest concern is whether there is sufficient commitment in our society to significantly and directly address the problems of educational equity through any sustained and coherent strategy (O'Day & Smith, 1993).

Race continues to be a critical, complex, and a pervasive issue in America and teacher education is not immune to its influence. Schools are under increasing attack for failure to address issues of racial diversity (Cizek, 1995). The American Association for

Employment in Education's (1998) Teacher Supply and Demand in the United States: 1997 Report; reported that the opportunities for people of color in education are inviting. Almost all educators, employers, and policymakers recognize the disparity between the number of teachers of color and the number of minority students in schools (TSUS, 1998). The conflicts, incongruence, inconsistencies, and mismatches can exist between mostly White teachers and students of color, which can limit students' learning opportunities (Milner, 2010).

The Achievement Gap

Numerous articles in education journals, newspapers, magazines, and books address the concern educators and community members have over the wide gap in performance between African American and White students. There is an achievement gap in our nation between Black and White students (Taylor, 2005). The legislation contributing to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2002 mandated that individual subgroups have strict accountability in regards to testing of all groups. The legislature of NCLB has exposed the achievement gap with minority students across the United States. The law encourages states to develop programs to test the performance of the whole student population and nine disaggregated groups according to race, gender, and other criteria (Taylor, 2005). Schools must make adequate yearly progress in all of the groups. This legislation was enacted to ensure that all students are educated to their fullest potential. According to Taylor (2005) the Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, noted the disparity in performance tied to race and ethnicity is known as the "achievement gap" (Taylor, 2005).

The achievement gap with students of color must be closed. With issues of retention occurring with African American educators in suburban schools will ultimately leave a void of African American educators to assist students in closing the achievement gap. Also, it leaves a void of African American educators; African American students can identify with to assist the students in being successful in suburban school settings. African American students achieve when taught by African American teacher as stated by Taylor (2005), and Wilder (2000).

African American Educators Perceptions

The presence of African American role models in the development of African American students is a critical component to their maturation and lifelong success (Taylor, 2005). As researchers, our energy and efforts should offer research to assist school leaders and educators in suburban school settings to help raise the success levels of African American students. Taylor (2005), noted that young African American males are the leaders on negative indices (i.e., dropout rates, suspensions, and non-promotions), and she declared the education of these young men to be a moral and civic imperative (Taylor, 2005). Milner noted that conflicts, incongruence, inconsistencies, and mismatches can exist between mostly White teachers and students of color, which can limit students' learning opportunities (Milner, 2010). These moral and civic imperatives exist regardless of geographic boundaries. African American educators are needed to educate the students in urban and suburban areas in an effort to decrease these negative indices. When African American children fail academically, all other children and all Americans are negatively impacted (Tucker, 1999).

The Critical Need

There is a shortage of African American teachers to educate African American students. Wilder's research gave a vivid depiction of the nation's teaching force. Typically, students in American public schools are taught by teachers who are White, middle class, and female (Wilder, 2000). The shortage of African American teachers is more pronounced in various geographical regions (Wilder, 2000). Researchers noted in explaining the need to increase the racial and cultural diversity of the teacher workforce in the United States, educators and policymakers cite a "demographic imperative" to counter the disparity between the racial and cultural backgrounds of students and teachers and address concerns about a predominantly White teaching workforce (Achinstein et al., 2010). With school districts everywhere, North, South, East, and West being held accountable for student success there is no room for error, and the migration of educators from suburban school settings to urban school settings should be of great concern to all policymakers and school leaders.

Problem Statement

African American students are having difficult times achieving success in schools due to the lack of African American educators in suburban districts (Gordon, 2000). The migration will possibly leave a void of African American educators, African American students can identify with. African American educators can contribute in helping close the achievement gap experienced by African American students. There is a critical need for African American educators in the changing demographics of schools nationally and in Texas school districts. Nationally, people of color only represent 40.0%

of the student population in public schools, whereas people of color only represent 17.0% of public school teachers are people of color and public school teachers of color are 7.9% Black, 6.2% Hispanic, 1.3% Asian, 0.7% Multiple Races, 0.5% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.2% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, and Freitas, 2010).The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) report of the 2008-2009 school year showed a higher Hispanic and African American student enrollment than White student enrollment in schools (TEA, 2010). Results from the TEA (2007) report showed a Harris County district, Houston Independent School District, had the following ethnic composition: 122,396 (58.3%)Hispanic, 62,976 (29.9 %) African American, and 17,872 (8.5%) White (TEA, 2007). As a result of shifts in demographics, Houston Independent School District is a majority-minority school district (TEA, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

I felt that one had better die fighting against injustice than to die like a dog or rat in a trap. I had already determined to sell my life as dearly as possible if attacked. I felt if I could take one lyncher with me, this would even up the score a little bit.

 (Ida B. Wells,1862-1931)

African American educators have been for the most part, been steered into teaching in urban school settings (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Urban schools have unique factors and motivators that differentiate them from suburban settings, attracting some of the more talented and experienced African American teachers (Wilder, 2000). There has been research that has focused on recruiting and retaining African American teachers in urban school settings (Wilder, 2000). The steering or urging African American educators

to urban school settings will ultimately leave suburban schools void of African American educators. An underlying assumption of the demographic imperative is that in a pluralistic society it is problematic that public school students (students of color and White students alike) experience a primarily White teaching population (Achinstein et al., 2010).

Typically, students in our nations' suburban public schools are taught by teachers who are white middle class females, African American students seldom encounter a teacher who looks like them (Wilder, 2000). Madsen contends in her research, the African American teacher report their colleagues made them feel as though they were defined by their color (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). The underlying assumption is their European American peers made them feel they are not qualified teachers. Eventually the African American teachers realize that they need to move forward and focus on their successes with their students (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). If these African American teachers are moving forward and leaving their White suburban schools, what schools are they going to seek educational employment?

The purpose of this study is to explore the motivators that contribute to the movement of those African American educators from suburban school districts to urban school districts. This study will also provide strategies that school leaders can utilized in an effort to recruit and retain African American educators in suburban school districts. This exploratory study will focus on several areas of research. The first area is recruitment and retention of African American educators in pre-service programs. The second area to be explored is the widening achievement gap that exists between Black

students and White students. The third area of research to be explored is the critical need for African American teachers' African American students to identify with. The fourth area of research that will be explored is the perceptions of African American educators. The last area is how African American educators deal with workplace relationships.

Significance of the Study

African American teachers are more culturally responsive to students of a similar racial background and have both cultural understandings, and a communicative competency to involve students in pedagogical exchanges that are potentially empowering in terms of facilitating their engagement with schooling (Rezai-Rashti, & Martino, 2010). There is research that supports the achievement of African American students when taught by African American teachers (Wilder, 2000). Rezai and Martino concluded teachers believe their gender and/or race had an impact on their pedagogical relationships with students (Rezai-Rashti & Martino, 2010).

The presence of African American role models in the development of African American students is a critical component to their maturation and lifelong success (Wilder, 2000). Minority teachers are a crucial source of both knowledge and numbers requisite to provide an adequate education not only to the rising numbers of minority youth in our cities, but for all children (Gordon, 2000). Today, many educators who teach low-income African American children are disconnected culturally, psychologically, and proximally from the children they teach, as well as from the communities where these children live (Morris, 2004).

Studies are scarce that explore the motivators that contribute to the migration of African American educators from suburban school districts to urban school districts. This study will give a thorough examination of the main motivators that contribute to migration of African American educators to urban schools districts. This study will also contribute relevant new literature and possibly provide a framework for answers to the absence of African American educators in suburban districts, the lack of intense recruitment procedures, and the need for African American students to have teachers with whom they can identify with.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used in this study:

Achievement Gap

The United States Department of Education (2005) defines the achievement gap as the difference in academic achievement between different ethnic groups.

African American

African American, sometimes referred to Afro-American or Black, is defined as people having origins in any of the black racial groups in Africa (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Culture

The set of shared beliefs, symbols, values, activities or knowledge of a group of individuals influenced by a wide of variety of factors (Gay, 2000). Generally refers to the patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. Can be defined as all the ways of life, including arts,

beliefs, and institutions of a population that are passed from generation to generation. It includes manners of dress, language, religion, rituals, and games.

Culturally-Responsive Teaching

Culturally-responsive teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including cultural references in all aspects of learning. This strategy provides a connection between culture and curriculum, home and school to promote socio-emotional wellness and academic achievement (Gay, 2000; Lasdson-Billings, 1994). Culturally-responsive teaching and culturally responsive-pedagogy will be used interchangeably in the research study.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a social-political construct, which should not be construed as being scientific or anthropological in nature, according to the United States Office of Management and Budget, which sets guidelines for maintaining, collecting, and presenting federal data on race and ethnicity. There are five federal government categories for data on race: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White. The government had in its 2000 Census two categories for data on ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino (Anderson, 2000).

Epoche

Husserl (1913) used the term epoche (Greek, for "a cessation") to make reference to the suspension of judgment regarding the true nature of reality. Epoche will be used in the research study.

Experience

Experience as defined in Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary (2006) is the events that make up the conscious past of a community past of a community or nation or humankind generally. The educational experience of African American educators will include all elements of this definition.

Hispanic

Hispanic, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (2000) and established by the Office of Management and Budget in 1997, is a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. The term Hispanic will be primarily utilized to reference people of Mexican descent.

Majority-Minority

Majority-Minority, as defined in Encarta's Online Dictionary (2006), is a majority of people in an area who belong to a minority group overall.

Migration

Migration, as defined in Dictionary.Com Online Dictionary (2012), 1. process or act of moving to a different location or the movement itself, 2. number or body of persons or animals relocating together, 3. movement or change, as from one computer system to another

Student of Color

A student of color is defined as Hispanic or African American students, and non European Americans (Madsen & Mabokela, 2007). The term student of color will be primarily utilized to reference people of African American or Hispanic descent.

Suburban

Major Suburban Texas Education Agency (TEA) defines a "Major Suburban" district and is classified as major suburban. The descriptive factors relevant to the characteristics of suburbia are the economic base and/or community character…, the social class and racial composition (Zikmund, 1995). The term suburban will primarily be used in this study.

Urban

According to TEA a "**Major Urban** of which there are 10 districts in the state of Texas (TEA, 2012) is a district classified as major urban. Urban concentrations are influenced by geography, geology of land, the location activity concentrations particularly economic activities, the transportation network, the social composition and legal environment (Zikmund II, 1975). The term urban will primarily be used in this study.

Theoretical Framework

Madsen and Mabokela's research on intergroup differences examines the impact of minority workers in majority organizations (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003). They noted group identities provided a broad overview to examine how workers define themselves as well as how other groups view their differences. The significance of intergroup theory for understanding individual identity helps to conceptualize the effects of diverse identities within an organizational context (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003). As noted by Gordon (2000), there are efforts needed that require full awareness of the differences between individuals within racial categories as well as the power of socialization into

professionalism and hence the middle class (Gordon, 2000). Lewis states the demographic profile of urban schools is commonly Black, Brown, and poor, whereas the suburban school systems are predominately White and middle class (Lewis & Moore, 2008).

According to Madsen and Mabokela organizational cultures are often influenced by how workers are socialized and how they fit within the organization's core values (Madsen & Mabokela, 2000). The culture within an organization strongly influences how minorities will be treated by their European American counterparts (Madsen & Mabokela, 2000). Although many organizations may promote a commitment to hiring minorities, some are unwilling to support or facilitate minority member's transition to majority organizations (Madsen & Mabokela, 2000). The case of African American educators moving to seek alternate employment in urban schools, they are in a majority organization which are suburban school settings and migrate to minority organization which are urban school settings.

The study will be grounded in the intergroup theory. A dominant culture exists in these schools that impose beliefs about the appropriate ways of educating children (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). The significance of intergroup theory for understanding individual identity helps to conceptualize the effects of diverse identities within a larger organizational context (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Key issues of intergroup theory related to issues of diversity include (1) the circumstances that lead to the formation of groups, their boundaries, roles, and development cycle; (2) the effects of population membership, group membership, and intergroup dynamics in dealing with prejudices;

and (3) the problems of identity, power, conflict, and social comparisons in groups (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Having a cultural identity different from that of the majority in an organization can impact every aspect of the career experience for people of color (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). The theoretical framework of intergroup theory is useful in understanding sources of conflict.

Overview of Remaining Chapters

Chapter II, the literature review, presents information on achievement of African American students when taught by African American educators, and the success of African American educators educating African American students when compared to middle class White teachers. The chapter will also discuss the shortage of African American educators, pre-service programs, intergroup conflict, financial incentives and merit pay, and an understanding of the exploration of migration with clarity. Chapter III describes the methodology, including the study design, research site, data collection methods, data analysis, ethical issues, limitations of the study, and the researcher's professional background and role in the study. Chapter IV will detail findings and chapter V will state the conclusions and future implications for further study.

Summary

Our nation has undergone major shifts in demographics, particularly in large suburban areas as noted earlier in this chapter. Schools in Texas and nationally have experienced significant shifts in changing demographics. As families leave the inner cities for much brighter living in our nations fast growing suburbs, our African American educators are migrating to the urban areas to educate students as Milner

(2010) noted in the data indicating that public school teachers were predominantly White, non–Hispanic (84%), and of the remaining proportion, 7.8% were African American, 5.7% Hispanic, 1.6% Asian American, and .8% Native American. African American educators have undergone movements to urban schools, and our African American students in suburban schools have less than adequately African American teachers, principals and mentors to serve them in suburban schools. Evans noted diversity in the principalship is virtually nonexistent as approximately 88% of this nation's principals are White (Evans, 2007). I hope to discover the perceived contributing motivating factors for the migration of African American educators to urban school districts.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The legislature contributing to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2002 mandated that individual subgroups have strict accountability in regards to testing of all groups. The legislature of NCLB has exposed the achievement gap with minority students across the United States. Numerous articles in education journals, newspapers, magazines and books address the concern educators and community members have over the wide gap in performance between African American and White students (Taylor, 2005). The large and persistent achievement gaps separating minority and nonminority students are arguably the most important educational problem in the United States (Dee, 2005). Disturbing numbers of African American and Latino students continue to lag behind their White peers on many measures of educational performance (Taylor, 2005). This disparity in performance tied to race and ethnicity is known as the "achievement gap" (Taylor, 2005).

Achievement Gap

On January 8, 2002, President Bush signed the No Child Behind Act, also known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The law's goal is to have all students performing at or above the grade level by 2013-2014. The law is based on four principles:

      1.   Stronger accountability for results;

2.   Increased flexibility with federal funds;

3.   Expanded options for parents;

4.   Emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work (Taylor, 2005)

The law encourages states to develop programs to test the performance of the whole student population and nine disaggregated groups according to race, gender, and other criteria (Taylor, 2005). Schools must make adequate yearly progress in all of the groups. This legislature was enacted to ensure that all students are educated to their fullest potential. The disparity in performance tied to race and ethnicity is known as the "achievement gap" (Taylor, 2005). There is an achievement gap in America between Black and White students. The demographic discrepancy between the racial and cultural backgrounds of teachers and students may contribute to the democratic failure to provide students of color with opportunities to learn (Kea, 2003). As researchers our energy and efforts should offer research to assist school leaders and educators in suburban school settings as well as urban school settings to help raise the success levels of African American students.

Young African American males are the leaders on negative indices (i.e., dropout rates, suspensions, and non-promotions), which declared the education of these young men to be a moral and civic imperative (Taylor, 2005). Reducing or eliminating these gaps by raising the achievement of minority students is widely seen as a critical component of promoting broader social equality with respect to a variety of outcomes like educational attainment and earnings as well as crime, health, and family structure

(Dee, 2003). Although the achievement gap between African Americans and Whites narrowed during the 1960s and 1970s, it has held constant since around 1980, and remains substantial today (Lleras, 2008). Recent research shows that during every year of schooling, African American students continue to learn less than comparable White students (Lleras, 2008). Whereas African American children begin elementary school approximately 1 year behind White children in vocabulary knowledge, they finish high school approximately 4 years behind Whites (Lleras, 2008).

The moral and civic imperative exists irregardless of geographic boundaries (Taylor, 2005). On the need to increase the racial and cultural diversity of the teacher workforce in the United States, educators and policymakers cite a "demographic imperative" to counter the disparity between the racial and cultural backgrounds of students and teachers and address concerns about a predominantly White teaching workforce (Achinstein et al., 2010). We need to equip and maturate both the students in urban and suburban areas to decrease these negative indices. When African American children fail academically, all other children and all Americans are negatively impacted (Tucker, 1999). We need educators to educate African American students and allow them opportunities to be successful in suburbia America also.

The lag in performance of students of color has been a main topic of discourse in education and numerous school leaders have attempted and researched ways to close this gap, known as the achievement gap. The creation of NCLB exposed subgroups that had been hidden or neglected in suburban districts. The exposure of minority subgroups has manifested itself in suburban school districts with an obvious achievement gap.

According to Turley, as neighborhood income increases, test scores and behavior improve significantly for White children but not for Black children (Turley, 2003). The gap with students of color must be closed.

Retention

The issues of retention occurring with African American teachers in suburban schools will ultimately leave a void of teachers to assist students in closing that achievement gap. Minority teachers who reflect the diversity of the student body are desperately needed (Kea, 2003). According to Kirby, this is the operationalization or the breakdown of the teachers in Texas of at-risk districts, about 37% of teachers teach in low-risk districts, another third teach in medium-risk districts, and 30% teach in high-risk districts (Kirby, Berends & Naftel, 1999). African American as well as White students are deprived of the opportunity to experience diversity because they are seldom exposed to teachers of color who bring wider points of view to the learning dynamic, and the shortage of African American teachers is apparent to those who attended private and suburban schools…(Wilder, 2000).

Also, Kirby noted in his research non-Hispanic White teachers' account for 95% of the teaching Force (Kirby et al., 1999). He also went on to detail the distribution of teachers by race/ethnicity and by where they are teaching. Kirby stated that minority teachers are teaching disproportionately in high-risk districts, and in low-risk districts, non-Hispanic White teachers account for 95% of the teaching force (Kirby et al., 1999).

This unbalanced distribution leaves a void of African American teachers; African American students can identify with to assist the students in being successful in

suburban school settings (Wilder, 2000). Wilder noted, research that supports the achievement of African American students when taught by African American teachers (Wilder, 2000). There is also literature that supports African American students are academically successful when taught by White teachers as well.

Similarly, researchers concerned with preparing and supporting urban teachers maintain that equipping teachers with cross-cultural skills, racial self-awareness, and exposure to multicultural curriculum improves education for urban students of color (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Harding claimed in a study of White educators working with racially and ethnically diverse students, that it is personal experiences and family backgrounds that most inform their pedagogy (Harding, 2005). Although White educators have offered significant work focused on antiracist education and personal projects of success with students, we know very little about White teachers' personal histories, their instructional practices, or their motivations to teach students of color (Harding, 2005).

African American Educators

According to Jacob (2007) empirical and theoretical literature supports the contention that African American teachers are often more successful than middle class White teachers in connecting the cultural lives of African American students to school knowledge and in reducing discipline problems (Jacob, 2007). The presence of African American role models in the development of African American students is a critical component to their maturation and lifelong success (Jacob, 2007).

As Milam pointed out, embedded in societal context, education in America is racialized (Milam, 2008). We cannot ignore race as a factor that influences educational opportunity and influences teacher expectations and student achievement (Milam, 2008). Situated among a racial hierarchy with White and Black as opposites (Ladson-Billings, 2000), the racialization of society can be seen "not only in the social, economic, and cultural resources passed along generation, but also in [White] dominance of the economic, legal, educational, and political arrangements" (Milam, 2008). From the colonial era to the present, educational institutions have been critical to the transmission of the racist ideology, and elites have long maintained power in part by controlling the processes of learning and knowledge dissemination through public, religious, and other private schooling (Milam, 2008). As an ever-present dynamic in American society, the politics of race and repression are (mis) represented in textbooks, curriculum, and every day practices in schools (Milam, 2008). The lack of understanding of the racialized nature of curriculum may lend itself to a denial of the racial nature of curriculum and to the denial by most "Whites" of a racialized self – lending a view of the racialized "other" that is focused on difference and separateness and all too often deficiency (Milam, 2008).

Education of students of color becomes critical when considering the dynamics in classrooms of White teachers and African American students. Milam noted, education in America is often designed to control and socialize people – and the education of African Americans has been and is no exception (Milam, 2008). The intersections of

identity and race are powerful social constructions that serve as foundations for daily interactions in and about schools (Milam, 2008).

Despite modest declines in Black-White residential segregation, African American students continue to be concentrated in racially segregated public schools within urban districts (Lleras, 2008). A growing body of research has found lower achievement gains in urban schools and schools where a higher percentage of the student body is African American (Lleras, 2008). Whether fair or not, educational opportunity and academic achievements are directly tied to the social divisions associated with race, ethnicity, gender, first language, and social class (King, 1993). The limited presence of African American teachers is a current challenge displaying little promise of solution in this country (King, 1993).

`   Is there a migration or an urging to prompt African American educators to move from suburban school settings to urban school settings? According to Madsen & Mabokela (2005) inclusiveness is derived from a supportive environment that affirms diversity as an explicit value (Madsen & Mabokela (2005). They noted, this environment is not usually associated with problems that plague many poor rural or "at risk" urban schools, but suburban contexts (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Bloom and Erlandson contends that despite their availability and preparation to ascend into campus leadership position, principals of color…, typically emerge in urban schools that are under supported and economically depleted (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003). The researchers also contend that the myth remains that the ideal leader for most schools conforms to a

White, masculine stereotype, especially at the secondary level (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003).

Workplace Relationships

According to Madsen noted in dealing with the intergroup conflict or workplace relationships, stated African American male teachers felt that rather than let the pressure occur in their European suburban school, they needed to question their decision to remain at their current school (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). If researchers support and provide evidence African American educators are securing positions in urban contexts, and studies also support students of color should have teachers and school leaders of color in their schools, what happens to the suburban African American student that is left with this void of an African American educator? Over the past few decades, the U.S. population has also become more concentrated in suburban areas.

Although racial and ethnic minorities continue to be underrepresented in the suburbs, the share of minorities among suburban populations has been increasing rapidly. As a result, the numbers of Black children attending middle-class suburban schools is also rising (Lleras, 2008). However, recent empirical evidence shows that racial segregation and increasing poverty have often accompanied minority suburbanization (Reardon & Yun, 2001). Thus, despite declines in Black-White residential segregation and an increase in the proportion of African American families residing in the suburbs, the majority of African American students remain concentrated in public schools where a larger portion of the population is low income and from a

racial or ethnic minority background, regardless of whether they attend urban or suburban schools (Lleras, 2008).

Studies are limited that explore the motivators that contribute to the migration of African American teachers from suburban schools to urban schools. This study will lend valuable contributions and scholarly research that could offer some insight into what motivators contribute to African American teacher attrition in suburban school settings and African American teachers migrating to urban school settings. To better understand the sources of the racial gap in educational performance and achievement, it is important to examine not only how African American and White students differ with respect to the overall learning process but also how these students interact with and are shaped by the larger organizational context and social environment of the school (Lleras, 2008).

Suburban/Urban School Contexts

Let's define suburban school settings so the exploration of African American educator migration can be understood with clarity. There are new suburbs and old suburbs; commercial suburbs, industrial suburbs, residential suburbs; upper class suburbs, middle class suburbs, working class suburbs, and even lower class suburbs (Zikmund II, 1975). The development factors derived from the evolution of the suburban are the community and the metropolitan area which surrounds it, and people who live there, along with the size and location (Zikmund II, 1975). Urban districts do indeed have high shares of poor and minority students (Jacob, 2007). Dingus noted what a suburban community looks like and its people, politics, population size, and character, and sometimes its White flight contribute to a suburban society (Dingus, 2006). The

descriptive factors relevant to the characters of suburbia are the economic base and/or community character…, the social class and racial composition of the suburb's residents, and the size of the population (Zikmund II, 1975). When schools are built in these communities they become suburban schools.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) defines a "Major Suburban" district and is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is contiguous to a major urban district; and (c) its enrollment is at least 3 percent that of the contiguous major urban district or at least 4,500 students. A district also is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in the same county as a major urban district; and (d) its enrollment is at least 15 percent that of the nearest major urban district in the county or at least 4,500 students. Examples would include Castleberry ISD (220917) in Tarrant County, which has a population of 1,798,838, but it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban. Castleberry ISD is contiguous to Fort Worth ISD, a major urban district, and its enrollment of 3,590 students is greater than 3 percent that of Fort Worth ISD. Goose Creek CISD (101911) is in Harris County, which has a population of 4,083,368 and contains at least one district classified as major urban. Goose Creek CISD does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban, nor is it contiguous to a major urban district. Although Goose Creek CISD's enrollment of 20,819 students is less than 15 percent than that of Houston ISD, the nearest major urban district in Harris County, it exceeds 4,500 students (TEA, 2012).

Urban concentrations are influenced by geography, geology of land, the location activity concentrations particularly economic activities, the transportation network, the social composition and legal environment… which the urban area lies (Zikmund II, 1975). By definition, of course, urban schools are located in large central cities (Jacob, 2007). In addition to the concentrations are the dynamics of the area such as construction maintenance, and deterioration of housing stock, the immigration of new peoples, racial or class groupings, and changing transportation available at any time (Zikmund II, 1975).

Urban schools resemble rural schools—and differ from suburban schools—in two other respects (Jacob, 2007). However, having assumed all of this, we need not believe that all suburbanites have consciously run away from the old central city or that they are prejudiced against Blacks…, (Zikmund II, 1975). Roughly 64 percent of students in central cities are minority, against only 32 percent in areas on the urban fringe or large towns (hereafter I will refer to these areas as suburbs) (Jacob, 2007). Some unquestionably are, but others are certainly not (Zikmund II, 1975). On average, urban students score lower on standardized achievement exams than their suburban counterparts (Jacob, 2007).

According to TEA a "Major Urban of which there are 10 districts in the state of Texas (TEA, 2012) is a district classified as major urban if: (a) it is located in a county with a population of at least 750,000; (b) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 75 percent of the largest district enrollment in the county; and (c) at least 35 percent of enrolled students are economically disadvantaged. A student is reported as

economically disadvantaged if he or she is eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program (TEA, 2012). Major Urban districts are the largest school districts in the state which serve the six metropolitan areas of Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Austin, and El Paso (TEA, 2000). Race is a salient part of American life, and the field of education is not exempt (Harding, 2005). Race and class shape the nationwide crisis in urban education and unfortunately, racism continues to affect the schooling of children of color in negative ways (Harding, 2005).

Empirical and theoretical literature supports the contention that African American teachers are often more successful than middle-class White teachers in connecting the cultural lives of African American students to school knowledge and in reducing discipline (Wilder, 2000). We must categorically indict the 'colorblind' and 'race neutral' edu-speak that is fraught and that centers around problematic notions of the behavior of youngsters, the achievement gap, and similar deficit metaphors (Katsarou, 2009).One of the greatest sources of uncertainty for teachers is whether they will be able to connect with students and build productive relationships (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

How Do African American Educators view Themselves

African American teachers lived in communities amongst students and parents, in turn becoming key contributors to the individual and collective well-being of the community (Dingus, 2006). African American teachers perform the multiple roles of teacher, cultural mediator, activist, advocate, and leader within schools and their ethnic communities (Dingus, 2006). According to Zhixin Su, one third of the teachers she

interviewed in her research perceived their early school experiences as particularly or uniquely negative due to their racial status and language difficulties (Su, 2006). The teachers also, demonstrated a strong awareness of the unequal educational opportunities for the poor and minority children (Su, 2006).

Scholarship on African American teachers links their work and roles to communities of origin and those in which they work (Dingus, 2006). The process of connecting African American students to academic achievement isn't easy in the best educational settings (Parson & Kritsonis, 2006). Also, there is irrelevance of the existing curriculum and instruction for minority students, and the need to restructure schools and society (Su, 2006). More specifically, African American teachers held higher expectations for their African American students than did White teachers (Wilder, 2000). Teachers can experience a sense of powerless in a suburban school setting, because of their communal roles (Dingus, 2006). Minority teachers serve as role models for all children, bring diverse perspectives to the classroom, and contribute to schools that reflect the multiethnic and multicultural communities of American society (Kea, 2003). African American teachers are often more successful than middleclass White teachers in connecting the cultural lives of African American students to school knowledge and in reducing discipline problems (Jacob, 2007).

School is a place where academic knowledge is constructed and transmitted, but it is also a setting where values are shaped, in ways most often subtle but always powerful (Villegas & Lucas, 2004). African American teachers are more culturally responsive to students of a similar racial background and have both cultural

understandings and a communicative competency to involve students in pedagogical exchanges (Rezai-Rashti, & Martino, 2010). African American educator's, sense of powerlessness and ineffectuality is in stark contrast to teacher self-efficacy or the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplishing a specific teaching task in a particular context (Milner & Hoy, 2003).

Social Change Agents

The importance of establishing cultural links between home and school for students was supported by landmark studies in education anthropology and cognitive science in the 1970's and 1980's that transformed our understanding of the learning process in cross-cultural settings (Villegas & Lucas, 2004). This is important for all African American educators. According to Bloom and Erlandson, educators stated one of the ardent philosophical beliefs is that most leaders will always live in the community where they work; it is an attempt to gain ground and turn around the indifferences and despair (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003). School district superintendents and school boards tend to offer administrative opportunities to African Americans to salvage their own people (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003). We need to salvage our students of color left in suburbia America, and those students of color in urban America.

Also, in addition to acting as role models, minority teachers can help minority students build cultural bridges to learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2004). Cultural synchronicity gives African American educators a clear advantage over their White counterparts when assisting African American students in building the necessary bridges

to learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2004). School is a place where academic knowledge is constructed and transmitted, but it is also a setting where values are shaped, in ways most often subtle but always powerful (Villegas & Lucas, 2004).

The Void of African American Educators

There is a shortage of African American educators to educate African American students. Typically, students in American public schools are taught by teachers who are White, middle class, and female (Wilder, 2000). Suburban schools are becoming increasingly diverse, yet the teaching workforce continues to be dominated by European American teachers (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Public school teachers are predominantly White, non–Hispanic (84%) and of the remaining proportion, (7.8%) were African American, (5.7%) Hispanic, (1.6%) Asian American, and (0.8%) Native American (Milner, 2010). Nationally, people of color represent 40.0% of the student population in public schools, while only 17.0% of public school teachers are people of color (Achinstein et al., 2010). Therefore, as more demographically diverse teachers enter these homogeneous professional communities, it will affect teacher retention and working conditions (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). The shortage of African American teachers is more pronounced in various geographical regions (Wilder, 2000). Of the African American teachers who make up 8% of the national teaching force, nearly two thirds of (64%) work in the South… (Wilder, 2000).

With all school districts everywhere North, South, East, and West being held accountable for student success there is no room for error. Therefore, the migration of

African American educators from suburban school settings to urban school settings

should be of great concern to all school leaders.

Race continues to be a critical, complex, and pervasive issue in America. Teacher

education is not immune to its influence. Schools are under increasing attack for failure

to address issues of racial diversity (Cizek, 1995). The American Association for

Employment in Education's Teacher Supply and Demand in the United States: 1997

Report; reported that the opportunities for people of color in education are inviting.

Almost all educators, employers, and policymakers recognize the disparity between the

number of teachers of color and the number of minority students in schools (Johnson &

Tillman, 1999). This is an apparent disparity of a supply-and-demand issue (Johnson &

Tillman, 1999). The teaching workforce is overwhelmingly composed of educators who

are White and female (Johnson & Tillman, 1999).

A program was developed in the Midwest to reflect an ongoing concern with

improving existing pre-service programs to prepare novice teachers for urban schools

(Schoon & Sandovdal, 2000). Specialty programs are constantly being created and being

improved for effectiveness to assist urban schools in meeting the mandates of NCLB,

and closing the achievement gap. Educators in suburban schools may take advantage of

the training an urban school district may offer, and coupled with the workplace pressures

in suburban districts, educators may migrate to urban districts.

Recruitment and Retention

It is the goal of elementary and secondary public school system in the United

States to provide a high-quality education to every student and to do so requires an

adequate supply of competent individuals who are willing and able to serve as teachers (Guarino et al., 2006). The problem of recruiting, preparing, and retaining African American teachers in schools can be resolved. The primary place to seek minority candidates is in the expanding pool of mature adults with college degrees who already reside in the particular metropolitan area (Haberman, 1999). Successful urban minority teachers can be locally recruited, selected, and prepared; that minority college graduates who already reside in the particular metropolitan area are likely to remain, and that on-the-job approach prepares teachers evaluated as successful by superiors (Haberman, 1999). Literature has suggested a large portion of literature on K-12 schools document the increasing disparity in the educational opportunities for African American males than African American females (Haberman, 1999).

As Bonner and Lewis alluded to, the equity discussion has received little attention. Even more disturbing is that in an age of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) diversity standards and greater strides at Predominately White Institutions (PWI's) to racially diversify their respective campuses, very few constituents in the educational community seem to be greatly concerned by the lack of African American males in teacher preparation programs (Bonner & Lewis, 2007). The limited scholarship that has been published has only documented that a shortage of minority teachers exists in this country; however, very few of these publications have provided realistic models and recruitment strategies questions to the education community (Bonner & Lewis, 2007).

An underlying assumption of the demographic imperative is that in a pluralistic society it is problematic that public school students (students of color and White students alike) experience a primarily White teaching population (Achinstein et al., 2010). For example, the research literature reports that African American males comprise approximately 2% of those enrolled in the 1,300 teacher programs across the country (Bonner & Lewis, 2007).

Over the past decade, myriad research has predicted the impact of declining numbers of individuals pursuing careers in teacher education; a key prediction has been that in the new millennium the field of education would be in a state of crisis, unable to attract and retain quality teachers to fill the projected teacher shortages (Bonner & Lewis, 2007). The demand for teachers is the number of teaching positions offered at a given level of overall compensation and the supply of teachers is the number of qualified individuals willing to teach at a given level of overall compensation (Guarino et al., 2006).

Numerous reports have indicated that there are, or will be, significant shortages of qualified teachers in Texas (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). Socioeconomic trends such as increasing student enrollments, large numbers of teacher retirements, and fewer individuals entering teaching have been expected to create an inadequate supply of qualified teachers (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). In Texas, the number of teachers certified each year has been increasing over the past several years, but attrition rates have continued to create shortages in some districts and in some subjects (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). Although decisions about whether to enter and remain in teaching are ultimately

personal ones that differ according to individuals' needs and circumstances, researchers have examined several factors thought to be related to attrition (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004).

Financial Incentives

Teachers are more likely to quit when they work in districts with lower wages (Lankford et al., 2002). Some district educators have offered a variety of compensation policies designed to attract more teachers into the profession and to retain more of those currently teaching (Hanushek et al., 2002). These include higher pay (typically across the board but sometimes targeted on special communities or subjects), forgiveness of student loans in exchange for a commitment to teach (often in difficult to staff schools), and housing reserved for teachers, and the expansion of alternative certification (Hanushek et al., 2002). A TEA (2012) survey released in 2012 stated the weighted average teacher salary in responding districts is $48,666 for 2011–12, virtually unchanged from the 2010–11 average salary of $48,639. The weighted average salaries by enrollment range from $41,153 in districts with fewer than 500 students to $50,732 in districts with more than 50,000 students. Region IV (Houston) has the highest weighted average salary for 2011–12 at $50,742. Region IV districts employ the largest proportion of teachers in the survey (65,126 or 23 percent) and in Texas.

These can be broadly categorized as salaries and incentives, working conditions, induction and professional development, and assignments (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). Herbert (2004) noted salary increases and other financial incentives are often thought to be a primary motivator for teachers to remain in the classroom. Indeed, a number of

states and districts have begun to offer signing bonuses, student loan forgiveness

programs, and other financial incentives to prevent teachers from quitting (Herbert &

Ramsay, 2004). Higher teacher pay reduces the probability that teachers leave the

profession, particularly once differences in alternative earnings opportunities are taken

into consideration (Hanushek et al., 2002).

Hanushek et al., (2002) also contend salaries are higher in urban districts and the

estimates of teacher salary effects on labor supply confound the impacts of salary and

community. These studies Hanushek (2002) discovered generally find that higher

teacher pay reduces the probability that teachers leave the profession, particularly once

differences in alternative earnings opportunities are taken into consideration.

Teaching in urban areas can be difficult and research supports financial

incentives may not be enough. According to Herbert and Ramsay (2004) they noted that

salary variation rarely compensates for the apparent difficulties of teaching in urban

settings and, in some cases, contributes to the inequities in teacher resources across

schools (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). We now know there is money to support educators

educating children in urban impoverished areas. We are still in desperate need of more

educators to prepare children for their future and the future of America in urban areas.

According to Goldhaber (2008) it appears likely based on empirical evidence

teachers in districts enrolling large numbers of disadvantaged students play a relatively

more important role in influencing achievement, than those same districts should be

more likely to use merit pay. Alternatively, merit pay might be more likely in these

districts because, if we take poverty as a proxy for low achievement, the political costs of action may be lower in districts where achievement is lower (Goldhaber et al., 2008).

Limited Presence

A myriad of reports depict a crisis related to the limited presence of African American teachers and the low numbers of all teachers of color (King, 1993). The need to consider the complex issues related to African American teachers remains (King, 1993). On a national level, the numerical shortage of teachers has not yet become a reality due to the current supply of qualified teachers exceeding stated demands (Bonner & Lewis, 2007). Literature suggests there is definitely a crisis regarding the retention, recruitment, and preparation of African American teachers.

Milner noted that public school teachers were predominantly White, non–Hispanic (84%), and of the remaining proportion, (7.8%) were African American, (5.7%) Hispanic, (1.6%) Asian American, and (0 .8%) Native American (Milner, 2010). As scholars, we are in flux of what to do in exposing the problem and developing solutions to our current problem (Bonner & Lewis, 2007). Currently, an overwhelming majority of teachers are White, female and from the lower middle class socioeconomic strata, while their students in many urban educational settings have become more racially and ethnically diverse from the lower socioeconomic strata (Bonner & Lewis, 2007). The shortage of African American teachers is not only apparent to those who attended private or suburban schools, but also to those attending inner-city schools (Wilder, 2000).

As a result, the literature reports that teachers of color are more likely to be willing to work in urban school settings and remain in urban schools than their White counterparts (Bonner & Lewis, 2007). Predominantly, Black teachers have been prepared by the nation's historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) (Boykin, 1992). Minority teachers are teaching disproportionately in high-risk districts, and in low-risk districts, non-Hispanic White teachers account for 95% of the teaching force (Kirby et al., 1999). Minority teachers who reflect the diversity of the student body are desperately needed (Kea, 2003). Districts and schools are constantly engaged in activities related to the recruitment (Guarino et al., 2006). Minority teachers serve as role models for all children, bring diverse perspectives to the classroom, and contribute to schools that reflect the multiethnic and multicultural communities of American society (Kea, 2003).

African American Educators Social Connections

Dingus clearly states African American teachers …build upon their personal connections to family, work, and connects to cultural practices (Dingus, 2006). The social persuasion in terms of verbal feedback and specific help, encouragement, praise, and norms of persistence and achievement can help create a supportive social environment (Milner & Hoy, 2003). Minority pre-service teachers are clearly committed to entering teaching as social change agents (Dingus, 2006). The literature shows that minority students taught by a same race/ethnicity teacher are better behaved in school, have lower dropout rates, and are less frequently absent from school (Villegas & Lucas, 2004).

For the minority teacher, the rewards for teaching would be less financial than emotional and cultural (Dingus, 2006). There have been generations of African American students with little sense of identity, purpose, or direction and with little knowledge of the relationship between their schooling and what will occur in their later life (Lomotey, 1993). The demographic discrepancy between the racial and cultural backgrounds of teachers and students may contribute to the democratic failure to provide students of color with opportunities to learn (Kea, 2003). Teachers of color can produce more favorable academic results on standardized test scores, attendance, retention, advanced-level course enrollment, and college-going rates for students of color than White colleagues (Achinstein et al., 2010).

The trusting nature of these relationships enables minority teachers to challenge minority students to invest in learning, despite the many academic and social barriers these youngsters experience along the way (Villegas, & Lucas, 2004). Typically, they (teachers of color) can be social changes agents in communities that are impoverished, low socio-economics, and the student expectations are low (Lomotey, 1993). African American teachers are more culturally responsive to students of a similar racial background and have both cultural understandings and a communicative competency to involve students in pedagogical exchanges that are potentially empowering in terms of facilitating their engagement with schooling (Rezai-Rashti, & Martino, 2010). Teachers who are effective with African American students use an array of approaches including culturally responsive and "vervistic" instructional techniques (Carter et al., 2008). We must categorically indict the 'colorblind' and 'race neutral' edu-speak that is fraught and

that centers around problematic notions of the behavior of youngsters, the achievement gap, and similar deficit metaphors (Elemi, 2009).

The self-efficacy social persuasion can include the responses of their students and the sense of collective efficacy within the entire faculty (Milner & Hoy, 2003). Mismatches can exist between mostly White teachers and students of color, which can limit students' learning opportunities when teachers operate mostly or solely from their own cultural and references and ways of knowing and experiencing the world, the learning milieu can seem foreign to students of color (Milner, 2010). The propondence of literature displays the African American teacher is committed to schooling the minority student and their self-efficacy social persuasion (Milner, 2010) can assist in the learning. So why are the African American educators migrating?

Stereotype Threat

According to Milner (2003) African American teacher self-efficacy and stereotype threat affects the effort the teachers have to invest in teaching which ultimately makes the teacher leave (Milner & Hoy, 2003). Stereotype threat or the pressure an individual faces when he or she may be at risk of confirming negative, self-relevant stereotypes can make one psychological burden… (Milner & Hoy, 2003). The lack of feedback, non-responsiveness from colleagues and students, criticism, and norms of neglect can create an unsupportive environment. In Milner's and Hoy's (2003) findings of their case study they discovered when the African American female teacher sense of efficacy was jeopardized she did not feel welcome or connected and felt she was not part of the school environment. Where did those African American female

educators seek employment when their sense of efficacy was jeopardized, and was this a key motivator that contributing to their leaving?

The Brown decision has had profound effects on students as well educators (Boykin, 1992). The abolishing of segregated schools meant that Black children were allowed to attend White schools, yet these new interracial environments were often threatening for Black students. Boykin (1992) stated that the self-concepts of Black children have been positively affected as a result of school integration, and it reveals that 70% of the respondent administrators believed that overall, Black children performed better academically in the familiar surroundings of predominantly Black schools. Additionally, most of the administrators felt that White teachers had a negative impact on Black children (Boykin, 1992).

Intergroup Differences

Due to the presence of diversity in schools, attention should be given on how these contexts can promote social norms for cohesiveness and mutual understanding (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Thus inclusiveness is derived from a supportive environment that affirms diversity as an explicit value (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). According to Madsen the personal experiences and professional education of teachers affect their routines and to be acculturated into a European American school, they have to acquire the necessary socialization patterns to understand their European American Colleagues' code of power (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Roles are determined by the nature of the shared structured relationships that exist between human beings (Lomotey, 1993).

Cooperation is the key to the effective operation of any organization (Lomotey, 1993). Suburban schools are becoming increasingly diverse, yet the teaching workforce continues to be dominated by European American teachers. Therefore, as more demographically diverse teachers enter these homogeneous professional communities, it will affect teacher retention and working conditions (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Do African American educators feel they are effective in these organizations and do they believe their colleagues are being cooperative? This could lead to educator migration to urban districts where much literature has supported the claim that they are often more effective as educators.

Such cooperation among staff members in schools can only come about when principals are able to capture the energies of their teachers and encourage them to work toward collectively agreed on goals (Lomotey, 1993). When European American teachers and teachers of color interact, there are conditions that will influence how they work collaboratively in these contexts (Madsen, 2010).

Establishing a teacher community becomes more complicated if there is disproportionate number of demographically diverse teachers, and teachers have misperceptions about students of color (Guzzo & Salas, 1995). This is evident in both Bell's (2002) and Achinstein's (2002) studies of teacher communities when conflict occurs due to student diversity. In Bell's (2002) study of intergroup differences between teachers of color and majority teachers, conflicts occurred due to differences in instructional practices, disciple and multicultural emphasis. Thus, these intergroup differences prevented a community of teachers. Achinstein's (2002) study about

demographically diverse schools and their inability to deal their differences results in a process of deep questioning and exhaustion. Additionally Madsen & Mabokela (2005) study of African American teachers in suburban desegregated schools teachers' indicate problems of role entrapment for African American teachers to be the "Black expert" and misperceptions about their contributions on instruction and curriculum.

The personal experiences and professional education of teachers affect the routines and knowledge of African American teachers within their school environment (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003). For educators of color to be acculturated in suburban White schools, they have to acquire the necessary socialization patterns to understand their white colleagues' codes of power (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003). Cox contends that organizations need to understand how various group identities within the workplace impact intergroup differences and affect the culture of organizations (Cox, 1994). He asserts that both phenotype identities and cultural group identities influence how various ethnic groups will interact with the dominant culture (Cox, 1994). The culture within an organization greatly influences how minorities will be treated by their White counterparts (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003).

While many organizations may promote a commitment to hiring minorities, some are unwilling to support or facilitate minority member's transition to a majority organization (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003). These educators will probably migrate to an urban school setting. Many African American educators feel isolated and believe that they are treated differently from their majority counterparts. Suburban desegregated schools often deal with micro-culture groups by exerting strong pressure on teachers of

color to assimilate to the existing culture (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003). As noted by

Lynn (2008) in sharp contrast…, Black teachers utilized their teaching as vehicle

through which to challenge social injustice (Lynn, 2008). Black education has been

dominated by a number of different ideological perspectives some of them critical and in

direct opposition to racism and others more in line with White supremacist ideals (Lynn,

2008). For Blacks and Black teachers in particular, it is important to acknowledge that

there exists a range of responses to White domination (Lynn, 2008).

Demographic heterogeneity of teacher groups leads to cross-cultural differences,

negative relationships among demographically diverse groups of teachers and prevents

the formation of a professional community (Bell, 2002). Team configurations that have a

"token" member in a mostly homogeneous group may result in dissatisfaction, limited

communication and segregated informal networks (Jackson et al., 1995). Readily

detectable attributes (such as race, sex, gender and sexual orientation) trigger social

cognitions (about self and others) (Bell, 2002). Unspoken but implicit this is turn shapes

interpersonal relations, patterns of team interactions and increases biases against

minority members (Jackson et al., 1995).

Schools are becoming increasingly demographically diverse, therefore creating

and maintaining a learning community of demographically diverse teachers is an

ongoing process (Wilder, 2000). The complexities of diversity affects social identity and

how groups identify themselves, also between group and within group differences

determines how one perceives themselves (Cox, 1994). When proportional

representation exists often there is a negative effect that results in cultural differences

(Cox, 1994). Because of these (cultural gender and racial discrepancies) differences between the majority and minority groups there is a subtle form of resistance which takes place (Cox, 1994). These subtleties lead to limited and surface level exchanges that become hidden and covert forms of resistance. Thus, marginalized group members may remain in these contexts, but they become pigeon-holed, exploited and used (Cox, 1994). When they leave, the organization suffers the loss of not having their perspective (Friedman & Davidson, 2001). When these educators leave, where are they choosing to further their career and educate children? It can be an assumption if they are leaving the homogenous organization. Are they migrating to an urban educational organization?

In schools that are demographically diverse intergroup theory may explain the challenges to creating a community of teachers (Thomas, 2008). In their exchanges teachers have to be more conscious about their beliefs and values when people of color enter the organization (Thomas, 2008). Intergroup theory describes the types of conflict that occurs among demographically diverse teachers. The process of creating a demographically diverse community is difficult for teachers who must come to terms about their beliefs about teachers of color (Thomas, 2008). This theory contains a complex set of interactions for understanding the effects of diversity in the workplace (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003). An individual's identity in an organization is determined not only by organizational categorization, but identity group membership also (Alderfer, 1982). It also recognizes that individual cultural identities influence how they perceive their work and their relationships with others (Alderfer, 1982). We must seek to provide a place on inclusiveness as educators.

Summary

To increase the knowledge base of African American educator migration more effort is needed on the part of educational researchers to explore African American educators and workplace relationships. There has been a plethora of educational literature supporting the dilemma we face as a country in educating African American students. We lack sufficient African American educators to assist African American students in their maturation and lifelong learning. Most of the African America educators we do have to educate students of color are seeking educational employment in urban, high-risk, impoverish inner city schools. If these educators are educating students in urban environments, then what African American educators are educating in suburban, low-risk, high to middle income schools? As I searched for existing studies to address the issue of African American educators' movement from various suburban districts to urban school districts, the studies were scarce, but there were extensive studies exploring workplace relationships. The scarcity in educational research on this particular issue prompted me to explore the migration of African American educators to urban school districts.

I desired to seek answers to the motivators contributing to African American educators moving, migrating, or selecting to educate students in urban school districts. To explore migration of African American educators in this qualitative study, I attempted to discover if pre-service programs are steering or urging African American educators to urban schools, are financial incentives a reason to migrate to the urban school district, or self-perceptions of how do African Americans view themselves as

educators motivating African American educators to seek employment in an urban

district. I sought to determine if the African American educators felt there was a critical

need for them in suburban school districts, or were they most effective in urban school

districts, and ultimately do workplace relationships motivate these educators to move

and seek employment in urban school districts? Chapter III will provide a

methodological framework to conduct this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This was a qualitative study designed to explore the motivators that contribute to the migration of African American educators from suburban school districts to urban school districts. This exploratory case study focused on four areas of research. Creswell (2007) described case study research as a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time. The bounded systems I researched were African American educators in urban school districts that migrated from suburban school districts.

The first area explored was the widening achievement gap that exists with students of color. The second area of research explored was the critical need for African American teachers African American students can identify with. The third area of research I explored was the African American educator as a social change agent. The last area explored is how African American educators deal with workplace relationships. Key stakeholders including teachers, principals, superintendents, board members, state educational leaders and national educational leaders should find this study helpful in creating academic success for all stakeholders.

Study Design

Some have argued that the purpose of qualitative research should be to advance a social justice agenda (Creswell, 2007). While one needs to acknowledge that our society has become more diverse, cognizant of underrepresented groups, and educated about

racial and ethnic tensions, not all qualitative projects must have this agenda as a central feature (Creswell, 2007). All studies should acknowledge and recognize these issues as part of all inquiry and actively write about them (Creswell, 2007). The purpose of this research was to actively investigate the migration of African American educators from suburban school districts to urban school districts, and the motivating factors contributing to their migration.

Creswell (2007) stated research design is the entire process of research from conceptualizing a problem to writing research questions, and on to data collection, analysis, interpretation, and report writing (Creswell, 2007). The design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and ultimately, to its conclusions (Creswell, 2007). Regardless of approach, all qualitative research tends to follow the basic process of research (e.g., introductions, questions, methods of data collection, and analysis, etc.) (Creswell, 2007). Creswell alluded to the fact that beginning researchers should not use more than one of the five approaches to qualitative inquiry; of these five the case study approach was selected.

Qualitative inquiry represents a legitimate mode of social and human science exploration, without apology or comparisons to quantitative research (Creswell, 2007). It begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2007). We conduct qualitative research based on a problem or issue to be explored. The issue I addressed was the migration of African American educators. It was my aim to provide useful research for those who lead our

nation's public schools, and to bring awareness to the diversity issues that exist amongst our educators.

The research design process in qualitative research begins with philosophical assumptions that the inquirers make in deciding to undertake a qualitative study (Creswell, 2007). Creswell pointed out that good research requires making assumptions, paradigms, and frameworks explicit in the writing of a study, and at a minimum, to be aware that they influence the conduct of inquiry (Creswell, 2007). The philosophical assumptions consist of a stance toward the nature of reality (ontology), how the researcher knows what she or he knows (epistemology), the role of values in the research (axiology), the languages of research (rhetoric), and the methods used in the process (methodology) (Creswell, 2007).

One lens a researcher can conduct qualitative research as through the lens a of a critical research theory perspective. Critical theory perspectives are concerned with empowering human beings to transcend the constraints placed on them by race, class, and gender (Creswell, 2007). I hope by conducting this qualitative case study the constraints of intergroup differences, the widening achievement gap, and the void of African American educators will be transcended. This study will illuminate social action, engage educational leaders in dialogues, and create some action related discourse. Also, we can address the differences of any inequities experienced by African American educators. I provided a detailed understanding of this complex issue. It was also the aim of this research to empower individuals, and allow their voices to be heard.

Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes (Creswell, 2007). According to Creswell there are three variations exist in terms of intent in a case study and they are single instrumental case study, the collective or multiple case study, and the intrinsic case study (Creswell, 2007). In a single instrumental case study the researcher focuses on an issue or concern, and then selects on bounded case to illustrate the issue. This study was conducted under auspice of a single instrumental case study, because the researcher was exploring the motivators that contribute to migration of African American educators from suburban districts to urban districts.

Research Site

Creswell proposed researchers should determine if a case study approach is appropriate to research the problem (Creswell, 2007). The researcher needs to find one or more individuals to study, individuals who are accessible, willing to provide information, and distinctive for their accomplishments and ordinariness or who shed light on a specific phenomenon or issue being explored (Creswell, 2007). I utilized the case analysis method to study educators who left suburban school districts and migrated to urban school districts. The subjects were educators from the Houston metropolitan geographical areas.

The Houston metropolitan area is one of the largest districts in the nation and it is surrounded by several suburban districts. The Big Boy Independent School District enrollment is about 250, 000 student population and some of the surrounding districts (Frenchlick ISD, Spruce ISD, Mojo ISD, Kool ISD, Gonewind ISD, Space Bar ISD, Klick ISD, Cool Water ISD, Conehead ISD, Whales ISD, Moose Water ISD, Palace ISD, Alright ISD, Latego Consolidated ISD, Lajoy ISD, and Taste City ISD) are considered as Zikmund (1975) would describe them as suburban districts. Some of the preceding districts were also TEA recognized school districts.

The Participants and the Setting

These particular educators were selected because they moved from a suburban district and migrated to an urban school district such as Big Boy ISD, Alright ISD, or Alway ISD which are considered urban districts. TEA's defines Alway ISD and Alright ISD as suburban school districts, but Zikmund along with most school leaders defines Alway ISD and Alright ISD as an urban school district. The educators chosen had at least one year of complete experience in a suburban district before they chose to migrate to an urban district. The level of experience provided the researcher more choices of a selection and diversity amongst the educators.

This case study included seven African American educators who had migrated from a suburban school district to an urban school district. The educators were teachers, counselors, curriculum specialists, assistant principals and principals. All participants were interviewed once; follow up inquiries and member checks were performed with each participant three times over a four month period. The interviews took place over a

four month period. The educators' experience ranged from 10 years to over 32 years of

experience as outlined in (Table 1).

Table 1. Job Title Profiles

Participant	Suburban Experience	Gender	Job Title	Interview
#1 Dr. Mom Money	20 Years	Female	Principal	9/31/2011
#2 Dr. Skills	24 Years	Female	Principal	10/15/2011
# 3 Ms. Decision Maker	3 Years	Female	Campus Specialist	11/24/2011
#4 Ms. Disappointed	9 Years	Female	Counselor	12/09/2011
#5 Ms. Talented	7 Years	Female	Science Specialist	12/18/2011
#6 Mr. Passover	10 Years	Male	Assistant Principal	12/20/2011
#7 Mr. Fasttrack	11 Years	Male	Associate Principal	12/29/2011

Educator # 1- Dr. Mom Money is an African American female principal who had

been an educator for over twenty years. She migrated to urban district after twenty years

in a suburban district. Educator #2- Dr. Skills is an African American female principal

who had been a principal for about 6 years and migrated to an urban district. Educator #

3- Ms. Decision Maker an African American female is a former speech teacher who had

taught for over 4 years and then migrated to two different urban districts. Educator # 4-

Ms. Disappointed an African American female, former marketing teacher who had been

a teacher for 9 years and then migrated to an urban district. Educator # 5- Ms. Talented

an African American female science department chair who had taught in several

suburban districts in Arizona. She migrated from suburban districts to urban districts in Arizona before moving to Texas. She began teaching in a suburban district. She then migrated once in Texas, from a suburban district to an urban district. Educator # 6- Mr. Passover an African American male teacher in a suburban school district for 9 years before migrating to an urban district to become an administrator. Educator # 7- Mr. Fasttrack an African American male teacher who had taught elementary and middle school P.E. for about seven years. He then moved to a suburban district from an urban district and back to an urban district.

Researcher's Professional Background

I believe that in modern society it is important for all human beings to have the opportunity to learn, and their learning is considering a top priority. This should be the ethical implications of everything that we do. With this in mind, I will always try to foster an atmosphere of learning. We should always persevere to give our best without giving up. I express these educational principles with actions and not words. "Be human, be tough and be challenge-seeking."

My goals and objectives are as follows: To develop individuals that have generous and receptive minds, and assist students to lead independent and well-regulated lives and exhibit responsible behavior. To develop human beings with a broad base of knowledge through integrated educational experiences, that includes an optimal mix of general and specialized curriculum. To provide individuals with vital practical skills, as well as a theory-supported creativity and a best practices mindset. To foster creative

students who have aims and ambitions to assist them in becoming skillful, having the ability to realize their true hidden potential.

My philosophy of leadership is base on setting and maintaining high personal and professional standards in a leadership role. An authentic and effective leader is honest, committed, and respectful to all. Leaders should lead by example by demonstrating a commitment to seeing the organization flourish and attain what is best for its people and always what is best for the student. These people are the followers that follow the leader because they are able to trust and respect to achieve, attain, and maintain common goals. Having common values such as loyalty, selfless-service, honor, integrity, and courage is vital to any successful organization. True leaders are motivated by a loving and authentic concern for all of its stakeholders. Further, in achieving an open line of communication coupled with a structure that outlines its vision is essential for all involved in carrying out responsibilities, expectations by both the leader and its people, while making clear the standard, willingness, and interests. This will lead to the accomplishment of any goal, anytime, anywhere.

"Leadership is the process of influencing leaders and followers to achieve organizational objectives through change."

Being an instructional leader is the process of influencing leaders and others to achieve educational objectives and ensure the success of all students. I want to pursue my doctoral degree at Texas A&M University to ensure student success across all levels of curriculum regardless of race, gender, color, creed, or disabilities. Upon completion of this degree I will maximize all the potential within me to ensure I continue the legacy

of those before me, and ensuring student success. I will offer insight from a cultural responsive leader's perspective. I will offer information on researched based practices to give conclusive evidence for co-hort peers to make inform decisions. I will always have a smile on my face and receive any information to make it pertinent to my growth as a professional. I want to be led in the path to be an effective leader in our nation.

I hope to gain the essence of the true portrait of an "Aggie Graduate", and what is expected in an instructional leader in our educational institutions. I want to be well educated on budgetary matters, fiscal operations, instructional programming, curricula development, discipline management delivery systems campus-wide, and physical plant operations. I will maximize the opportunity, sharpen my vision, and excel in the opportunity.

An advantage I may have in conducting this research is that I understand the migration efforts of those who have migrated. I just want to know why they migrated and what motivators contributed to their migration. I attempted to understand the concepts and terminology used by the selected participants. I feel they were more comfortable with me as a researcher and we had a common background. Being an African American administrator may be an advantage because the participants will understand my vision to shed light on the social injustices of African American educators.

Growing up as a person of color, with and around educators, I had an understanding and concern for African American educators. Once I entered the profession I observed African American educators on a continuous basis migrating to

urban districts for many different reasons. I begin my career in an urban district as a teacher and then left and accepted a position in a suburban district as a teacher due to budget shortfalls or poor fiscal management in the urban district. I later had to migrate to an urban district to find promotion opportunities and feel respected and needed. I will carefully monitor my biases in dissecting and interpreting data. This particular research is dear to my heart and I strived to maintain an open mind while conducting the study.

The study was conducted in an effort to gather information on the motivators that caused African American educators to migrate for one reason or another to an urban school district. Educational leaders both national and locally should focus more attention on African American educators migrating, and this study could lead to more success in closing the ever widening achievement gap. I believe all students can be successful in their maturation and throughout their educational endeavors as well as life too.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection offers one more instance for assessing research design within each approach to inquiry (Creswell, 2007). According to Creswell (2007) a "circle" of interrelated activities best displays this process, a process of engaging in activities that include but go beyond collecting data (Creswell, 2007). Data collection should be visualized as a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions (Creswell, 2007).

This qualitative study used intensive open-ended questions to interview the subjects. The interviews were semi-structured probing for responses as to why African American educators moved from their suburban school district to gain employment in an

urban school district. The researcher used interviews as the preferred method of data collection. The participants consented to the research process and the educators were assured their willingness to participate in the study was voluntary and there was no coercion.

Sampling Procedures

The concept of purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). This means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2007). The units of analysis for this particular research study were African American educators who worked in a suburban district for at least one school year and then at some point in their career migrated to an urban school district. An educator consisted of teachers, counselors, administrators, assistant superintendents, human resource personnel, and coaches. Creswell noted decisions need to be made about who or what should be sampled, what form the sampling will take, and how many people or sites need to be sampled (Creswell, 2007).

I decided to use African American educators with at least one to two years experience due to the fact that most advancement or promotion opportunities within the State of Texas requires at least two years of classroom teaching experience. These individuals could offer insight on their current level of employment and also as a classroom teacher.

Creswell recommends in case study research not to include more than 4 to 5 case studies in a single study (Creswell, 2007). He noted that this number should provide

ample opportunity to identify themes of the cases as well as conduct cross-case theme analysis (Creswell, 2007). He also noted that to select collective case studies and employ maximum variation as a sampling strategy to represent diverse cases and to fully describe multiple perspectives about the cases (Creswell, 2007).

Interview Process

I interviewed seven African American educators who had more than one year of educational experience as a certified teacher, counselor, or principal in the State of Texas. These educators were chosen for the study because they had been an educator in a suburban district for at least one year and migrated to an urban school district. All of the educators were teachers at some point in their educational careers. The subjects consisted of five females and two males. The subjects were two principals, one assistant principal, one associate principal, one counselor, a science curriculum specialist, and campus curriculum specialist (see Table 1).

After gaining approval from the university to conduct the research, a copy of the IRB approval letter was given to the informants. The letter explained how this research was voluntary and asked the informants to give their consent to participate in the research. The letter explained that the informants' identities would be kept confidential using pseudonyms.

I kept a written journal of the interview notes in handwritten format. Additionally, interviews were handwritten, transcribed and reviewed by the subjects. I gathered rich and thick descriptions of the data throughout the study. The results from the study were share with the subjects at the conclusion of the study process.

Interviews took place during the months of September through December after approval was granted by IRB. Semi-structured interviews of the educators were conducted to understand the motivators that contribute to African American educator leaving their suburban school district to seek employment in an urban school district. The educators were asked questions about their years of experience, workplace relationships with colleagues, and why they chose to leave and educate in a less favorable urban environment. Additionally, the educators were asked about discipline strategies, instructional strategies, parental support, and money. All interviews took place in administrative offices, and lasted about 45-90 minutes. After completion of the handwritten interviews, the notes were transcribed and typed for review by participants and later analyzed.

Data Sources and Context

The study took place in urban district as defined by TEA and Zikmund (1975). An urban district is where the greatest membership a county with populations of 725,000 or more, and more than 35 percent of the students are identified as economically disadvantaged. In some cases, other size threshold criteria may apply. The urban school districts had varying African American educators and student demographics to be explored. The educators met certain criteria in order for selection in the purposeful sampling. The educators were of African American descent. The researcher identified seven educators who have left a suburban school district to educate in an urban school district. The educators were teachers, educational diagnosticians, counselors, and administrators. The teachers must have had at least one year of teaching experience in a

suburban school district and have migrated to an urban school district. A suburban school district as defined by TEA is other school districts in and around the major urban areas. All of the educators met the criteria to be selected for the purpose of exploring what motivators contributed to their migration.

Data Analysis

The data was categorized using the constant comparative method (Creswell, 2007). The researcher began open coding and from this coding, axial coding emerged (Boyatzis, 1998). The researcher analyzed the data and coded that data until the core of the motivators were identified. The researcher was the instrument conducting the interviews. The researcher separately interviewed each participant looking for emerging themes. The researcher selected seven members from a pool of participants to interview intensively, to explore what motivators prompted the educators to leave the suburban district and migrate to an urban district. The interviews for this exploratory study were intended to discover the motivators for their migration. An inductive, data driven framework was utilized to assist with data analysis (Boyatzis, 1998).

In member checking, the researcher solicits participants' views of the credibility of the findings and interpretations (Creswell, 2007). After the written interviews were typed for legibility, the typed transcription was shared with the participants to ensure its accuracy of the typed responses. All of the subjects were part of the member checking process. Some amendments were made to the transcription and the subjects verified the accuracy once again of the typed transcription.

Peer debriefing is described as a "devil's advocate", an individual who keeps the researcher honest; asks hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations... (Creswell, 2007). The process of by which a researcher confides with a colleague to provide an opportunity for a catharsis (Creswell, 2007). During the data analysis process, the researcher solicited the support of another doctoral candidate with whom he had coursework with throughout my research to assist in reviewing the data and the emerging themes. The cohort colleague was utilized as a second set of eyes and ears to ensure contextual accuracy. The colleague also assisted in validating the coding and theming methods.

Reliability and Trustworthiness

To establish trustworthiness and reliability prolonged time was spent in the field to provide a thick description of the data. The researcher interviewed the participants over a four month period. Also, to establish reliability and trustworthiness member checking was utilized to ensure the clarity of the data collected and analyzed. It also offered assistance in providing specificity in themes and design credibility. The constant comparative method ensured that the data collected matched the theory proposed (Creswell, 2007).

Ethical Issues

It was important to determine how the researcher was to handle ethical concerns that arose throughout the exploration of the study. Specific guidelines were followed to ensure all participants were shielded and protected. This also aided in the reliability and trustworthiness of the data and assisted the researcher from forming biases.

This study met the standards of the Human Subjects Protection Program and qualified as "exempt" under the auspices of the Institutional Review Board provisions of the Office of Research Compliance at Texas A&M University (see Appendix A). The participants were actual school district employees, and were given pseudonyms to protect anonymity.

Confidentiality and Participation

The information collected during the research such as interviews were kept strictly confidential. I as the researcher along with my committee chair only have access to the information and the information had coded names. The identities were concealed upon writing the findings and conclusions. The transcriptions were coded to protect the participants' confidentiality and provide the utmost anonymity. Once the material and published the written report were collected, the handwritten notes were destroyed and transcriptions were locked in a file.

Triangulation involves corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective (Creswell, 2007). It also aids in the validity of the research. One method that sustains validity is the presence of the researcher in the research. Because I was an African American educator who had migrated to urban district, I was able to comprehend to a large extinct the issues dialogued. It provided me with a clearer context of the information. I had no pre-existing theory about the motivators that existed to contribute to educator migration. I just knew movement was happening. Also, peer debriefing, and member checking was utilized as explained earlier.

Researcher's Role

In a qualitative study, the researcher is the primary instrument for gathering and analyzing data and as such, can respond to the situation by maximizing opportunities for collecting and producing meaningful information (Merriam, 1998). Taylor explained in her research that the more researchers are aware of their verbal and nonverbal behavior, the more attuned they are to their behavior and its effect (Taylor, 2005). As the researcher I listened to the participants and attempted to be an effective communicator and establish rapport with them. I asked meaningful questions and listened intensely and objectively to the responses**.**

Summary of Study

Variables such as time, money, and resources, made it unrealistic to conduct this exploration in a larger geographical area. Also Big Boy ISD is one of the largest school districts in the State of Texas and one of the largest in the country. Therefore, purpose sampling was the most efficient method of sampling for this exploration. I conducted the exploration in one large metropolitan area, and this offered a vivid depiction of the study.

The research was limited to seven African American educators, which provided a manageable number to interview and gather data. The participants were both males and females thereby removing the gender limitation. Also, the participant's job titles varied in the educational arena thereby removing the title barrier.

In this chapter, the methods have been thoroughly detailed. The case study was outlined and included sections for data sources, data context, data collections, data

analyses and trustworthiness was established. In Chapter IV, the findings from the

interviews will be presented and outlined. The information is categorized by emerging

themes.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Even in literature and art, no man who bothers about originality will ever be original: whereas if you simply try to tell the truth (without caring two pence how often it has been told before) you will, nine times out of ten, become original without ever having noticed it. (C. S. Lewis)

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the motivators that contributed to African American educators leaving suburban school districts and choosing to work in urban school districts. The setting of this research took place in and around a large metropolitan area in the state of Texas. This section includes the reporting of findings for this study. This study explored the reasons that contribute to African American educators choosing to leave the confines of the metropolitan suburban area to migrate to an urban area to educate students of color. The results of the study were based on data gathered from semi-structured interviews and member checking was utilized. The questions were developed from information obtained through literature review.

It begins with an overview of the definitions of suburban and urban contexts. It then profiled each participant along with a reporting of the findings through emerging themes and answers to the research question as interpreted from interviews. Data from the interviews were used to help gain an understanding of what prompted the educators to leave and search for employment elsewhere. Several themes highlighting social injustice emerged from the data gathered during the interview process: Educators, 1)

moved to become social change agents, 2) moved for financial increases, 3) moved for growth opportunities, 4) moved due workplace relations, and lastly 5) moved due perceptions and experiences from the suburban district. Sub-themes also emerged including (a) social activist approach (b) attempting to just fit in to maintain steady employment, and (c) ownership of students of color achievement.

As I searched for existing studies to address the issue of African American educators' movement from various suburban districts to urban school districts, the studies were scarce, but there were extensive studies exploring workplace relationships. The scarce educational research on this particular issue prompted me to conduct research exploring the urban migration of African American educators. I was astonished by the limited research articles on this phenomenon, but from the stories of the research participants, I hope now there is a social voice of change being echoed.

Data Findings

The findings from the research question is presented first, followed by the stories of those subjects who felt compelled to share more of their lives as educators and why they educate in some capacity each and every day. As the data was analyzed, and those specific themes began to emerge within the responses, the questions and answers are listed first, then, the categorized themes and given titles are last. Table two will outline and simplify Urban vs. Suburban contexts see (Table 2).

Table 2. Characteristics of Urban vs. Suburban School Districts

District	Number in Texas	Enrollment %	# of Students
Urban	10	75% of Largest County	At least 750,000 in County
Suburban	78	15% of Nearby Urban	At least 4,500

A "Major Urban" or "Urban" district of which there are 10 districts in the state of Texas (TEA, 2012) is defined for this study by the Texas Education Agency since all participants were located in a metropolitan area in the state of Texas. A district is classified as major urban if: (a) it is located in a county with a population of at least 750,000; (b) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 75% of the largest district enrollment in the county; and (c) at least 35% of enrolled students are economically disadvantaged. A student is reported as economically disadvantaged if he or she is eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program (TEA, 2012). Major Urban districts are the largest school districts in the state and serve the six metropolitan areas of Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Austin, and El Paso (TEA, 2000).

A "Major Suburban" or "Suburban" of which there are 78 districts in the State of Texas is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is contiguous to a major urban district; and (c) its enrollment is at least 3% that of the contiguous major urban district or at least 4,500 students. A district

also is also classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in the same county as a major urban district; and (d) its enrollment is at least 15 percent that of the nearest major urban district in the county or at least 4,500 students.

At the beginning of the this project, as the researcher, there was some curiosity about what type of answers and responses the researcher would receive inquiring why people chose to leave one job for another. Typically, an urban school district does not warrant the most favorable working conditions. As an African American male educator and researcher, I knew an achievement gap existed between students of color and White students. You ponder as an educator and administrator is it worth the time and energy trying to save the world by choosing to educate in an urban school setting. Were there some underlying reasons as to why these educators were not receiving what they were seeking in their suburban school districts as oppose to searching for it in an urban school district? At the time of this study I was an administrator in a suburban school district, and I witnessed educators migrating to urban school districts.

Prior to starting the data collection process, I thoroughly explained to each participant the information provided to me was extremely important, and it was completely confidential. I also made them aware of the districts to which they migrated to and from would not be able to identify them as research subjects in any manner. The information provided to me would be kept confidential and as research participants they would be given pseudonyms for identifiable purposes in the research. The information was only to help and assist me in developing an in-depth understanding of the motivators

that contributed to their migration to an urban school district. The data was reviewed by a trusted peer and colleague to assist in validating the study findings. The educator's identities were not divulged to the "debriefer." Table three will detail the pseudonyms and interview dates in the data collections methods table see (Table 3).

Table 3. Data Collection Methods

Participant	Method	Job Title	Interview
#1 Dr. Mom Money	Interview	Principal	9/31/2011
#2 Dr. Skills	Interview	Principal	10/15/2011
#3 Ms. Decision Maker	Interview	Campus Specialist	11/24/2011
#4 Ms. Disappointed	Interview	Counselor	12/09/2011
#5 Ms. Talented	Interview	Science Specialist	12/18/2011
#6 Mr. Passover	Interview	Assistant Principal	12/20/2011
#7 Mr. Fasttrack	Interview	Associate Principal	12/29/2011

Stage for Success

This research idea began perusing through my mind when I observed African American educators leaving and going to Big Boy Independent School District. I was curious as to why they were gaining our educators who we had train, developed, and mentored. The affects of the migration were being experienced school wide, district wide, and specifically by students of color and their academic achievement. I could not understand if it were just teachers, but suburban school districts were losing counselors,

diagnosticians, curriculum specialists, social workers, and principals. After conducting this research I gained valuable insight to assist my staff and myself on how to effectively retain those African American educators. The story of the educators and this tremendous study will now be told.

District Profiles

District # 1- Alway *ISD*: Alway ISD is located in the Big Boy Metropolitan area and is in Hounds County. The district is comprised of 43 schools including 26 elementary, 5 junior high schools, 5 middle schools, and 5 high schools. It has a total of 45,768 students including 32.8% African American, 49.8% Hispanic, 12.7% Asian, 3.8% White, and 0.1% Other. The district employs 3,037.41 educators including 2,337.96 females, and 699.45 males. The ethnicity of full time employees (FTE's) includes 36.20% White, 0.12% American Indian, 21.55% Hispanic, 5.6% Asian, 33.66% Black/African American, and 2.82% other. Figure one will give a visual depiction of the Always ISD FTE's in ethnic and gender data, see (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percent of Total FTE's Always ISD 2010-11 School Year
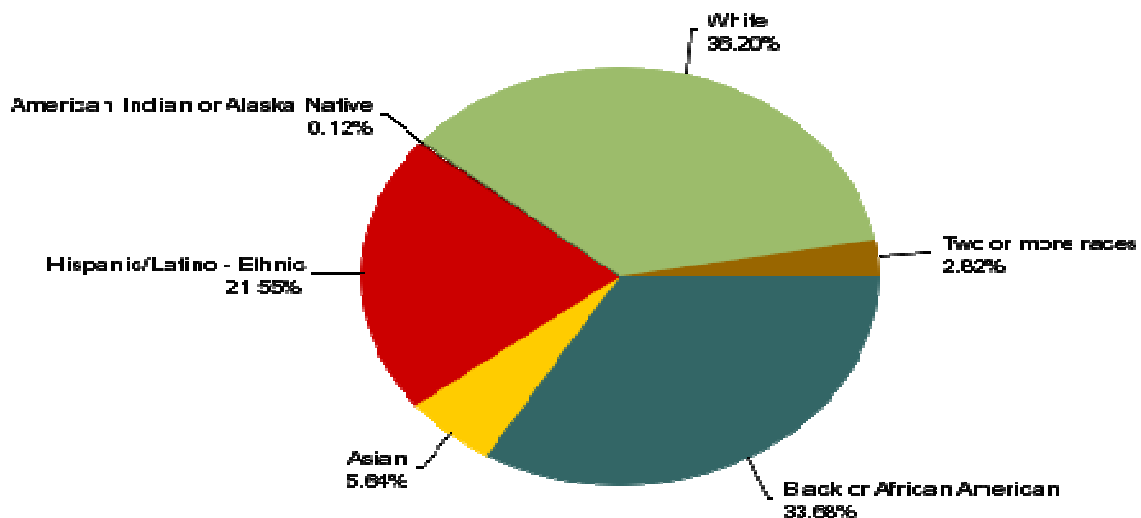
District # 2 Alright ISD: Alright ISD is located in the Big Boy Metropolitan area inside of Hounds County. The district is comprised of 72 schools with 41 elementary schools, 12 high schools, 9 junior high schools, and 10 middle schools. It has 63,154 students with a racial makeup of 26.2% African Americans, 70.0% Hispanics, 1.4% Asians, 0.1% American Indian, 2.2% White, 0.1% Other and 0.9% two other races. The district employs 3,963 employees with 3,043.33 females, and 919.65 males. The ethnic breakdown of FTE's is 36.99% White, 0.33% American Indian, 23.29% Hispanic, 2.74% Asian, 34.37% African American, 0.07% Native Hawaiian, and 2.22% Two more races. Figure two will give a visual depiction of the Alright ISD FTE's in ethnic and gender data, see (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percent of Total FTE's Alright ISD 2010-11 School Year
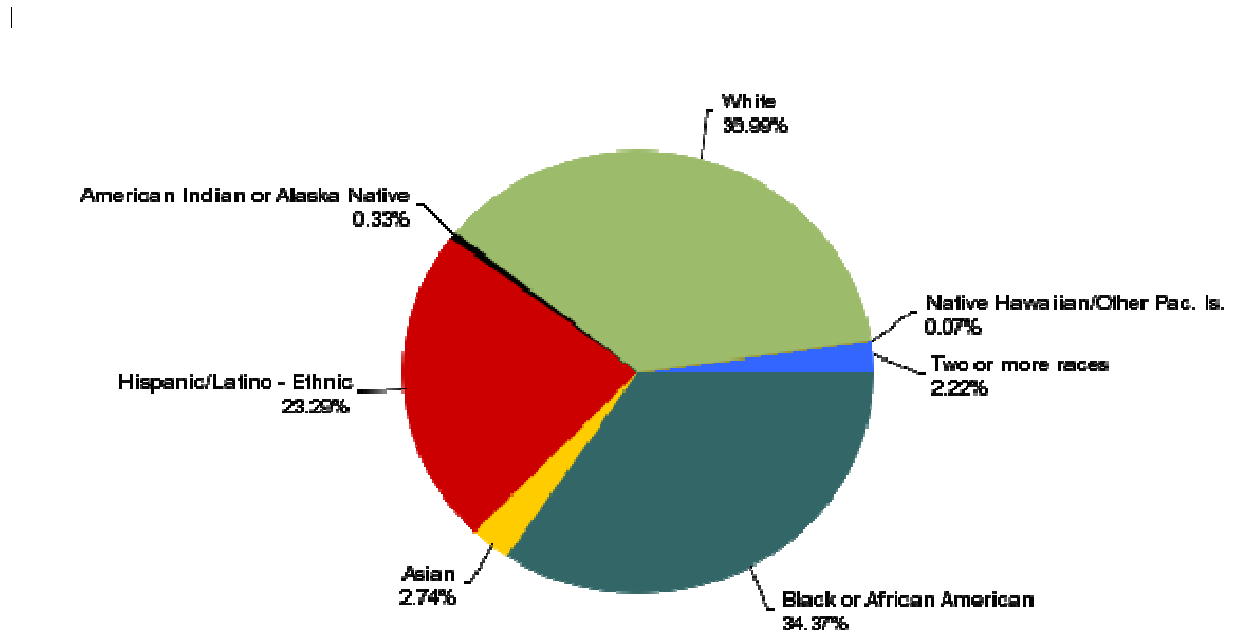
District #3 Mojo ISD: Mojo ISD is located in the Big Boy Metropolitan area and is

comprised of 78 schools including 51 elementary schools, 11 high schools, 16 middle

schools. It has a total of 106, 097 students with a racial makeup of 15.5% African

American, 8.0% Asian, 42.5% Hispanic, 31% White, and 2.7% other. There are a total

of 6,470.36 FTE's with 5,352.06 (82.72%) female and 1,118.29 (17.28%) males. The

racial distribution is 0.03% Native Hawaiian, 10.25% African American, 1.80% Asian,

11.94% Hispanic, 74.21% White, and 1.40% Other. Figure three will give a visual

depiction of the Mojo ISD FTE's in ethnic and gender data, see (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percent of Total FTE's Mojo ISD 2010-11 School Year
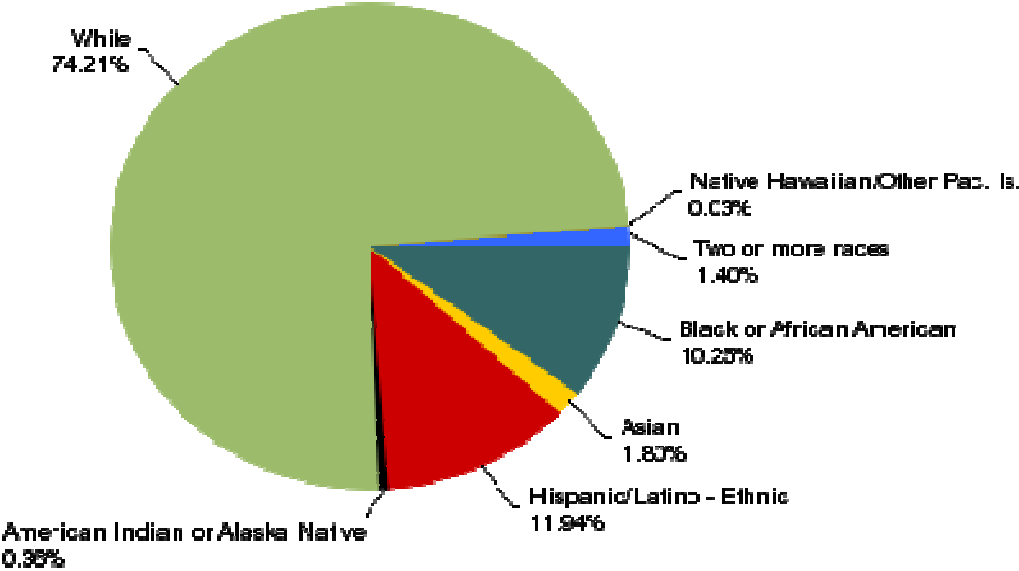
District # 4 Frenchlick ISD: Frenchlick ISD is located in the Big Boy Metropolitan area, but is located in Hardball County which is southwest of Big Boy. The district is comprised of 70 schools, of which are 46 elementary, 11 high schools, 11 middle schools, and 2 junior high schools. There are 68,948 students with an ethnic makeup of 29.40 % African American students, 21.3% Asian students, 25.9% Hispanic, 0.6American Indian, 20.3% White, and 2.4% other. The district employs 4,134 fulltime employees of which 3,220.54 (77.89%) are females, and 913.98 (22.11%) are males. The ethnic distribution is 27.07% African American, 4.37% Asian, 9.53% Hispanic, 0.26 Native American, and 58.77% White. Figure four will give a visual depiction of the Frenchlick ISD FTE's in ethnic and gender data, see (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Percent of Total FTE's Frenchlick ISD 2010-11 School Year**
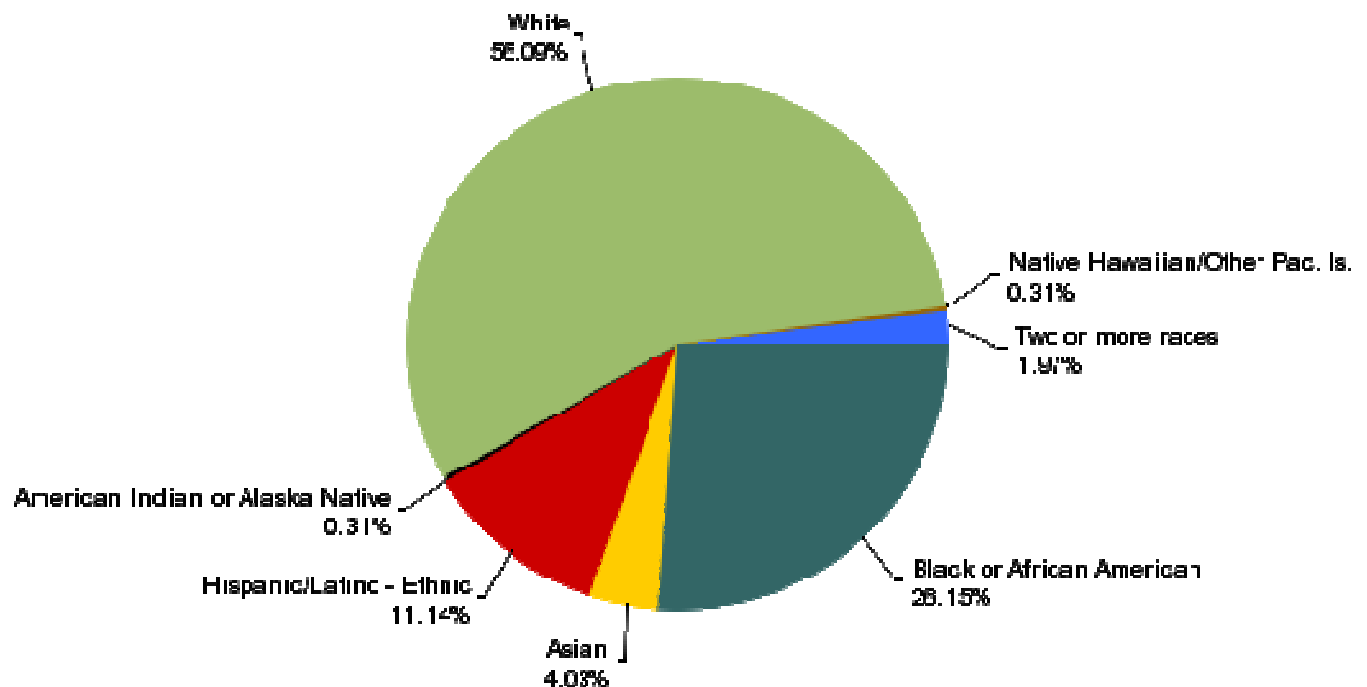
District #5 Big Boy ISD: Big Boy ISD was the district the participants chose to migrate

to. It is defined as an urban school district. It is located in Hounds County and it is the

largest district in the State of Texas. The district is comprised of 297 schools of which

197 elementary, 50 high schools, and 50 middle schools. The district has an enrollment

of 204,245 students of which 26.2% African American, 3.1% Asian, 61.9% Hispanic,

0.2% American Indian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian, 0.7% Other. The district educator

makeup is African American, 4.44% Asian, 25.94% Hispanic, 0.33% American Indian.

The district has 8,749.87 (74.08%) females, and 3,061.58 (25.92%) males. Figure five

will give a visual depiction of the Big Boy ISD FTE's in ethnic and gender data, see

(Figure 5).

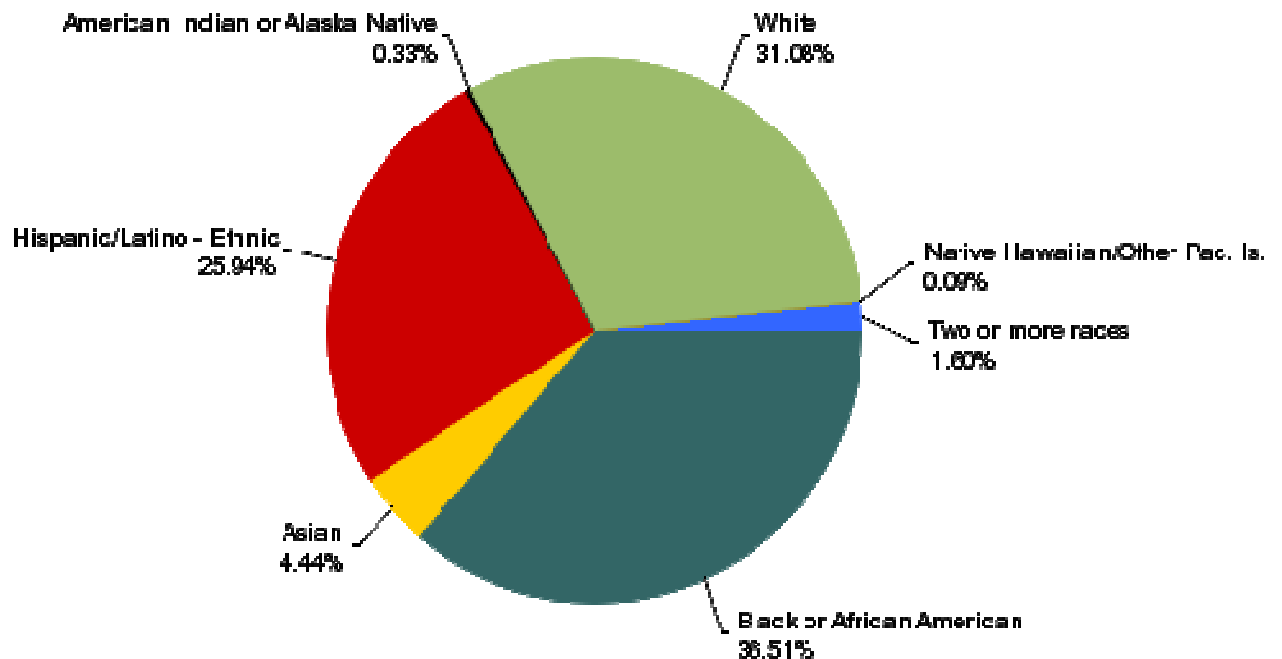**Figure 5. Percent of Total FTE's Big Boy ISD 2010-11 School Year**

Table 4. Participant Profiles

Participant	Age	Job Title	Gender	Migrated Too
Dr. Mom Money	46	Principal	Female	Big Boy
Dr. Skills	56	Principal	Female	Big Boy
Ms. Decision Maker	31	Campus Specialist	Female	Big Boy
Ms. Disappointed	49	Counselor	Female	Alright
Ms. Talented	38	Science Specialist	Female	Big Boy
Mr. Passover	34	Assistant Principal	Male	Big Boy
Mr. Fasttrack	36	Administrator	Male	Big Boy

Participants Stories

Each of the participants had a compelling story to tell and as it unveiled it seem to be a story of social injustice. Table four outlines the participant profiles see (Table 4). During the interviews I felt as though I was Moses migrating back to Egypt to release the Israelites. During the interviews, all of them allowed their stories to be released as though they were having a cathartic moment. Some of the participants cried, a couple were angry, and one participant became furious as to why he was consistently overlook for promotions. I allowed the conversation to flow and most of them did not hold back in sharing their compelling stories.

They were cognizant of the connection between their story and how their circumstances dictated their decision to migrate back to an urban district or migrate to an urban district for the first time. As a researcher and colleague, I was astounded by their desire to share details about their professional decisions and how it affected their

personal lives. I interpret their willingness to share their stories as a need to sound off about some of the injustices they encountered or a platform to toot their own horn by going back and giving a helping hand.

I heard their voices and now I want others to hear their voices. I include a brief profile of each participant. The information in each profile is based on details obtained from the interview, and from my prior knowledge about some the participants as a colleague. In order to protect their identities, privacies, and job security each participant have been assigned a pseudonym and a number based upon the passion they exuded in the face to face meetings.

Participant #1 – "Dr. Mom Money"

Dr. Mom Money is a female, African American, and a 20 year veteran in education. She has been a principal for over seven years, earned her Doctorate of Education from Texas Southern University, and enjoyed the good life. She is a single parent of two children and she made it clear, once her children completed high school she was "done with education."

Dr. Mom Money explained in detail that she became a teacher to make a difference in the world of education. She was once a high school counselor and enjoyed that experience in her suburban district. In her words she was "cool with the status quo, you come to work, leave by three, and everything was cool." "I had no idea I was going to be an administrator." She said:

"I was working for one of the meanest principals in the district, and oh by the way, years later I worked for that same principal. I had been in the district for some years and I was not planning on leaving."

She was being as creative and enthusiastic as ever when one day, she was asked have you ever considered administration. Dr. Mom Money wanted to let her story reign supreme, because what she thought was gold turned out to be a pot of misery.

She grew in up in 3rd Ward (Predominant African American Community) and she had witnessed all of the crime and the embattled streets of disdain and poverty in her community. She wanted more for her neighborhood; because she thought she had arrived at a place where she could go back and save the "Ward."

"When I left my district and went to Big Boy ISD, I needed more money for retirement. They dangled a carrot over my head for a $12,000 dollars raise, a bigger district, and all I had to do was raise test scores. I am gone."

She left the confines of one the other largest district in the state, to join Big Boy ISD.

"McGary, I am a single parent, and I don't have no man looking out for me. These white people don't give a shit whether you live or die, so I am going to take the money and run."

Participant #2- "Dr. Skills"

Dr. Skills is an African American female elementary principal with over 32 years of educational experience. Dr. Skills spent most of her career in Frenchlick ISD. She was an elementary school teacher for 18 years at one middle school. She spent most of her career in her suburban school district. She earned a doctorate of education from TSU,

and she told me to always "write, write, and write." Dr. Skills came to her suburban district where as she stated "there were hardly any Blacks in the district." She was one of two elementary teachers and only one black counselor on her campus and it was always "a struggle to be accepted as a colleague." Dr. Skills was raised in a military family and she was exposed to many different cultures and ethnicities.

> "My father moved around a lot in the military, and we were always around different people and lived in different countries."

Her first exposure to an all African American student body was her graduate classes at Prairie View A&M University (PV).

> "I had always been In cultures that knew how to assimilate. We need to be at the top of our game and need to know culture. We cannot be mediocre. I really did not experience racism as much because we saw so many different people. I settled down and moved with my husband to southern Texas due his job transferring him and it was an eye-opener for me."

She worked in four different districts because of her husband's job. She desired to work where her kids attended school and she wanted them to attend school in "good district." Dr. Skills stated a couple of times in her interview; "I did not know anyone where I moved to, but it was nothing new for me." She applied in what was a predominantly White suburban school district, and landed a job. "My neighborhood was White, and the Blacks were bused across the sub-division to a different school in the district." Her daughter attended a school where there were only three Black children in the entire school, but she wanted her children to attend as school in the area they lived.

Once she started working at the school, she recognized the students were grouped according to basic skills.

"I saw immediately the African American students were in the foundations class."

She knew she could move those students and help them gain the basic foundational skills they were lacking. "Black students were low academically and those kids had to be given 200% and my principal was open for it." She told a story of how a parent did not want her child in that class with "those kids." I asked her how that made her feel, and she replied;

"I am here to move those kids and I will move them as long as my principal let me do what I do."

Dr. Skill's principal was from Chicago and her principal did not tolerate racism. She received a lot of opportunities to have autonomy, because "those kids needed to be moved." The district was very suburban and Blacks were few, and "those kids could not connect to the White teachers." Her principal looked for the best candidates to teach the children and she was the best person for the job. "You need to know how to deal with those kids."

During her first year, she taught kindergarten and the children went to the first grade the next year and were high level. She looked for more challenges after moving the kids and her principal suggested she move into administration. She enrolled in a program at Prairie View A&M University (PV), and completed her degree for mid-management. Her principal hired her as an assistant principal, and now she was on her

way in a White suburban district, not accepting of African Americans. She attended school for a couple of years and landed a principal's job in her suburban district. Her first job as a principal job was in a school with a racial makeup of 30% African American teachers and 70% White teachers. The principal prior to her had been moved to a predominantly White school in the district, and left a school with majority African American students with low expectations and test scores.

> "We cannot be mediocre, and we need to be on top of our game. After my first year there were fifteen vacancies. Most of the teachers were Anglo and that was because of expectations. Those teachers follow their old boss into their culture."

She stated you have to get people on the bus and in the right seats. She noted how teachers need to be placed based on skill set and not based on what they want to teach. "I then left and went to Big Boy ISD."

"A good friend was in Big Boy ISD, and the superintendent asked for my resume and I completed the job requirements and interview process." She stated, "it was a combination of things that prompted me to leave." The school, she explained, was on auto-pilot, and she was in the district for sixteen years. The new school was about 15-20 minutes from her residence and they gave her autonomy to handle the budget, employ different configurations and everybody is paid for everything." She also discussed how she was nearing retirement and needed her top three years. Big Boy ISD gave the raise she needed. The new district simply gave her more money to come and work some of the magic she had worked with the African American students in her suburban school.

"The fight, was tough with the administration and the suburban stuff. I knew

those kids in the new school needed me and my skills, and I knew I could help

save them."

Once in the new district she experienced tremendous growth opportunities and

the ability to spend money free of suburban bureaucratic red tape.

"I had some good experiences and bad experiences in my old district, but in the

end, those kids over there needed me more."

Participant # 3- "Ms. Decision Maker"

Ms. Decision Maker is a 33 year old African American female with about ten

years of educational experience. Ms. Decision Maker became a teacher after attending

an alternative certification program to teach speech. She was working in radio and

broadcasting and decided she did not like the field. Once she completed the program, she

landed a teaching position in a suburban community outside of another large school

district in Texas.

"The school enrollment consisted of 5,000 students and it was a huge school. The

larger population presented all of the large school challenges. It was

predominantly African American, with a population of Hispanics and a few

White kids. It was a huge suburban high school and you could simply hide and

no one would know it."

She went on to explain how she attempted to connect with the kids culturally and

deal with their personal history. As I talked with Ms. Decision Maker it became apparent

she was not totally comfortable with teaching African American students.

"I tried to build relationships with the students and relate to their personal

history."

She mentioned several times how she was trying to help them understand her, and she

brought resources from her grad school program to connect with them. She was an

African American female teacher bringing grad school information to connect with those

African American kids culturally. She explained that even though it was a suburban

school outside of a large metropolitan area it was still economically challenged. I do not

know if she knew the demographic data of the school or she was just stating that because

of the high percentage of Students of Color.

"It qualified as economically disadvantaged and presented the problems of an

economically disadvantage school."

She left and move to southern California to attend graduate school once again.

She attended graduate school at Stanford University. Once in California she was

recruited again by a suburban school district in California and became an administrator

to assist in opening a new school. "The school did not pay a whole lot and the hours

were too much, so she migrated back to Texas. She accepted a job in Big Boy ISD.

Once in Big Boy ISD, she was placed in a high school in a community called 4th

Ward (Predominantly African American) of Big Boy ISD, and began to educate students

in much the same way she had done previously in her suburban school district in the

large metroplex. She noted;

"the huge differences with the urban school was the parental involvement and

teachers come in with more skills…"

She explained;

> "I never regretted leaving the suburban school setting, because in the huge
>
> district you can't make any decisions. As a teacher you are given directives as a
>
> teacher and you must follow those directives. I was upset and frustrated because I
>
> could not figure out how things operated. The instructional decisions of the
>
> building were a major interest to me and I was not allowed to make any
>
> instructional decisions as a speech teacher."

She was on the principal's advisory committee, but she explained;

> "that was just a show, and there were no decisions being made by that
>
> committee."

She wanted to see to instructional delivery design of how kids learned and "you didn't

get to see that in my district" she explained. "I felt out of the loop", and she was very

frustrated with the administrative operation of the school. She could not help kids the

way she had intended too upon leaving her pre-service program, which gave her so much

promise and hope. "I was a robot just responding to decisions being made and I did not

enter education for that reason."

"Working in Big Boy ISD was not a huge difference from working in the suburbs

of California and the large metroplex, but it was a lot of opportunities for growth." All

promotions are accompanied by a certain certificate and she said "I was not prepared to

keep paying to attend school and gain all of those certificates." "I never regretted leaving

the suburban district" she detailed. "It is about what people are doing different to educate

kids." Ms. Decision Maker said;

"I want to give back, and it was room for me to give back in Big Boy ISD and

lots of opportunities for growth in my educational career."

Ms. Decision Maker said "it is hard to retain top talent because of the lack of support

and money in the suburbs." She gave some parting words that resonated in my *Moses'*

Spirit.

"The more time in the urban setting, you grow teachers and the peer development

there is hard to find, and they tend to stay longer."

Participant # 4- "Ms. Disappointed"

Ms. Disappointed is a 49 year old African American female with over 10 years of

educational experience. Ms. Disappointed was a marketing teacher in her suburban

district for nine years before she migrated to an urban school district. She was in

corporate America for over twenty years before deciding to make a career move into

education. She had been contemplating making the career move, but was hesitant. After

some company downsizing and job security was scarce, she then decided to make the

move. She was passionate about education and her corporate business mind approach

was great for education.

I had the pleasure of meeting Ms. Disappointed some ten years ago when I was a

marketing teacher. Our students competed against each other the four years in marketing

competitions. For the record, our passion was extremely equal, but my students on a

consistent basis edged her students out in marketing competitions each and every

competitive season. I was aware of her love for children, and her eagerness to compare

her program to mine. We dealt with similar students in two different sides of town, and

our students performed at a high level. She would often ask me how I maintained a consistent level of success. I explained, I am in this for kids to win, and kids are in it to win because it is there "Super Bowl." She loved her children and the district in which she worked.

I asked Ms. Disappointed why she left a district she was so much in love with and no longer working in a suburban district. I informed her she would be a great candidate for my research.

She stated with an emphatic "yes, I want to be heard, because it ain't right." She continued to detail her story, and how she had gained her degree in counseling from one of the regional universities in the Big Boy metropolitan area through a cohort offered by the suburban district she was employed along with several other surrounding districts. She was eager and energetic to enter the counseling program, seeking a degree in school counseling. She told me very candidly;

> "We were basically guaranteed a job because of the need for counselors. I along with several other ladies entered the program from our suburban district, attempting to get a degree and a job. Upon graduation and a passing score on the Texas Excet exam it was time for me to start applying for counseling jobs. I applied in my district and I did not receive any interviews initially, but I was confident I would land a job, because everybody else did."

I then asked her what did she mean by that statement and she had a cathartic moment.

Her conversational tone changed and her voice became high pitch and had a sort of resounding "they did this to me." She started explaining she was the only African American in the counseling program from her district.

"Everybody in the cohort from our district were females and White but me."

They all got jobs in the district and I did not even get an interview. I thought something was wrong with me and so I started questioning myself if I was good enough and did the district need a Black woman to be a counselor like me. I kept applying and finally I got one interview with an African American female high school principal. She gave me a great interview, but I did not get the job and I was disappointed."

She talked as if she as was conversing with a friend and trusted confidant. The friend and colleague advised her to search the urban inner city schools for a counseling job. "They could benefit from my passion and enthusiasm, and I know I have a lot of that."

She applied in a district located near Big Boy ISD and of course it was an urban school district. She said, "In one interview, I landed a job." She went on to detailed how she was a great and motivated employee. She did everything required of her and extra.

"I thought I was headed in the right direction, but I guess I had not arrived with the White Man like I thought."

She discussed how everyone in the Career and Technical Education department in her former suburban district was Anglo and very accommodating for nine years.

"Once they found out I wanted new challenges and more responsibilities, it was like they changed overnight. They began to become very distant and standoffish,

and I could not figure out what I had done. I just wanted to move up and get more career opportunities and I thought I had set myself up for career advancement."

Ms. Disappointed was extremely upset and disappointed of her apparent workplace ousting. She felt like they threw her to the curb because she desired to have more money and opportunities for career advancement. She needed more for her life and the classroom was not a challenge to her anymore. She wanted to impact more students of color and the classroom limited her ability to impact more kids and families. She detailed how the White graduate students from her former district were afforded the opportunity to land a counseling job, but she was not afforded an opportunity.

"I've given my all and did everything the right way. I want to grow, and it was apparent I was not going to grow there."

Her new counseling opportunity is great and she is able to impact the kids that need her the most. "I am part of the administration hierarchy, and part of the team." The discipline processes are the same she noted. She discussed how kids are just kids.

"The parents provide more parental support and I have started a family counseling group."

The principal at her current school is a novice principal, and gave her the autonomy to let her gifts flourish. She discussed how she did not get that opportunity in her suburban district.

"There are numerous opportunities for growth and I would not have had those opportunities before because of the politics in the district. "They do not want

to face the fact we have issues in our community and with our Black and

Hispanic kids."

She offered some parting words as the interview concluded. "The urban district has a

keen interest in ownership of the community and the old district tries to hide the

community issues."

Participant #5- "Ms. Talented"

Ms. Talented is an African American female with over 14 years of educational

experience. She has been a teacher since 1997, and she is 38 years of age. Ms. Talented

was a science teacher with extensive experience in curriculum and instruction. She has a

Masters degree in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in science education. She

was once an aspiring researcher but as she put it "life has its way of bringing us to where

need to be." Ms. Talented story is somewhat different than the rest of the participants

simply because she started her career in Arizona. She discussed how districts in Arizona

are similar in structure to the Texas school districts designs. The suburban areas housed

the upper middle class families and their children attend school in those predominantly

White communities. The urban schools or inner city schools as she described house your

Hispanics and African American families and their children attend school in those

schools. She stated, "I worked in three urban districts and one suburban district in

Arizona as a science teacher." She attended an alternative education program to obtain

her certification, and she said, "the program was ok but constantly the program

administrators constantly reminded us the jobs are in the inner city."

She secured a job in a suburban district in Arizona and it was ok at first but the workplace relationships begin to sour once they realized she was astute regarding curriculum and instruction, and as scientifically sound as they were she exclaimed. She also discussed how she worked in a rural district and the central administration was located on the campus along with the high school and middle school; "it was all on the same acreage." The suburban school district had seven campuses in a good area of town and she taught multiple preps. She was one of three African American teachers in the suburban school district. She also taught health in Tempe, AZ. The work environment changed with discipline and relationships with African American kids.

The white colleagues could not relate to the Blacks, Hispanics or Asians. She said;

> "I felt like I needed to step up because I was the only teacher that could handle those kids, as they called me. It made me feel like I was the momma and they were in my hen house. Sometimes they would send students of color to me. They would send them to me for discipline, but I was not the AP (assistant principal), and it created at times anxiety in me or anger. I wanted the kids to have discipline and direction so I created a Black Student Union. The kids made a nickname of "BSU for us."

She went on to tell me how she would take the kids on road trips to Black colleges and universities so they could be exposed to what the world had to offer. One of the schools in Arizona was different and the other two were about the same. She then left and moved to Texas.

She landed a job in Big Boy ISD as a science teacher and it was great. The district was expanding and they created some science specialist jobs, and she desired one of those positions. She talked about her experiences in Arizona where the kids depended on her and now she was in Texas and she felt the same.

> "I finally realized I am a good science teacher who knows how to help kids move. I love science and I wanted minority kids to love science, because it is the gateway to instant money once you leave college."

She detailed how she desired more say in curriculum because that was her background. She notice some of her colleagues who had depended on her for insight and planning landed jobs as specialist, but "my phone never rang" as she stated. The working relationship was good she explained, but she really desired one of those specialist positions.

One of her trusted friends, a White female colleague told her that she was more qualified than the pool of potential candidates vying for a specialist position. The colleagues would present problems to her and she would assist them in solving the problems in an attempt to convey sound instruction to students. They would package her ideas and present them to the district's curriculum department and as she stated, "next thing I know, I would be in meetings like professional development and that was my stuff I had just given to the specialist."

> "It was always disappointing to see my work in the professional development, but I couldn't get the job."

Once she was voted teacher of the year and the committee was forbidden from announcing her as the winner due to her color. A member of the committee divulged the information to her, which should have been kept confidential.

"I'm frustrated, and there is nothing else I can do. I kept applying for jobs but was always denied."

She explained how the principal wanted to apologize to her in lieu of what had transpired with the teacher of the year process. One of her colleagues informed her of the potential fraud that had taken place and told her to say something. She detailed how the principal "got wind of it", and he wanted to prevent her from causing a major disruption in the educational process of the school. So he offered an apology and explained there was nothing he could do at that point because the winner had been announced to the staff.

Ms. Talented left her suburban district in Houston and migrated to an urban district, because she was disappointed at the fact she could not utilize her talents to make learning more efficient for all kids. She stated;

"All kids can benefit from the skills I possess, but they will not allow me to utilize them."

She secured a job as a science curriculum specialist in an urban district. She detailed how the training for science teachers arrives on her desk and she directly impacts instruction. She primarily works in the middle school settings, and the middle school setting was new for her because she has been a high school teacher her whole career. She

talked about how the small community rallies around her and it is a different vibe than the large high school setting.

She said "the move was totally to assist teachers and help kids learn science better." "That is what I always wanted to do." The discipline is about the same she explained. She said, "because kids are kids and when you get right down to it, they all want to learn." She discussed how involving the parents in the decision making process for kids, prompts the parents to be more supportive and demanding of their child.

> "The suburban context wants to convert people to be on their side and learn their ways, which are not always the most effective ways to assist kids to be successful. The number one reason I am doing this is because I want to help students in different capacities and there was no room for growth in the suburban district. When it all comes down to it, kids are kids and they deserve to learn."

Kids deserve to learn and she longed for an environment her talents could be utilized. She was extremely impressive in her attempt to convey in the interview how much she had learned from her different educational experiences and desired to share that knowledge with more people than the suburban district could provide.

Participant # 6- "Mr. Passover"

Up to this point I had interview five females in various capacities of school leadership and educational venues. There were very few educators migrating based upon a whim, and male educators migrating came at a premium. I did observed one particular male educator leave on two separate occasions to teach young African American kids how to be productive people in communities and enhance their overall maturation.

Mr. Passover was an African American male educator with lots to prove. He was 35 years of age and had been an educator for over 14 years. He loved little children and love children is what he did best. Educating and preparing students to be productive members of society was rewarding to him. He took the traditional path in becoming a educator. He entered college to teach, because he always dreamed of becoming a teacher. He started teaching in a rural suburban community as he called it. He taught 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders all subjects.

He was emphatic about his role as an elementary school teacher. He talked about how the environment was new for him, and there were only a few African American educators on campus. He was the only male educator and one of a few African American educators on campus. The environment was different but his principal was great. "She was momma, and everybody knew it." The school was predominantly African American and Hispanic students and he stated "I enjoyed every minute of it."

"I learned good instructional practices and cultural relevant pedagogy." He talked about the strong African American female principal he worked for. She wanted to connect with the learner, and he was all for that.

The majority of the teachers were White, roughly 80% of the teachers in that school were White, and the leader urged them to have connections with the students. "She put aside money so teachers could go camping overnight with the students." The principal wanted the strong support for the students, and she would go to no ends to ensure the teachers, administrators, and clerical staff connected with students. He

discussed his strong rapport with the staff and how they would socialize together to build team cohesiveness.

"It was strong, and it was a team concept. We pretty much did everything together. Everything was on the team concept, and the school was designed on a team concept."

He discussed how the subject teams were placed together in curriculum instructional pods, and the teachers planned as a team and partied as a team. His principal promoted the team concept, because she knew if the children saw the oneness amongst the educators it would be reflected in discipline and learning. The school was designed for this teaming concept, and "momma wanted her staff to be happy so her kids could be successful."

"She was more than a leader, she was a momma. I did not want to leave that urban school."

He got engaged and moved to Big Boy ISD and landed a job in a large suburban district in the metroplex of Hounds County. He then started working as a district curriculum specialist in the suburban district. He wrote a proposal to become a behavior specialist because discipline was out of control and the school was in chaos. The proposal was accepted and approved. He began this teaching assignment in a new school working for an African American male principal. It was the first time he had worked for a male principal of color, and that was new territory for him. But, he endorsed the challenge of assisting another Black man reach success.

"I felt I was needed and it was the clientele I felt I could work with."

He said he could make an impact with those kids.

The principal allocated the money and he was on his way to doing wonderful things with the children in the suburban district. He performed in the role for three years and he then felt a strong desire vie for more impactful roles. He then noticed the lack of promotions coming he was way and he kept getting *passed over*. He designed the position, worked with the principal to allocate money for the position, and defined the job description and subsequently more individuals in the district obtained the title of behavior specialist. But, he was not being promoted, and he desperately needed career advancement, because there nothing else he could do in that role.

He was doing everything required of him, but no promotions. He was Black, successful, and tried to play the part so he would look promotable. He said;

"White people in his district looked at appearances and how you could look in a leadership role. I did the necessary work, played the role and played the games to the fullest, but was constantly being passed over for jobs by less qualified individuals. I was not even noticed, and colleagues in the same role were being promoted, but no jobs came to me."

He was in all the district's leadership programs, academies for leadership, but no leadership roles were afforded to him. Ms. Passover became extremely frustrated at the lack of opportunities and being passed over for promotions. "I did not get promoted." He had an eye-opening experience as he observed a colleague received a promotion with less skills and ability. He stated the colleague told him;

"Man, I do not know why they are not promoting you, and you have all of the
tools for leadership. The colleague was Caucasian male colleague of mine with
less passion and enthusiasm for the job. The colleague was a specialist and I had
defined the job description and had the inaugural role."

He then had a moment, in which he appeared he was attempting to shed tears, and as a
strong resilient Black Man, I did not envision his passion initially, but it surfaced. We
endure many pains as African American men in the world of work and social settings,
but we never shed tears because we know that's how it is. We grin, bear it and overcome
the obstacles, because so many people depend on our strength and vitality.

"It demoralized me and made me feel as though I was not worth being
promoted."

Of all the data collected, Ms. Passover's story prompted me to understand, I am still a
Black man living in America and some things will not change, but social injustices
should have light shed on them. No amount of education, money, power, or prestige will
take away the pain we bear as Black men. He said it once again, "I did not feel like I was
worth being promoted." He then went on to say that a trusted African American male
colleague told him;

"Bruh they can't keep you out of the door as long as you keep knocking on it.
From that moment on, I kept knocking."

He detailed how he and the African American male colleague were on a trip
together and the two of them discussed more accounts of how to handle the stressors of
professional racism as a male educator of color. He said:

"For him to tell me he had less skills and qualifications, and thanks me for writing the job description that got him promoted was heart wrenching and a wakeup call. I could not understand why. I put in long hours, work with the community and I thought the district noticed it. The White counterparts were not doing as much as I was doing and they were still being promoted. The colleague mentioned to me he had not done those things, and he was still promoted."

Ms. Passover was advised by the African American male colleague to apply in other school districts because he possessed the skills, persona, and ability to get the job done.

"I discovered research about the obstacles Black males face in suburban districts, but the colleague pretty much told me all the same things the research said. I looked in other districts, mainly urban districts, because I knew they would give me a chance. I interviewed and received a job as an AP in an urban district, just like he told me it would happen. I felt I could be utilized there, and that they would hire me as oppose to other suburban districts."

Ms. Passover appeared to be somber as the interview proceeded. As he thought about being passed over for jobs by less qualified individuals, he realize the situations and occurrences will not change, he must overcome them as a male educator of color. He did everything possible, and he thought he had arrived, but he was mistaken.

He built strong rapport with his colleagues so he thought. He discovered they were fair weather people who only used him to control the Black kids. He did a good job and he said, "I did a great job with the Natives." He used the terminology because one of the African American female educators told him he was there for the discipline and they

did not need his input on curriculum. "If I thought I was going to do curriculum I was sadly mistaken."

> "They tolerated me, but respected I could handle the students of color and parents of color. They did not want any of my input in curriculum development or policy making. They just tolerated me."

Once he entered the new urban school it was a release on life for him again. As he discussed the first days on the job, his conversational tone became upbeat. It seems as though we were talking about a close relative had passed when he was narrating his experiences in the suburban district. He perked up and gathered some base in his conversational tonality. His new suburban school was great. The people gave him a new and renewed outlook on education.

> "I thought I had lost my savor dealing with those people. I thought I was worthless and horrible. I had a good relationship with the parents, staff, and the new community. She gave me autonomy to do my thing. I flourished in the new role."

He wanted to be promoted and make more money. He said "they were making more money and moving up, why that couldn't be me." "The new role gave me room to grow, and I like that." He said "I got promoted twice already in three years in the urban district." He discussed how in the end, it was about feeling valued and contributing to student success.

Participant # 7- "Mr. Fasttrack"

Participant number seven was a unique character with an ideology to die for. He was an African American male 36 years of age and had over 14 years of educational experiences. At the time of the interview he was enrolled in a doctoral program online to pursue in doctorate in education. He was born and raised in south attending school in Big Boy Independent school system. He was married with two small kids. He attended a historically black college and university (HBCU) in Mississippi on a football scholarship. He played quarterback and also was a third baseman on the college baseball team. If you know anything about athletes, they are always right. He entered education through the traditional route, and majored in elementary education with an emphasis in physical education. His dream was to be a football coach, and he decided if he could not play pro football or baseball, then he should coach someone else to do it.

He left the great state of Mississippi with a degree in elementary education with an emphasis in coaching. He secured a job in Big Boy ISD as an elementary PE teacher. He said "it was the job of my life teaching and training little kids how to keep their bodies in shape.

He simply stated "I wanted to go back home and help." I felt I was given back and they mentioned that at the college." His HBCU would always remind them to go back and help your community."As his story unfolded it was intriguing and somewhat perplexing and paradoxical to the research. The study sought to uncover the hidden mystery of African American transitions to suburban school districts to urban school districts, and Mr. Fasttrack's journey was nothing but transitions.

Mr. Fasttrack taught elementary for a couple of years and he desired to become an educational leader. He decided to attend Prairie View A&M University to obtain a degree in educational administration. Once he obtained his degree, he was promoted to assistant principal in his urban district.

> "I was given a chance to impact my community and I cannot ask for anything else. I thought I was in heaven; I finished school, got a promotion, and now I can say Alcorn, prepared me to go back and rescue."

He was an administrator for one year and moved to the suburbs. He started applying for administrator jobs in suburban districts, because as he stated "the hood, can't be all to education." He desired to leave and see some nice buildings and green grass for a change.

Mr. Fasttrack received a job in the 3rd or 4th largest district in the state and one of the largest suburban districts. He was once again riding on a cloud, but he quickly discovered the life is not always fast and promotions are not athletics.

> "You just don't sit, you play hard, and coach must put you in the game. He said I do not understand why I have to wait, if I have the skills. They should just put me in the job, and let work my jelly. I know curriculum, I can control the kids, and I have the look. I had the house, the job, the look, but not the promotion."

He desired to be a principal and quickly discovered how his suburban district differed in making hiring decisions. "They make you wait and play the system." He detailed how assistant principals have been waiting to become principals for twenty years, and he did

not think he could wait that long. He expressed how he had so much to offer the students professionally.

> "I wish I had remained in my old district, at least they give you a chance at becoming a principal much easier. I wanted to give back more and I felt as though I could not make a decision at the administrative level. I thought I would have more opportunities here, but it is the worst thing I have ever witnessed. The teachers are status quo, and they do not really have concerns for the African American kids. I felt the administration required students, teachers, and staff to be quiet and don't get on the news, but we are ending up in the news because we are failing to educate these kids."

He was adamant he knew he could help children, and they were not allowing him opportunities for success in the suburban district.

He had a different perspective of the urban district because he was raised in an urban district, worked as a teacher in an urban district, and received his first administration job in the urban district. He was achieving at a rapid pace so why did he choose to leave the suburban district initially. As researcher I sought answers to those questions because none of the prior participants exhibited the journey Mr. Fasttrack exhibited.

As a researcher I chose to delve into his decision making patterns. He explained, there were very few African American men in the suburbs and he figure the odds were in his favor to be one of the chosen few.

"I was wrong man, they don't care how many minorities they hire, as long as the

people be quiet in the community, we will be ok."

He quoted one the central level office administrators whom he had gained some rapport

and built a relationship with.

"I was a young Black man with much to prove. The administrative level of

education within a suburban district has a life all of its own. The administrators

did not do anything socially, but attend football games."

 He said "they just want you to stay out of the news, and they were not really in the

business of making sure all students learned." His desire and passion was to assist

students of color achieved.

"I wanted to help others the way someone helped me."

Mr. Fasttrack began in an urban setting and migrated to the suburban setting. He

expressed his displeasure with the workplace, his displeasure with pay, and his

displeasure with promotions standards.

He vehemently discussed how he was home with "his people" and decided to

work in the suburban district, because as he stated, "I thought it was greener pastures

over the horizon." He sought after the clean confines of the suburban schools.

"I did not want to work that hard, but it was harder trying to fit in than educate

children. I left and went back to Big Boy ISD. I left for two reasons, one; I

wanted to be a principal and my district was not going to promote a young

brother with a few years experience, and two; I knew I could make a difference

in the community. I was not prepared to seat and wait for twenty years and

maybe one day they would move me up."

He worked with an assistant principal who had been an assistant principal for twenty

plus years. The consensus amongst his colleagues in the suburban district was African

American educators just don't move up in that district. There was a system in place

working and his colleagues reminded him he could not change an established system.

"I was once one of those students, and somebody looked out for me, and now it

is my time to look out for someone else."

He expressed how educators of color did not receive promotions and it was never

an issue in his suburban district amongst the educators of color. It was apparent to him

White people moved up, and they we are never given DI (director of instruction) jobs."

"All of those (DI jobs) are given to the White females, and the district has a

history of promoting DI's to the principalship. It adds up to no jobs for Black

men. I wanted to *move up quick* and I had seen some White administrators do it,

nevertheless I couldn't."

He sought to be a principal and history dictated it would not occur in the current

suburban district. He migrated to Big Boy ISD and accepted a position as a Dean of

Instruction, which is now his new urban district.

He said "it is now time for me to reach down and get someone else. As I said

before, I was one of those kids and somebody came and gave me a chance. I have

to give somebody else a chance. The urban district has numerous opportunities

for growth."

He discussed the district's professional development and upward mobility opportunities. The professional growth opportunities were exceedingly superior to that of the suburban district, and the money was better. They have the resources to tap into, because they have so much Title I money. I will never look for an administrator job in a suburban district again." He noted how they will let you rot and pay you to rot. His facial expressions mirrored his sentiment, but it was apparent he was not happy with his departure from the suburban district.

The former football player now turned educator was use to moving and making plays. He could not make a play in the suburban district, because they did not need his playmaking ability. He attempted to assist the team and make education fun for all children, but it was apparent his district was concerned with a larger context.

"Those kids deserve to learn, and have access to all of the rights every other American citizen does. The one regret I will have once I'm gone is who will help these children now. If I leave and everybody else starts leaving, what happens to those kids in the classrooms we leave behind?"

His concern was about the kids, but money, action, and the upward mobility was a stronger urge forcing him to leave than a call for him to stay.

Summary of Profiles

All of the participants shared their stories of why they migrated. Some of them went on to discuss some tough emotional incidents and occurrences experienced, and there were of somber expressions. During the interviews, I regressed into my counseling mode, because the participants needed to release some of those pinned up emotions. The

struggles, the challenges, and rejection was all for the education of all children. All of

the participants moved to urban school districts, and received promotions. None of them

remained classroom teachers. I will discuss the findings further throughout this section.

You have heard the stories of these African American educators who have

migrated from suburban school districts to urban school districts. The major themes will

now be outlined. The sub-themes are included within some of the major themes, and in

many cases will overlap as the major themes are discussed.

Themes

The researcher generated and gathered the data for this project by conducting

semi-structured face to face interviews with each participant using an eleven question

instrument (See appendix B). As an African American educator and administrator I had

some rapport with the participants, and I attempted to capture their stories unblemished,

to gather an accurate depiction of the motivators that prompted them to move to an urban

school district.

During the interviews the participants' voices were captured through note taking.

After the interviews, I transcribed each handwritten interview and the subjects were

solicited to participate in member checking. I allowed the participants to share and I

wrote. I asked my questions, but often the next question was answered by the

participants just sharing their story. The data was analyzed and themes began to emerge.

The themes emerged from patterns discovered as the participants answered the various

questions in the interview. The constant comparative data analysis generated five major

motivators contributing to the migration of those educators to urban districts. The themes

were Educators, 1) moved to become social change agents, 2) moved for financial reasons, 3) moved for growth opportunities, 4) moved due workplace challenges, and 5) moved due to certain perceptions they developed from their experiences in the suburban district.

Social Change Agents

The first theme to emerge as a motivator was educators moving to become social change agents. The African American educators becoming social agents or "going back" to educate in an urban environment was clearly the number one motivator for their migration. All of the participants highlighted the idea of going back to assist the students of color, their families, and the schools they attend. The educators discussed how it was a monumental moment to go back and assist those students. Mr. Fasttrack stated;

"I wanted to give back more and I felt as though I could make decisions… I knew I could make a difference in that middle school. I was once one of those students, and somebody looked out for me, and now it is my time to look out for someone else. The academic needs of the students are greatly impacted by where they live. These kids need extra attention and care, but they can't make it if they don't get what they need. I was once one of those kids sitting in that classroom and someone reached down and got me. Now it is time for me to reach down and get someone else."

The participants were passionate about rescuing and saving their communities and

there students. Mr. Passover said, "I felt I was needed and it was the clientele I felt I could work with. I felt I could make an impact... I felt I could be utilized there and they would hire me as oppose to other suburban school districts."

Ms. Disappointed felt needed and appreciated by moving back to the urban context.

"They needed me in the urban district more than my old suburban district. I was looking for opportunities to enter into education and make a difference. I am definitely utilized and I am not in the classroom... "I am more useful where I am now, and I do not do anything different..., I build connections with the community and it has numerous opportunities..."

Dr. Mom Money echoed as if she was Moses an Israelite rescuing her Hebrew people from Egypt. "I grew up there and went to high school in the community, and I wanted to go back home. The participants detailed how there sought employment in those areas and assist children. Rescuing the Israelites from Egypt was a passion for all of the participants. Dr. Mom Money said;

"I went back to help with scores and they were doable... The working conditions were not at all that great in the urban district. It was uncharted area. It was no direction, no exposure for kids, the dropout was high, and it was unacceptable, but it was home..."

Both the male and female educators identified similar experiences with minor differences in their response patterns.

It was clear and consistent the educators felt a calling to educate in urban environments. Dr. Money talked about the some of the learning conditions of the

children in the school. I gathered from her story she was there to help. She said; "Teachers cursed kids out, it was barbaric treatment and the mentoring piece was not there and I felt I could have provided that." The educator's stories emerged more than themes, but a calling placed on them to become a social change agents.

The educators felt like it was their duty to migrate to an urban school to educate students of color. Dr. Mom Money had the most compelling story of becoming a social change agent. Her interview was in-depth as she discussed how the conditions were deplorable. She said, "It was apathy no hope for children." The apathy the deplorable conditions, the lack of leadership prompted her along with six other educators to migrate and educate in an urban district. She also discussed several other items that were caused by ineptness. She said; "I wanted to go back and help my community. The schools will not do well, because they don't want them too." This data generated from the interviews birthed this theme and gave a clear vivid depiction of those educators choosing to migrate and become social change agents. Mr. Fasttrack discussed how his father had always told him as a boy to never forget where he came from and if he was able one day to help someone go back and get them.

Each educator story gave a rich thick description of why it was their duty to go back and help. In this particular context it meant going back to an urban school district and educate students of color.

This theme consistently reminded me of Moses. I could not deviate from the story of Moses in freeing his people from cruel hands of the Egyptians. The educators felt as though the treatment and learning conditions the children in urban schools

experienced were cruel and it was happening at the hands of educators who were not

equipped to educate that specific population. Ms. Decision Maker gave some key

pointers in her attempt to act as a social change agent. She said;

> "I attempted to open up conversation. Usually across the board kids of color got
>
> stricter discipline. It frustrates you as an educator of color. It is about what
>
> people are doing different to educate kids. I want them to learn, I want to give
>
> back."

Ms. Decision Maker along with the other six subjects painted a mural of social change

and it involved them being the catalyst to start the enzymatic reaction. They needed a

platform to change, and the urban school setting was the empty mural that needed some

change in each paint stroke.

Financial Increases

The next theme to emerge was that the educators moved to an urban district for

financial increases. Money was the number two motivator. Throughout the interview

process this theme was clear and consistent. All of the participants left for financial

increases except Ms. Talented. Ms. Talented did not state clearly it was for money, but

she discussed how it was a promotion and more money was involved. While it emerged

in all of their answers, it was clear money was a motivator. Of the seven participants, six

of participants responded they moved due to financial increases. Dr. Mom Money said;

> "I told you, I was a single parent and a carrot was dangling over my head.
>
> For a $12, 000 dollar raise..., I wanted to go back home and make more
>
> money to move up."

> *Dr. Skills said;* "I also wanted to top out my salary and I went to the
> urban school district for more money. They have more resources than my
> former district. Your title money, Title I, Title II, and Title III. Certain
> programs are paid and to support others. Everybody gets paid for
> everything extra, unlike my prior district."

Dr. Skills noted the last three years should be her highest earning years to top out her
retirement salary. These educators desired to earn substantial financial income increases
comparable to those in the corporate sector. *Ms. Decision Maker said,* I was an
administrator…, it was a promotion and a pay increase." The participants made it
overwhelmingly convincing with their responses, financial increases prompted them to
migrate. Mr. Passover expressed his sentiment very plain.

> "I wanted more money to take care of my family. I saw other White colleagues
> move up and get promoted who were less skilled than me. They received big
> raises and we all want more money in our careers. I had a wife, and a child to
> care for; why not me. I did not get in education for the money, but this is
> America and everybody wants more money and the urban school district
> provided me the opportunity, and was able to pay me for…"

Mr. Fasttrack stated;

> "I wanted the money too, but the money along with the kids made it easier. I just
> wanted to be a principal, and I wanted to make more money. My friends and
> colleagues saw me as a savior, but I was getting paid as a slave. Money makes a

lot things a bit easier, and I wanted more money and the opportunity to be a
principal."

The informants cited various reasons such as more money, merit pay, and other
educational opportunities tied to finances that prompted them to migrate to an urban
school setting. Dr. Mom money was the most charismatic and outspoken of the
informants. She constantly stated reasons pertaining to money as to why she chose to
leave her suburban school district and migrate to an urban school district.

> "I will never look at money again. The working conditions were not at all that
> great in the urban district. I felt as though I was in an unchartered era. It was no
> direction, no exposure for the kids. The dropout rate was high. It was
> unacceptable. The expectations were low."

She along with the other participants gave clear responses to finances being a motivator
contributing to their decision to migrate to an urban school district. The semi-structured
interview questions were designed to extrapolate the perceived motivators contributing
to their decision to migrate.

The informants begin to answer the questions and state some of their reasons for
choosing to migrate. Money was a clear and concise theme from all seven participants.
The two male subjects stated they had to care for the well being of their families, making
money a strong motivator to migrate to an urban school district. Mr. Fasttrack stated, "I
have two small children and a wife with a new house and I need money so they can live
the American dream also." Mr. Passover said, "I am married now, I am no longer single
and the money was there." The male educators along with all of the female educators

cited various reasons affixed to economics as a motivator that contributed to their migration efforts and greatly influenced their decision to migrate to an urban school district. Dr. Skills talked about her destiny to educate in an urban school setting. She stated some of the following reasons; "Everyday has the same challenges, such as equity merge, and teacher change cultures. The infrastructure needs changing from blinds, paint, furniture, and repairs. As a people we don't know what happen, and we were pushed to excel and go places, see things, and now education." The educator elaborated and it was clear and apparent that it was her destiny and calling to go back and educate in an urban setting and money was a motivator.

Growth Opportunities

The next clear theme to emerge as a motivator that contributed to the educators migrating to an urban school district was growth opportunities. All seven of the educators cited growth opportunities as a motivator prompting them to seek employment in an urban school setting. Each educator gave clear riveting testimony of how growth opportunities eluded them in their suburban school district, but the urban school district provided those opportunities for growth. They desired to grow and the suburban district did not provide the platform for growth. Ms. Disappointed noted;

> "I felt it was more opportunities in the urban district than the suburban district. It was easier leaving the suburban district. The experiences I had in the first nine months with my new district would not have had happen in my old district. There are more growth opportunities. I would not have had those opportunities for growth if I had remained in my old district."

Dr. Skills discussed how the she could grow there even after thirty-two years of experience as an educator. She said;

> "There were opportunities to grow professionally in the suburban district, but they were better in the urban district. Suburban districts' positions were much smaller. The urban district was much bigger and more opportunities."

Ms. Decision Maker discussed her new role in the terms of impacting policy.

> "I was able impact learning. I went to the urban school district and there I changed policy as an administrator. It was not a lot of growth opportunities at my other school district. You were not easily promoted… It was room for growth… It was hard to retain top talent of color because of the lack of support to grow…"

Dr. Mom Money discussed how the new district had numerous opportunities for growth. She detailed her opportunities by saying;

> "There were opportunities to grow professionally in suburban district, they were much better in the urban district. Suburban districts positions were much smaller. The urban district was much bigger and more opportunities."

She also went to say about more opportunities for growth;

> "Professional positions were much better in the urban district, compared to suburban districts positions being much smaller. My new superintendent restructured and we had to work toward whatever roll. The urban district was much bigger and more opportunities."

Each participant detailed the opportunities. Dr. Skills detailed her opportunities by saying;

"I went to urban district because a good friend was in there, and a superintendent asks for my resume and she did the job embedded activities. My old school was on auto-pilot. I wanted more experiences. The principals have autonomy. My old district is run by central office administrators. You have autonomy with budget, employ different configurations, and you pay everybody. The urban district has more resources. There is growth for people at the school. You can give teachers more autonomy and training. I have opportunities to mentor other principals and maybe a move to central office."

Her account and story was similar to that of the other educators. Each story supported growth opportunities as a motivator contributing to migration. Ms. Decision Maker talked about her need to impact curriculum and the urban district provided her the opportunity and increase her capacity as an educator. She said;

"I went to urban school, and there, I was able to impact learning. I was able to change policy and I was an administrator. It was not a lot of growth opportunities at my other school district. You were not easily promoted, and everything requires a certificate. It was much more flexible at the other school setting. It was room for growth and it was hard to retain top talent of color because of lack of support."

As with each participant, growth opportunities emerged as a motivator. Ms. Disappointed talked about her experiences in attempting to gain a job as a counselor. "I felt it was more opportunities in the urban school district than the suburban school district. It was easier leaving suburban to urban."

The stories of these African American educators detailed the perceived motivators contributing to their migration and they stories provided thick rich data. Ms. Talented discussed her need for more opportunities the suburban school districts could not provide her. She said;

"I applied for several jobs in the suburban district and was denied. My white counterparts were gaining jobs they were less qualified for and they told me you should have landed that job. I applied for curriculum positions because that is what I wanted to do."

She longed for those opportunities to educate children and equip educators with science curriculum. The suburban district would not allow her to utilize her talents and she began to search for other jobs that would allow her talents to be utilized. She landed a job in an urban school district. She also discussed her longing for opportunities and the need to move up.

"I wanted the opportunity to move up and get promoted. The move was totally to assist teachers and help kids learn science better."

The educators gave clear, relevant, pertinent information about the need for more growth opportunities. Growth opportunities were a clear motivator contributing to their migration to an urban school district. The stories and testimonies gave evidence to support growth opportunities as a motivator. As I stated earlier, all seven educators cited growth opportunities as motivator.

Workplace Relationships

As this theme emerged it was clear and apparent workplace relationships were a

motivator contributing to the migration. The educators moved due to workplace relationships. The constant bombardment of negative behavior and created tensions prompted the educators to seek employment elsewhere. Being subjected to additional performance pressures, constant scrutiny, and lack of employment security motivated them to leave. Dr. Mom Money characterized her perceptions plain and precise by saying;

> "It was cultural differences not color differences when I left and went back to an urban context."

Dr. Skills made this statement, "…maybe she is going to be a trouble maker when she talks about students of color. It was like a life changing experience to in this environment." It was clear and evident as the researcher there were intergroup differences and the educators were trapped in roles instead educating all children. Ms. Disappointed said;

> "I was disappointed I did not get a job in the suburban district. I worked really well with the counselors and administration. Some of the teachers were standoffish. I thought my relationship was good until they learned I wanted to advance, and then the relationship changed. They felt I disserted then, but I just wanted to advance."

Ms. Talented provided more supporting evidence when she said;

"The White colleagues were fine a first, but at times they couldn't relate to

Blacks, Hispanics, or Asians. Sometimes some white teachers sent the Black kids

to me for discipline and direction. You could clearly see the racial lines…"

These educators' endured obstacles that obviously made it difficult to reach success in

the White dominated organizations. Mr. Fasttrack experience some harsh workplace

realities of his own when he returned to the suburban district and was prompted to

migrate for a second time. He noted;

"It was ok, but the teachers were status quo and did not really have concerns for

the African American kids. I felt the administration just wanted students,

teachers, and staff to be quiet and don't get in the news."

The intergroup differences experienced by these educators prompted all seven educators

to migrate due to these difficult relationships. The experiences were too much to

overcome and the educators migrated to familiar contexts. This ultimately was an urban

district. Mr. Passover explained how he was accepted initially, but then the work

environment change once he decided to pursue an administrator job. He said;

"I had a good rapport with my colleagues until they realized I wanted to be in

administration, then things began to change and my role as a specialist was

reduced. People began to act funny with me and I use to attend, I no longer was

invited."

His testimony and story along with the other six educators proved workplace

relationships was obviously a motivator contributing to their migration to an urban

school district.

Educator Perceptions

The last theme to emerge from the educator's responses was their perceptions. Working in the suburban district they felt devalued and underappreciated. Intrinsically they developed negative feelings when they once viewed the suburban district as a workplace and platform to change lives while educating kids. Dr. Skills stated;

"I spent most of my career in that district, and it was hardly any Blacks. It was a predominantly White district and they bused the blacks. My daughter went to the school and there were three Black children in the entire school, and the students of color were low academically. Once a high school principal leading a large African American population submitted the federal Title I application and was told you don't need it, the other schools are not doing it. It was a slap in the face"

Her attitudes and beliefs about the suburban district were altered once the African American principal leading the economically challenged school was compared to the predominantly White schools with half of the pressures he dealt with. Another participant was feeling dejected and left out due to her inability to land a job.

"My district would not hire me as an African American woman, but all of the Anglo women landed a job. They do not want to hire African Americans, except to be a good Blacks… I certainly felt as though there was an elephant in the room once I begin dialoguing about advancement opportunities."

Ms. Talented made a bold statement, and I knew their perceptions of their former district made them feel left out and less inferior. Ms. Talented said;

"I believed the relationship was good and I had a god reputation, but you really

don't know. Behind closed doors they really don't think we are qualified enough or smarter enough to do curriculum jobs or hold central office positions. It is not what you know, but who you know. The suburban context wants to convert people to be on their side and learn their ways."

Mr. Passover detailed his feelings while feeling a bit emotional. He said;

"It demoralized me and made me feel as though I was not worth being promoted. I could not understand why. I put in long hours, work with the community and I thought the district noticed it. White colleagues were not doing as much as I was doing and they were still being promoted. I wanted to move up because I wanted to feel valued…"

This theme emerged last and as the researcher I was unsure of this theme until I reread Mr. Passover's quote, and it solidified this as s major theme. He said;

"As I said it demoralized me and made me feel as though I was not worth being promoted. Why not? I put in long hours, work with the community and I thought the district noticed it. The colleague had just enrolled in a doctoral program and he mentioned he had not done those things. I got advice from another colleague of mine to look in another district for an administrator position. I discovered research about the obstacles Black males face in suburban districts. It made me look at other districts mainly urban districts, because I felt they could use my talents and I would be needed there. I wanted to move because I wanted to feel valued and contribute to student success, and the suburban district would not afford me that opportunity."

All educators developed negative perceptions once traumatic events occurred involving incidents in which they felt their race contribute to their suburban district changing how they were treated. The theme was clear and evident, and their perceptions were a motivator contributing to their migrating to an urban school district.

Summary

The results of this study revealed the inner thoughts and emotions of seven African American educators migrating to an urban school district The motivators emerged in themes and they became clear and evident this contributed to their migration. These were contributing factors prompting all seven educators to migrate. Some of them emphasized certain reasons more than others, but all of the participant's responses gave a clear vivid description to the themes that emerged prompting the educators to migrate to an urban school district.

While conducting the research five major themes emerged from the deep face to face dialogue I experienced with the subjects. The semi-structure interviews allowed me to view their soul and data revealed some educational altering responses. The five major themes contributing to the educators' migration were 1) moving to become social change agents, 2) moved for financial increases, 3) moved for growth opportunities 4) moved due workplace relationships, and 5) moved due negative perceptions. While interviewing the educators it became apparent they were passionate about educating all children and not just children of color. One major statement all of the subjects made in one form or another was, all children deserve the right to be educated regardless of where their school is located.

Interviewing the seven educators utilizing semi-structured interviews allowed me to gather a plethora of data. It provided me at thick rich description of the motivators contributing to the migration of those seven educators. To make sense of all the data I allowed the data to present emerging themes using the constant comparative method for data analysis.

The readers have been provided with an extensive detail portrait of each participant while attempting to capture a vivid depiction of what they were expressing. I then tried re-create a written expression of those amazing journeys so the reader could possibly see what was enlighten as the candidates were interviewed. Creswell (2007), states that a rich thick description allows the reader to make decisions regarding transferability because the writer describes in detail the informants or setting.

Each participant had a compelling story to tell about their journey as they migrated or moved to a new urban school district. All of the participants emphasized certain factors contributing to their migration. In spite of the difficulties each participant faced, they kept their head high and left home each day with the hope of educating somebody's child. I believed each educator did a great job of educating. They were educating and equipping children for our future. Five major themes emerged from the data analysis and each theme provided a glimpse into the lives of these educators.

Section V will present a discussion and comparison of significant findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further study. I will also explore their correlation to prior research and the literature provided in Chapter II.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions and Recommendations

The final chapter of this study concludes with an explanation of recommendations for policy, practice, and potential research studies evident through research findings. This study examined the motivators contributing to the migration of African American educators from suburban school districts to urban school districts. The study searched for those contributing factors that forced or urged African American educators to leave their suburban school districts to search for employment in urban school districts and educate students of color. If educators, superintendents, local board officials, policy makers, local municipalities, state governing officials, and federal school officials understand why educators migrate to the confines of the urban environments while leaving suburban children void of educators they can identify with (Wilder, 2000). We can make great inroads in decreasing the academic gap, which decreases the achievement gap, which will ultimate close the widening economic gap.

Policy initiatives and mandates can be enacted to assist with the dilemma. Thus, increasing data and information about creative strategies will assist school districts to improve its retention of African American educators. The study addressed the perceptions of African American educators who migrated from suburban to urban environments. The study also addressed some related concerns: 1) Are pre-service programs steering or urging African American educators to urban schools? 2) How do African Americans see themselves as educators? 3) Do African American educators

think they are needed in suburban school districts or urban school districts? 4) Do

workplace relationships motivate these educators to move and seek employment in urban

school districts? The following section will discuss the emerging themes along with the

answers to the question as it relates to the literature and the discussion of the seven

participants.

This qualitative study generated data to analyze the emergence of the five themes

and to answer the research question utilizing semi-structured interviews. The rich thick

data detailing the motivators that contributed to their migration, revealed why these

educators searched for employment in urban school contexts. This chapter will present a

summary of the findings and conclusions, supported by the literature. In addition, this

chapter will analyze the conclusions so one can gain an in-depth understanding of the

motivators contributing to African American educators' migration. Finally, this chapter

will outline research implications and suggestions for future research.

Moses Frees the Educators

Revealed in this study were five salient themes, which emerged from the semi-

structured interviews of seven African American educators who migrated from suburban

school districts to urban school districts. Those participants opened their lives, told their

stories, and provided me the data to turn their intangible stories into written expression.

The review of the literature resulted in an examination of various issues related to

African American educators in regards to retention and recruitment, workplace

relationships and intergroup conflict, the definition of suburban and urban school

contexts, the ever increasing achievement gap, African American educator's perceptions,

financial incentives, and the limited presence of African American educators. The literature also discussed the social connections established by African American educators, and stereotype threat.

This research was conducted utilizing the case analysis method to study educators who had left suburban school districts and migrated to urban school districts. The subjects were educators from the Big Boy metropolitan geographical area. The Big Boy metropolitan area is one of the largest districts in the nation and it is surrounded by several suburban districts. The Big Boy Independent School District enrollment is about 250, 000 student population and some of the surrounding districts are considered as Zikmund (1975) would describe them as suburban school districts based on his characteristics. Some of the districts were also recognized school districts. The seven educators were selected because they left their suburban school district and migrated to an urban school district to gain employment as an educator.

Themes to Literature

The first theme to emerge was the educators moving to the urban school contexts to establish those social connections or to become social change agents in their communities. This theme detailed how African American educators migrated back to urban school districts to assist with the development of their communities. According to Jacob (2007) empirical and theoretical literature supports the contention that African American teachers are often more successful than middleclass White teachers in connecting the cultural lives of African American students to school knowledge and in reducing discipline problems (Jacob, 2007). African American teachers lived in

communities amongst students and parents, in turn becoming key contributors to the individual and collective well-being of the community (Dingus, 2006).

Milam noted that we cannot ignore race as a factor that influences educational opportunity and influences teacher expectations and student achievement (Milam, 2008). Both Jacob (2007) and Milam (2008) agree African American educators are better suited to educate students of color. Milam noted, education in America is often designed to control and socialize people – and the education of African Americans has been and is no exception (Milam, 2008). These seven educators all detailed how they desired to return to urban schools to assist in the achievement of students of color.

The next theme to emerge involved the educators seeking employment in urban schools for financial increases. The educators all had stories as to why money provided a conduit to make move more enticing and convincing. There was a sentiment in research that suggests that wages and compensatory benefits provide a platform to work even in most unfavorable conditions. Herbert and Ramsay recognized in Texas, the numbers of teachers certified each year have been increasing over the past several years, but attrition rates have continued to create shortages in some districts and in some subjects (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). Salary increases and other financial incentives are often thought to be a primary motivator for teachers to remain in the classroom (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004).

Ultimately, the urban school districts offered more financial incentives, and the educators accepted job offers within those urban school districts. The idea of money enticing educators to move districts can be viewed by some as a disruption to the educational process. However, teachers are more likely to quit when they work in

districts with lower wages (Lankford et al., 2002).

In addition, higher teacher pay reduces the probability that teachers leave the profession (Hanushek, et al., 2002). This motivator prompted the educators to understand that economics play a part in education. Education is not immune from economic decisions, and money is a vital part of the American way of life. America is neither equal nor fair but is a capitalistic society, and if you are to survive in this country you need to be aware of its economics and its impact.

The researchers also contend that the myth remains that the ideal leader for most schools conforms to a White, masculine stereotype, especially at the secondary level (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003). African American teachers lived in communities amongst students and parents, in turn becoming key contributors to the individual and collective well-being of the community (Dingus, 2006). Scholarship on African American teachers links their work and roles to communities of or origin and those in which they work (Dingus, 2006). The process of connecting African American students to academic achievement isn't easy in the best educational settings (Parson & Kritsonis, 2006). Literature clearly affirms African American educators desire to become social change agents.

The next theme to emerge was African American educators citing growth opportunities as a motivator prompting them to migrate to urban school districts. This theme focused on the educators' perceptions of promotion and advancement opportunities in their suburban school district. Climbing the educational ladder was an important piece in their future as a professional educator of color. The educators refused

to sit while growth opportunities passed them without having the opportunity to apply in their suburban districts. Madsen suggested in her research, this environment is not usually associated with problems that plague many poor rural or "at risk" urban schools, but suburban contexts (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005).

Bloom and Erlandson (2003) contends that despite their availability and preparation to ascend into campus leadership position, principals of color typically emerge in urban schools that are under supported and economically depleted. The presence of African American role models in the development of African American students is a critical component to their maturation and lifelong success (Jacob, 2007). Teachers can experience a sense of powerless in a suburban school setting, because of their communal roles (Dingus, 2006). Minority teachers serve as role models for all children, bring diverse perspectives to the classroom, and contribute to schools that reflect the multiethnic and multicultural communities of American society (Kea, 2003).

The next theme to emerge as a motivator was migration due to workplace relationships. This theme focused on African American educators and there working relationships with White colleagues in suburban schools. The suburban environments did not always provide the most conducive working environment for educators of color to educate children. Madsen noted some African American male teachers in dealing with the intergroup conflict or workplace relationships, stated African American male teachers felt that rather than let the pressure occur in their European suburban school, they needed to question their decision to remain at their current school (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005).

Public school teachers are predominantly White, non–Hispanic (84%) and of the remaining proportion, 7.8% were African American, 5.7% Hispanic, 1.6% Asian American, and .8% Native American (Milner, 2010). Nationally people of color represent 40.0% of the student population in public schools, while only 17.0% of public school teachers are people of color (Achinstein et al., 2010). Bonner and Lewis noted that teachers of color are more likely to be willing to work in urban school settings and remain in urban schools than their White counterparts (Bonner & Lewis, 2007).

Madsen (2005) noted inclusiveness is derived from a supportive environment that affirms diversity as an explicit value. Also, according to Madsen the personal experiences and professional education of teachers affect the routines and to be acculturated into a European American school, they have to acquire the necessary socialization patterns to understand their European American Colleagues' code of power (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Lomotey (1993) suggested roles are determined by the nature of the shared structured relationships that exist between human beings. Madsen (2003) contends for educators of color in to be acculturated in suburban White schools; they have to acquire the necessary socialization patterns to understand their white colleague's codes of power.

The fifth and final theme to emerge was the educators' pre and post perceptions of their roles in their suburban district. This focused on the fact the educators felt as though they were undervalued as employees and moved to urban school districts where they were appreciated and affirmed in the role as an educator. Cox (1994) contends that organizations need to understand how various group identities within the workplace

impact intergroup differences and affect the culture of organizations. The culture within an organization greatly influences how minorities will be treated by their White counterparts (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003).

Freedom

Success for these African American educators depended on their ability to thrive in the dominant culture. Mabokela and Madsen contend while many organizations may promote to a commitment to hiring minorities, some are unwilling to support or facilitate minority member's transition to a majority organization (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003). Ultimately, these educators did not feel successful and migrated to an urban school setting.

As noted by Lynn (2008) in sharp contrast… Black teachers utilized their teaching as vehicle through which to challenge social injustice (Lynn, 2008). Black education has been dominated by a number of different ideological perspectives some of them critical and in direct opposition to racism and others more in line with White supremacist ideals (Lynn, 2008). Team configurations that have a "token" member in a mostly homogeneous group may result in dissatisfaction, limited communication and segregated informal networks (Jackson et al., 1995).

Relationship of this Research

As I searched for existing studies to address the issue of African American educators' movement from various suburban districts to urban school districts, the studies were scarce. However, there were extensive studies exploring workplace

relationships and African American educators working in urban schools. Madsen and

Mabokela (2005), and Wilder (2000) researched African American educators discomfort

with White suburban dominated school contexts. Cox (1994), Lomotey (1993), Milner

(2003), Madsen & Mabokela (2006), Jacobs (2007), and Cox (1994) researched

educators and workplace relationships. The limited educational research on this

particular issue prompted me to explore the migration of African American educators to

urban school districts.

Socially Connected

The second theme to emerge involved the educators migrating to urban school

districts to become social change agents and become connected to the community. The

participants provided similar answers in regards to moving back to help and assist their

communities. The participants felt compelled to give assistance in the urban

environments. The same sentiments resonated when it came to what some of them called

"going back" or the motivation to change difficult urban environments in the educating

students of color. According to Jacob the presence of African American role models in

the development of African American students is a critical component to their

maturation and lifelong success (Jacob, 2007). Literature supports those educators are

needed in those urban communities where majority of the population are students of

color. One of the participants, Mr. Fasttrack stated, "I wanted to give back more…" He

also made a statement in regards to his upbringing, "I knew I could make a difference in

that school, I was once one of those students and somebody looked out for me, and know

it is my time to look out for someone else." Milam (2008) noted we cannot ignore race

as a factor that influences educational opportunity and influences teacher expectations and student achievement.

Tucker noted when African American children fail academically, all other children and all Americans are negatively impacted (Tucker, 1999). The participants created an atmosphere of duty or call when they discussed "going back" to the urban school contexts. Research supported the attitudes and beliefs of the seven educators. Dingus research noted, African American teachers lived in communities amongst students and parents, in turn becoming key contributors to the individual and collective well-being of the community (Dingus, 2006). Dr. Mom Money said, "I grew up in the ward and went to high school there and I wanted to go back home." Also, Dr. Skills made it plain in her assertion, "…Anglo teachers did not know how to deal with the kids, Anglo teachers did not give the kids the foundations they needed, and I knew a lot African Americans and I wanted to go help others." Helping, going back, looking out for them, among other colloquialisms kept resonating, but combined all seven African American educators saw themselves as social change agents and felt connected to these communities. According to Villegas and Lucas (2004), the importance of establishing cultural links between home and school for students was supported by landmark studies in education anthropology and cognitive science in the 1970's and 1980's.

According to Bloom and Erlandson, educators stated one of the ardent philosophical beliefs is that most leaders will always live in the community where they work, it is an attempt to gain ground and turn around the indifferences and despair (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003). One of the participants Ms. Talented stated "I felt as though

I was a Black advocate for the Black kids, and they depended on me." Mr. Passover made it simple and concrete in his riveting testimonial, "I felt I was needed and it was the clientele I felt I could work with. I felt I could make an impact." His statements is supported the research of Rezai-Rashti and Martino (2010) when the researchers asserted African American teachers are more culturally responsive to students of a similar racial background and have both cultural understandings and a communicative competency to involve students in pedagogical exchanges (Rezai-Rashti, & Martino, 2010).

The research supports the theme that emerged when African American educators migrated because they saw themselves as socially connected to the African American students in urban communities. It is a place dear to them, it was home and those children reminded them they were once that child sitting in a classroom.

Also, in addition to acting as role models, minority teachers can help minority students build cultural bridges to learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2004). According to Villegas and Lucas cultural synchronicity gives African American educators a clear advantage over their White counterparts when assisting African American students in building the necessary bridges to learning. School is a place where academic knowledge is constructed and transmitted, but it is also a setting where values are shaped, in ways most often subtle but always powerful (Villegas & Lucas, 2004).

Financial Increases

The review of literature identified many factors that can contribute to African American educators migrating to urban school districts from suburban school districts for financial reasons. Researchers identified the following specific literature linked to the

educators migrating for financial increases: 1) overall compensation, 2) lower wages increase movement, 3) compensation packages, 4) targeted special communities, 5) incentives, 6) money is a primary motivator, and higher pay reduces attrition. These topics are discussed in the literature as topics linked to financial increases as a motivator to entice African American educators to migrate to urban school districts. Working in an urban school district can be a prideful event for the educator choosing to go back, but the money is a primary motivator.

The six of the seven participants cited the potential for a financial increase as a motivator to migrate to an urban school context. Their feelings of being paid more were more enticing than the favorable environment the suburban school context provided. The educators desired to assist and money made it more enticing in each case. The one participant that who did not cite money as a motivator contributing to her migration stated she would not take a pay cut either. The participants provided information in detailing their stories to support the research literature of Herbert and Ramsay when they researched shortages of teachers in Texas. It also supports the findings of research offered by Lankford, Loeb, Wyckoff, and Hanushek when they researched compensation packages. Lankford et al., (2002) specifically stated teachers are more likely to quit when they work in districts with lower wages. Overall, this study supported the research literature pertaining to the motivators that contribute to educators choosing to educate in urban school environments.

All of the subjects commented about money as factor for moving or the potential to earn more money than they were presently earning. It was interesting and worth

noting, the educators gave several answers that motivated them to migrate, but money was never left out. I can state without reservations the results of the study supported the literature as financial incentives being a motivator to urge those educators to migrate to urban areas. Ms. Decision Maker did not say it was a motivator, but she did state "it was a promotion and a pay increase." Whereas, Dr. Mom Money made it clear that was a huge contributor to her migration. She said, "as I told you, I was a single parent and they dangled a carrot over my head, and for a $12, 000 dollar raise..." Four other participants reported the money was a contributing motivator to entice them to migrate to urban areas. Therefore, I conclude to justly say the participants responses coincide with literature.

Growth Opportunities

As it related to educators moving for growth opportunities; the third theme to emerge as these educators felt it was more opportunities in the urban school districts than in suburban school districts. According Kirby the operationalization or breakdown of the teachers in Texas of at-risk districts, about 37% of teachers teach in low-risk districts, another third teach in medium-risk districts, and 30% teach in high-risk districts (Kirby et al., 1999). Kirby et al., (1999) also stated that minority teachers are teaching disproportionately in high-risk districts, and in low-risk districts, non-Hispanic White teachers account for 95% of the teaching force.

According to Madsen & Mabokela (2005) inclusiveness is derived from a supportive environment that affirms diversity as an explicit value (Madsen & Mabokela (2005). Madsen (2005) went on to say this environment is not usually associated with

problems that plague many poor rural or "at risk" urban schools, but suburban contexts. Bloom and Erlandson contends that despite their availability and preparation to ascend into campus leadership position, principals of color… typically emerge in urban schools that are under supported and economically depleted (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003). Dingus (2006) noted teachers can experience a sense of powerless in a suburban school setting, because of their communal roles. Ms. Decision Maker affirmed this fact in her statement, "I went to an urban school and there I was able to impact learning. You were not easily promoted…and it was much more flexible at the other school setting." Ms. Talented attested to this when she was awarded teacher of the year and did receive it.

Opportunities come in the form of money, accolades, the sense of knowing you have made an impact, and a making the difference in the life of a child. Ms. Talented said, "I once won teacher of the year and they would not give it to me because I was Black." One of the participants noted "the urban district was far better and advance in terms of professional development and upward mobility.

The literature definitely affirms the responses provided by the participants. It is more opportunities for African American educators in urban school contexts in terms of making a mark in the lives of students of color. According to Milner and Hoy (2003) African American educator's, sense of powerlessness and ineffectuality is in stark contrast to teacher self-efficacy or the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplishing a specific teaching task in a particular context. The literature affirms the educators will seek employment in an urban school district and the participants responses definitely related to the literature

provided. African American educators will migrate for more growth opportunities and be freed from the burden of complacency.

Workplace Relationships

The final theme to emerge dealt with workplace relationships. This theme resonated more than any of the other themes. All of the participants effectual responded in similar manner. Dr. Skills said, "the district was suburban and Blacks were very few. I wanted to move to administration, and my colleagues would say those kids are not going on, and maybe she is going to be a trouble maker when she makes statements about Black kids." Lomotey noted cooperation is the key to the effective operation of any organization (Lomotey, 1993). The educators felt as though in most of their suburban schools there was no cooperation or tolerance of their color or their ability to be effective in the suburban context. Madsen (2005) emphasized schools are becoming increasingly diverse, yet the teaching workforce continues to be dominated by European American teachers. Therefore, as more demographically diverse teachers enter these homogeneous professional communities, it will affect teacher retention and working conditions (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005).

As I noted in the chapter II these workplace relationships could lead to their migration to urban school environments where literature has supported the claim they are more effective as educators. The respondents affirmed to the fact it prompted their migration to urban school districts. Mr. Passover responded by saying, "I had good rapport with my colleagues until they realized I wanted to be in administration, then things began to change and my role was reduced." He also said, "People began to act

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funny with me and I noticed meetings I used to attend, I could no longer attend." The

workplace became uncomfortable for him in the homogeneitic environment; the

suburban school district. He attested to fact it was mostly White teachers and "it became

an unfavorable place to work, so I left." Lomotey (1993) noted such cooperation among

staff members in schools can only come about when principals are able to capture the

energies of their teachers and encourage them to work toward collectively agreed on

goals (Lomotey, 1993). Madsen discussed in her research that when European

American teachers and teachers of color interact, there are conditions that will influence

how they work collaboratively in these contexts (Madsen, 2010).

According to Guzzo and Salas (1995) establishing a teacher community becomes

more complicated if there is disproportionate number of demographically diverse

teachers, and teachers have misperceptions about students of color (Guzzo & Salas,

1995). Mr. Passover noted a specific number; "80% of the teachers in the school were

White…" The literature supports the claims and this is evident in both Bell's (2002) and

Achinstein's et al., (2010) studies of teacher communities when conflict occurs due to

student diversity. In Bell's (2002) study of intergroup differences between teachers of

color and majority teachers, conflicts occurred due to differences in instructional

practices, disciple and multicultural emphasis. Thus, these intergroup differences

prevented a community of teachers (Achinstein et al., 2010). Ms. Talented noted, "I was

one of three black teachers in the suburban school district. The White colleagues were

fine at first, but at times they couldn't relate to Blacks, or Hispanics." Throughout the

interviews the participants gave countless testimonials as to how the suburban context did not provide a conducive work environment and most times it was counterproductive.

The interviews revealed emotionally information from the respondents as they told their stories of the social injustice they encountered attempting to educate children. The literature supports the participants' statements wholeheartedly. The interviews also revealed a direct correlation; a majority White teaching force resulted in an uncomfortable work environment for African American educators. Madsen noted the personal experiences and professional education of teachers affect the routines and knowledge of African American teachers within their school environment (Madsen & Mabokela, 2003).

In most respects, African American educators are motivated to migrate due to workplace relationships. The seven educators confirmed workplace relationships as a motivator contributing to their migration from a suburban school district to an urban district. Additionally, both male and female participants experienced similar incidents in suburban school districts, motivating them to question their employment decision. Literature also affirms this, when Madsen (2010), Lomotey (1993), Achinstein et al., (2010) affirmed these relationships will prompt these educators of color to seek employment elsewhere and it typically involves moving to an urban school context.

Perceptions and Feelings

The fifth and final theme to emerge from the data the respondents provided were the deficit perceptions they felt of their suburban district. The emphasis the respondents placed on the feelings they had after being ostracized, treated unfairly, and made to feel

inferior left them to wonder if they were in the right employment setting to be successful. Milam noted in her research the lack of understanding of the racialized nature of curriculum may lend itself to a denial of the racial nature of curriculum and to the denial by most "Whites" of a racialized self – lending a view of the racialized "other" that is focused on difference and separateness and all too often deficiency (Milam, 2008). She also noted the intersections of identity and race are powerful social constructions that serve as foundations for daily interactions in and about schools (Milam, 2008).

The literature lends itself to attest to the view of the respondents of the feelings of inferiority and their deficit perceptions of their suburban districts. All seven of the participants made statements they were viewed in terms of their race and not on their abilities or skills.

Madsen (2005) in her broad scope of research into these relationships noted, African American male teachers felt that rather than let the pressure occur in their European suburban school, they needed to question their decision to remain at their current school. I would definitely affirm the literature does support the claims of the respondents. Ms. Talented said, "behind closed doors they really don't think we are qualified enough or smarter enough to do curriculum jobs or hold central office positions. The suburban context wants to convert people to be on their side and learn their ways." Mr. Fasttrack noted, "I felt the administration just wanted us to be quiet… they were not really in the business of making sure all students learned." Ms. Disappointed made a bold statement affirming how she felt after she went through the

interview process. "They do not want to hire African Americans, except to be teachers. You have to be a good Black to get a job. I certainly felt as though there was an elephant in the room once I started my dialogue about attempting to advance."

The literature and the participants' responses affirmed their feelings of being unwelcomed or questioning their decision to remain somewhere they were not really valued as capable intellectual educators.

Related Questions

The following research question was explored in this qualitative study; what are the perceived motivators that contribute to African American educators choosing to migrate to an urban school setting. I also explored other related questions; are pre-service programs steering or urging African American educators to urban schools, how do African Americans see themselves as educators, do African American educators think they are needed in suburban school districts or urban school districts, and do workplace relationships motivate these educators to move and seek employment in urban school districts? The semi-structured interviews gave a thick rich description of the data and provided answers to the three of the four related questions.

Pre-Service Programs

Are pre-service programs steering or urging African American educators to urban school districts? The data revealed pre-service programs seek to urge new educators exiting there programs to enter and educate in urban school districts. Once an educator gained experience they were more likely to migrate to an urban district based upon financial reasons, workplace relationships, and growth opportunities. The pre-

service programs impact lessens once the educator has secured employment in either an urban or suburban school district. Literature suggests predominantly, Black teachers have been prepared by the nation's historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) (Boykin, 1992).

Pre-service programs do not have any effect on teacher migration from one district to another. Haberman (1999) suggests the primary place to seek minority candidates is in the expanding pool of mature adults with college degrees who already reside in the particular metropolitan area (Haberman, 1999). Literature and the data provided, supports migration is not an effective avenue of selecting and retaining African American educators.

As Educator

How do African Americans see themselves as educators? The educators see themselves as social change agents. The educators felt compelled to give assistance in the urban environments. The same sentiments resonated when the colloquialism "going back" emerged as a motivator enticing educators to migrate and change difficult urban environments in the educating students of color.

According to Villegas and Lucas (2004), the importance of establishing cultural links between home and school for students was supported by landmark studies in education anthropology and cognitive science in the 1970's and 1980's. The presence of African American role models in the development of African American students is a critical component to their maturation and lifelong success (Jacob, 2007). The intersections of identity and race are powerful social constructions that serve as

foundations for daily interactions in and about schools (Milam, 2008). Situated among a racial hierarchy with White and Black as opposites (Ladson-Billings, 2000), the racialization of society can be seen "not only in the social, economic, and cultural resources passed along generation, but also in [White] dominance of the economic, legal, educational, and political arrangements" (Milam, 2008).

The Need

Do African American educators think they are needed in suburban school districts or urban school districts? The educators do migrate because they feel they are needed in those urban school contexts to be socially connected to those communities and "give back" what was given to them along their educational journey. The educators felt compelled to migrate to urban school districts from suburban school districts to be socially connected to those urban communities. The educators migrate to urban school districts to become social change agents and become connected the community. Literature and data supports those educators' feelings they are needed in those urban communities where the majority of students are students of color.

The respondents' data revealed they had feelings of being ostracized, treated unfairly, and made to feel inferior and it left them to wonder if they were in the right employment setting to be successful. Milam noted in her research the lack of understanding of the racialized nature of curriculum may lend itself to a denial of the racial nature of curriculum and to the denial by most "Whites" of a racialized self – lending a view of the racialized "other" that is focused on difference and separateness and all too often deficiency (Milam, 2008). The educators are motivated to migrate

because they feel they are not needed in suburban school context.

Workplace Relationships

Do workplace relationships motivate these educators to move and seek employment in urban school districts? Yes; workplace relationships do motivate African American educators to migrate and seek employment in urban school districts. The African American educators felt as though in most of their suburban schools there was no cooperation or tolerance of their color or their ability to be effective in the suburban context. Intergroup differences and workplace relationships was a primary motivator causing African American educators to migrate and seek employment in urban school districts.

Due to the presence of diversity in schools, attention should be given on how these contexts can promote social norms for cohesiveness and mutual understanding (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). Thus inclusiveness is derived from a supportive environment that affirms diversity as an explicit value (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005). According to Madsen the personal experiences and professional education of teachers affect the routines and be acculturated into a European American school, they have to acquire the necessary socialization patterns to understand their European American Colleagues' code of power (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005).

General Implications

When examining the major themes of this study, it became obvious, the motivators contributing to African American educator migration from suburban school districts to urban school districts is not a topic well researched in the literature. As a

result school leaders may not have adequate information on the retaining African American educators. The major themes to emerge gave a clear indication of how these educators interpolate and process those external factors involved with educating children of color both in suburban and urban school districts. All of the major themes contained pieces of importance to assist us in creating a dialogue and discourse to evoke systemic change. I now have a better understanding of why these African American educators, Dr. Mom Money, Dr. Skills, Ms. Disappointed, Ms. Decision Maker, Ms. Talented, Mr. Passover, and Mr. Fasttrack choose to migrate into urban school districts to educate, where the environments may not have been the most favorable.

Implications for Policy, Practice and Future Research

Policy

The research and the literature on motivators contributing to the migration of African American educators from suburban school districts to urban school districts recommended several solutions to effectively thwart this phenomenon. The moral and civic imperative exists irregardless of geographic boundaries (Taylor, 2005). On the need to increase the racial and cultural diversity of the teacher workforce in the United States, educators and policymakers cite a "demographic imperative" to counter the disparity between the racial and cultural backgrounds of students and teachers and address concerns about a predominantly White teaching workforce (Achinstein et al., 2010). We need to educate the students in urban and suburban areas to decrease these negative indices. Policy makers can offer substantial signing bonuses in suburban school districts for African American educators. More research need to be conducted in the

areas of nurturing, retaining, valuing, supporting and respecting African American educators. In light of the challenges in meeting the needs of students in K-12 environments school leaders must adopt successful hiring practices. Also, move African American educators from historical roles of counselor, advocate, disciplinarian, parent surrogate, and role model to leadership roles such as, executive leadership, principals, school counselors and curriculum roles. Furthermore; school leaders must be cognizant of workplace practices and promotion opportunities.

According to Parson (2006), the process of connecting African American students to academic achievement isn't easy in the best educational settings. Students from poor and minority groups face a very uncertain time in U.S. education. Their economic and social conditions are deteriorating without relief in sight, and the progressive curriculum reforms, if carried out one school at a time, will almost certainly place them at an even greater disadvantage (O'Day & Smith, 1993). Our gravest concern is whether there is sufficient commitment in our society to significantly and directly address the problems of educational equity through any sustained and coherent strategy (O'Day & Smith, 1993). Policy makers can mandate such policies like the National Football Leagues' (NFL) "Rooney Rule." The NFL mandated this policy to ensure all NFL head coaching vacancy interview an African American or Hispanic candidate for a potential head coaching job. Suburban school districts can mandate such a policy to ensure equity in leadership roles possible recruit more educators of color.

Another debated policy is merit pay. Policy makers can research initiatives to pay those educators whom significantly increase students of color high stakes test scores.

According to Goldhaber (2008) based on empirical evidence teachers in districts enrolling large numbers of disadvantaged students play a relatively more important role in influencing achievement. Those same districts should be more likely to use merit pay. NCLB mandates have placed strictly accountability on all of us to increase test scores of all sub groups. Money can ease the stress of accountability.

Practice

Local, state, and national educational agencies need to indict the social injustices of inequity in education. Educators are moving from one school district to another on the basis of money, work place differences, and feelings of inadequacies. As a nation we should be appalled at those social injustices. We celebrated the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial landmark in 2012, and some forty years later those social injustices are as prevalent today as they were in 1968 when he was assassinated.

There are strategies we can employ as school leaders to combat the inequities in education. One strategy, we can promote more minority candidates to school leadership, and expose faculty, staff, and students to leaders of color. Mandate representatives on school based leadership teams and district based leadership teams to become inclusive of the student body and community. Provide opportunities for those African American educators to grow in instructional and non-instructional roles. Give them opportunities to participate in the district leadership academies, and affirmed them in their endeavors. Kea stated it best when she said, minority teachers (educators) serve as role models for all children, bring diverse perspectives to the classroom, and contribute to schools that reflect the multiethnic and multicultural communities of American society (Kea, 2003).

Future Research

As an African American educator and one who once migrated to an urban setting, I searched for other educators who experienced similar migration journeys. Initially, I wanted to conduct a quantitative study on the numbers of African American educators who migrated to urban school districts. However, after discussing some of the framework and methodology, I decided to conduct a qualitative study on the lives of seven educators; five females and two males. It became apparent, some of the missing links in the body of literature were: 1) a more comprehensive perspective of African America educator migration, 2) a quantitative study of how many African American educators migrate and the leading motivators, 3) Suburban school districts rationale on African American educator migration into urban districts, and 4) the success rate of African American educators oppose to Hispanic and White educators in suburban school settings.

This study could be further expanded utilizing the mixed methods approach. It will enlighten school leaders and policy makers to the growing number of educators who have chosen to educate in urban areas as oppose to the middle class confines of suburbia America. Surveys with educators from several states would expand the pool of research subjects, which will expand the data and possibly answer more of our questions.

Another area to explore would be the African America educators who migrate to economically challenged schools within their suburban district. They choose to educate in those schools designated as urban schools, economically challenged schools, schools with majority students of color within their suburban district. It will assist school leaders

and policy makers in drafting educational initiatives to assist those educators who choose to educate at the less favorably schools with financial incentives to remain there.

What I Learned

As an African American male educator, I know all too much about social injustices. Those injustices range from my time in the Marine Corps to becoming a Stockbroker, and an educator. As a male educator of color, I will never arrive. I must navigate within the system and play the cards to which I am dealt. I have been exposed to the history of the African American people, and the social injustices experienced by people of color since this country's inception. This should motivate all educators to strive for what is best and do what is right. We are in the business of educating children for the future and vitality of this country and also globally. Combat the inequities and war against the social injustices, and at the end of the day know you fought for children.

I was raised in the southern portion of Louisiana and attended public schools in a country town. I understood the value of having an education and what an education could mean to your future. I witnessed relatives die, become incarcerated, and never become gainfully employed. I destined and willed myself to be better and earn an education. As I begin attending school in the south, integration was some three or four years prior to the start of my kindergarten year. The schools I attended were 70% - 80% Anglo and we were grouped based on abilities. The one thing I longed for more than anything was to have an African American educator.

The majority of my relatives and friends went to nearby schools and they had those experiences of being educating by an African American male teacher. It seems as

though all of the teachers taught in the nearby town instead of the town I attended school. My first experience with an African American male teacher was in the eighth grade and the next one was in high school. I did not experience one African American male professor in college. I often wonder why I did not have African American male teachers or principals.

I then became an educator and began a career preparing children for our future. I often noticed educators migrate and seek employment in the urban districts for various reasons. I would ask them, "why are you leaving?" I would always get the same answers; "you will see." I would say to myself, "see what." Then one day it hit me and I had to drive 102 miles roundtrip everyday for an assistant principal's job.

I sought for answers twenty years ago regarding the absent of Black male educators in my formal schooling, and today I have made some awesome discoveries. Some of the questions I asked twenty years ago have been answered with this study. The questions I searched for answers twenty years ago are relevant for today's educators.

Since I have conducted this study my eyes have been illuminated to African American educator migration to urban environments. The themes to emerge from this research gives a vivid depiction of how these educators felt valued and the value they feel they bring to the classrooms across America. They become key contributors to their communities and play a vital role in the maturation of young people they educate. Whether they teach in urban America or suburban America these educators value the education of the children they educate. The workplace relationships and intergroup differences cause me to reflect as to why I did not have an African American educator

for the majority of my elementary and secondary schooling. The majority of the staff from custodians to the cooks were all Anglo. Just maybe, those educators could not effectively handle the dominant culture and migrated.

The journey of researching this topic has given me some tools and instruments I can utilize as I continue my educational leadership journey. As a leader I must become a pirate for inclusiveness, and quarterback for justice. Just as Moses can lead people through the "Red Sea", I can champion justice and lead the Israelites (African American educators) to their promise land of equity. I need to empower people and allow them to thrive in their educational roles in an effort to prevent educator migration.

Conclusion

Over fifty years since Brown v. Board of Education Supreme court decision, a plethora of journal articles, books, dissertations, and other publications have documented the need for greater equity specifically in the field of education (Lewis & Bonner, 2007). The development of education can be traced through looking at the growth of the field's knowledge base (Merriam, 1994). To increase the field's knowledge base of African American educator migration more effort is needed on the part of educational researchers to explore and research African America educator migration.

I started this journey in effort to add to the field's knowledge base regarding this phenomenon. I can now say we have gained valuable knowledge and I have added to the field's knowledge base. The scarce educational research on this particular phenomenon prompted me to explore the migration of African American educators. Unfortunately, many African American students rarely experience teachers who provide culturally

relevant knowledge (Wilder, 2000).

Urban schools have unique factors and motivators that differentiate them from suburban settings (Zikmund, 1975), attracting some of the more talented and experienced African American teachers. It was my aim in conducting this research to enlighten the readers, and assisting the reader in gaining an appreciation of this study. I hope you have acquired a knowledge base of why African Americans educators in elementary and secondary education migrate to urban districts from suburban districts. I hope the answers I have provided to these questions and concerns will create some discourse and grab the attention of policy makers, school districts leaders, researchers, and other educators.

The future of our county depends upon the hope of educating and our ability to effectively educate all Americans. National policy makers, state policy makers, and local policy makers must make adjustments as to how we treat the people who educate the children of our country. The statistics are staggering and the hope equity in education is a constant battle. This research should add ammunition to the battle to fight the inequities. The passion, the determination, and internal drive will wake up the proclivities inside me to battle against these inequities.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions:

1. Why did you leave and migrate to a familiar context.

2. How long have you been teaching there, your degree, your subject area.

3. Tell me about your background and how you have made it here to this urban school.

4. Tell me how you work with all students and especially students of color (SOC).

5. What are some things you do to get to know your students?

6. So you change your instructional strategies to meet the needs of studens (differences from the white students).

7. What are your professional relational exchanges like with the other white teachers?

8. Do you have similar interests with the white teachers and do things socially?

9. Are there differences in discipline (give examples)?

10. Are you assigned certain roles because you are the only person of color here at the school?

11. What is your working relationships like with your parents and parents of color.

12. Do you feel there were opportunities for growth at the school?

APPENDIX B

Human Subjects Protection Program   Institutional Review Board

APPROVAL DATE:	03-Aug-2011

MEMORANDUM

TO:	MCGARY, OSTROVA D 77843-3578
FROM:	Office of Research Compliance Institutional Review Board
SUBJECT:	Initial Review

Protocol Number:	2011-0326
Title:	"The Motivators that Contribute to the Migration of African American Educators from Suburban districts to Urban districts"
Review Category:	Exempt from IRB Review

It has been determined that the referenced protocol application meets the criteria for exemption and no further review is required. However, any amendment or modification to the protocol must be reported to the IRB and reviewed before being implemented to ensure the protocol still meets the criteria for exemption.

This determination was based on the following Code of Federal Regulations:
(http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm)

45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Provisions:

Comments:

This electronic document provides notification of the review results by the Institutional Review Board.

VITA

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