

**INTERGROUP DIFFERENCES AND ITS IMPACT
ON PROFESSIONAL EXCHANGES**

A Dissertation

by

EDDIE MUZQUIZ RODRIGUEZ

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

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2012

Major Subject: Educational Administration

Intergroup Differences and Its Impact on Professional Exchanges

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ABSTRACT

Intergroup Differences and Its Impact on Professional Exchanges. (August 2012)

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Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Jean Madsen

The purpose of this study was to examine how misperceptions of intergroup differences affect the working and professional relationships among Hispanic teachers, European American (White) teachers, and European American (White) administrators in urban schools. As this was an exploratory study to examine the professional exchanges among racio-ethnically diverse groups of teachers and administrators, a qualitative case study methodology was used to collect and report the data for the study. This case study approach was helpful in examining administrators' and teachers' perceptions of intergroup conflict and how these cultural differences affected their exchanges. The data were collected through interviews and through observations made while attending various school functions, such as faculty meetings. The study took place in two urban public schools in South Central Texas, each with a European American administrator, Hispanic teachers, and European American teachers. Included in this study were 14 teachers, 7 European American and 7 Hispanic, two principals, and four assistant principals who participated in two focus groups to validate the teachers' responses.

The intergroup properties that were identified in this study were areas of conflict between majority and minority groups that affected the working relationships and active collaboration in instructional matters between school professionals. The properties of intergroup conflict were used to identify causes of conflict among different group members. The properties of intergroup conflict areas revealed in the study were incompatible goals, competitions for resources, cultural and power differences, group boundaries, and leadership behaviors.

The quick increase in the diverse populations, primarily Hispanic, of urban schools in South Texas has not allowed sufficient time for Hispanic teachers to enter the workforce, much less Hispanic administrators. As identified in the study and through the properties of intergroup conflict, cultural differences among various demographically diverse groups, such as the principals and teachers studied here, lead to misperceptions that eventually lead to conflicts. Potential conflicts, due to leadership and followership diversity, and to opposing interests, occurred in the day-to-day exchanges between the principals and teachers. Responses made by the European American principals to the opposing interests provided opportunities to create an inclusive school organization.

DEDICATION

To my parents, brothers, and sister.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Madsen, my committee members, Dr. Torres, Dr. Autenrieth, and Dr. Webb-Hasan, for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research.

I would also like to thank Rose Narvaez, my colleague and friend, for her support and for all of the time that we spent together working and discussing our research findings, as well as driving to and from San Antonio to Texas A&M University. We spent hours in the car driving back and forth, as well as sharing stories that kept us going.

I cannot leave out the participants of the study who took the time to talk to me and provide the valuable input so that this study could be completed. As teachers, I know it is difficult to give up time to do “one more thing,” but the participants were very willing to provide their input for my work.

Finally, I would like most of all to thank my parents, brothers, and sister for their encouragement, support, and patience. Their support was more than anyone could have ever expected.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
 CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	7
Purpose of the Study	9
Significance of the Study	10
Methods.....	12
Research Questions	13
Operational Definitions	14
Organization of the Study	17
II REVIEW OF LITERATURE	18
Workplace Relationships and Getting Along.....	19
Teachers and Students of Color	23
Professional Communities and Implications for Teachers of Color	27
Collaborative Structures and Conflict.....	28
Contextualizing Conflict in Demographically Diverse Schools	30
Implications of Conflict and Schools	35
Intergroup Conflict.....	39
Conflict and Need for Diversity Plan.....	40
Importance of the Knowledge of Cultures	43
Properties of Intergroup Conflict	46
Programs That Prevent Intergroup Differences and Linkages to Schools	49

CHAPTER	Page
Characteristics of Effective Leadership and Leadership Styles	53
Managing Diversity.....	60
Theoretical Framework and Embedded Intergroup Theory	64
Summary	69
III METHODOLOGY	71
Introduction	71
Overview of Methods.....	72
Case Study.....	72
Data Collection.....	74
Purposeful Sample Selection of Teacher Participants.....	74
Data Sources.....	78
Data Analysis	87
Limitations	90
Summary	91
IV FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS	93
Introduction to Findings.....	93
Teachers of Color Responses	98
European American Teachers' Responses	114
European American Principals' Responses.....	129
Summary	136
V SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	137
Recommendations	141
Summary	151
Future Research.....	151
REFERENCES.....	153
VITA	171

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		Page
2.1	Properties of Intergroup Conflict	50
3.1	Data Source of Participants	80
3.2	Data Source of Students	81
3.3	Data Source of Schools' Staff	86
4.1	Overview of Findings	96

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		Page
4.1	Properties of Intergroup Conflict and Subthemes Based on Responses of Teachers of Color.....	98
4.2	Properties of Intergroup Conflict and Subthemes Based on Responses of European American Teachers	115
4.3	Properties of Intergroup Conflict and Subthemes Based on Responses of European American Administrators.....	130

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“Ten persons who speak make more noise than ten thousand who are silent.”

—Napoleon I, Maxim (Tripp, 1987, p. 405)

Our schools are undergoing monumental challenges as they evolve from monocultural non-diverse contexts to ones that contain ethnically diverse, multilingual, and economically diverse children. The same holds true for cultural differences that exist between teachers and administrators at all levels of instruction. Today’s schools consist of administrators and teachers who, in some instances, do not culturally reflect the student population that they serve. In the case of minority teachers, researchers have cited many reasons for the decline of minority participation in the teaching force—among them, the overall decline of the numbers of college-bound students from ethnic groups, the widening of professional opportunities for people of color, the increased prevalence of competency examinations, the lack of prestige for teaching as profession, low salaries, and less than optimal working conditions (Delpit, 1995). Many times, the administrators and the teachers at a campus also differ between each other with respect to race and culture.

The professional exchanges that occur between teachers and administrators of different ethnicities are critical to their ability to accomplish the goals of the school and ultimately for the success of students. Diversity-enhanced schools (schools consisting of cultural differences) are places of vibrant opportunity—places that call for exciting and meaningful work (Howard, 2007). In schools with diverse teachers and administrators, the

This dissertation follows the style of the *American Educational Research Journal*.

issues facing the dominated groups, particularly the tension between assimilation into the dominant culture and maintaining a separate cultural identity, leads to conflicts. All too often, communication, understanding, and appreciation are lacking among diverse groups. Negative beliefs about diversity leave their imprint not only on teachers and schools as well, but impact students and their ability to succeed more so (Nieto, 2004).

All schools experience conflict and most of the time the only conflict that is written about is that which occurs between students. Seldom do we hear or read about conflict that occurs between the adults in a school. Thankfully, the conflict among the adults seldom is like the one we tend to see among students, which more commonly is physical or verbal. Conflict is simply the condition in which people's concerns—the things they care about—appear to be incompatible. Conflict, then, is something we face every day—a fact of life. Conflict can be an event whereby individuals or groups clash, in which divergent beliefs and actions are exposed. It is also the process whereby individuals or groups come to a sense that there is a difference, problem, or dilemma, and thus begin to identify the nature of belief or action. In this way, conflict is a social interaction process, whereby individuals or groups come to perceive of themselves at odds (Achinstein, 2006).

Existing conflicts in organizations vary but nonetheless they consume valuable time and energy that could perhaps be expended in another way that could benefit the organization. Surveys show that leaders spend about a quarter of their time handling conflicts. They have to negotiate over resources, handle disagreements over policies, deal with complaints, enforce rules, and manage the inevitable frictions and resentments

that occur between people (Thomas, 2002). The ethno-racial diversity that is currently found in schools, as well as the increasing diversity of roles and gender, has made of urban schools complex communities that defy simple explanations and single-dimension administrative and teacher concepts.

Because it appears to be humanly impossible for people to simply get along together, it is almost inevitable in most cases for conflict not to exist. Because of this, the understanding of conflict is critical. Understanding why intergroup conflict occurs and the ways that members of different groups manage conflict is necessary if conflicts are to be handled constructively. The aspects of intergroup conflict:

Intergroup conflict is, by definition, a collective phenomenon, and requires a suitable collective “model of [humanity].” The psychological factors associated with intergroup hostility are best sought in collective social cognition and motivation. It is an important task...to examine the relationship between individual drives and cognition and those associated with the groups to which they belong. (Condor & Brown, 1988, p. 19)

Despite the existing differences that are present in schools among those that are employed there, teachers and administrators must work together for the common goal, which is to educate all students. Understanding and learning how to deal with these differences is vital in forming a positive school climate that is more conducive to student learning. There are at least three reasons why school leaders need to address intergroup relations in their schools: First, students are unlikely to focus on academic learning if they feel threatened. Maslow (1968) theorized in the 1950s that a sense of safety and security were a prerequisite for higher levels of human development. If we want to increase learning among European American students and children of color, then schools must create a strong foundation for their learning. This foundation includes freedom

from slurs and harassment based on ethnicity, language, religion, and other aspects of identity (Henze, 2002). If teachers of color and European American teachers do not exhibit positive relationships among themselves and their school leaders, students can also feel a sense of threat toward themselves, as well as a feeling of insecurity. This may come about even to a greater extent if a student's "favorite" teacher comments about conflicts experienced from other teachers. This sense of insecurity then may, to some extent, be detrimental to student accountability outcomes, and at a time when state assessment results are integral to school ratings, can be very detrimental to schools' overall accountability performance and expectations.

Second, in today's increasingly multicultural schools and work environments, students and adults need more than ever to learn how to get along and work productively with those who are different from themselves. Relations across lines of difference are always in need of preventive attention so that they do not escalate to violence (Henze, 2002). When different groups work together, diverse degrees of ethnocentrism come into play. Ethnocentrism is the belief that one's own cultural ways are not only valid and superior to those of others, but also universally applicable in evaluating human behavior (Hernandez, 1989). People with strong ethnocentric attitudes and beliefs—especially unconscious ones—may have difficulty appreciating and accepting the range of cultural differences that exist in societies (Hernandez, 1989). Ethnocentrism is a universal characteristic in which one views one's own cultural traits as natural, correct, and superior and perceives those of others' cultures as odd or inferior (Gollnick & Chinn,

2002). The challenge for administrators and educators in multicultural situations is to understand ethnocentrism, to recognize its dangers, and to respond appropriately.

Third, schools are always searching for new ways to address students' needs through adequate professional development based on the needs assessments of students. Schools are also searching for knowledge bases (expertise) within their own schools instead of always seeking outside consultants. Schools should become

laboratories for a more just society than the one we live in now....Classrooms [and schools] can be place of hope where students and teachers gain glimpses of the kind of society we could live in and where students could learn the academic and critical skills need to make it a reality. (Bigelow, Christensen, Karp, Miner, & Peterson, 1994, p. 4)

Both within and beyond the schoolhouse walls, the purposes of schooling and the practices of teachers are highly contested, giving rise to conflict (Achinstein, 2002).

Understanding conflict is essential to building a fuller conception of teacher professional communities.

Many teachers, administrators, and schools, in an attempt avoid conflict, claim to be color blind and, therefore, do not want to acknowledge existing cultural differences. Perhaps they adopt color-blind ideologies and endeavor to pretend that racism ended with the end of Jim Crow or after the civil rights movement. Some teachers and administrators claim to be color blind with the intent on being fair, impartial, and objective because to see a difference, in this line of reasoning, is to see defects and inferiority. Although this sounds honest and ethical, the opposite may actually be true. Color-blindness may result in *refusing to accept* differences and, therefore, accepting the dominant culture as the norm (Milner & Ross, 2006). It may result in denying the very identity of the diverse groups,

thereby making them invisible. Too often color blindness is used as a way to deny differences that help make us who we are (Nieto, 1996). Establishing a teacher community becomes more complicated if there is a disproportionate number of demographically diverse teachers, and teachers have misperceptions about student of color (Guzzo & Salas, 1995). This is evident in both Bell's (2002) and Achinstein's (2002) studies of teacher communities when conflict occurred 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, discipline, and multicultural emphasis. These intergroup differences prevented a community of teachers to form and work efficiently and effectively. Achinstein's (2002) study about demographically diverse schools and their inability to deal with their differences resulted in a process of deep questioning and exhaustion. Additionally, in Madsen and Mabokela's (2002) study of African American teachers in suburban desegregated schools, teachers indicated problems of role entrapment for African American teachers to be the "Black expert" and misperceptions about their contributions on instruction and curriculum.

As in most organizations, people employed there come from different backgrounds, both socially and academically and differ in race or ethnicity as well. Schools are no different in most cases, especially in large urban school districts. Demographically 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, May, & Whitney, 1995). Readily detectable attributes (such as race, sex, gender, and sexual orientation) trigger social cognitions (about self and others). This, in turn, shapes interpersonal relations, patterns of team interactions, and increases biases against minority members (Jackson et al., 1995).

As school populations continue to change, so does the workforce that serves the students. It is important that school leaders understand the importance of the daily principal-teacher exchanges and how the cultural diversity that exists between them and teachers impacts the inclusive organizational culture that consists of understanding: (a) the formation of groups, their boundaries, roles, and development cycle; (b) the population membership and intergroup dynamics in dealing with prejudices; and (c) the problems of identity, social comparison in groups and power, and conflict (Watts, 1994).

Statement of the Problem

The population of the United States is undergoing rapid and substantial change. As a country, we are growing older and more diverse at the same time. By 2050, if projections hold, we will be a “majority minority society”—a country that no longer has a majority of any one racial or ethnic group. These demographic trends have important implications for school leaders (Crouch, 2007). 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, 2005b). When European American teachers and

teachers of color interact, there are conditions that will influence how they work collaboratively in these contexts (Alderfer & Smith, 1982; Alderfer, Alderfer, Tucker, & Tucker, 1980; Cox, 1994). Diversity resistance often occurs when an organization undergoes change in response to addressing the needs of demographically diverse groups (Thomas, 2008). Organizational resistance to issues related to demographically diverse groups has ramifications for recruiting and retaining demographically diverse personnel, organizational effectiveness, and prevents collaborations (Thomas, 2008). This exploratory research examined teachers of color and White teachers' perceptions of European American administrators influenced by their team structure.

Despite the growing number of teachers of color and principals of color into a workforce that has predominantly been considered to be dominated by European American teachers, little research exists regarding: (a) the professional exchanges between European American principals and teachers of color (Hispanic teachers) or vice versa in urban schools, (b) how teachers of color respond to these interactions, and (c) the necessary leadership skills needed by European American principals to establish an inclusive school organization. Collectively, intergroup differences and the exchanges that occur between teachers of color, European American teachers, and European American administrators are topics of study in the educational arena and have been since the mid-1980s. Knowing that intergroup differences exist where different groups of individuals interact, what are administrators and teachers doing if, in fact, these interactions impact student achievement?

Purpose of the Study

Teachers across America are predominantly European American. National data indicate that European American teachers comprised 84% of the teachers in 2000 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). Although the proportion of teachers of color, especially that of prospective teachers, has increased slightly in recent years, it does not match the increase in student diversity. Because this is the case with teachers, the same can be said of administrators. Even though more minorities are graduating from college, they are not selecting teaching as their career (Zumwalt & Craig, 2005). Rapidly changing demographics demand that both teachers and administrators engage in a vigorous, ongoing, and systemic process of collaboration to work efficiently and effectively in carrying on the day-to-day duties of teaching students, while creating a positive working climate.

Intergroup relations between two or more groups and their respective members are often necessary to complete the work required in a school organization (Belak, 1998). Many times, groups interrelate to accomplish the organization's goals and objectives, and conflict can occur. Kanter's (1977) research on the concept of proportional representation noted that members of a subgroup (minorities) that composed less than 15% of the majority group experience challenging work environments. Lopez (1996) contended that majority group members (usually non-Hispanic White, middle or upper class, and heterosexual) live within their own experience of entitlement and privilege. This forms their identity and constructs that experience as normative. This construction fosters the tendency to view all persons of

other races, classes, and sexual orientation as “other.” Because social diversity entails a diversity of experience and interests, it challenges convention and working agreements (Scott, 1988). Cox’s (1994) research stated that due to the conflict between identity groups and their position in their organizational group, competing goals and no agreement on roles and responsibilities, occurred. The intent of this study was to examine how misperceptions of intergroup differences affect the working and professional relationships among teachers of color, White teachers, and school administrators in urban schools and also contribute literature to this ongoing discussion regarding intergroup conflict in schools, of which there have been few studies done. The purpose of this study was twofold: (a) to examine how misperceptions of intergroup differences affect the working and professional relationships in urban schools among teachers of color, European American teachers, and European American school administrators and (b) to examine how intergroup conflict impacts student performance, teacher commitment, and motivation. In order to conduct this investigation, the researcher collected data from each participating school to strengthen the theoretical design related to intergroup differences. These findings have possible leadership development implications for aspiring or current administrators and/or teachers.

Significance of the Study

It is certainly true that the conditions under which employees work do have a great impact on their satisfaction and productivity, and schools are no different. Today’s teachers are seeking school environments that support their work, places where they can have a voice, and be recognized for their efforts. Constructive conflict management

means keeping disputes under control. It is in the interests of school leaders to ensure that conflicts and disputes over race and gender, if aired, will not be unpredictable, potentially explosive, or hard to contain. As a result, organizations and individuals employ discourses that seek to control these forces and have the effect of suppressing alternative discourses. Such thinking is shorthanded for it fails to recognize that in terms of schools, work force diversity is inevitable, that this diversity infuses all aspects of organizational life, and that it holds enormous potential for creativity and learning in the organization. How the principal carries out his or her job does have an effect on how the school is organized and on teachers' job satisfaction. Leaders must address racial and cultural differences between group boundaries and cultural differences to promote schooling that is fully inclusive and to serve all students well (Bell, 2002).

In this study, where European American teachers, European American principals, and Hispanic teachers worked together, it was no different. It was believed that this study addressed group identities as critical parts of a working organization. It was also believed that this study addressed the properties of intergroup conflict and the concept of ethnocentrism as a component of some researched conflict examples. It was the intent of this study to address some of these differences so that leaders who face daily challenges due to differences that exist, may come to understand ways to improve their daily exchanges among European American teachers, teachers of color, and themselves. Because the principals' leadership methodology impacts everything including student performance, this study also addressed the importance of creating a diversity plan, its significance, and impact to the overall working relationships among the staff.

This study provided findings that can be used in comparing the findings of other studies, such as Madsen and Mabokela (2005a) and Bell (2002). Hopefully this study provided necessary information to help leaders deal with day-to-day exchanges with diverse groups at their campuses, so that in the end, the needs of students, teachers, and community are truly met.

Methods

A qualitative case study, to examine the professional exchanges among racially-ethnically diverse groups of teachers and administrators, was used for this research. This qualitative approach, based on the principles of ethnographic research, was selected to capture the richness of the unique interactions and experience of the participants in the study (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). The intent of this qualitative study was to explore: (a) the professional exchanges between European American principals and teachers of color (Hispanic teachers) or vice versa in urban schools, (b) how teachers of color respond to these interactions, and (c) the necessary leadership skills needed by European American principals to establish an inclusive school organization. The study took place in an urban desegregated school district in the South, specifically two high schools, each with European American administrators, European American teachers, teachers of color, and serving a predominantly Hispanic student population.

Permission was requested from the school district to conduct the study, and after it was granted, arrangements for meeting with the school principals, academic deans, and teachers were established. Teachers for the study were required to meet the criterion of

having more than five years' experience. Structured interviews, with a set of pre-established questions, based on the properties of intergroup conflict, were conducted with each of the participants as well as secondary interviews to further investigate the participants' perceptions of cultural differences. All interviews were taped and later transcribed for recurring themes.

A total of 14 teachers—7 European American teachers and 7 teachers of color—were interviewed. Two principals and four assistant principals participated in two focus groups. Apart from interviews, observations were also conducted, and the researcher attended several faculty meetings and professional staff development days.

A qualitative thematic strategy of data analysis was used to categorize and make judgments about the interpretation of the data. The collected data were analyzed using a methodological process of coding that allowed for important themes and categories to emerge.

Research Questions

As a way to examine these three aspects, the researcher proposed two guiding questions for this qualitative study.

1. How do teachers of color, European American teachers, and European American administrators perceive their day-to-day professional exchanges?
2. What must principals in urban schools do to establish an inclusive school culture when there are diverse groups of teachers?

Operational Definitions

The intent of this study was to examine how misperceptions of intergroup differences affect the working and professional relationships among teachers of color, European American teachers and European American school administrators in urban schools. The following are definitions for this study:

Cultural Diversity: The representation, in one system, of people with distinctly different group affiliations of cultural significance (Cox, 1992).

Cultural Identity: The individual reflection of culture as it is constructed by society (Cox, 1994; Ferdman, 1995). It is one's individual image of the behavior, beliefs, values, and norms that characterizes one's groups' feelings.

Diversity: A mixture of people with different group identities within the same social system (Nkomo & Cox, 1996).

Embedded Intergroup Theory: A theory of embedded intergroup relations specifically for organizations where individuals feel a connection to their identity group. Embedded intergroup theory includes self-identification, where the identity group membership precedes the organizational group membership.

Ethnicity: The definition of *ethnicity* takes into consideration people's national origin, religion, race, and any other combination thereof. Attributes associated with ethnicity include (a) group image and sense of identity derived from contemporary cultural patterns; (b) shared political and economic interests; and (c) involuntary membership, although individual identification with the group may be optional. The extent to which individuals identify with a particular ethnic

group varies considerably, and some may identify with more than one. Strong ethnic identification suggests a sharing and acceptance of ethnic group values, beliefs, behaviors, language, and ways of thinking (Manning & Baruth, 2004). The definition of ethnicity also includes a community of people within a larger society who are set apart by others or who set themselves apart primarily on the basis of racial identity and cultural characteristics such as religion, language, or tradition. The central factor is the notion of being set apart because of physical or cultural attributes or both.

Ethnocentrism: Ethnocentrism is the belief that one's own cultural ways are not only valid and superior to those of others, but also universally applicable in evaluating human behavior (Hernandez, 1989). People with strong ethnocentric attitudes and beliefs—especially unconscious ones—may have difficulty appreciating and accepting the range of cultural differences that exist in societies (Hernandez, 1989). Ethnocentrism is a universal characteristic in which one views one's own cultural traits as natural, correct, and superior and perceives those of others' cultures as odd or inferior (Gollnick & Chinn, 2002).

Identity Group: Groups, whose members share common biological characteristics, have participated in equivalent historical experiences, at times subjected to certain social forces, and hold similar world views (Alderfer, 1982; Nkomo & Cox, 1996).

Intergroup Conflict: The analysis of intergroup relations is in part the study of power relations and the analysis of conflict among groups. In the context of cultural

diversity, intergroup conflict has two features: group boundaries and group differences, and the conflict is directly or indirectly related to group identities.

Managing Diversity: Planning and implementing organizational systems and practices to manage people so that the potential advantages of diversity are maximized, while its potential disadvantages are minimized (Nkomo & Cox, 1996).

Organizational Group: Is one whose members share common organizational positions, participate in common work experiences, and have similar organizational views (Alderfer, 1982; Nkomo & Cox, 1996).

Properties of Intergroup Conflict: In the context of intergroup conflict, there are conditions that influence how the leader and majority and non-majority workers will react to each other (Alderfer, 1982; Cox, 1994). These properties of intergroup conflict include: incompatible goals, competitions for resources, cultural and power differences, conformity of identity, group boundaries, affective patterns, cognitive formations, and leadership.

Race: Although the term *race* refers to biological differences among people, it has long been used to differentiate groups of people. Determining racial categories often proves difficult because of the wide variety of traits and characteristics people and groups share. Society has generally recognized differences between races (e.g., physical differences), but these differences satisfy only biological aspects and do not explain differences in social behavior (Manning & Baruth, 2004).

Organization of the Study

There are five chapters to this qualitative study. An overview of the research, including a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, operational definitions, and research questions, are all arranged in Chapter I. A review of literature on intergroup differences and conflict is provided in Chapter II. Chapter III outlines the methodology of the research and Chapter IV describes the results and analysis of the research. Chapter V finalizes the study with conclusions and recommendations for further study.

This chapter established the need and purpose for present study, summarized its research questions, its design, and provided definitions of key terms. The next chapter reviews selected literature regarding characteristics of effective leaders and leadership styles, the theoretical framework used, and intergroup differences and its impacts.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

“If we cannot end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity.”

–John F. Kennedy, Commencement Address
American University, Washington, DC
June 10, 1963 (Tripp, 1987, p. 978)

The intent of this study was to examine: (a) the professional exchanges between European American principals, teachers of color (Hispanic teachers), and European American teachers or vice versa in urban schools; (b) how teachers of color respond to these interactions; and (c) the necessary leadership skills needed by European American principals to establish an inclusive school organization. The theoretical framework used by the researcher to analyze data was that of embedded intergroup because it offers insights on how the identities of European American administrators and teachers of color interacted within a school organizational culture. To help understand the working relationships between European American administrators and teachers of color, Alderfer’s and Cox’s Properties of Intergroup Conflict were used.

In the literature review for this study, the researcher examined: (a) theoretical framework and embedded intergroup theory; (b) teachers and students of color; (c) impacts of conflict; (d) intergroup conflict; (e) properties of intergroup conflict; (f) impacts of conflict in schools with respect to student performance, teacher commitment and motivation; (g) characteristics of effective leadership and leadership styles; and (h) managing diversity. Review literature that directly addressed the theoretical framework of embedded intergroup theory was selected because it focused on intergroup conflict.

Review literature on intergroup differences, its possible outcomes, and literature that identifies the consequences of organizations that have methods in place for dealing with diversity in the workplace were selected because of their significance, and possible solutions, to this study.

Workplace Relationships and Getting Along

As with personal relationships, workplace relationships are just as critical if any set accomplishments are to be expected. Relationships take time and trust, and depending on circumstances, relationship building can be a difficult task. Because workplace relationships include individuals working together on a daily basis, careful attention to their development and maintenance is critical. The schools in the study were comprised of many individuals, students, teachers, and administrators. The demographics of the student population, along with the demographics of the adults, made for very dynamic and unique working environments for everyone. The way that students interacted with each other was one aspect of the daily events that occurred as well as the interactions of the adults (teacher-to-teacher, teacher-to-student, teacher-to-administrators, and all vice versa), which provided entirely different variables to how the schools functioned and performed. How the workplace relationships were carried out will determine whether the relationships will be long lasting and productive or will quickly come to an end. The success of an organization requires more than just having a sound mission, vision, strategies, improvement plans, or policies in place. In the case of the schools of the study, ensuring that everyone had as a goal the fulfillment of the mission and vision of the schools for the benefit of the students, was not enough when

considering the enormous impact that working together and resolving conflict would have on the adults' roles toward accomplishing their goal.

The individuals in the study came from different backgrounds and had a range of teaching experience. Their ability to teach their content area was not seen as the issue by the observer for they were all quite capable of doing a good job with their content. All persons in the study were "highly qualified," meaning they possessed the qualities necessary by the State in order to teach in a public school. However, all organizations need quality people with effective human dynamics to achieve their objectives. Working with colleagues is a two-way street. In the workplace, leaders and workers need to set aside preconceived notions and create a culture where people can express their feelings freely, feel respected, and be listened to as well. During planning periods, meetings, and during any time when academics or students are discussed, it is necessary that individuals are listened and respected. This could be said of any organization and not just in a school setting.

Many of today's schools are mixtures of people (administrators, teachers, students, and staff) coming from different cultures with different customs, dialects, and ideologies. In this study, the people working at the schools and attending the schools were also a mixture of different cultures and ethnicities. The greatest disparity of culture was among the adults (teachers themselves and the administrators) at the schools and, thus, the reason why this study took place. The way members of a school perceive the various ethnic and linguistic groups can affect their members' own awareness of commonalities and differences within and between groups. These perceptions influence

the day-to-day interactions that occur between all individuals in schools. Because teachers and administrators in large urban schools tend to be of different cultural groups, their interactions for planning, problem solving, and working together sometimes is only superficial in nature and the dominant group usually tends to lead the others in their direction. Further research indicated that when teachers of color are recruited to majority schools, there is an expectation for them to use traditional instructional and discipline practices (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005a).

The assumption of rightness is often reinforced by the fact that dominant groups tend to know very little about those people whom they define as “the other.” Usually it is the minority group that knows more about the dominant group than the dominant group of the minority. Individuals from the dominant group are usually unaware of their own power and can carry on the daily activities of their lives without any substantial knowledge about, or meaningful interaction with, those people who are not part of the dominant group (Griffin, 1995; Howard, 1993; Johnson, 2001). In the case of this study, the schools included had as the majority teachers of color. The European American teachers, as well as the European American administrators, were the minority.

With the high stakes testing that was taking place across the state, the schools in the study were held accountable for the success of the students. The administrators of the schools were responsible, as instructional leaders of their schools, to enforce that teachers taught and students learned. Through their high expectations on a daily basis, they, the leaders, established the culture of the school to some extent. School cultures, which are considered organizational cultures, are created by leaders and one of the most

decisive functions of leadership may well be the creation, the management, and—if and when that may become necessary—the destruction of culture (Schein, 1985). Culture and leadership, when one examines them closely, are two sides of the same coin, and neither can really be understood by itself. In fact, there is a possibility—underemphasized in leadership research—that the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to work with culture (Schein, 1985). Cox (1994) believed that competing tensions over issues of race and ethnicity cause group members to center on preserving their own culture. Hence, groups are more aware of their need to protect their cultural identity that plays out in one's work efforts (Cox, 1994).

As a way of creating an inclusive school where teachers are motivated to teach all students and everyone feels a sense of belonging and ownership, it becomes important to understand what happens when majority and non-majority teachers interact during their day-to-day exchange. Effective leadership adds value to the impact of classroom and teacher practices and ensures that lasting change flourishes. Awareness of the school and teacher practices that impact student achievement is critical, but without effective leadership, there is less of a possibility that schools and districts will address these variables in a coherent and meaningful way (Miller, 2003). Demands for change have manifested in the role of the school leader. Leaders are expected to generate significant improvement and increase student achievement, while simultaneously meeting the daily and long-term learning and social needs of the students and also those of the teachers they supervise (Durdin, 2008).

Structural inequality and cultural incompatibility may be major causes of school failure, but they work differently on different communities, families, and individuals. School achievement can be understood and explained only as a multiplicity of sometimes competing and always changing factors: (a) the school's tendency to replicate society and its inequities, (b) cultural and language incompatibilities, (c) the limiting and bureaucratic structures of schools, and (d) the political relationship of ethnic groups to society and the schools (Nieto, 1996).

Teachers and Students of Color

It is unquestionable that the United States is a diverse and pluralistic society. Its citizens differ in culture, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, and religion. Since the foundation of this country, these differences have influenced the expression of values, norms, and traditions of minorities and immigrants. Although students of color (Hispanics) are the fastest growing population in the United States, they remain among the most educationally disadvantaged (Kloosterman, 2003). This was no difference in the schools of the study. Students at these schools were underperforming when compared to schools comprised of European American students.

In schools not only are workplace relationships critical among the adults in a school but also among the teachers and their students. We believe different educational outcomes are the result of quite different kinds of relationships that students establish with their teachers, parents, counselors, and other community people. Such relationships require careful analysis, diagnosis, and then attention. A students' home experience and school environment, as well as the ways adults assess and respond to the student's skills,

talents, and personality are factors that shape educational outcomes. We have learned that unless education professionals discern, better understand, and capitalize on the talents, skills, and cultural backgrounds that different youngsters bring to the classroom as they move through grades, first-rate teaching that enhances a students' potential will remain elusive (Gregorian, 2001). This takes us back to the topic of color blindness discussed previously. Not only were are some teachers color blind toward their classroom populations, but in this study, color blindness was understood, although not expressed, by some administrators toward their teaching staff.

One implication for schools is that more teachers who share the cultural background of students should be recruited. As Palmer (1998) reminded us, "We teach who we are" (p. 10). The same can perhaps be said of administrators—they lead based on who they are, expecting teachers to be like them, and have the same expectations and apply the same disciplinary measures to students, regardless of the teachers' or students' cultural backgrounds. Aragon (1973) argued that the reason ethnic minorities were not doing well in school was more a function of teacher limitations than student inabilities. Teachers, rather than students, were "culturally deprived" because they did not understand or value the cultural heritages of minority groups. The school's responsibility for aggressively recruiting teachers who are as diverse as the student body, something that until now has not been given much of a national priority, is of major importance. This does not mean that teachers can only teach students from the same ethnic or racial background; the data concerning the rising number of culturally diverse students and the decreasing number of culturally diverse teachers suggest that this is not only unrealistic

but impractical as well (Nieto, 1996). All teachers can become role models for all students as long as they are caring and knowledgeable about their students (Nieto, 1996). This was the case of many teachers in the schools of this study. Both European American teachers and teachers of color were doing a wonderful job in meeting the needs of students of color as well as building relationships with them to help guide them toward excellence, but as in many schools across the country, there existed some who were not “in touch” with the needs of students and, therefore, were not working with the students to the extent that they should have been doing.

Webb, Wilson, Corbett, and Mordecai (1993) developed a criteria for caring stating that caring is a value and a moral imperative that moves “self-determination into social responsibility and uses knowledge and strategic thinking to decide how to act in the best interests of others. Caring binds individuals to their society, to their communities, and to teach others” (pp. 33-34). All teachers, apart from just caring, and regardless of background, need to develop multicultural communication and understanding in order to build relationships with students and assist them in succeeding. The same holds true for relationship building that occurs between administrators and teachers of diverse cultural backgrounds. When the adults develop multicultural communication and understanding between them, then they, too, are successful. Acceptance is a level of support for diversity. If teachers and administrators accept differences, they are at the very least acknowledging them without denying their importance (Nieto, 1996).

The degree to which teachers know themselves as a racial being is the extent to which they can enter into authentic relationships with their colleagues and students who are of a different race (Howard, 2006). The term “relationship” does not imply a buddy or best friend nor does it imply talking about a soft-hearted do-gooder approach or a missionary stance of “helping the less fortunate” (Ladson-Billings, 2001, pp. 82-83). An authentic professional relationship is one that communicates clearly, through words and actions, respect for life experiences and for others’ abilities. It includes the enjoyment of working together. Despite the fact that teachers mentioned in the study appeared to work together, greet each other in the morning, and sit together during faculty meetings, the appearance of authentic relationships among them may, at times, have appeared to be deceiving.

The organizational culture of the schools should reflect the desired relation between racial and ethnic groups. That is, relations among administrators, teachers, and support personnel should be a model for the types of intergroup relations students are expected to display. At first glance, the schools in the study appeared to have organizational cultures that exhibited a very positive working environment among everyone. However, through observations done by the researcher and interviews conducted as part of this research, it became known that a small percentage of the adults in these schools felt that conflicts existed from the weak relationships that were present. According to social learning theory, a great deal of human behavior is acquired through observation (Bandura, 1986). This recommendation capitalizes on the idea that nondiscriminatory behavior can be acquired through exposure to models who behave in

nondiscriminatory ways. Research suggests that the most effective models are those who are respected by the observers (because they have high status, competence, or power), to whom the observers are attracted, and who find the behavior rewarding. Using these criteria, it is obvious that administrators and teachers are important models for the acquisition of intergroup relations skills and behaviors and thus adds emphasis to the importance of understanding each other.

Professional Communities and Implications for Teachers of Color

The idea of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) is an adaptation of the concept of learning organizations described by Senge (1990). As in most schools, the schools in this study demonstrated some evidence of the existence of professional learning communities. Learning communities are comprised of people who see themselves as connected to each other and the world, where creative thinking is nurtured, and “where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Senge, 1990, p. 3). Sergiovanni (1992) observed that “the idea of a school as a learning community suggests a kind of connectedness among members that resembles what is found in a family, a neighborhood, or some other closely knit group, where bonds tend to be familial or even sacred” (p. 47). A related concept, a “school-based professional community,” (p. 4) was characterized by Kruse and Louis (1993) as one where teachers engage in reflective dialogue, where there is de-privatization of practice, collective focus on student learning, collaboration, and shared norms and values. Unfortunately, observations by the researcher alluded to a lack of collaboration or sharing of information by some of the teachers in the study. While some teachers did collaborate

and form bonds which “spilled” over and turned into student success in learning, others did not. Implications for teachers of color include the ability to feel listened to and respected as they share their knowledge and experiences with other teachers and administrators different from themselves. If the teachers of color are of the same race and ethnicity of the population they teach, then there is perhaps a greater possibility that this commonality includes integral knowledge that other educators different from the students can benefit. It must be mentioned that this is not always the case. It is because of this valuable sharing of information that teachers and administrators must be able to communicate effectively without conflict so that overall, and ultimately, students and teachers benefit from the exchanges that take place during the professional learning community meetings.

Collaborative Structures and Conflict

Professional learning communities occur in strong teacher communities where there is an emphasis on teacher learning and its connection to student learning (Lieberman & Miller, 1991). Shared vision and collaboration provide “deprivatized” common understanding to promote coherent practices across grade levels (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Therefore, schools must be organized to prevent isolated privatized practice of autonomous classrooms. Sometimes these professional communities have norms and values that are incongruent with a teacher’s own philosophy (Tozer, Senese, & Violas, 2009). If there is a weak community that allows for teachers to isolate themselves and seniority to dictate values, then there is no incentive to change practices (Lieberman & Miller, 1991). When traditional values and beliefs are challenged, there

are boundaries between cultures and power groups at the school (Achinstein, 2002; Hargreaves, 1994). Therefore, teacher communities that uphold homogeneous values that exclude teachers of color will continue to allow teachers to have low student expectations, unfair discipline practices, and less equity in student outcomes (Bell, 2002).

Establishing a teacher community becomes more complicated if there is a 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, discipline, 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 and Mabokela's (2005a) study of African American teachers in suburban desegregated schools indicate problems of role entrapment for African American teachers to be the "Black expert" and misperceptions about their contributions on instruction and curriculum.

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). This was the case in this study to some extent as was evident to the researcher. 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). This, in turn, shapes interpersonal relations, patterns of team interactions, and increases biases against minority members (Jackson et al., 1995).

Contextualizing Conflict in Demographically Diverse Schools

There is a growing collection of research on heterogeneous (diverse) work groups; it is in these exchanges that influence how members sense how much they are valued (Ely & Thomas, 2001). In the schools in the study, many teachers mentioned they felt valued by many of their peers and by their students. However, there were many more teachers who felt otherwise. Therefore, the emphasis on creating professional community in demographically diverse schools may face resistance due to fears of letting go of a familiar way of teaching and frustrations over a lack of control teachers may experience (Thomas, 2008). While teachers appear to be open to diversity in terms of social justice, they are still resistant to changing their practices. Conflict among demographically diverse groups results when teachers' views and behaviors deviate or are perceived as being at odds. Norms of consensus are that incompatible due to border politics and the ideology of insiders and outsiders shapes how teachers address conflict (Achinstein, 2002).

Schools are becoming increasingly demographically diverse, therefore, creating and maintaining a learning community of demographically diverse teachers is an

ongoing process. The complexities of diversity affects social identity and how groups identify themselves; also, between group and within group differences determine how one perceives themselves. 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 that takes place. 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. When they leave, the organization suffers the loss of not having their perspective (Friedman & Davidson, 2001).

Because teachers of color are underrepresented in schools, pivotal and peripheral norms are established and enforced by majority teachers (Cox & Finley-Nickelson, 1991). Kanter's (1977) research on the concept of proportional representation noted that members of a subgroup (minorities) that compose less than 15% of the majority group experience stereotypical racial acts that may impede their professional advancement. Therefore, teachers who have little exposure with people from different racial groups and have worked only with their own group may have a greater tendency to hold stereotypes and create a hostile environment. Many of the teachers in the study had only worked in this particular district and with this particular student population, especially the teachers of color.

If majority groups are uncertain about working with people of color, there is a search for common group norms so they can exchange information and develop a

common social identity. Thus, if the majority group stresses their norms and values, interactions among the members will be on cultural values that affect constructive group processes and the well-being of team members. Therefore, when European American teachers misperceive their African American principals' leadership, it results in problems of "image" management where their authority and effectiveness are questioned (Madsen & Mabokela, 2002). In the study, when teachers of color misperceived their European American principals' leadership, the same held true as in Madsen and Mabokela's study. Additionally Jones' (2002) study of both Black and White teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership indicated that White teachers were resistant and unwilling to change their instructional practices. With the emphasis on attracting and retaining teachers of color, the possible solution may lie in how they respected and perceived and their ability to retain their cultural identity and what that means for them in their interactions with other teachers (Madsen & Mabokela, 2000).

In schools that are demographically diverse, intergroup theory may explain the challenges to creating a community of teachers. 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 occur 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. This theory contains a complex set of interactions for understanding the effects of diversity in the workplace. An individual's identity in an organization is determined not only by organizational categorization, but also identity

group membership. It recognizes that individual cultural identities influence how they perceive their work and their relationships with others (Alderfer, 1987). Relations among groups may determine how groups are formed, the emotional climate of the workplace, the distribution of resources, group reactions to authority, and the effectiveness of the group in achieving its objectives (Alderfer, 1977).

Various researchers have identified multiple sources of conflict and refer to how one condition of discord seems to affect another (Alderfer et al., 1980; Alderfer & Smith, 1982; Cox, 1994). These properties of intergroup conflict include: (a) incompatible goals, (b) competition for resources, (c) cultural and power differences, (d) conformity of identity, (e) group boundaries, (f) affective patterns, (g) cognitive formations, and leadership. Sources of intergroup conflict are often viewed as negative effects, as this requires majority workers to establish patterns of adjustment to diversity issues in the workplace. These conflicts cannot be ignored and must be recognized as important for creating a community that can recruit and retain a demographically diverse group of teachers (Cox, 1994). Based on this study, intergroup theory provides insights on how cultural differences among demographically diverse teachers leads to organizational resistance and affects the professional community of a school.

Diversity resistance often occurs when an organization undergoes change in response to addressing the needs of demographically diverse groups (Thomas, 2008). In the case of this study, European American administrators are at the helm of steering schools that serve a predominantly Hispanic student population by teachers who are Hispanic and teachers who are European American. It was learned from teachers who

had been at the schools for a long period of time, that when administration changed, meaning a new principal was hired, resistance emerged until teachers began to understand and accept the leadership of their new leader. In the study, resistance also diminished somewhat when European American administrators allowed teachers to retain their cultural identity during their interactions with other teachers and with their students. Professional learning communities at schools occur where shared vision and collaboration provide “deprivatized” common understanding to promote coherent practices at all grade levels (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). This new relationship forged between administrators and teachers leads to shared and collegial leadership in the school, where all grow professionally and learn to view themselves (to use an athletic metaphor) as “all playing on the same team and working toward the same goal: a better school” (Hoerr, 1996, p. 381).

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). Schools must, therefore, be organized to prevent isolated privatized practice of autonomous classrooms. While working collaboratively in professional learning communities, key tools in this process are shared values and vision; supportive physical, temporal, and social conditions; and a shared personal practice.

Implications of Conflict and Schools

The schools in this research worked hard to improve student performance.

Teachers attended staff development, developed new curriculum to address the needs of students, and sought resources to fill in gaps they felt needed to be addressed. Schools have an obligation to help students improve the quality of their lives. Nias, Southworth, and Yeomans (1989) noted that in schools displaying cultures of collaboration, teachers spent a great deal of time talking to one another. Their talk revolved around both themselves and their teaching. Nias et al. saw this talk as a medium through which shared meaning could be established and then continue to be reinforced. They saw three benefits from this kind of teacher talk. First, it was a process that revealed individuals' attitudes, values, and beliefs. Teachers, thus, got to know one another much better, both personally and professionally. Second, this kind of talk was also based on trust and could, therefore, lead to mutual openness. The sharing of lives involves the sharing of emotions and people come to understand others more deeply and develop reciprocal, trusting relationships. Third, the development of a shared language enabled exchanges to convey complex ideas. A cultural language developed among group members. When educators were allowed and encouraged to work to their full potential, education became capable of actually changing the nature of the lives of students (Portales & Porales, 2005).

The majority of teachers in the schools in this study worked to their full potential and shared winning ideas with others; however, there still existed a few who did not. In schools where conflicts existed between teachers or between teachers and administrators,

the relationships that were crucial to the daily interactions between them and to the success of students, hindered everyone's ability to succeed. Cummins (1996) cautioned that "good teaching does not require teachers to internalize an endless list of instructional techniques; much more fundamental is the recognition that human relationships are central to effective instruction" (p. 73).

To educate all students so that they are capable of reaching their full potential, the class relationships between teachers and students must be at the core. Unfortunately, few educational systems are set up to empower teachers, especially in this age of accountability, even though relationship building is ever more important. Often, school experiences do not work properly because in too many school districts, other issues, expectations, and relationships besides the ones between the teachers and the students, are treated as more important. When this occurs, actual classroom teaching is then consigned to being a lesser activity. When that happens, other interests and relationships elbow out the essential classroom relationships between teachers and students that ought to have first consideration (Portales & Porales, 2005).

Events such as these lead to unstable educational systems disengaging teachers and administrators by promoting other objectives. Such is the case when conflicts arise. Such school systems, affected by conflict, need to be reorganized so that every single member is again reminded that educating students is the priority. All in all, the intergroup conflict that existed in the schools in the study, although it could have been detrimental if allowed to go beyond what it currently was, however, was still at a state

where it could be turned around. Many teachers were still focused on teaching students and teaching them well.

Employee contributions can be maximized when people operate in a non-hostile, supportive environment free of prejudice and discrimination. Certainly, those directly affected by a discriminatory environment must appropriate work time and mental energies to issues associated with real or perceived prejudice and discrimination. Some people estimate spending as much as 30% or more of their work time dealing with such issues, thereby reducing the time they have for business. Sometimes the stress of such issues lingers long after the matter has ended—with detrimental effects on productivity (Hankins, 2000). Since waste of any kind can be costly, organizations must utilize all resources effectively. However, unlike resources that are quantifiable, measurable, and predictable, human resources are tougher to manage because human behavior is not entirely predictable. Humans can perform differently under what may appear to be the same circumstances. Compounded by the entrance of prejudice and discrimination, although not always readily visible, these variables can have an extremely negative effect on human resources (Hankins, 2000).

Another factor: as opportunities increase for women and minority men, the voices of unhappy European American men are surfacing in ever-increasing numbers (Hankins, 2000). A possibility not often considered is that some loss of productivity occurs as European American men learn to deal with, or reject, organizational diversity efforts. In addition, affected individuals may prematurely separate from the organization—at a significant cost to the establishment, not just to the women or

minority men who leave (Hankins, 2000). Therefore, as more demographically diverse teachers enter these homogeneous professional communities, it will affect teacher retention and working conditions (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005a). It was not difficult to find teachers with five or less years' experience to interview for this study, for according to the records in the Human Resources Department of the school district in this research study, teachers with more than 10 years of experience, vary significantly in comparison to those with less experience. Of course, many reasons for leaving the profession (of the schools in the study) exist and we cannot say that all teachers have left because of lack of diversity efforts, but by any means should they be ruled out.

Over time, such losses may show up as higher recruiting expenses, turnover and absences, poor-quality output, health and safety issues, lowered employee performance, and diminished organizational productivity. These losses further compounded as they become entrenched in daily operations, ending up as organizational norms. It should not be too difficult to understand how organizations ultimately suffer (Hankins, 2000).

This research studied the various types of intergroup conflict that occurred between teachers of color, European American teachers, and their European American administrators in urban schools and how it affected their working relationship. In many schools with diverse individuals working, some components that support intergroup conflict are language differences, ethnic vitality of cultures involved in the workplace, and what is known as institutional racism. All these are catalysts of intergroup differences. In this qualitative study, the researcher used Alderfer and Cox' Properties of Intergroup Properties because it helped to understand the working relationships between

European American administrators and teachers of color in a structured framework. The properties of intergroup conflict identified in this study were areas that caused tensions between majority and minority groups and, therefore, Alderfer's nine Properties of Intergroup Conflict were used in the study. These conflicts occurred when these groups had opposing interests or views. The theoretical framework used by the researcher to analyze data is that of embedded intergroup because it offers insights on how the identities of European American administrators and teachers of color interacted within a school organizational culture.

Intergroup Conflict

Kanter's (1977) research on the concept of proportional representation noted that members of a subgroup (minorities) that compose less than 15% of the majority group experience challenging work environments. Direct contact with culturally different people in our neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces is an inescapable part of life. With immigrants and minority group members representing nearly 30% of the present workforce in the United States, an understanding of competent conflict management is especially critical in today's society. In this study, despite the fact that teachers of color were a higher percentage of the working staff than the European American teachers, some of the properties of intergroup conflict were still a topic of investigation. Managing intergroup conflict competently means managing conflict appropriately, effectively, satisfactorily, and productively (Ting-Tommey & Oetzel, 2001). Based on this study, intergroup theory provided insight on how cultural differences between teachers and administrators leads to organizational resistance and ultimately affects the school as a

community. According to intergroup theory, group conflict between majority and non-majority workers occurs because majority workers have to establish patterns of adjustment in working with others who are different from them.

As may occur in most schools, teachers who teach the same grade level, the same content area, have the same years of experience, or perhaps have taught at the same school for years, tend to associate more with each other than with the rest of the school's faculty. Teachers in schools for this research were no different. Teachers of the same content area or teachers who began teaching the same year, tended to spend more time together either to socialize or to share ideas. According to Howard (2006), people tend to draw distinctions between themselves as individuals and groups, even if the distinctions are essentially meaningless in a larger context and having drawn these distinctions, values of superiority and inferiority are attributed to the various in-groups and out-groups that have been created. Teachers in schools tend to perhaps form paradigms of their colleagues or administrators, based on either past experiences or misperceptions from others that perhaps are not so. When this is added to the existence of a powerful "visible marker" such as race, individuals are left with patterns of intergroup relations that are extremely resistant to change (Rothbart & John, 1993). The minimal group paradigm raised a cautionary flag for educators, signaling both the difficulty and the necessity of working toward greater intergroup harmony (Banks, 2005).

Conflict and Need for Diversity Plan

Conflict is complex and the term "conflict" has no single clear meaning. Therefore, definitions will vary. Some researchers view conflict as a *situation* and others

as a *behavior*. However, both camps agree that conflict results from incompatibility or opposition in goals, activities, or interaction among social entities. One way of defining conflict is to define it as an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals (Garcia, 2006). Another definition of conflict is an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or dissonance within or between social entities (i.e., individual, group, or organizations, etc.) (Rahim, 2001). In the study, conflicts that were found among teachers and administrators were incompatible goals, cultural differences, power differences, group boundaries, and competition for resources.

Conflicts that occur are usually diversity collisions (that happen in the workplace) that are often accidental, unintended statements that are offensive or inappropriate. When knowledge is lacking, people will rely on the stereotypical or biased information gathered throughout a lifetime. Knowledge, in this context, is the extent to which an individual possesses information about others from diverse backgrounds. The more factual the data that people have about other cultures and groups, the easier it is to be comfortable when interacting with people different than themselves. By having more accurate information about others, the more likely accurate opinions, feelings, and behaviors will be developed (Billings-Harris, 1998). Research indicates that organizations that have a systematic process for addressing demographically diverse issues are more effective and efficient (Dass & Parker, 1996). The question becomes, will a strategic plan work for schools and what adaptations will be needed to fit a school context (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005a)? Managing diversity has

been noted to reduce turnover, improve productivity, and provide benefits to all participants (Dass & Parker, 1996). Because the staff in the study constituted nearly 58% teachers of color at School A and 52% teachers of color in School B, the ability to effectively work with European American teachers and European American administrators was critical on a daily basis since this included more than half of the teaching staff. In this study, the need for a diversity plan was also apparent especially when the turnover rate of teachers at School A and School B occurred more so during the fifth year or so. Again, a diversity plan that addresses the needs of all teachers should reduce turnover rates and improve productivity.

In comparison with many of these definitions, the Anglo-Saxon definitions for conflict connote a broader package of meaning, such as perceived incompatible goals or perceived interference of the other in achieving the desired outcomes (Folger, Poole, & Strutman, 2000; Lulofs & Cahn, 2000). Thus, from this outcome-based definition, the word conflict reflects a wider range of problematic interaction phenomena. Although conflict definitions do vary, they do overlap with respect to the following areas: conflict includes *opposing interests* between individuals or groups; such opposed interest must be *recognized* for conflict to exist; conflict involves *beliefs*, by each side, that the other will thwart (or has already thwarted) its interests; conflict is a *process*; it develops out of existing relationships between individuals or groups and reflects their past interactions and the contexts in which these took place; and *actions* by one or both sides do, in fact, produce thwarting of others' goals.

Another such example involves the linguistic symbol of the word *conflict*. For example, in the French culture, conflict is likened to a “war-and encounter between contrary elements that oppose each other and ‘to oppose’ is a strong term, conveying powerful antagonism” (Faure, 1995, pp. 41-42). Although the French like a debate, they do not like to engage in a conflict. For the Chinese, the word conflict is equated with intense fighting and contradictory struggle. To engage in a conflict with someone is, in the Chinese mind-set, disruptive to the harmonious fabric of a personal relationship. In Chinese culture, any type of dispute or antagonistic conflict is seen as inviting chaos or *luan*. Most Chinese nurture the belief that conflict should be approached with self-discipline and self-restraint. Although they prefer to discuss or *tao lun* differences (which implies nonjudgmental exploration), they do not like to critically evaluate or *tan pan* differences (which implies that a judgment will be rendered via verbal exchange). Thus, understanding the core linguistic symbols and the culture-laden meanings behind these symbols may be critical to the initiation, negotiation, and resolution phases of any intercultural conflict episode.

Importance of the Knowledge of Cultures

In the study, the researcher observed on various occasions the use of metaphors or phrases that underhandedly articulated the possible formation of conflict among the groups observed. One example was a comment made by a teacher when their ideas were “shot down” by the others in the group. The metaphors, phrases, or symbols that we use to formulate conflict approaches and behaviors—conflict is an uphill battle, she really pushed my button, power, authority, compromise, and concessions—often present the

following intercultural problems. First, the conflict metaphors or symbolic words that negotiators use often do not reflect equivalent conceptual meanings across different cultures. Second, the conflict phrases that different disputants use may conjure different emotionally laden meanings than were originally intended. Third, the attitudinal tone (especially if the speaker is using English as a second language) behind such language usage may provoke different evaluative reactions. Last, the nonverbal gestures, the facial expressions, and the body posture that accompany the verbal dispute process may be entirely misconstrued, thus provoking further conflict spirals in the intercultural communication process.

Knowledge of the diverse cultures in the workplace is critical for proper communication to occur without offending those who are different from us. The more teachers and administrators understand each other's customs and daily practices, the less the possibility of formulating conflict, or creating misunderstandings among them, exists. Intercultural communication is often referred to as a symbolic exchange process between persons of different cultures (Ting-Toomey, 1999). In the symbolic exchange process, conflict intentions are inferred and perceptions and cultural-based interpretations are formed. Through the use of symbols is one way that individuals formulate conflict. A *symbol* is a sign, artifact, word(s), gesture, placement, or nonverbal behavior that stands for or reflects something meaningful. We use language as a symbolic system (with words, idioms, metaphors, and phrases) that contains rich culture-based categories.

Language is a prism through which we interpret the conflict world around us. Naming particular conflict events via language usage is part of this symbolic system. Intercultural frictions often arise because of the ways we name or catalog the different groups or individuals or conflict behaviors around us. The use of the term “veteran teacher” may imply to some people those with most experience who may be able to contribute a wealth of information to the group, while others may be offended by the term for they may misinterpret it as being seen as someone who is old and should perhaps retire. Careful interpretation to such terms may not be assumed as being necessary, but the possibility may exist where comments made, especially by leaders of schools, may not be appreciated unless clarified. The *meanings* or interpretations that we attach to the symbol (e.g., a national flag or a work such as *power*) can have both objective and subjective levels. People globally can recognize a particular country by its national flag because of its design and color. However, people (e.g., of different ethnic backgrounds) can also hold subjective evaluations of what the flag means to them, such as a sense of pride or oppression. Misinterpretation of metaphors or symbols can lead to conflicts that can affect the working relationships of the individuals present.

In analyzing the routine tasks teachers perform, Smith (1971) declares that “teaching is above all, a linguistic activity” and “language is at the very heart of teaching” (p. 24). The effects of communication skills are especially significant to improving the performance of underachieving ethnically different students. In many classrooms, teachers use culturally conditioned language and nonverbal movements to communicate, to manage impressions, to persuade, to develop relationships, to negotiate,

to compete, and to collaborate. Verbal and nonverbal cues are the emblems of our cultural personal identities. The same holds true when diverse teachers and administrators communicate with each other. To increase the likelihood of satisfactory outcomes in conflict, we must become mindful of our symbolic exchange process—on both the verbal and nonverbal levels—with cultural and personal sensitivity.

Properties of Intergroup Conflict

With the formal inception of professional learning communities and mentors and mentees in schools, teaching is no longer the isolated profession it was once seen to be. The relationships that exist between the working adults of a school are critical to the daily functions and success of the school. Because today's schools are composed of a variety of diverse groups of people, the relationships that perhaps would be simpler to create and maintain in a homogeneous environment, are sometimes a bit more challenging. The type of intergroup relations occurring with organizations is influenced significantly by the degree of boundary permeability of the groups within it (Alderfer, 1987). Variables that may indicate degree of boundary permeability in an organization include organizational goals, environmental malevolence, or benevolence, authority relations, economic conditions, role definitions, communication patterns, human energy, affect distribution, intergroup dynamics, unconscious basic assumptions, time-span, and cognitive work (Alderfer, 1987).

Over-bounded organizations are characterized by strong boundaries, clear and rigid goals, overly defined and restrictive role definitions, guarded communication, and authoritarian leadership. To some extent in this study, there existed some evidence of

over-boundedness within the small intergroups comprised of teachers who found commonalities in their teaching (content and/or grade). Rigid role definitions may cause employees to feel alienated from the organization and feel as if they are unable to develop beyond fixed role expectations. Under-bounded organization or groups are typically characterized by weak boundaries, unclear goals, role ambiguity, inefficient or confusing communication patterns, and competing multiple leadership (Alderfer, 1987). In under-bounded systems, role confusion and ambiguity create anxiety in individuals trying to fulfill unclear expectations. The inability to secure well-defined roles from the organization may cause employees to reform from fully engaging in the group. Thus, systemic boundaries affect organization group boundaries within it. Alderfer (1980) stated: "When organizational structure can significantly shape environmental dynamics, task group boundaries are more powerful than identity group boundaries. When environmental forces overwhelm organizational boundaries, identity group dominate task group conflicts" (p. 275).

Optimal boundary permeability, which lies somewhere between under-bounded and over-bounded permeability, allows organizations and the groups within it to reach their full potential (Alderfer, 1987). Optimal boundary permeability could also allow the advancement of qualified minorities for the benefit of the organization. Thus, optimal boundary permeability variables serve as indicators of the likelihood of penetrating the top ranks of an organization.

Any group relationship occurs within an environment shaped by the larger system in which it is embedded (Alderfer, 1987). Intergroup relationships are recreated

at multiple levels through parallel unconscious processes. Parallel processes are an important principle of the theory of embedded relationships.

Processes within or between a system (i.e. organization) or suprasystem (i.e., the United States) can be observed in several ways: (a) individual processes, (b) intergroup relations communication, (c) intergroup outcomes as they relate to other groups, and (d) the impact of the suprasystem on the groups within it (Alderfer, 1987). Intergroup relations are conceptualized as parallel processes, reflective of processes in the suprasystem and in its subsystems; many unconscious processes occur with and between groups in the suprasystem that recreate the dynamics and relations repeatedly at various levels. Therefore, it is important to examine the unconscious and conscious processes at the individual, group, intergroup levels, as well as the suprasystemic level.

Research has found several characteristics of why opposing interests exists among organizational groups. Unequal power intergroup relationships occur when individuals who share a common condition induced by actions of a high power group begin the process of forming a group as a way to improve their status (Alderfer, 1977). Among groups of equal power, such as the case with many teachers in the schools of this study, the group dynamics vary in how competitive versus cooperative these groups are (Alderfer, 1977). Relations among groups may determine how groups are formed, the emotional climate of the workplace, how roles are structured within the workplace, the distribution of resources, the reaction of the group system authorities, and the effectiveness of the group in achieving its objectives (Alderfer, 1977). In the context of

intergroup conflict, there are conditions that influence how the leaders and majority and minority groups will react to each other (Cox, 1994).

As previously mentioned, Alderfer's nine properties of intergroup conflict include: (a) competing goals, (b) competitions for resources, (c) cultural differences, (d) power differences, (e) conformity versus identity affirmation, (f) group boundaries, (g) affective patterns, (h) cognitive formations, and (i) leadership behaviors (Table 2.1). These properties are often the cause of tensions between identity groups and organizational membership. These conflicts cannot be ignored and must be recognized as important in recruiting and retaining a diverse work force (Cox, 1994).

Programs That Prevent Intergroup Differences and Linkages to Schools

Intergroup relations programs are likely to be much more successful in an organizational climate that promotes positive intergroup relations among the administration, faculty, and staff than in one that does not. It is necessary to mention that in the schools where the research was held, for the most part, relationships among all of the adults appeared to be good and stable. Teachers were attending work and were holding themselves accountable for the success of their students. If basic democratic values of equality and participatory decision-making are considered to be valuable for students, the adults in their environment must display these types of attitudes and behaviors toward one another. If intergroup collaboration is sought in students, the administrators, teachers, and staff should show the way. If students are expected to treat each other with civility, tolerance, and respect, then the administrators, faculty, and staff should model these behaviors. Similarly, the students' parents should be shown respect

for their cultural and racial backgrounds. One of the basic tenets of the original contact hypothesis was that support by authority figures was essential to improve intergroup relations (Allport, 1954).

Table 2.1. Properties of Intergroup Conflict

Property	Description
Incompatible Goals	Differences among majority and non-majority workers in competing goals that are influenced by norms, goal priorities, work styles among and between these groups (Cox, 1994).
Competition for Resources	Allocation of resources that are influenced by embedded organizational issues such as acknowledgement of group identities in regulating jobs, training priorities, and expansion of resources (Cox, 1994).
Cultural Differences	Cultural differences between group members of different groups occur due to misunderstanding and misperceptions (Cox, 1994).
Power Differences	Majority groups hold advantages over minority groups in the power structure of the organization. Intergroup hostility between groups results in a disagreement over the redistribution of power. Minority group density in organizations poses a threat to the existing power structure and provides an opportunity for those who are powerless. The types of resources that can be obtained and used differ among groups. Power differences among groups influences the group's boundaries between the majority and non-majority workers (Alderfer, 1982; Cox, 1994).
Conformity versus Identity Affirmation	The tension between majority and minority group members over the preservation of minority group identity (Cox, 1994).
Group Boundaries	Both physical and psychological group boundaries determine group membership. Transactions among groups are regulated by variations in the permeability of the boundaries (Alderfer, 1982).
Affective Patterns	The severity of intergroup conflict relates to the polarized feelings among the groups. Group members split their feeling so that positive feelings are associated with their group and negative feelings are associated with other groups (Alderfer, 1982).
Cognitive Formations	Due to group boundaries, power differences and affective patterns, group members develop their own language, influence members' perceptions of subjective and objective criteria of other groups and work efforts, and transmit propositions about other groups in relation to their own group members (Alderfer, 1982).
Leadership Behavior	The group leader and other group representatives reflect the boundaries of groups and how they will interact. Members of a similar group reflect power differences, affective patterns and cognitive formations of their group. The role of the leader in a network of intergroup relations determines the intensification of intergroup conflict (Alderfer, 1977, 1982).

Intergroup conflict often starts with different expectations concerning appropriate or inappropriate conflict behavior in a conflict scene. If the different cultural members

continue to engage in inappropriate or ineffective conflict behaviors, the miscommunication can easily spiral into a complex, polarized conflict situation. In a polarized conflict, trust and respect are often threatened, and distorted perceptions and biased attribution are likely to emerge. If school administrators are not aware of how to approach and solve intergroup conflicts if they already exist within the school, this could have detrimental effects if engagement in conflict continues and escalates.

The study of intergroup conflict is about the study of conflict that evolves, at least in part, because of cultural group membership differences. It is about acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to manage such differences constructively and creatively (Loden & Rosener, 1991). In today's schools, the diversity that exists among teachers, students, and administrators can lead to diversity issues that affect job performance of the adult and student success at school. Inattention to diversity issues in the workplace can lead to the following costs: (a) low morale because of culture clash, (b) high absenteeism because of psychological stress, (c) substantial dollars that must be spent to retrain individuals because of high employee turnover, (d) much time wasted because of miscommunication between diverse employees, and (e) the enormous amount of personal energy expended in defensive resistance to inevitable change (Loden & Rosener, 1991). The long-term advantages of managing diversity effectively at the organization level are (a) full use of the organization's human capital, (b) increased knowledge and enhanced mutual respect among diverse employees, (c) increased commitment among diverse employees at all organizational levels and across all functions, (d) greater innovation and flexibility as others participate more constructively

in problem-solving teams, and (e) improved productivity as more employee effort is directed at achieving the system's goals and less energy is expended in dealing with cultural miscommunication issues (Loden, 1996; Loden & Rosener, 1991).

So how can communication blocks exist when both parties, administrators and teachers, truly believe they have the same goals that are to educate students? The answer to this question lies in ethnographic analysis, that is, in identifying and giving voice to worldviews. It is not only important to realize that in order for students to be successful that teachers utilize the best instructional methodology and that administrators encourage and monitor it, because the actual practice of good teachers of all colors typically incorporates a range of pedagogical orientations. Instead, the differing perspectives on the debate over "skills" versus "process" approaches can lead to an understanding of the alienation and miscommunication, and thereby to an understanding of the "silenced dialogue" (Weis & Fine, 1993, p. 121). In the study, teachers believed they were doing a great job in teaching their students based on what they perceived to be the best instructional methodology. It was when administrators attempted to question some of the data that some teachers in the study felt the communication block existed between both parties.

Not only should school authorities support positive intergroup relations, but they need to model these behaviors in their own conduct. In addition, as Cohen and others (Cohen, 1980; Schofield, 1995) have suggested, the racial, ethnic, and gender composition of the administrative, teaching, and support staffs of schools set the tone for interactions within the schools. It is important that the racial and ethnic groups

represented among the students be as well represented as possible among the administrators, teachers, and support staff. When this is not the case due to varying population availability, more so as in rural areas, the ability of administrators to hold in high regard the cultural identity of all of its members is even more necessary. It is impossible to create a model for the good teacher without taking issues of culture and community into account (Weis & Fine, 1993).

Characteristics of Effective Leadership and Leadership Styles

When looking at conflict and some of its causes, it is also important to find possible solutions to conflict that administrators and school leaders can implement to continue the mission of the school. By studying literature dealing with effective leadership and leadership styles, solutions to dealing with intergroup conflict such as those found in this study can be sought. In this study, teachers of color, European American teachers, and European American administrators, and their professional exchanges are the topic of study. Whenever cultural differences exist in a working environment, the possibility of intergroup conflict exists. Effective leaders must be able to react to these conflicts and maintain the vision of the school. Cultural forces affect the kind of leader behavior that is usually accepted, enacted, and effective within a collective is called cultural congruence. Accordingly, behavior that is consistent with collective values will be more acceptable than behavior that represents conflicting values. Violation of cultural norms by leaders or managers will result in dissatisfaction, conflict, and resistance on the part of followers or subordinates and, at times, lower

performance of leaders, their work units, and their subordinates (House, Wright, & Aditya, 1997).

The role of all people who work outside of the classroom, school administrators included, is to facilitate the learning that occurs inside the classroom, smoothing out the paths so that teachers can focus their best efforts and attention not on controlling students, but on delivering a quality education to all of them (Portales & Porales, 2005). The administrators of the schools in the study were observed doing a great deal of this. They involved themselves in as many activities as possible or directed others to do so. While dealing with economic constraints, bureaucratic issues, restrictions and/or gripes from their district, difficult parents, and intergroup conflict, school leaders must also possess various qualities if they are to take on the role of a leader and not just that of a manager (Straker, 2008).

Marshall and Kindal (1999) argued that for a leader to be effective at their job, they must possess certain qualities apart from the ability to elicit cooperation from their subordinates, ability to listen, and the ability to place the needs of others above their own. In order to elicit cooperation, listen well, and place the needs of others above their own, effective school leaders' need to possess some degree of emotional maturity, wisdom, and humility. These other essential qualities of effective leadership are categorized into five major areas:

1. Self-awareness: the ability to recognize and understand their own moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effects on others. Before school leaders can begin to understand the people they are leading, they must first

understand themselves. They must know their limitations, their strengths, and their weaknesses and work toward improving any deficiency they feel may hinder their effectiveness toward moving the group forward.

2. **Self-regulation:** the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses—anger, prejudices, stubbornness, for instance, and moods. It involves the ability to system judgment and to think before acting. An effective school's functioning usually requires quick action and decision-making. Before acting on issues of great importance to the educational whole, administrators must be able to have foresight and hindsight and must demonstrate a level of self-control above and beyond those they lead.
3. **Motivation:** the passion for what they are doing that goes beyond money, power, or status quo. Effective school leaders must be able to lead those who are unwilling to be lead because they have become complacent or comfortable at what they do.
4. **Empathy:** the ability to understand other people's emotional makeup and the skill of treating people according to their emotional reactions. It hinges upon the ability to listen and the ability to put someone else's needs above their own.
5. **Social Skills:** a proficiency in managing relationships and building networks, and the ability to find common ground and build rapport.

The cultural difference proposition asserts that increased task performance by followers, organizations, and institutions in societies will be induced by the introduction

of selected values, techniques, and behavior patterns that are different from those commonly valued in society. The rationale for this hypothesis is that by being different with respect to some behaviors, leaders introduce more changes of the kind required for innovation and performance improvement. If a leader enters a working environment with different values or ideas than those that the majority or identity group is accustomed to, the leader must realize of any consequences of such actions that may arise, but must also be capable of working out differences and help his subordinates understand the reasoning behind his actions. In contrast to the cultural difference proposition, the proposition of successful leadership through induction of practices that are different from the model cultural practices is still viable if we consider leaders as shapers of change rather than simply embodiments of the status quo (House et al., 1997).

Organizational leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members. The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness research program (GLOBE) is a long-term program designed to conceptualize, operationalize, test, and validate a cross-level integrated theory of the relationship between culture and societal, organizational, and leadership effectiveness. The GLOBE project used the concept of Implicit Leadership Theory (ILT) as a critical explanatory mechanism by which culture influences leadership process (House, 2004).

Another model, a leadership model developed by Bass and Avolio (1997), identified three leadership behaviors: (a) transactional leadership, (b) transformational leadership, and (c) a non-leadership construct. The first leadership behavior is

transactional leadership. This leadership behavior is identified with exchange of rewards for meeting agreed upon objectives. The transactional leader monitors followers to ensure mistakes are not made but allows the group to exist. In this case, the leader intervenes only when things go wrong. If there exists a leadership model, there must also be the model that identifies the situation where lack of leadership exists. Transactional leadership is the dimension of leadership that views leadership as a series of transactions or exchanges that take place among leaders, colleagues, and followers. The vast majority of leaders in most organizations in the United States practice transactional leadership, which implies setting unambiguous goals, establishing clear measures, and holding people individually accountable for results. Although transactional leaders hold individuals accountable, they do not individualize the needs of followers nor focus attention on their personal fulfillment needs.

In its simplest sense, transactional leadership is leadership by contingent reinforcement, where power (i.e. capacity to influence, control, and direct change) is conceptualized as a tool that leaders use to achieve their own ends. Followers are motivated by the power of the leader's promises, rewards, and threats of disciplinary actions or punishments. The transactional leader's actions depend on whether followers carry out what the leaders and followers have "contracted" to do. Effective use of the transactional dimension of leadership is key to the success of a high-performing leader. However, simply drawing on this dimension alone will not build or sustain a high performance workforce (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Ciulla, 1998; Northouse, 2001).

The second behavior is transformational leadership. It is identified by certain behaviors that include inspirational, motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized considerations. The dimension of transformational leadership builds on and significantly expands the transactional leadership process with a much different view of the leader-follower power relationship. The transformational leader is concerned with the performance of followers and also developing following to their fullest potential. Transformational leaders often possess a strong set of values and ideals, and they are effective at motivating followers to act in ways that support the greater good rather than their own self-interests. The transformational leader enhances performance by: (a) stimulating interest among followers to view their work from new perspectives, (b) generating awareness of the purpose, vision, and mission of the team and organization, (c) developing colleagues and followers to look beyond their own interests and toward those that will benefit the group (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Transformational leaders do more with their followers than set up simple exchanges or agreements. They behave to achieve superior results by employing what is referred to as the “Four I’s,” which is directly aimed at attaining individual follower fulfillment:

1. Idealized influence—they act as strong role models for their followers; followers identify with them and want to emulate them. They possess very high standards of moral and ethical conduct and can be counted on to do the right thing.

2. Inspirational motivation—they communicate high expectations to followers, inspiring them through motivation to become committed to and a part of the purpose and shared vision in the organization.
3. Intellectual stimulation—they stimulate followers to be creative and innovative, and to challenge their own beliefs and values as well as those of their leader and organization. This behavior supports followers as they try new approaches and innovative ways to deal with organizational issues.
4. Individual consideration—they provide a supportive climate in which they listen carefully to the individual needs of followers. They act as coaches and advisors, while trying to assist individuals to satisfy their worker fulfillment needs (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Northouse, 2001).

In the simplest form, transformational leadership is leadership in which power is not an entity that leaders use over others to achieve their own ends, but instead it occurs in relationships and is used by leaders and followers to reach a common goal.

Transformational leadership is a relationship in which leaders and followers morally elevate each other. It is about change and sharing a common purpose, vision and values (Garcia, 2006).

The third leadership behavior, a non-leadership construct, a *laissez-faire* leadership is an absence of leadership. In this study, the researcher finds transactional leadership and transformational leadership evidence in different degrees of existence at each of the participating schools.

High-performing leaders realize that mastering both the transactional and the transformational dimensions are essential to focus leadership attention on follower fulfillment in order to harness the emotions of the many people to build and sustain a high-performing workforce. They also fully understand that their ability to leverage both dimensions with confidence and credibility is the only way for their organizations to survive in an ever-changing, complex environment (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Goleman, 1998; Katzenbach, 2000; Kotter, 1999).

Managing Diversity

Because individuals from different cultural groups do not understand the implicit patterns of expectations and meanings of behaviors that are implicitly understood and shared by members of the same cultural group, many opportunities that could elicit expressions of willingness to cooperate, expressions of affection, sympathy, etc., result only in frustration and increased misunderstandings (Lousa, 1979). Leaders must be cognizant of this. Leaders sometimes assume they manage diversity effectively when they offer diversity training, plan for affirmative-action, accommodate employees with disabilities or post equal-employment notices on company bulletin boards. Others create and staff diversity positions, establish special mentoring programs, and offer seminars on career management to women and minority men (Livingston, 1991). If activities like these constitute an organization's total efforts, it is being reactive rather than proactive, thus, limiting its potential progress. The effective management of diversity involves much more than these steps (Hankins, 2000).

In essence, managing diversity is about using all of the talents available to the organization without resorting to ethnocentricity or stereotyping. Managing diversity sounds easy in theory, but our prejudices may be part of our cultural upbringing and it may take considerable effort and even soul searching to free ourselves from them. The rewards, however, are well worth the effort. By using the contingency theory, which states that there is no one way of managing, an administrator will use the best methods available best suited for the situation and people involved (Cartwright, 2002). When an administrator understands each member of the school and where he or she is coming from, the administrator will be able to use the proper methods to achieve success for all.

Diversity management is an ongoing process, not just a program or series of activities. As such, it must be built into every facet of the business, and basic human-relations principles for dealing with individual differences adhered to by, and applied to all people. As managing diversity moves beyond legal compliance to addressing the human attitudes and behaviors that first created the need for laws, the spirit of managing human differences is at work (Hankins, 2000).

When diversity is managed proactively, the organization eliminates discrepancies based on racial, gender, or cultural differences. Because the European American administrators at the participating schools were not fully aware of the need for managing the existing diversity at their campus, they were unaware of the need to act proactively as a means to stopping any arising conflicts before they even erupted. By working proactively, managing diversity ceases recruitment, termination, training, development,

placement, disciplinary action, promotional, and salary practices that advantage some groups while disadvantaging others (Hankins, 2000).

Principle-based diversity management facilitates environments in which their members are free to contribute fully to organizational success. This was not always the case in either of the participating schools. To guide diversity practices, leaders may either develop their own principles (codes of conduct to influence how people think and act) or they may apply the basic common-sense canons for healthy, productive relationships identified below. Principles for treating human differences:

- All organizational personnel deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Individual differences can be visible and invisible. Addressing invisible differences is as important as addressing visible ones.
- People should treat each other fairly and equitably.
- Talent, intelligence, skills, and abilities are distributed among all groups.
- No one should be advantaged or disadvantaged relative to others by virtue of his or her membership in a particular group.
- Prejudice and discrimination are deterrents to productive, healthy organizations and must be sought out and driven from the organization.
- People should be treated as individuals—not just members of a group.
- It is not appropriate to prejudge, stereotype, or discriminate against others for reasons that include race, gender, ethnicity, age, religion, or physical condition.

- Prejudice and discrimination are problems. Every person, by his or her attitudes or behavior, is either part of the solution or part of the problem.
- If people have the right information, and believe it to be true, they will generally be moved to action.
- All diversity issues should be addressed, including those pertaining to women, minority men, and White men.
- All organizational members have a responsibility to help create the cultures in which they wish to work.
- It should be assumed that all employees want to succeed and are capable of doing so, and treated accordingly.
- A full appreciation for human diversity can be reached when people no longer define (or judge) each other based on cultural or physical attributes, but on the content of their character.

Principles are the cornerstones of organizational operations. All organizational members must unconditionally embrace them lest they become meaningless rhetoric.

Organizations that manage diversity, not by laws but by principles, open doors to greater success and profitability (Hankins, 2000).

Many education leaders in diversity-enhanced schools are moving beyond blame and befuddlement and working to transform themselves and their school to not only serve their students well, but also help meet the needs of their colleagues. This transformative work proceeds best in five phases: (a) building trust, (b) engaging personal culture, (c) confronting issues of social dominance and social justice, (d)

transforming instructional practices, and (e) engaging the entire school community (Howard, 2007).

While systemic, multidirectional attacks on educational inequities are most desirable, individuals do not have to wait for these to happen before taking action on their own. Micro-level changes, such as those that take place within the classroom and departments, are important, too (Gay, 2000).

Theoretical Framework and Embedded Intergroup Theory

In urban schools, when there are cultural differences among various demographically diverse groups of principals and teachers, just as there may be benefits to the organization, there may be misperceptions that may lead to conflicts. Such diversity also presents certain difficulties that must be given attention in the management of diverse workgroups (Cox, 1994). These misperceptions about cultural differences may disrupt the overall functioning of the school organization and may affect organizational effectiveness (Belak, 1998). It is important to recognize the fact that intergroup diversity contributes to an increase in social incompatibilities. Such is the case as with the schools in the study. Comprised of teachers and administrators of diverse groups, their day-to-day exchanges may lead to misperceptions and ultimately conflicts. Although dissimilar people are not always disliked, and, in fact, are sometimes preferred, we tend to like people who have similar attitudes and values and dislike those who disagree with what we believe (Byrne, 1971).

A theory that is used at times by researchers when dealing with issues of diversity is the critical race theory (CRT). Critical race theory originated in schools of

law in the late 1980s with a group of scholars seeking to examine and challenge race and racism in the United States' legal system and society. Critical race theory was not used in this study because CRT addresses the historical and contemporary realities of race, racism, and White privilege, while looking at issues of inequality. A CRT in education centralizes race and racism, while also focusing on racisms' intersections with other forms of subordination, based on gender, class, sexuality, language, culture, immigrant status phenotype, accent, and surname (Arriola, 1997). Again, the theoretical framework used by the researcher in this study to analyze data is not that of CRT but of embedded intergroup relations because it identifies with the intergroup working exchanges between diverse groups (Alderfer, 1982; Nkomo & Cox, 1996). The daily exchanges between teachers of color, European American teachers, and European American administrators were observed and studied by the researcher.

The theory of embedded intergroup relations stems from some of Sigmund Freud's work. Freud made the first attempts to liberate the human psyche in the early 1900s by helping patients uncover and understand their unconscious. Both repression and resistance were unconscious processes that protected the psyche, in both adaptive and maladaptive ways, at various times. These were identified as defense mechanisms, along with others, that are often utilized by the ego to serve as protection from conscious awareness of painful realizations. Oftentimes one can be overwhelmed by the psychic energy expended to utilize defense mechanisms. Many analysts after Freud have applied his concepts with variation to expanded theories explaining psychological processes.

Later, the role of unconscious processes was applied to small group behavior, in addition to individuals, by Wilfred Bion. Bion (1961) postulated that a group behaves on two levels: (a) on the conscious level and (b) on the (unconscious) basic assumption level. He described the three basic assumptions that determine group behavior as: (a) dependency, to obtain security from one individual; (b) fight or flight, to attack or run away from somebody or something; and (c) pairing, to reproduce itself (Bion, 1961). Group members' interactions represented not only their individual unconscious processes but also now the groups as a whole.

The behavioral and psychological components, or school's intergroup relations, are those aspects of the institution that contribute to a positive or hostile environment for different groups. This includes perceptions by faculty, staff, and students about discrimination, attitudes about diversity, acts of insensitivity, heated and uncivil debates around issues of diversity, classroom discussions about minority groups based on misinformation or stereotypes, verbal attacks against members of different groups, hate crimes, racist or sexist computer jokes, and many other factors that influence intergroup relations in schools.

Rice (1969) expanded upon Bion's (1961) theory and provided the foundational concepts and language application to human behavior within the context of institutional processes. Rice postulated that:

1. The effectiveness of every intergroup relationship is determined, so far as its overt purposes are concerned by the extent to which the groups involved have

to defend themselves against uncertainty about the integrity of their boundaries.

2. Every relationship—between individuals, within small groups and within large groups as well as between groups—has characteristics of an intergroup relationship (Rice, 1969).

Rice's (1969) theory gave rise to another theory focused on intergroup relationships within several layers of a system.

Clayton Alderfer, in turn, utilized elements of Rice's (1969) theory, influenced by the work of their predecessors Bion and Freud, in the development of his embedded intergroup relations theory. Intergroup relations refer to the processes that occur with and among groups. There are five properties of intergroup relationships (Alderfer, 1987). First, groups are defined by their established boundaries. Group boundaries are both psychological and physical and determine the interactions with other groups. Groups range from being over-bounded to under-bounded. Second, power differences characterize groups. Groups vary in the type of resources they can and choose to use. Affective patterns are the third intergroup relationship property, referring to the type of feelings a group may have about their own group and others. The intensity of those feelings is also significant. Fourth, groups differ by cognitive formations. Meaning, groups develop their own interpretations of relationships and dynamics occurring between and among their group and others. Therefore, two groups in conflict may have polarized views of theories and perceptions of the same event. Lastly, leadership behavior is also a property of intergroup relations. Leadership behavior reflects the

group boundaries, power, affective patterns, and cognitive formations of the group. In addition to reflecting group characteristics, leaders also establish the culture of the group. Leadership both influences and is influenced by the group and external forces such as other groups.

In organizations, embedded intergroup relations occur between identity groups and organizational groups. Individuals carry images of their own and other groups, ultimately affecting intergroup relations. Therefore, group members and non-group members vary in their perceptions of the salience and visibility of established boundaries. Identity groups consist of groups that members join at birth such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, family, generation, and many others. Organizational groups consist of task groups and hierarchical groups at work. Each identity, task, and hierarchical group can be characterized by distinct behaviors and thought patterns. As a result, each group experiences the organization differently.

Embedded intergroup theory recognizes that individual cultural identities influence how they perceive their work and their relationships with others (Alderfer, 1987). According to embedded intergroup theory, leaders and followers are constantly attempting to manage potential conflicts that arise from the interactions between identity groups and organizational group membership (Nkomo & Cox, 1996). With intergroup conflict, there are conditions that influence how the leader and majority and minority workers will react to each other.

Relations among groups may determine how groups are formed, the emotional climate of the workplace, the distribution of resources, group reactions to authority, and

the effectiveness of the group in achieving its objectives (Alderfer, 1977). Sources of intergroup conflict are often viewed as negative effects, as this requires majority workers to establish patterns of adjustment to diversity issues in the workplace. These conflicts cannot be ignored and must be recognized as important in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce (Cox, 1994). The analysis of intergroup relations is, in part, the study of power relations and the analysis of conflict among groups and how that impacts equal and unequal power groups within the organization. One of the most prominent reasons for intergroup conflict is simply the nature of the group. Other reasons may be work interdependence, goal variances, differences in perceptions, and the increased demand for specialists. Also, individual members of a group often play a role in the initiation of group conflict.

Summary

The overview of literature demonstrates the need for more research in the areas of leadership and conflict, especially as schools begin to become more and more diverse, not only in student populations, but also with the changing demographics of administrators and teachers. Despite the multitude of ways that leadership has been conceptualized, the overwhelming number of leadership authorities agree that the leadership phenomenon is not a person, position, or title, but rather an influence process and a power relationship. Central to the phenomenon of leadership as a process are the following components: (a) Leadership is a series of actions and behavior, (b) leadership involves influence, (c) leadership occurs within a group context, and (d) leadership involves goal attainment. Based on these components, leadership can be defined as a

process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2001).

On the other hand, central to the phenomenon of leadership as a power relationship is the fact that power is the capacity or potential to influence or affect others. Therefore, since leadership involves influence and influence is based on a power relationship between leaders and followers, how leaders use or abuse power directly affects their ability to lead. Once again, the vast majority of leadership experts view leadership as a complex moral relationship between people, based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and shared vision of the good.

This chapter reviewed characteristics of effective leaders and various leadership styles. The theoretical framework of embedded intergroup, which identifies the working exchanges between diverse groups, was also examined. This chapter examined research of how misperceptions of intergroup differences affect working and professional relationships in urban schools among teachers of color, European American teachers, and European American school administrators based on the nine properties of intergroup properties. The following chapter explains the methodology, methods, and materials for this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The intent of this qualitative study was to examine: (a) the professional exchanges between European American principals and teachers of color (Hispanic teachers) or vice versa in urban schools, (b) how teachers of color respond to these interactions, and (c) the necessary leadership skills needed by European American principals to establish an inclusive school organization. Referencing two groups that exist in the schools pertaining to the research (identity groups and organizational groups), conflict that arose between administrators and teachers and delineated in the properties of intergroup conflict was analyzed based on the researcher's observations and participants' responses to interview questions. The researcher, also being a teacher of color, at one time experienced very similar intergroup conflicts when working at schools such as those in the study.

One major similarity that the researcher experienced as conflict was the lack of sharing or collaboration with other teachers who were not of the same ethnicity. Not to be taken as complete isolation because the researcher did meet, plan, and share with many people, but there were nonetheless some individuals who refused to come together and partake in support. At the time, the information available regarding intergroup conflict was not as readily available or accessible as it is now, but the need to address it and expose it was and still remains, perhaps especially more so now that demographics in schools are changing so rapidly each year. Apart from reasons stated in the Purpose of

Study in Chapter I, this study is important because working in an environment of conflict, leads to other events that, in turn, affect not only the employees of the schools through degradation of school climate, but affect much worse, the students and their successes. It is because of this, that the impact of such conflict on student learning and the schools' leadership creation of possible solution(s) to this conflict were also studied.

Overview of Methods

A qualitative case study, to examine the professional exchanges among racially-ethnically diverse groups of teachers and administrators, was used for this research. The intent of this qualitative study was to explore: (a) the professional exchanges between European American principals and teachers of color (Hispanic teachers) or vice versa in urban schools, (b) how teachers of color respond to these interactions, and (c) the necessary leadership skills needed by European American principals to establish an inclusive school organization. Very few studies have examined teacher-principal conflicts and their respective perceptions of such conflicts. The study took place in an urban desegregated school district in the south, specifically two high schools, each with European American administrators, European American teachers, teachers of color, and serving a predominantly Hispanic student population.

Case Study

A qualitative case study was used for this particular research. This approach, based on the principles of ethnographic research, was selected to capture the richness of the unique interactions and experience of the participants in the study (Erlandson et al., 1993; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Case studies are detailed investigations of

individuals, groups, institutions or other social units. The researcher conducting a case study attempts to analyze the variables relevant to the subject under study (Polit & Hungler, 1987). The principal difference between case studies and other research studies is that the focus of attention is the individual case and not the whole population of cases. Most studies search for what is common and pervasive. However, in the case study, the focus may not be on generalization but on understanding the particulars of that case in its complexity. A case study focuses on a bounded system, usually under natural conditions, so that the system can be understood in its own habitat (Stake, 1988).

This qualitative study used a number of strategies for data collection including, interviews, observations, and field notes (Merriam, 1988). The case study approach should be understood within the framework of qualitative research. It is defined by Merriam as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit” (Merriam, 1988, p. 27). Merriam (as cited in Nieto, 1996) further described the four essential characteristics of a qualitative case study as *particularistic* (focusing on one person or social unit); *descriptive* (because the result is a rich, thick description); *heuristic* (because it illuminates the reader’s understanding and brings about the discovery of new meanings); and *inductive* (because generalizations and hypotheses emerge from examination of the data).

This study was particularistic because it explored European American principals, European American teachers, and teachers of color, while searching for understanding regarding their exchanges and ways for administrators to address arising issues. While

searching for themes as data were analyzed, the case study was inductive in nature because generalizations emerged from it. This chapter includes the methodology data collection process, an explanation of the data sources and the subjects involved, and the methodology employed for data analysis.

Data Collection

This was a case study to examine the professional exchanges among racially-ethnically diverse groups of teachers and administrators. A case study approach (Merriam, 1998) was helpful to examine administrators' and teachers' perceptions of intergroup conflict and how these cultural differences affected their exchanges.

Following District Policy for permission for such a study, prior to beginning the data collection, permission from the School District's Evaluator was requested, who in turn, made arrangements for meetings with the schools' principals and academic deans. The initial meeting with the principals and academic deans provided an avenue for not only explaining the rationale for the study but also provided an opportunity for them to assist in selecting participants for the study based on the criteria for participants.

Purposeful Sample Selection of Teacher Participants

A sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole (Merriam-Webster, 2004). When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey. Purposeful sampling is a non-random method of sampling where the researcher selects "information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance

to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful sampling” (Patton, 1990, p. 169). Using one of 16 types of purposeful sampling that Patton (1990) described as criterion sampling, teachers were selected for the study. Teacher participants were selected from the two identified high schools with the assistance from the principals and academic deans during the initial meeting when the purpose of the study and the criteria for the participants were explained. The criteria of the teacher participation were based on their gender, ethnicity, and diversity of roles within the school, leadership positions within the staff, more than five years’ teaching experience, and their success as teachers with students of color. The teachers of color and the European American participants were selected based on their beliefs toward culturally diverse issues, willingness to share their ideas and feeling regarding such issues, and their demonstration of leadership among teachers in their schools.

Four European American teachers from School A were selected and three European American teachers were selected from School B. Three teachers of color were selected from School A and four teachers of color were selected from School B. In total, seven European American teachers and seven teachers of color were interviewed for the study. Of the teachers of color, all seven were Hispanic, and five were females and two were males. Of the European American teachers, all were female. This diversity allowed the researcher to receive a cross-section of perception and increased the likelihood of the relevance of what could be learned from them (Guba, 1993).

After establishing who the participants would be, as a way of making the initial contact, schools selected for this study were personally visited. Intensively structured

interviews for data collection that asked respondents a series of pre-established questions were used (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Interviews were used because at the most basic level, interviews are conversations (Kvale, 1996). Kvale (1996) defined qualitative research interviews as “attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples’ experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations” (p. 1). Interviews for research or evaluation purposes differ in some important ways from other familiar kinds of interviews or conversations. A great deal of qualitative material comes from talking with people, whether it be through formal interviews or casual conversation (Siedman, 2006). Unlike conversations in daily life, which are usually reciprocal exchanges, professional interviews involve an interviewer who is in charge of structuring and directing the questioning. While interviews for research or evaluation purposes may also promote understanding and change, the emphasis is on intellectual understanding rather than on producing personal change (Kvale, 1996).

Times and locations for interviewing the participants were established to accommodate the participants and also so that they would feel at ease in responding to the interviewer. Patton (1987) pointed out that any face-to-face interview is also an observation. The skilled interviewer is sensitive to nonverbal messages, effects of the setting on the interview, and nuances of the relationship. While these subjective factors are sometimes considered threats to validity, they can also be strengths because the skilled interviewer can use flexibility and insight to ensure an in-depth, detailed understanding of the participant’s experience. Patton (1987) noted that quotations:

Reveal the respondents' levels of emotion, the way in which they have organized the world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions. The task for the qualitative evaluator is to provide a framework within which people can respond in a way that represents accurately and thoroughly their point of view about the program. (p. 279)

The questions for the interviews were developed based on the properties of intergroup conflict, the linkage to professional relationships. Questions asked of the participants were directly related to the purpose of the study and they were developed having a good probability of yielding the kind of data desired. Participants in the study were asked a total of 18 questions during face-to-face interviews, and any doubt by the interviewer in any of the participants' responses, was followed with additional questions. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The transcriptions of the interviews were done by the researcher. Lapadat (2000) argued that the process of transcription promotes intense familiarity with the data, which leads to the methodological and theoretical reasoning that is essential to interpretation.

After the interview tapes were transcribed, the tapes were analyzed for recurring themes, similar themes, or codes. Coding served to summarize, synthesize, and sort many observations made of the data. Researchers use codes to pull together and categorize a series of otherwise discrete events, statements, and observations which they identify in the data (Charmaz, 1983). The interview questions allowed for a coding scheme used for data analysis (Cresswell, 1998).

This first contact with these participants was used to focus the inquiry at the single-case level of analysis (Merriam, 1988). Additional secondary interviews were conducted two weeks later, or when their busy schedule permitted time to visit and

interview, to further investigate these participants' perceptions of cultural differences or conflicts between themselves and administrators or teachers, depending on who was going to be interviewed.

Observational data were used for the purpose of descriptions of settings, activities, people, and the meanings of what is observed from the perspective of the participants. Observations can lead to deeper understandings than interviews alone, because it provides knowledge of the context in which events occur and may enable the researcher to see things that participants themselves are not aware of, or that they are unwilling to discuss (Patton, 1990). A total of 30 observations were also made at the schools of teachers teaching, planning, and communicating in the halls with each other and with their administrators, and the researcher attended 12 faculty meetings and four professional staff day presentations.

Data Sources

Informant interviews, participant observations, and archival analyses are the primary sources of data in qualitative research (Maanen, 1983). While performing a qualitative case study, observations and data collection settings may range from natural to artificial, with relatively unstructured to highly structured elicitation tasks and category systems, depending on the purpose of the study and the disciplinary traditions associated with it (Cohen & Manion, 1994). European American administrators and teachers, as well as teachers of color, who participated in structured interviews, were from two different urban schools from the same school district. The following section

describes the school district, the schools within the district, the students, and the participants of the study.

To select participants for this study, schools with diverse teaching staffs and administrators were identified. Teachers of color (Hispanic) and European American as well as the European American administrators were invited to participate in the study. Anonymity was established by using an ID number for each participant. To ensure that administrators and teachers selected had a good grasp of the inner workings of schools and all that they entail (in order to respond with as much information as possible to the interview questions), all participants selected had no less than five years' experience in their current interviewing roles. Counselors, special education teachers, and parents were excluded from the pool of interviewees because of the different type of subject matter that entails their daily exchanges with school administrators. Demographic information pertaining to the participants was recorded (Table 3.1). The researcher collectively analyzed the European American teachers' and the teachers' of color data collectively.

District Information

The study took place in an urban desegregated school district in the south. The school district was selected based not only on the criteria that it was comprised of a diverse group of teachers, students, and administrators, but that the administrators were European American and the staff consisted of both European American teachers and teachers of color.

Table 3.1. Data Source of Participants

ID Number	Ethnicity ¹	Gender	Years of Experience	Teaching Assignment ²	School
Y005	H	F	8	T	A
Y006	H	F	12	T	A
Y007	H	F	18	T	A
X007	H	F	17	T	B
X008	H	F	14	T	B
X009	H	M	13	T	B
X010	H	M	10	T	B
Y001	EA	F	29	T	A
Y002	EA	F	21	T	A
Y003	EA	F	12	T	A
Y004	EA	F	9	T	A
X004	EA	F	7	T	B
X005	EA	F	15	T	B
X006	EA	F	15	T	B
XP01	EA	M	16	P	A
YP01	EA	F	29	P	B

¹H=Hispanic; EA=European American.

²T=Teacher; P=Principal.

The case study was going to investigate the professional exchanges between teachers of color and European American administrators, and this district met the criteria necessary for the study. The majority of the district's student population was Hispanic (students of color). The total number of minorities in the district was 98% with 42% identified as at-risk students. Across the district, teachers of color comprised 29% of the professional teaching staff and European American comprised 71%. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the teachers within the district had five or fewer years of teaching experience. The district teacher turnover rate was at least 16% for the year (Texas Education Agency, 2006). A total of 14 teachers—7 European American teachers and 7 teachers of color—also from urban high schools were interviewed. Two principals participated in two focus groups to validate the teachers' responses. All participants selected had no less

than five years' experience in their current interviewing roles, which was part of the criteria for participating because any teacher with less years of experience would probably not have the necessary insight to provide full insight to the questions asked by the interviewer. The schools that were selected for the study, despite the high number of Hispanic students, exhibited high levels of participation in multicultural activities within the school district and throughout the city during the year.

Students and the Schools

In Table 3.2, information regarding the student populations of both schools in the study is found.

Table 3.2. Data Source of Students

Data Descriptors	School A	School B
Total School Population	1,557	1,343
African American	13 (.8%)	31 (2.3%)
Hispanic	1,525 (97.9%)	1,305 (97.2%)
White	16 (1%)	7 (.5%)
Native American	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	3 (.2%)	0 (0%)
Economically Disadvantaged	1,482 (95.2%)	1,223 (91.1%)
Limited English Proficiency	119 (7.6%)	123 (9.2%)
Students with Disciplinary Placements	59 (3.6%)	61 (3.9%)
At-Risk	1,140 (73.2%)	1,025 (76.3%)
Number of Students/Teachers	16	15.9
Graduation Rate	69.5%	62.1%
Attendance Rate	92.6%	92.2%

Note. 2007-2008 Academic Excellence Indicator Report (Texas Education Agency, 2008).

Profile of Schools

School A. School A was built in 1963. The school was located in an upper middle-class neighborhood and is located within close proximity of two large universities. School A's location was considered to be a better class area of the school district since most people living there were employed at one time as civil service workers at the nearby military Air Force base up until the based closed. The school, when compared to other schools, has always had a large number of students involved in extracurricular activities (band, R.O.T.C., and other clubs). When the school opened its doors in 1963, the population of the school consisted of a very diverse student population; but over the years, and especially with the Air Force base closure, the school is now predominantly Hispanic. The community surrounding the school consisted of residential and commercial businesses, retail stores, and fast food restaurants. School A was also located in a predominantly Hispanic community with many senior citizen homeowners. School A was a predominantly Hispanic school with low state assessment scores. The school's rating at the time of the study was acceptable according to the State Education Agency.

School B. Of all the school district's high schools, School B is not only the oldest, but it is also the one that has undergone the most remodeling within the past five years. This school is also within close proximity to two universities. School B is a Fine Arts high school that services students from the other two major high schools. Even though the school is targeting students with fine arts courses, all content area courses are offered at the campus to meet the scheduling demands imposed by collaborating with the

other two high schools' bell schedules and transportation needs. The school consists of the same student demographics as School A, predominantly Hispanic, with an acceptable rating from the State Education Agency. The school is located in an older part of the school district and has a high-aging population and middle-class to lower income families of Hispanic descent. There are no major businesses with the proximity of the school as with School A. Because School B is a fine arts high school that also offers all content areas, a traditional high school would offer, through their arts curriculum (music, dance, drawing, television, and drama), cultural events are more prevalent and are integrated into the existing school's curriculum.

School Principals

The following is a brief description of the two European American high school principals' leadership. How they managed issues of diversity in the workplace is addressed in this section. Of the two European American principals interviewed, one was female and the other male. For this study, the two European American principals have had similar and different experiences in their professional and personal backgrounds.

Principal A. Principal A was completing his fifth year in the school district as principal of the high school. His background consisted of 12 years as a high school Language Arts teacher in another school district in the city. Principal A came into the school district at a time when the high school was changing principals due to political implications that had surrounded the previous principal of the school. Principal A's appointment to the high school came after many years of not having a European

American principal at this particular school but was readily accepted by the community, school staff, teachers, and students. Principal A was a very visible principal who always made it a point to be in teachers' classrooms observing instruction and making sure that students were not roaming the halls but getting to class on time. Principal A felt that in order for students to be successful, teachers needed to be held accountable. This was done by not only having administrators visit teachers while instructing, but having other teachers observe teachers teaching during conference periods and reporting back to him and the academic dean. Prior to doing observations, all campus teachers were trained in what to look for so that everyone knew what was expected.

Principal B. As a past science teacher in the same school district and with over 23 years' experience, Principal B also came to the high school with two years' experience as an assistant principal and two years as an academic dean. With this experience, Principal B was selected as the first European American Principal of this high school. Principal B was also very visible at her campus just as was principal A; but unlike Principal A, who was very involved in the actual undertaking of many tasks, Principal B's leadership style included a greater extent of delegating tasks and later requesting reports to be submitted to her. Principal B was genuinely concerned for the academic success of students but felt that if students were involved in extracurricular activities, they would have an incentive for attending school and for succeeding in their core classes.

Teachers of Color

Table 3.3 consists of the demographics of the schools in the study. Seven teachers of color were interviewed for the study. Only seven were interviewed because despite the fact that several attempts were made seeking participants, some did not meet the criterion of having more than five years' teaching experience or they decided not to participate in the study due to other commitments. All were Hispanic, and five were females and two were males. Their teaching experiences ranged from 5 years to 28 years. Their average years at the same campus (either School A or School B) was nine. In getting to know the teachers, the Hispanic teachers expressed a variety of experiences and backgrounds. With the exception of one, all were from the same city.

The researcher found this to be important because even though teachers made use of the term Hispanic to identify themselves, the term Hispanic may have created an emergent ethnic identity among persons who might otherwise have thought of themselves as Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban, and the distinction was needed in the event that it would become integral to the study. One teacher was from the state capital. All had graduated seeking degrees that would provide them with opportunities outside of teaching, but somehow they found that teaching was what they had ultimately decided to do. All seven were educated outside of the school district and were born into lifestyles of middle-class status. The Hispanic teachers' experiences varied from the first to graduate from college in their family to having command of the Spanish language and being able to communicate it fluently. Five spoke only English and two communicated fluently in Spanish.

Table 3.3. Data Source of Schools' Staff

Staff Demographics	School A	School B
Total Staff	133.4	119.0
Professional Staff	124.5	110.9
Teachers	97.3	84.4
Professional Support	31.7	20.7
Campus Administrators	5.5	5.7
Educational Aides	8.9	8.1
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex:		
African American	6.0	4.0
Hispanic	57.9	51.9
White	31.4	26.5
Native American	1.0	1.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.0	1.0
Males	48.9	46.3
Females	48.4	38.1
Teachers by Years of Experience:		
Beginning Teachers	4.8	8.1
1-5 Years' Experience	33.6	28.2
6-10 Years' Experience	16.7	9.7
11-20 Years' Experience	22.2	19.0
Over 20 Years' Experience	19.9	19.4
Average Years' Experience of Teachers	11.7	12.1
Average Years' Experience of Teachers with District	9.4	8.6

Note. 2007-2008 Academic Excellence Indicator Report (Texas Education Agency, 2008).

European American Teachers

As a way of balancing the number of participants with the teachers of color who decided to participate in the study, seven European American teachers who met the study's criteria of having five or more years of teaching experience were interviewed. Actually, their teaching experience ranged from 5-26 years of teaching experience. The average teaching experience of the European American teachers was eight years. All of the teachers grew up in middle-class families and five of the seven were, in fact, from the same city. Two of the seven teachers grew up in small towns in close proximity to

the city. Six of the seven teachers had earned teaching certifications from colleges and universities, while one teacher was alternatively certified. All were educated outside of their school district and had other siblings who had graduated from colleges and universities prior to them earning their degrees. When asked if any of them had aspired to work in a field other than teaching, all responded that they had attended college with the intent of becoming educators. This was different from the Hispanic teachers, as noted earlier. All of the European American teachers had worked with Hispanic students from low- to middle-level socioeconomic status in other districts prior to working at School A or School B. None had command of the Spanish language, but all European American teachers admitted that they could understand a few words in Spanish.

Data Analysis

A qualitative thematic strategy of data analysis was employed to categorize and make judgments about the interpretation of the data. This methodological process became the unit of coding; the participants' interviews became the unit of analysis and provided a theoretical justification, given the phenomenon of interest (Boyatzis, 1998). This analytical procedure allowed important themes and categories to emerge inductively from the data across schools and districts (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Findings from the interviews were clustered by key themes across schools and single cases (Bell, 2002).

Trustworthiness and Reliability

As a way of ensuring that credibility and reliability in the gathering of information was established, procedures used for gathering data, methods used during interview sessions with participants, and methods for the analysis of data were those used that were well established and similar to those used by others in successful research in comparable studies. To ensure a level of trustworthiness in the study, the researcher developed a familiarity with the culture of the schools in the study and with the everyday environment of the schools, thus forming a good working relationship between the researcher and the participants. Also, participants were selected at random with the only criterion being that they met the requirements established for participating (must have no less than five years' teaching experience). The randomness of the group allowed for multiple voices to participate with a greater amount of information being contributed to the study from various sources, rather than just having those who wanted to be heard being heard. In this case study, the random sampling allowed for a greater representative sample of a larger group. To ensure credibility, member checks were routine. Participants were provided transcripts of the recorded conversations to not only ensure accuracy of the data collected but to also do "on-the-spot" checks to ensure that what was said before in conversation still held to be true.

The researcher used the prior-research-driven approach to identify themes and to develop a coding process (Boyatzis, 1998). In establishing the reliability for this study, the data from the interviews that were conducted with each participant were analyzed using what Conrad (1982) called a constant comparative method. The term "reliability"

is used in positivist discourse to indicate that observations can be made in similar fashion in different observation instances (Slater, 1998). Among the ways that Merriam (1998) identified for analyzing data were the constant comparative method. The basic strategy for this method, according to Merriam (1988), “is to do just what the name implies—constantly compare” (p. 159). Bits of data are compared across interviews, documents, or observations, and the comparisons that emerge are used to develop categories that are compared with each other. Merriam continued to mention that in using a constant comparative method of analysis of data, as the interviews are conducted, it is important to look for trends and patterns in the responses from the participants.

This process of constant comparative method created a match between the interview data and the existing theory and allowed the interplay between the data from this study with intergroup theory (Alderfer, 1982). Sensitivity to contamination of the data was important; therefore, the researcher (a) developed an explicit code and set up a consistency of judgment to establish reliability, (b) used multiple diverse perspectives to examine these teachers’ comments, and (c) used sensitivity to the themes when interpreting the data (Boyatzis, 1998). The researcher was able to generate a data analysis code, of various themes, that was applied to these participants’ interview data (Boyatzis, 1998).

In the social sciences, triangulation is often used to indicate that more than two methods are used in a study with a view to double (or triple) checking results. This is also called “cross examination” (Cheng, 2005). The idea is that one can be more

confident with a result if different methods lead to the same result. If an investigator uses only one method, the temptation is strong to believe in the findings. If an investigator uses two methods, the results may well clash. By using three methods to get at the answer to one question, the hope is that two of the three will produce similar answers, or if three clashing answers are produced, the investigator knows that the question needs to be reframed, methods reconsidered, or both.

Triangulation, member checking, and thick descriptions were established by the researcher. This allowed the researcher to conduct follow-up interviews to assist with any clarification. Triangulation assisted the researcher in examining the data repeatedly to search for overlooked or missed information from the interviews. Triangulated data resources provided justification for themes.

Limitations

The purpose of this case study was not to generalize all teachers and administrators within the United States. Case studies can help us look at particular situations so that solutions for more general situations can be hypothesized and developed. According to Erickson (1986), practitioners can learn from a case study “even if the circumstances of the case do not match those of their own situation” (p. 144). Again, although not meant to generalize to all cases, the particular situations presented and analyzed can help illustrate some general problems in education. The study was done as an investigation as a way of capturing the richness of the unique interactions and experiences of the participants in the study. The purpose of the study was to examine: (a) the professional exchanges between European American principals

and teachers of color (African American or Hispanic teachers) or vice versa in urban schools, (b) how teachers of color respond to these interactions, and (c) the necessary leadership skills needed by European American principals to establish an inclusive school organization. Given the restricted focus of the study, possible limitations were identified.

One of the limitations to consider was due in part because the participants were from a variety of personal and educational experiences, backgrounds, and gender differences. Because of these differences, their cultural identities may or may not impact their understanding of the European American leaders. Another limitation included the scope of the research. Because the scope of the research was limited to only two schools, the findings are, therefore, not representative of all schools in general. As mentioned before, this was a case study, therefore, a limitation to consider is that properties of intergroup conflict used may not reflect in majority organizations since this study used the properties in minority organizations. Three additional limitations of the study are: (a) the researcher's personal and professional experiences and background knowledge revealed divergent constructions of reality about the context of the study; (b) the challenge of cross-cultural interpretations was used to identify different voices, perceptions, and experiences in majority and minority groups; and (c) the fact that an increased number of non-certified teachers of color are hired in urban school districts.

Summary

A qualitative case study was used as the framework for this study discussing intergroup differences and the professional exchanges that occur between teachers of

color, European American teachers, and European American administrators.

Participating teachers and administrators in the study were selected based on set criteria.

Part of the data collection included face-to-face interviews with participants, attending

staff meetings, and doing follow-up interviews. Constant comparative methods were

used in analysis of the transcribed data with full maintenance of anonymity of the

participants through the use of a coding method, as themes and sub-themes were created.

To ensure that information was not overlooked, to establish validity and trustworthiness,

and for justification of the themes, triangulation of the data was done. Chapter IV

discusses the results of this study. These results reflect the data collected through

individual and focus group interviews and transcriptions and written minutes from

interviews, meetings, and observations.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction to Findings

The intent of this qualitative study was to examine: (a) the professional exchanges between European American principals, teachers of color (Hispanic teachers), and European American teachers or vice versa in urban schools; (b) how teachers of color respond to these interactions; and (c) the necessary leadership skills needed by European American principals to establish an inclusive school organization. The chapter begins with a description of the properties of intergroup conflict, followed by an overview of the responses by teachers of color to the properties of intergroup conflict, and then continues with European American teachers' responses to the properties of intergroup conflict. Finally, the chapter concludes with the responses toward the properties of intergroup conflict from the European American principals and with a summary of the findings as they answer the two guiding questions in the study:

1. How do teachers of color, European American teachers, and European American administrators perceive their day-to-day professional exchanges?
2. What must principals in urban schools do to establish an inclusive school culture when there are diverse groups of teachers?

The findings in this study demonstrated, in some areas of intergroup conflict, opposing views between the teachers of color and European American teachers within the interactions between minority and majority groups. Once again, the aspects of intergroup conflict:

Intergroup conflict is, by definition, a collective phenomenon, and requires a suitable collective “model of [humanity].” The psychological factors associated with intergroup hostility are best sought in collective social cognition and motivation. It is an important task...to examine the relationship between individual drives and cognition and those associated with the groups to which they belong. (Condor & Brown, 1988, p. 19)

The opposing views were sources of tension that created problems for the teachers of color in their schools. These problems led to a dysfunction among teacher collaboration, lack of synergy among teachers and administrators, and lack of trust that led to impacting student learning in a negative manner. In Bell’s (2002) study of intergroup differences between teachers of color and majority teachers, conflicts occurred due to differences in instructional practices, discipline, and multicultural emphasis. Thus, these intergroup differences prevented the creation of a cohesive learning and working community of teachers.

In Bell’s (2002) study as in this one, even the most well-meaning adults perpetuated inequities without any awareness that they were doing so. Effective leadership adds value to the impact of classroom and teacher practices and ensures that lasting change flourishes. Awareness of the school and teacher practices that impact student achievement is critical; but without effective leadership, there is less of a possibility that schools and districts will address these variables in a coherent and meaningful way.

Because leadership has such a significant impact on student achievement, state and district policymakers are shifting leader preparation programs toward a dual focus on leadership skills and management training. Principals need core knowledge, as well as management skills, to inform and lead change. A large number of educators enter the

field with a passion to teach and desire to work with children—not to deal with conflict and controversial issues (Dass & Parker, 1996). Administrators need to learn how to approach conversations skillfully, without being defensive, and without letting the other person in the discussion take the subject personally. The conversations need to be productive rather than adversarial. It was noted by one administrator that his passion was to teach students and that dealing with controversial issues was not his forte.

I was a classroom teacher for over 11 years before becoming an administrator. I loved teaching, and it was my passion to inform students about the content that I taught. However, I believed that by becoming an administrator, I would be able to reach more students and so I became one. Little did I know all of the intricacies involved in this role. There is much more to it and much of it is not as enjoyable as teaching is to me.

After using the comparative data analysis method, the data analysis determined that the properties of intergroup conflict identified by teachers of color were: (a) incompatible goals, (b) group boundaries, (c) cultural differences, and (d) competition for resources. The properties of intergroup conflict for teachers' of color perceptions were dominated by their eagerness to become a translator of their culture.

Of the nine properties of intergroup conflict, Table 4.1 describes the six properties of intergroup conflict that were identified in the study's finding by the researcher from the responses given by the European American administrators, European American teachers, and the teachers of color.

Table 4.1. Overview of Findings

	Properties of Intergroup Conflict	Description	Found in Responses by European American Administrators	Found in Responses by European American Teachers	Found in Responses by Teachers of Color
1.	Incompatible goals	Differences among majority and non-majority workers in compatible goals that are influenced by norms, goal priorities and work styles, among and between these groups (Cox, 1994).	X	X	X
2.	Cultural differences	Cultural differences between group members of different groups occur due to misunderstanding and misperceptions (Cox, 1994).	X		X
3.	Power differences	Majority groups hold advantages over minority groups in the power structure of the organization. Intergroup hostility between groups results in a disagreement over the redistribution of power. Minority group density in organizations poses a threat to the existing power structure and provides an opportunity for those who are powerless. These types of resources that can be obtained and used differ among group boundaries between majority and the non-majority co-workers (Cox, 1994).	X	X	
4.	Group boundaries	Both physical and psychological group boundaries determine group membership. Transactions among groups are regulated by variations in the permeability of the boundaries (Alderfer, 1982).		X	X
5.	Competition for resources	Competition for resources includes allocation of resources that are influenced by embedded organizational issues such as acknowledgement of group identities in regulating jobs, training priorities, and expansion of resources (Cox, 1994).			X
6.	Leadership behaviors	The group leader and other group representatives reflect boundaries of groups and how they will interact. Members of a similar group reflect power differences, affective patterns, and cognitive formations of their group in relation to the other group. The role of the leader in a network of intergroup relations determines the intensification of intergroup conflict (Alderfer, 1977, 1982).	X		

As part of the analysis of the findings of the study, the findings were coded and analyzed using the nine properties of intergroup conflict (Alderfer, 1982; Cox, 1994) of which only a total of six of the properties were found to be most evident to varying degrees among the European American principals, European American teachers, and teachers of color. The responses of teachers of color, European American teachers and principals, observations done at the schools, and notes were coded and separated according to their correlation to the properties of intergroup conflict. The findings are presented initially with an overview of findings, then specifics are divided into sections in the following manner: (a) the responses from the teachers of color to the properties of intergroup conflict are mentioned first, (b) European American teachers' responses to the properties of intergroup conflict follow, and finally, (c) quotes and analyses of European American principals' responses to the properties of intergroup conflict in their daily exchanges between teachers of color and European American teachers are listed.

Seven European American teachers and seven teachers of color were interviewed for the study following the selection criteria mentioned in Chapter III. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 include quick overviews of the properties of intergroup conflict and subthemes found based on each teacher's responses to questions. It should be noted that both groups of teachers had somewhat similar findings in six of the nine Properties of Intergroup Conflict to varying degrees.

Teachers of Color Responses

Schools are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality. The diversity brings substantial potential benefits, such as better decision making, and greater creativity and innovation. But increased cultural differences bring potential costs in higher turnover, interpersonal conflict, and communication breakdowns. Due to the diversity among teachers and administrators in the study, when responses were coded and analyzed, an indication of properties of intergroup conflict became evident. In the study at the two schools, a total of seven teachers of color were interviewed, of which five were female and two were male. Their years of teaching experience ranged from 8-18 years. The properties of intergroup conflict identified by teachers of color were: (a) incompatible goals, (b) group boundaries and cultural differences, and (c) competition for resources (Figure 4.1). The participants' responses to questions during the interviews were then classified into central substantive themes.

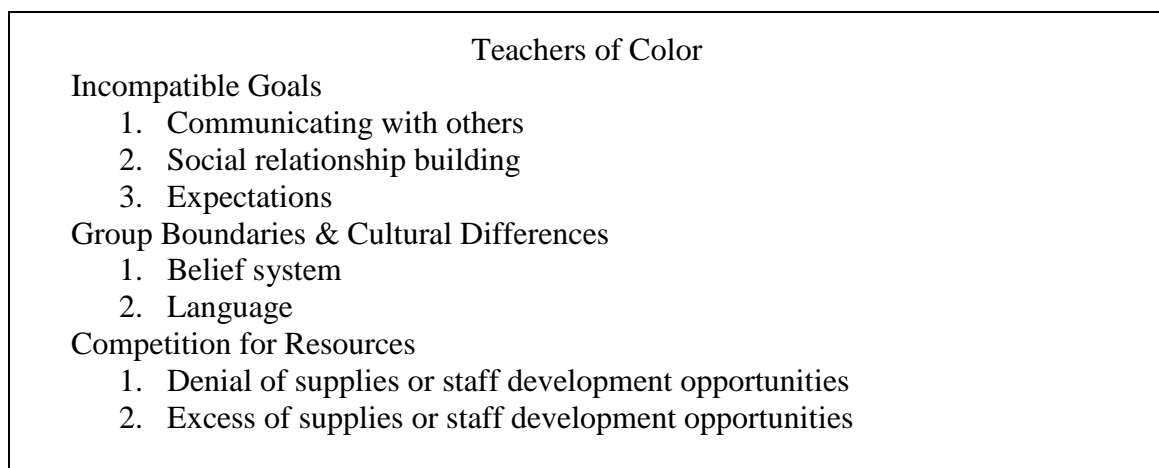


Figure 4.1. Properties of intergroup conflict and subthemes based on responses of teachers of color.

Incompatible Goals

There were differences between the goals of teachers of color, the goals of European American teachers, and those of the European American administrators. Incompatible Goals was one of properties of intergroup conflict identified in responses given by the teachers of color. In reviewing the property of incompatible goals, it is important to recall that perceived goal incompatibility appears in a couple of forms. First, the parties in conflict may want the *same* thing – for example, a promotion, attention from administrators, or similar successes for their students. They struggle and jockey for position in order to attain the desired goal. They perceive the situation as one in which there “isn’t enough to go around.” Thus, they see their goal as “incompatible” with the other person’s *because* they both want the same thing.

Second, sometimes the goals are *different* (Wilmot & Hocker, 1998). In an organization, one person may want to see seniority rewarded, whereas another may want to see work production rewarded. Parties in the organization struggle over which goal should be rewarded. Of course, many times the content goals seem to be different; but beneath them is a relational struggle over who gets to decide. Regardless of whether the participants see the goals as similar or different, perceived incompatible goals are central to all conflict struggles. In the case of the teachers of color, the intergroup conflict of incompatible goals was perceived by them as a conflict in communication with others, in social relationship building with other teachers in the building, and in the expectations that different groups of teachers had for students.

Communicating with others. Because minorities are more likely to be underrepresented in organizations, pivotal and peripheral norms are established and enforced by the dominant culture (Cox & Finley-Nickelson, 1991). All teachers of color interviewed felt that they needed to maintain their cultural identity and maintain high expectations for themselves as teachers and for their students. When teaching students, and as a method of assisting their students in succeeding, teachers of color felt it was necessary to take the district curriculum and relate it to the experiences that they knew would enhance learning for their students based on the cultural similarities and similar life experiences that they shared with their students of color.

Communicating with students in a manner that they could relate to the content for better understanding was easy for teachers of color to do because they felt they could relate better to students; but when they tried to share their ideas of relevancy to European American teachers, the communication was generally superficial and the strategies were not seen to be implemented fully in their classrooms. The European American teachers felt that students should simply learn what was taught to them—period. They felt that the attention that the teachers of color paid to students was not something that they, the European American teachers, were asked to or should do as part of their teaching duties. While attempting to make the curriculum relevant to students, one teacher of color shared her frustration in the following quotation:

I really want my students to say when they graduate, that they learned computer animation in a way that it is actually going to mean something to them. Much of what is in the curriculum goes beyond the boundaries of the experiences that our students have had. By communicating with my students and forming a relationship in which they feel comfortable talking to me about, I then bring our topics of conversation into the instruction and include as much

relevancy as possible in the explanations. It's amazing when you see the "light" come on and students say, "so that's what you meant!"

Despite the fact that it is difficult to make all content topics relevant to students, the majority of the teachers of color make every effort to help their students understand concepts through cultural relevancy. As a way of ensuring that effective communication occurs between teachers and students, it was observed that teachers of color bring items from home, use more videos and pictures, use Spanish to describe items and elaborate on ideas presented; share similar experiences they had when growing up, and use more repetition of events already taught, than did most of the European American teachers. In his comment, one teacher of color explains how he helps students understand Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*:

In my English class, I introduce students to Shakespeare. Because most high school students are at the appropriate age of falling in love, *Romeo and Juliet* happens to be one of the stories to which they can relate. Because the reading is quite intense to most students in America, I spend time interpreting Shakespeare's writing for my students using the footnotes in the text, but I also make every attempt at making every scene in the story that we discuss, relevant to today's students. Apart from simply reading Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, we also see the musical *Westside Story* one day after school and stop the video periodically to make connections and comparisons and contrasts to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. I somehow doubt that many teachers do this for our students and unfortunately many of our students don't see why or how *Romeo and Juliet* is a story for even today's world.

Communication between students and teachers was not the only concern that teachers of color had. Communication with other teachers, too, was seen as incompatible by the teachers of color as well. As a way of maintaining their racial identity in the school, teachers of color felt a need to bond with other teachers of color as together they collaborated lessons and planned activities for their students. Teachers of color felt a

need to feel comfortable communicating with other teachers without being overly conscious of what was said and how it was said. As an example, one valuable observation made by the researcher was with regards to an incident in a school-sponsored club. Clubs within the schools, for the most part, were generally sponsored by either all teachers of color or by European American teachers, but seldom by a combination of both. As one teacher of color mentioned:

As senior class sponsor, other teachers that work with me as sponsors get along great. We tend to want what is best for our kids and they require quite a bit of money. As a way of raising money, we host food sales during lunch and after school. Since we all have a specialty dish that either we cook or our moms cook, most students and faculty look forward to our Mexican meals. Sometimes when a certain dish doesn't turn out as expected, we can all laugh and joke about each other's cooking without offending anyone.

The culturally common thread exhibited by the teachers' of color club sponsors allowed them to joke about each other's cooking without finding any comments offensive; and because of their cultural similarity and understanding of one another, they were able to be successful. It is doubtful whether this could actually occur if the sponsors were made up of teachers from different backgrounds without teachers having to be more cognizant of what was said. This was a type of camaraderie that was evident among the sponsors that perhaps would not be compatible with other groups.

Social relationship building. The teachers of color reported the need for a strong reference-group orientation that would enable them to retain their cultural identity within the school. By working together during planning and collaborating in extracurricular activities, teachers of color felt a sense of belonging that assisted them to excel each day. Because teachers of color and European teachers did not plan together, a

similar situation resulted as in Bell's (2002) study. It was observed that even when teachers teaching similar content had comparable conference periods, not all teachers at the schools in the study met with others to plan common lessons, share ideas, or to reflect on student learning. Many times, teachers of similar cultural backgrounds met to plan, despite teaching different content areas. Demographic heterogeneity of teacher groups was leading to cross-cultural differences and negative relationships among demographically diverse groups of teachers that were preventing the formation of a professional community (Bell, 2002).

A teacher of color mentioned:

Sometimes on the bulletin boards in other hallways, student products are posted by other teachers that I'd like to also have my students do. I know that my students would enjoy doing those same activities, but unless we have the time to share with each other, each teacher tends to only do their own thing at times.

Teachers of color felt a lack of social relationship building between themselves and European American teachers. Teachers of color saw this lack of relationship building as something that was perhaps not only distancing teachers from other teachers, but was not allowing teachers to share ideas with one another so that all students were doing activities that were appearing to be beneficial to students in other classrooms. The property of intergroup conflict of incompatible goals in the area of communication and social relationship building among teachers was seen by teachers of color as having somewhat of an impact in student learning and in equity of opportunities rendered to students they taught.

Expectations. Despite the fact that both School “A” and School “B” consisted of a high level of students of color, the teachers of color, through their high levels of expectations and dedication to the community, felt a bond with the community. The high expectations for self that the teachers of color exhibited was also transferred toward the students. After listening to their teachers of color express enthusiasm for learning and informing them of what they could expect in college and beyond, the value of an education exhibited by the teachers was also exemplified in the students. It was evident that the teachers were making an impact on their students regarding achieving their own personal goals.

In classroom observations made by the researcher, teachers constantly made reference to how important an education was in today’s world. The teachers of color related to students and to the community because the demographics of the school was indicative of a population and of a socioeconomic community similar to one the teachers of color had experienced while they were growing up. The teachers of color knew the music, the food, the environment, and some knew what it was like to be raised in single-parent homes just as their students were experiencing. The teachers of color knew what it was like to be the first in the family to graduate from high school and from a college or university. As one teacher of color mentioned when asked in an interview question to describe herself:

I am first generation American. My parents came from Mexico, and I am the middle child. My older brother, my younger sister, and I all have college degrees and are the only ones in my family who have finished college. My parents never accepted excuses and I don’t accept them from my students when they don’t complete assignments or projects. My students need to learn that regardless of background or economics, they should continue to work hard and

never use excuses. When I speak to my students about what they are going to do after graduation, I always tell them that it is important to plan well, to seek good advice from their counselors, and to aspire to be better than they could possibly be. It's not easy—at least for me it wasn't—but it can be attained and it hurts me to see many students give up. I hope that if students can see that I have succeeded, that they can, too.

The intergroup conflict of incompatible goals and differences in expectations for students from both the teachers of color and from the European American teachers, including goal setting by teachers, was evident quite explicitly in the quote above and in the one mentioned below. Of the teachers interviewed, teachers of color perceived education as very important and highly achievable by all students they taught. On the other hand, a different view and expectations for students was evident by European American teachers interviewed.

A teacher of color mentioned:

I sometimes get upset when I listen to some of the teachers [European American teachers] speak badly about our students. I think that if they had a choice to select students to teach, I doubt they'd want to teach most of the ones they currently have in their classrooms. Their comments are very stereotypical of what people think of us Mexican Americans. I believe that teachers make decisions based upon how people behave without having any real knowledge of ethnic behaviors beyond those that they have experienced in their own backgrounds.

One [European American] teacher was literally amazed when she found out that most of our students live in homes without central heating and that they have window unit air conditioners instead. She didn't know they "still" existed. Because of some of our students' low socioeconomic status, she couldn't understand, or should I say, perhaps believe, that her students could be academically successful and pursue a college degree. I don't feel many [European American] teachers are pushing our students to aiming for goals that perhaps other students in other parts of the city are aspiring to achieve.

In talking to her students and raising the standard by expecting students to do well and complete assignments, this particular teacher was demonstrating a transcendence of expectations for herself to her students. The teacher's visible frustration at students not succeeding was evidence of a conflict of incompatible goals that she had with those that some European American teachers or the administrators at the school have for the same students.

Indicative of the perception by one teacher of incompatible goals for students, a teacher of color stated:

Well, we have European American teachers and some of them don't believe too much in our students. When I speak to my students and after some time I see that they're not being successful in other classrooms, I invite them to come and see me for help with other content areas. I know I can help them. I get frustrated when they don't show up for I feel as if I have sand running through my fingers and I can't seem to get a grasp of it long enough to hold it. This is how I feel about my students at times because I know they can be successful. I know that not all European American teachers are like me. Now, I'm talking about some of them, not all of them. Perhaps it would be best if the European American teachers who don't belong in our school would be better off in some other school where they have more European American students.

In a study by Delpit (1995), in African American communities, teachers are expected to show that they care about their students by controlling the class, exhibiting personal power, establishing meaningful interpersonal relationships, displaying emotion to garner student respect, demonstrating the belief that all students can learn, establishing a standard of achievement and "pushing" students to achieve the standard (high expectations), and holding the attention of the students by incorporating African American interactional styles in their teaching. Teachers who do not exhibit these behaviors may be viewed by community members as ineffective, boring, or uncaring.

Madsen and Mabokela (2005b) make similar statements, such as when teachers of color are recruited to majority schools, there is an expectation for them to use traditional instructional and discipline practices. By not adhering to such expectations set upon teachers of color by administrators, incompatible goals, primarily in the area of expectations, may lead to conflict among teachers and administrators. The same could be said of teachers in this study. Even though many teachers at the schools in the study adhered to effective instructional practices, which were providing students with the necessary instruction to learn the content being taught, when teachers of color or European American teachers did not incorporate the strategies for success mentioned in Delpit's study, the assumption by either group of teachers on each other was that the teacher did not care about his or her students.

Group Boundaries and Cultural Differences

A property of intergroup conflict that emerged during the analysis was the issue of group boundaries. Group boundaries are manifested where the majority group makes decisions on what is acceptable and establishes the norms and expectations that are due to cultural differences. In any workplaces where cultural differences exist, ignorance toward these differences can lead to conflict (Ferdman, 1995). In reviewing the intergroup property of group boundaries, it is important to understand that the boundaries around a group determine membership within that group and can be physical or psychological. In the case of this study, membership in a group was both physical and psychological for groups formed in the schools consisted of teachers of common ethnicities and sometimes, not always, common teaching positions. We create

boundaries, whether we are aware of them or not, whenever we begin a new group or meet with an already existing one. The most elementary boundaries relate to time, space, task, and role. How we understand these boundaries may inform us about more complicated ones, such as how we deal with contact among members, or between members and us, outside of the group.

Permeability is a concept that refers to how a group regulates its transactions with other groups, and groups can be over bounded or under bounded. When a system is optimally-bounded, there is a healthy sense of group membership and optimal interactions exist with outside systems. Over-bounded systems are in danger of becoming too distinct and can lead to phenomena, such as groupthink and elitism; these systems are usually managed in a strict hierarchical manner where the chain of command is clearly defined. This was the case of the administrators in the school and to some extent some of the sub-groups that existed between teachers of color and European American teachers. Members of an over-bounded system usually display positive effect distribution, whereby group members are tight-knit and roles are explicitly defined.

First-year teachers, which by the way were not part of this case study, would perhaps tend to belong to an under-bounded system. Under-bounded systems, conversely to over-bounded systems, are in danger of becoming absorbed by its environment; the looseness of the system prevents cohesion between its members and the sense of belongingness is minimal; these systems often suffer from ambiguous and conflicting role definitions and lack of clarity (Alderfer, 1980).

In the case of teachers in the schools in this study, to avoid unnecessary stereotypes between teachers of color and European American teachers, the teachers of color felt that they had to defend their status (educational accomplishments, years teaching, experience, classroom successes, etc.) to received recognition from other groups. All teachers at the schools worked hard, but the group boundaries that were established, either by content areas, grade levels, or level of instruction, were created as a distinction between teachers of color and European American teachers.

One teacher of color commented:

When teachers we meet with other groups to plan and to discuss (which is not often), and it comes time to elicit credit for our performance, we feel as if we have to work harder at being recognized for our accomplishments.

A cultural difference is evident in this teacher's quote. Cultural differences result in group conflict because the majority of cultural norms prevail with the organization (Ferdman, 1995).

Belief system. Longstreet (1978) stated:

Learning to be a student has many of the characteristics of learning to be a member of an ethnic group. A whole way of living is assimilated both from one's family life and from one's school life. The family way may not be at all like the scholastic way—or there may be many points of similarity and compatibility. In any case, youngsters are unaware of what is happening to them. By the age of 10 or 11 American students have at least two ethnicities: that of their heritage and that of their school.

Longstreet's quote not only applies to students but to the current teachers teaching in a school where they are the minority and as a group share a common belief system. Because of this, the formation of group boundaries among teachers of color and group boundaries among European American teachers exists. The teachers of color

reported that their individuality was often overshadowed by their colleagues' stereotypical beliefs about teachers of color, and thus, this was the cause of boundaries.

As one non-European American teacher comments:

There are some teachers that do need more help than others but at the same time, I think that there are some teachers where more is expected of them. If you're a hard worker and you do well, more work is given to you to do and instead of expecting others to improve they are given less work to do. By work I mean that if you can handle students well then you tend to get the roughest group of kids to supervise during assessments or during times when the school schedule is modified. I feel that they need to teach all teachers how to handle students so that everyone shares in the responsibility.

Language. The analysis of findings also suggested not only group boundaries and cultural differences that exist between teachers and some of the European American teachers, but also, once again, a lack of culturally relevant teaching on the part of the European American teachers. The relevancy in teaching was not necessarily in the area of making concepts to be learned relevant to students, but in the notion of the understanding of the language of teacher-to-student and vice versa. Teachers who might be regarded as culturally relevant educators demonstrate broad pedagogical understandings in the area of conceptions of themselves and others. In their conceptions of themselves and others, culturally relevant teachers believe that all students are capable of academic success; see their pedagogy as art—unpredictable and always in the process of becoming; see themselves members of the community; see teaching as a way of giving back to the community; and believe in the Freirean notion of “teaching as mining” or “pulling knowledge out, not putting it in” (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, pp. 22-23).

Another teacher of color commented:

As a way of retaining my ethnic identity, I speak Spanish fluently and watch Spanish television. Some of the teachers in the teacher's lounge were in shock when they heard me speak Spanish for the first time. They had no idea that I did, but they never expected that I'd be a teacher who would speak fluent Spanish.

From the perspective of the racial identity development theory, each individual demonstrates differing degrees, styles, or stages of identification with his or her particular racial group. Helms (1990) defined racial identity as "a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group" (p. 3). The teacher above also feels that she, unlike with the European American teachers, can better identify with her colleagues, thus forming group boundaries among themselves and leading them to separate from the European American teachers. The cultural difference that she feels exists because of her abilities and leads to the formation of this group boundary. At the same time, conflicting group boundaries could emerge from both groups if teachers who do not understand the language feel threatened by their inability to understand what a teacher is saying if he or she speaks in a language other than his or her common one. As mentioned in the review of literature, these misperceptions about cultural differences may disrupt the overall functioning of the school organization and may affect organizational effectiveness (Belak, 1998).

Competition for Resources

Another component of intergroup conflict that was suggested as a finding of the analysis of this case study of the two schools was competition for resources. Teachers of color felt that the allocation of resources was powered by organizational issues based primarily on group identities. Competition for resources includes allocation of resources

that are influenced by embedded organizational issues, such as acknowledgement of group identities in regulating jobs, training priorities, and expansion of resources (Cox, 1994). In terms of resources, this includes not only the materials with which to teach but also participation in staff development opportunities and attending conferences and workshops to provide all students with much better instruction. The sharing of ideas and materials that occurs at staff development sessions and during professional learning community meetings, is essential in helping teachers implement new strategies that invigorate learning experiences for students. In some cases, teachers of color in the study saw either an excess of resource allocations or a denial of them.

Denial of supplies or staff development opportunities and excess of supplies or staff development opportunities. In the schools where this study was done, teachers of color talked separately about two points of view regarding competition for resources: (a) teachers in the school were given all the necessary resources because they were good teachers and they were being rewarded or (b) they were given all the necessary resources because they needed all the help they could get due to a weakness in teaching. In other words, the organizational issues and group identity determined how the resources were allocated.

Interestingly enough, whether the teachers of color mentioned that teachers were given all the resources they needed because they were good teachers or because they saw teachers receive resources because they demonstrated a weakness and were seen as requiring resources, they, per se, did not see it as an intergroup conflict themselves.

As one teacher of color mentioned in her quotation:

I have always wanted to attend a national conference but have never been selected to attend. This year one of the conferences that I was hoping to attend came and went and I was told that perhaps next year I can attend. Oddly enough, I find it interesting that other teachers tell me that I will probably never get to attend a conference because I would have to demonstrate great improvement in my students' scores in order to attend. If you show performance in scores of students, then the possibility of attending a conference is greater because it is a form of reward.

The feeling of having to perform and being held accountable in order to participate in conferences (despite the fact that as an outsider, the evaluator sees a need for staff development) is a conflict for this teacher. The conflict of competition for resources (in this case attending a conference) is apparent in her statement. Such a feeling leads to continued stagnant production by the teacher because the possibility of her needs being met are not shared by others. Perhaps, it would be more beneficial if the teacher were allowed to attend such conferences so that she could improve her teaching methodologies and, in turn, have a greater number of students demonstrate success on assessments.

In most schools, not all materials and resources are allocated to all as many people may think they are. Due to funding, the allocation of teaching materials may be somewhat limited in some schools, while in others, there may exist an abundance of materials. In this study, a teacher of color suggested the conflict of competition for resources by stating:

Resources are distributed to teachers at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year. We have local resources that I understand are kept in a locked closet that we can get office supplies from, if we ask very nicely. It is interesting that other teachers have an "inside track" to getting anything they need, anytime.

Competition for resources in schools, such as supplies, equipment, or staff development, may inevitably lead to interpersonal or interdepartmental conflict. The embedded organizational issue of competition for resources that exists in this intergroup conflict, as interpreted from these teachers' quotes, is that in order to receive the opportunity of a resource (staff development or materials), it is important for the first teacher to demonstrate good teaching abilities, as asked for in student accountability or to ask for materials and resources in a particular manner, as mentioned by the second teacher.

European American Teachers' Responses

Seven European American teachers were part of the study of which all were female. Their years of teaching experience ranged from 7-29 years. Intergroup conflict properties were evident in the responses given by the European American teachers during their interview sessions and of the three that were determined by the researcher, two were common to those of the teachers of color (see Figure 4.2). Cox (1994) contended that the norms, values, and beliefs of the majority group dominate the organizational structure, whereas the majority and minority responses affect the individual and group interactions within the organization. This appeared to be the case at both schools in the study. The European American teachers' beliefs and values as a whole appeared to be dominant throughout the school in terms of long-range planning, campus improvement plans, etc.; but in the classrooms where teachers of color taught, the values and beliefs differed. In the analysis of data, even though the properties of group conflict appear to have similarities between the two groups at first glance, it is

upon close inspection of the sub-themes that major differences become more evident. The properties of intergroup conflict that data of the European American teachers suggested were: (a) incompatible goals, (b) power differences, and (c) group boundaries.

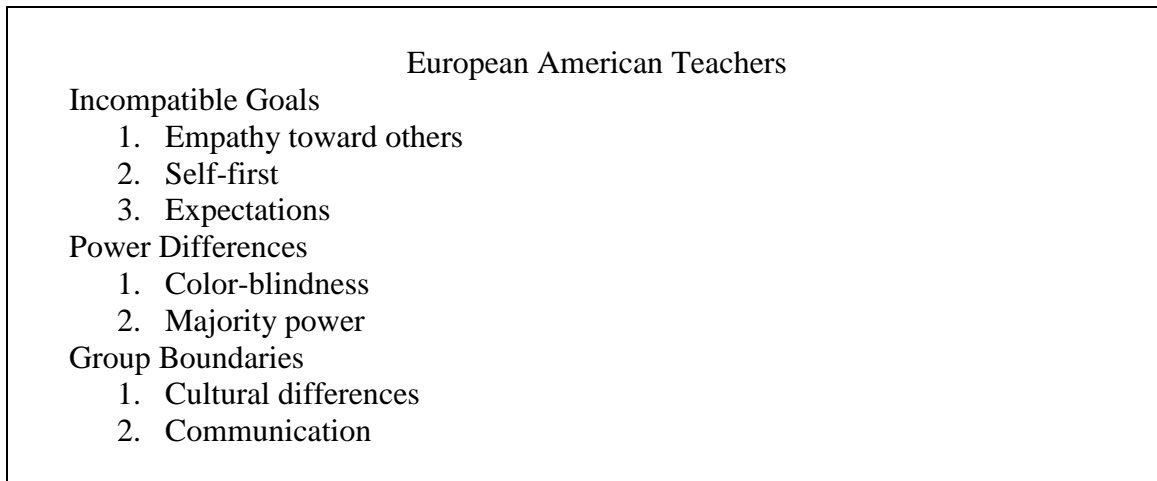


Figure 4.2. Properties of intergroup conflict and subthemes based on responses of European American teachers.

Incompatible Goals

Empathy toward others. The findings from the European American teacher responses suggested their incompatible goals were in the following areas: (a) ethnic differences in empathy toward others and management practices and (b) expectation for “self-first.” A European American teacher made note of the conflict of incompatible goals between herself and teachers of color with specifics in ethnic differences in empathy toward others and management practices as noted in her quote:

One thing that I have noticed is that the teachers of color are more motherly towards the students of color and we, the European American teachers, aren’t always this way. I noticed this one day when a student was crying in the hall. A teacher of color approached her to see what the problem was and came to find

out that her boyfriend no longer wanted to be her boyfriend. The female teacher of color spoke to her gently and guided her towards the water fountain for a drink of water to calm her down. Reflecting on this, I don't think I would have done the same thing. Students need to face the facts, get over it, and move on.

It was apparent through this European American teacher's comment that in her perception of the teachers of color, teachers of color could somewhat empathize with students of color much better than some European American teachers could because they tended to know the culture more and felt a greater connection to the students. The relationship that existed between students of color and teachers of color allowed for more empathy from the adults toward the students. In such a case, it was perceived that if a student of color was in need of social/emotional help, according to this teacher, a teacher of color would be a better assistance provider. The teacher of color recognized a close bonding and connection between the community and expectations—one that perhaps the European American teacher had not developed. The definition of conflict specifies that friction results when people's goals differ. In this case, the goal of exhibiting empathy toward others is very different and thus is conflicting in the workplace. The level of empathy exhibited by teachers to students at the school was the incompatible goal that differed greatly between European American teachers and teachers of color.

Another European American teacher commented:

I don't like for students in my classroom to be loud. I think this leads to a classroom that is not orderly, and even when I have students doing group work, I like for conversations among students to be kept at a minimum. On the other hand, the classroom next door is always loud. Students there are always talking out of turn; they don't raise their hand when asking a question for they simply blurt it out. During my conference period, I can hear the teacher teaching and interacting with students, but many times the teacher is leading the students to

respond in a loud manner. Don't get me wrong—the teacher is teaching the content and students are participating and keeping to the topic, but she has a different rapport with her students and a different expectation of classroom discipline and student engagement than I have.

It is apparent that the European American teacher above has a different teaching style (or management goal in terms of “the expectation of student behavior with this particular lesson is”) or issues with discipline different from the teacher next door that she is describing in her quote. After further investigation, the teacher next door is a teacher of color who perhaps has made a close bond and connection between herself and her students and feels comfortable in the way in which her students and she interact with each other. One can ascertain that the goals that each teacher exhibits in classroom management are incompatible. Once again, the definition of conflict specifies that friction results when people's goals differ, and in this case, the goal of each teacher with regard to classroom acceptable behavior is incompatible with that of each other's. When planning lessons or even when observed by administrators, if the goals are incompatible, conflict will arise.

Self-first. Another sub-theme of the intergroup conflict of incompatible goals that surfaced from the analysis of the European American teachers' responses was that of expectation of “self-first.” The responses of the European American teachers revealed that, despite the fact that they have worked at the school with teachers of color, there still exists a level of disconnect between themselves and the school as a whole. Their responses alluded to the fact of self-gratification of themselves as teachers (what they would obtain in the end) as opposed as to how much they could provide to students or to the community. The main interest of some of the European American teachers in this

case study tended to revolve around stipends, self-gratification through self-recognition of their accomplishments, and not so much in reflecting on what they could contribute to students as great teachers and ensure that all students succeeded.

As one European American teacher stated:

I am looking forward to retiring and setting up a consulting-type of service. I have been teaching for nearly 30 years and I feel that I can share my experiences with others and tell them what has actually worked for me as a classroom teacher. I have only two more years to go and I am counting the days.

The subtheme of placing “self-first” continued to be evident in another European American teacher’s comment. This particular teacher, unlike the first one mentioned previously, had nine years teaching experience.

I am ESL certified and because of this, I teach many ESL students throughout the day in many of my class periods. I try hard to ensure that they learn the content but at times it gets very frustrating, especially when I see test and benchmark results and I don’t see much progress in their learning. I tell my family that if it weren’t for the stipend I was getting paid, I don’t think I’d be teaching these ESL students.

These particular teachers’ quotes exemplify the beliefs of the majority, though not all, of the European American teachers. It is important to make note of the years of experience of each of the above European American teachers, because despite the fact that there exists nearly a 20-year difference, the feeling of taking care of themselves and their needs instead of the students’ was apparent in both teachers. The concern for “self” was more evident in European American teachers and the contrary was evident from the responses of teachers of color.

Expectations. All teachers have expectations for their students and depending on the situation, goals, and their expectation, can be at different levels. But despite this,

most people tend to believe that even when the goal is at a different level, the level is still at a high expectation. When the European American teacher was asked if she saw any differences between the goals/expectations of teachers of color and the goals/expectations of European American teachers set on students, she responded:

I have not noticed any major goal differences other than differences in the approach that everyone takes. Every teacher wants students to be academically and personally successful and most everyone believes that students can go beyond high school. I would have to say that it is not uncommon for European American teachers to be pessimistic when it comes to actually determining the future of our students. Although they desire improvement for all students, some European American teachers feel, I think, that things are awfully hard for students and therefore don't tend to expect much from them. In some cases, the idea of having students work on assignments at a higher level doesn't exist.

Believing in the preconceived notion that students cannot perform at a high level similar to that of other students in other schools, appeared to be what some of the European American teachers felt. With teachers and administrators working hard to ensure that students met state standards in state assessments, pessimistic attitudes from any staff member could be detrimental and conflicting to the overall functioning of the school and its day-to-day performance. Another European American teacher noted the conflict of incompatible goals and expectations in the following quotation:

I think the goals between me and teachers of color are similar. On the other hand, once you really stop and think about it, maybe the goals of teachers of color are different because teachers of color understand the dynamics of the students' home a little better than perhaps somebody that is European American and the expectations for the students may be different.

It was evident that despite the fact that European American teachers did not feel that there existed any type of goal differences between them and other groups of teachers, evidence of incompatible goals came to light with the different expectations

teachers tended to have toward students as quoted by the European American teachers. Considering the fact that the populations of the schools in the study consisted of 98% students of color, to have teachers in the schools who were “pessimistic” about students’ futures, was indicative of incompatible goals.

Power Differences

Another intergroup conflict that was suggested by the European American teachers’ data analysis was that of power differences. Power comes in many forms. Some people have power due to their resources, personality, social skills, connections, and so on. Power shifts back and forth between individuals depending on the situation at hand. These power differences are important to recognize because they influence our day-to-day performance. Power differences between groups usually involve the varying availability of resources to different groups (Alderfer, 1980). Majority groups hold advantages over minority groups in the power structure of the organization. Intergroup hostility between groups results in a disagreement over the redistribution of power. Minority group density in organizations poses a threat to the existing power structure and provides an opportunity for those who are powerless. The types of resources that can be obtained and used differ among groups. Power differences among groups influences the group’s boundaries between the majority and non-majority workers (Alderfer, 1982; Cox, 1994). Power differences were revealed by the European American teachers in the following areas: (a) color blindness and (b) majority power.

Color blindness. Many teachers and schools, in an attempt to be color blind, do not want to acknowledge cultural or racial differences. To be color blind assumes that

the individual is fair, impartial, and objective because to see differences, in this line of reasoning, is to see defects and inferiority (Nieto, 1996). The rationale appears to be that if they do not notice a difference, it can no longer have a negative impact. Although this sounds fair and honest and ethical, the opposite may actually be true. Color blindness may result in refusing to accept differences and, therefore, accepting the dominant culture as the norm. It may result in denying the very identity of our students, thereby making them invisible (Nieto, 1996). Color blindness also involves the assertion that color is noticed but is not “seen” or given meaning (Crenshaw 1997). (For example, in interviews with college students, Lewis, Chesler, and Forman (2000) quote one student as saying, “I’m not going to think of you as Black, I’ll just think of you as my friend.”) This kind of assertion, however, illustrates the very power of race in that it suggests that acknowledging blackness is likely to lead to negative consequences (Crenshaw 1997).

The European American teachers’ responses revealed that color blindness and their failure to acknowledge ethnic identities of students existed. Lewis (2001) calls a “color-blind” approach where these teachers avoided the racial realities and were willing only to address the superficial meaning of race. Teachers who were color blind, European American teachers in this case, were actually demonstrating the power differences that existed between them and teachers of color, because they were closing their eyes to existing inequalities, while making their culture the “center of the universe.” In contrast, teachers of color did just the opposite. They appeared to understand and want to learn and share with each other and their students, the

differences that existed so that they could learn from each other and use the cultural experiences of students as foundations for teaching whenever the moments arose.

One way this was exhibited by teachers was by not teaching students using a variety of methodologies to meet the diverse populations' learning styles. Gay (2000) stated: "Overall, characterizations of learning styles suggest that they are not monolithic, situational, idiosyncratic, or static traits. Instead, they are multidimensional, habituated processes that are 'central tendencies' of how students from different ethnic groups engage with learning encounters" (p. 178).

By exhibiting color blindness, European American teachers were not capable of doing what teachers of color were doing in their classrooms to reach students, which was to make the curriculum, that was being taught, as relevant to students as possible so that they could make better connections in learning. At the same time, they were providing students a curriculum that was not at a higher rigor so that students could excel. The European American teachers were not utilizing the possible background knowledge that students possessed as either social capital or academic capital to enhance their lessons and make learning a much more positive and enjoyable experience for students. As was observed by the researcher, when it came to differentiating instruction for students and applying relevancy, many of the European American teachers all seemed to teach in the same manner, and as one teacher stated, "if they get it fine, if not I still need to move on."

By being color blind, European American teachers also exhibited a denial of cultural identities, such as their heritage, traditions, and language, within a group. Failure

to see and acknowledge cultural identities made it difficult to recognize the unconscious biases everyone had. Those biases could taint a teacher's expectations of a student's ability and negatively influence a student's performance. Study after study have shown that low teacher expectations are harmful to students from socially stigmatized groups (Scruggs, 2009). An example of a teacher who failed to acknowledge cultural identities and thus demonstrated a sense of power by noting that her method of instruction had excelled before was found in the following quotation:

I have always treated all of my students the same. I used to teach in a school that consisted of a student population that was predominantly European American and students there excelled well. I am using the same lessons that worked there here, and the students here just don't seem to get it fast enough. Because of them and their failure to learn, my administrator is on me.

This teacher in no way alluded to meeting the needs of students especially in attempting to be culturally aware of her teaching environment and the community that she serves. As stated in the literature review: some teachers and administrators claimed to be color blind with the intent on being fair, impartial, and objective because to see differences, in this line of reasoning, was to see defects and inferiority. At the same time, by being color blind, during observations by the researcher, this teacher demonstrated no differentiation of instruction for special populations; did not meet the needs of students through the use of relevancy in her instructional methodologies; but did, however, subject herself as a successful teacher by telling her students that she did not understand why they had such difficulty in learning concepts that so many other students had learned with ease. She demonstrated the existence of a power difference between herself and the students (and in conversations with teachers of color did so even more) and felt

threatened by the students' failure when administrators asked about her students' performance. Determining how racial narratives and understandings shape people's lives, how their social location shapes their life chances, and how they understand these processes requires both speaking with people in depth about their lives and spending time with them in their real life contexts (Lewis, 2003).

Although this sounds honest and ethical, the opposite may actually be true. Color blindness may result in *refusing to accept* differences, and therefore, accepting the dominant culture as the norm. It may result in denying the very identity of the diverse groups, thereby making them invisible. Too often color blindness is used as a way to deny differences that help make us who we are (Nieto, 1996). The connection to the Intergroup Property of Power Differences was found after analysis of the data. Because of the European American teachers' use of color blindness, students in these classrooms may have felt that a greater power difference existed between them and their teachers of color. When people lack power, they often feel like they lack control over what happens. Decisions are not necessarily theirs to make. People do not like feeling powerless and having decisions made for them.

Majority power. As we continue to look at power differences and specifically at majority power, it is important that we define curriculum since the curriculum serves as one primary means of social control. Curriculum is defined as the organized environment for learning in a classroom or school. It is never neutral but represents what is thought to be important and necessary knowledge by those who are dominant in a society (Nieto, 1996). It encompasses every experience that the student has while at

school or on a school-sponsored field trip. In the case study, there were situations where administrators and others at central office wanted total control over the curriculum that schools utilized as well as over teachers' work. It appears as a norm nowadays, that decisions about what is most important for students to learn are generally made by those furthest from the lives of students, namely, central and state boards of education, with little input from teachers, parents, and students.

At both schools in the study, when teachers were allowed to make their own decisions regarding what they were allowed to change in the district-mandated curriculum, the teachers in the majority were usually the ones who made the decisions for others regardless of the minority teachers' efforts in advocating their ideas or providing input. On one occasion, when the teachers of color complained to the administrator of School "B," and presented their case as justification for what they were recommending, the administrator still sided with the European American teachers. This is an example of how curriculum may serve as a primary means of social control. Another way is when the curriculum is also taught as if it were the whole, unvarnished, and uncontested truth.

European American teachers were the majority at both schools in the study and when European American teachers were asked if the school empowers all groups of teachers equally, one European American made note of the conflict of power differences by expressing:

I think there are teachers that get to select and make decisions for the rest of us more often than others. I am not talking about department leaders or department chairs; I am talking about teachers that tend to be more vocal. Thankfully the right people are the ones that are the most vocal.

While the voices of students are not heard, frequently neither are those of all teachers—primarily teachers of color, especially when it comes to curriculum.

Disempowered teachers who show little critical thought can hardly be expected to help students become empowered and critical thinkers. In an analysis of empowerment that suggests that “power over” others needs to be replaced by “power with” others, Kriesberg (1992) cautions against applying the concept unilaterally to teachers, calling such as application a “managerial cooption” of the concept (p. 56).

Fine (1993) reported research finding that teacher disempowerment correlates highly with disparaging attitudes toward students; that is, the more powerless teachers feel, the more negative they feel toward their students as well, and thus affect student performance. In contrast, teachers who feel that they have autonomy in their classrooms and with their curriculum generally also have high expectations of their students (Fine, 1991). The same has been found by Garcia (1988) and others. In investigating the characteristics of instructional features that have shown promise with minority students, researchers found that teachers who felt they had the autonomy to create or change the curriculum were also highly committed to the educational success of all of their students. And in a review of the literature on effective secondary schools, Lee, Bryk, and Smith (1993) reported that teachers who experience more control over classroom conditions consider themselves more efficacious.

One of the properties of intergroup conflict suggested through analysis was that of power differences with respect to some of the European American teachers stating that they were color blind toward the students in their classrooms and, therefore, perhaps

color blind toward their peers. A second finding was the power difference that existed in curriculum development and implementation as well as what occurred when decisions were allowed to be made by teachers to modify or adjust it. Majority power usually prevailed and many times teachers' of color opinions and ideas were left out of the equation.

Group Boundaries

Another property of intergroup conflict suggested after analysis by European American teachers through their responses was that of group boundaries. When European American teachers crossed over into the group boundaries of teachers of color, conflict became evident. Alderfer (1982) indicated that both physical and psychological group boundaries determine group membership. In this case study, European American teachers, through their responses, revealed intergroup conflict of group boundaries with sub-themes in cultural differences and communication.

Pierce, Kostova, and Dirks (2003) stated:

Group boundaries not only serve to distinguish groups from one another, but also to define groups in a more absolute sense – identifying and circumscribing the territory each will occupy within the organization. This territory will generally include physical space and other tangible objects, as well as any number of intangible objects like activities, roles, issues, ideas, and information. Unfortunately, the establishment of such territory can have negative implications for cross-boundary collaboration, as it affords group members a sense of *psychological ownership* – claims to, or feelings of possessiveness and attachment toward, territorial objects. Groups may begin to see themselves as the sole rightful performers of certain tasks or possessors of certain knowledge, and then hold themselves to those expectations by restricting their activities and information exchange to ingroup members. (p. 88)

Cultural differences and communication. Due to a lack of understanding between the cultural differences that existed between not only themselves and teachers

of color or students, European American teachers tended to hesitate talking about cultural differences that everyone knew existed and only addressed them when that was impossible to avoid such as when the school district-mandated cultural events be celebrated or acknowledged. As was evident, these cultural differences were both physical and psychological. A feeling of uneasiness was evident whenever European American teachers needed to cross into physical group boundaries. In the teachers' lounge, when teachers would arrive, it was observed that teachers would ask for permission from one another to sit at their table. Despite the fact that half the school year had already expired and that everyone knew that the lounge would almost fill to capacity during lunch time, few people invited others to their table or few people of different cultural groups felt comfortable enough to simply sit with others without requesting their permission to join them.

The proximity of teachers to each other when talking to each other or where teachers tended to sit and congregate during faculty meetings was indicative of the formation and the uneasiness that was present regarding physical group boundaries. In meetings, most of the European American teachers tended to sit toward the front of the auditorium, while the teachers of color sat toward the back of the room. As teachers entered, even if they were early, the European American teachers either saved a seat for their peers, while teachers of color tended to stand against the back wall even if seats were available up at the front.

Yet, even when the occasion did arise, European American teachers were very cautious in how they acted or how things were said in an attempt to speak in politically

correct terms. This was explained more thoroughly in the quotation by one of the European American teachers:

We all tend to get along just fine. We even attend parties held at various teachers' houses. One time we went to a party that was well attended by the majority of the teachers in the school. It was a large party and it was held at one of our Hispanic teacher's house. It was great except for some supposedly traditional food that was served that everyone was asked to try. How anyone can eat that is beyond me! I was careful not to make a scene when I ate it and I pretended to swallow the food. Instead I slowly got out of my chair and went into the other room and threw it out in my napkin without anyone noticing me doing it.

The European American teacher's inability to communicate honestly with teachers of color and express feelings with them is evidence of conflict that exists. The lack of cultural understanding is causing conflict that perhaps may keep other teachers from making the connection between different groups an easier and more probable possibility.

European American Principals' Responses

While interviewing teachers of color and European American teachers, several of the Properties of Intergroup Conflict were similar within both groups. Incompatible goals and group boundaries were shared by both groups. Because teachers in a school do not work in isolation but work as part of a team with administrators, it was important to also interview and, code, and analyze interview responses and the researcher's observations of the European American administrators as a means of obtaining a better perception of the impact everyone had on each other.

Apart from studying the responses of teachers of color and those of European American teachers, the responses of the European American principals, during their day-

to-day exchanges with teachers of color and European American teachers, were also reviewed. A summary of the properties found after the analysis of the data are located in Figure 4.3. In the study, two school principals were interviewed: one male and one female. Both were European American and one had nearly doubled the years of experience as the other. The researcher found that the day-to-day exchanges between the European American principals, teachers of color, and European American teachers did indicate differences in exchanges between both groups. Intergroup conflicts that surged from these exchanges between the European American principals and teachers were: (a) incompatible goals, (b) cultural and power differences, and (c) leadership behaviors.

European American Principals	
Incompatible Goals	
1. Expectations	
2. Self first	
Cultural and Power Differences	
1. Racial and cultural experiences	
2. Favoritism	
Leadership Behaviors	
1. Empowerment and academics	
2. Expectations and cultural awareness	

Figure 4.3. Properties of intergroup conflict and subthemes based on responses of European American administrators.

Incompatible Goals

Expectations. Differences among majority and non-majority workers in incompatible goals that are influenced by norms, goal priorities, work styles among and between these groups is one form of intergroup conflict (Cox, 1994). Just like the

European American teachers who felt that all students should succeed regardless of race and also revealed a sense of color blindness, the European American principals felt the same way. The goals and expectations that the teachers of color exhibited toward the students was somewhat different from the goal that one European American principal revealed. As one principal stated:

We are here to provide every student a good education. Our teachers work hard and we have after-school tutoring if students so desire to attend. If students don't learn it's because they don't put in the effort to learn. Mind you, we do what we can with our students, but those that can't learn need to find some other place to attend school or seek a GED. We can't hold back other students because some refuse to do what they've been told to do."

He continued to add,

We strive to get our students to graduate and go to college, but we all know that we still need people to do service jobs such as cashiers and change the oil on our cars. We have to be realistic and understand that not all of our students will go to college.

Perceived goal incompatibility appears in a couple of forms. First, the conflict parties may want the same thing – for example, in this case, success for all students. Both teachers and administrators were working toward that goal. However, the incompatibility lies in the expectations that teachers of color, European American teachers, and European American administrators have of students. Regardless of whether the participants see the goals as similar or different, perceived incompatible goals are central to all conflict struggles, and therefore, the way administrators felt with regards to student expectations had an impact on how they tended to feel toward teachers teaching and working on a daily basis.

Self first. Evidence of concern for “self” was also evident in the European American principals as was with the European American teachers. On the other hand, the teachers of color appeared to believe that service to others (their students) as opposed to thinking of pursuing other roles in education. In comparison to the European American staff, the teachers of color also viewed themselves as more of a cheerleader, encourager, or facilitator of their students. As is customary in many school districts, in order to be promoted into district-level positions, school employees must be school administrators first. Both European American principals made note to the fact that they have been administrators in the school district for some time now and that they aspired to “bigger and better” things. As one of the European American principal noted:

Everyone knows that in today’s schools things are tougher than ever. I have been a teacher, an assistant principal, and a vice-principal. I have served my time and in the future I’d like to be a director of a district program or an Executive Director at the district level. I have worked long and hard and I think it’s about time for a change.

Cultural and Power Differences

Racial and cultural experiences. Another intergroup conflict that the researcher identified from analysis of the data from the European American administrators as sources of conflict were cultural and power differences. Cultural differences between group members of different groups occur due to misunderstanding and misperceptions (Cox, 1994). Majority groups hold advantages over minority groups in the power structure of the organization. Intergroup hostility between groups results in a disagreement over the redistribution of power. Minority group density in organizations poses a threat to the existing power structure and provides an opportunity for those who

are powerless. The types of resources that can be obtained and used differ among groups. Power differences among groups influences the group's boundaries between the majority and non-majority workers (Alderfer, 1982; Cox, 1994). The intergroup conflict of cultural difference was noted in a quote below:

I know that the students and parents respect me and like me despite the fact that I am European American. Unfortunately, when students get in trouble and parents come in to meet with me, because I don't speak Spanish and find it difficult to communicate with them, I usually delegate such meetings to other administrators on campus who can communicate with them.

Favoritism. A response by one of the European American principals indicated a sense of favoritism toward one group over another. This was noted in the following quotation showing favoritism:

If I need anything at all, I know that there are some good people that I can count on to assist. Despite the fact that we attended the same school and graduated together, this has nothing to do with the friendship that we have. [In his quote, the principal mentioned a European American teacher by name.]

Leadership Behaviors

Empowerment and academics and expectations and cultural awareness.

Another intergroup conflict for the European American principals was leadership behaviors. The group leader and other group representatives reflect the boundaries of groups and how they will interact. Members of a similar group reflect power differences, affective patterns, and cognitive formations of their group in relation to the other group. The role of the leader in a network of intergroup relations determines the intensification of intergroup conflict (Alderfer, 1977, 1982). From the principals' responses, the areas of conflict in leadership behaviors that were found were: (a) empowerment and academics and (b) expectations and cultural awareness.

While working with culturally diverse teachers, the European American principals understood the importance of empowering their teachers for it provided teachers a sense of “buy-in” into the system and, in turn, helped the administrator to work on other challenging events that required his or her personal attention. By empowering others in the academic aspects of the school, principals use this leadership strategy as a method toward having everyone participate in the success of the school as a whole and addressing intergroup conflict to some respect. This is noted in the following quote by one of the European American principals:

I have a wonderful, hardworking staff. Some have a lot of potential and many have qualities that can give a lot to our school and students. If I need to arrange a meeting with parents, I know who can arrange it for me in an instant—food, tables, decorations, and all. If I need a master schedule looked over, I know which teacher is an expert at looking them over. I try hard to work with my staff and empower my teachers in areas that I know they can handle. Some of the teachers help out during TAKS testing. They help organize all of the logistics for the exams, and I know that their work is important to everyone. Sometimes, teachers come to me with problems to solve, and I usually send them back with the task of coming back to me with a solution. Of course, there are problems that I can immediately solve, but many times teachers are given the task of coming up with their own solutions. Hopefully, by asking them to do this, teachers will also work together and learn from each other. They know that if a problem arises or if they have questions regarding what they have been asked to do for me, they can come and ask and we will solve it together. So far, none of the teachers have opposed doing what has been assigned for them to do.

Another leadership behavior revealed in the study with the European American principals' responses to teachers of color and European American teachers were the limited perceptions they had of teachers of color as compared to the perceptions held toward European American teachers. On the other hand, the perceptions of the principal by teachers of color were somewhat less than the perceptions of the principals by the

European American teachers. The following quote from one of the European American principal reveals the conflict that existed:

As the school administrator, European American teachers don't tend to question much of the decisions that I make. On the other hand, teachers of color tend to ask for justification and reference Board Policy for many of the decisions that I make. Most teachers appear to be in agreement with the decisions that I make and realize that I only want what is best for all. They know that I have high expectations for all of them and I feel they expect the same from me. They know that seldom have I made decisions that have caused us to fall behind or not succeed.

In order to comprehend similarities and differences in communication across cultures, it is necessary to have a way of talking about how cultures differ. After analysis of the comments by this European American administrator, it is evident that he perhaps does not have a clear understanding of the cultures of his teachers of color. It is important to recognize that communication is unique within each culture. To have a clear understanding of why teachers of color ask more questions or expect additional clarification of instructions would perhaps lead to presentations that were better prepared by the administrator and perhaps assist all teachers, not just the teachers of color. Communication is a process involving the exchange of messages and the creation of meaning (Gudykunst, 1998). No two people ever attach the same meaning to a message, and the determining factor as to whether the information was communicated effectively is dependent on the degree to which the participants attach similar meanings.

Summary

This chapter described some of the participants' responses to the questions by the researcher regarding the exchanges that took place in their school between them and their colleagues. The data analysis of the participant's responses provided insight into the participants' experiences and how they correlated to the properties of intergroup conflict as interpreted by the researcher. The final chapter addresses insights constructed from the literature review, as well as contributions of the study and possible future research needs based on the findings of study or information not found within the study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The intent of this qualitative study was to explore the following problem statements: (a) the professional exchanges between European American principals and teachers of color (Hispanic teachers) or vice versa in urban schools, (b) how teachers of color respond to these interactions, and (c) the necessary leadership skills needed by European American principals to establish an inclusive school organization. With this purpose in mind, the researcher proposed two guiding questions for this qualitative study:

1. How do teachers of color, European American teachers , and European American administrators perceive their day-to-day professional exchanges?
2. What must principals in urban schools do to establish an inclusive school culture when there are diverse groups of teachers?

The study took place in two urban high schools located in the Southwestern United States, where teachers of color and European American teachers and administrators, who met the criteria explained in Chapter III, were selected to participate. A total of 14 educators/administrators participated in the study. A qualitative case study was used as the framework for this study discussing intergroup differences and the professional exchanges that occur between teachers of color and administrators. Participating teachers and administrators in the study were selected based on set criteria. Part of the data collection included face-to-face interviews with participants, attending staff meetings, and doing follow-up interviews. Constant comparative methods were

used in analysis of the transcribed data with full maintenance of anonymity of the participants through the use of a coding method, as themes and sub-themes were created. To ensure that information was not overlooked, to establish validity and trustworthiness, and for justification of the themes, triangulation of the data was done.

The study did not proceed without limitations to consider. One of the limitations to consider is due, in part, because the participants were from a variety of personal and educational experiences, backgrounds, and gender differences. Another limitation included the scope of the research that was limited to only two schools and thus the findings are, therefore, not representative of all schools in general. As mentioned before, this was a case study; therefore, a limitation to consider is that properties of intergroup conflict used may not reflect in majority organizations since this study used the properties in minority organizations. Three additional limitations of the study are: (a) the researcher's personal and professional experiences and background knowledge revealed divergent constructions of reality about the context of the study; (b) the challenge of cross-cultural interpretations was used to identify different voices, perceptions, and experiences in majority and minority groups; and (c) the fact that an increased number of non-certified teachers of color are hired in urban school districts.

The study made reference to two groups that exist in each observed school: identity groups and organizational groups. Both the administrators and the teachers exhibited assumptions that the processes operating when they communicate with people from other groups are the same processes operating when they communicate with people from their own groups. This was the case with identity groups and/or organizational

groups in each of the schools. The fact that these two types of groups and the interactions between European American teachers, teachers of color, and European American principals, formed conflicts, these conflicts appeared to hinder the productivity of the entire school that to some extent limited students to achieve.

For the most part, all groups appeared to have a grave interest in helping students achieve and in ensuring that student needs were addressed. This was very evident especially in the comment by one European American teacher who agreed that “Maybe the goals of teachers of color are different because teachers of color understand the dynamics of the students’ home a little better than perhaps somebody that is European American and the expectations for the students may be different.”

It was interesting that despite coming to this conclusion, the teacher did not suggest ways to change herself, but relied more on the teachers of color to help students more because it appeared they could “connect better” with them. Unfortunately, time was spent dwelling on issues (conflicts) that arose from between teacher-to-teacher interactions and/or teacher-to-administrator interactions. This time could have very well been spent in addressing the learning needs of students in a much more direct and perhaps beneficial manner.

Another finding was that teachers of color at the schools appeared to be the possessors and disseminators of the overall school’s populations’ culture for both students and for their European American colleagues. They led the school in providing information regarding individual student “history” because close relationships appeared to have been established first with teachers of color than with any other adult in the

building. The students, according to some teachers, came to them for help and advice regarding both academic and social issues. Teachers of color understood the culture of students' backgrounds and could many times empathize with students and why they did certain things, while some European American teachers did not understand. This type of understanding or lack thereof from either type of teacher when discussed at meetings, led to questions from either side.

Theories of intergroup relations are concerned with the interactions, attitudes, feelings, and behavior that are embedded in an intergroup context. Taylor and Moghaddam (1987) defined intergroup relations as “any aspect of human interaction that involves individuals perceiving themselves as members of a social group, or being perceived by others as belonging to a social category” (p. 6). One of the most influential explanations for intergroup conflict, *realistic conflict theory*, suggests that intergroup hostilities stem from incompatible interests and goals between groups, with the incompatibility fostered by scarcity of resources (Levine & Campbell, 1972).

The theoretical framework of this study, embedded intergroup theory, as mentioned in the first chapter, recognizes that individual cultural identities influence how participants perceive their work and their relationships with others (Alderfer, 1994). According to embedded intergroup theory, leaders and followers are constantly attempting to manage potential conflicts that arise from the interactions between identity groups and organizational group membership (Nkomo & Cox, 1996). With intergroup conflict, there are conditions that influence how the leader and majority and minority workers will react to each other.

Based on the finding of the research, a suggested strategy for dealing with intergroup conflicts is the development of a diversity plan. When leading a diverse group of teachers and students, knowledge about the school participants' ethnic and cultural differences, becomes imperative (Madsen & Mabokela, 2005b). As the school administrators in this study worked with teachers, their knowledge of teachers' cultural background, beliefs, attitudes, ideals for themselves, their school, and their students, would have made working together much more efficient and would have perhaps provided greater gains for all.

Recommendations

As a way of diminishing existing intergroup conflict in the school, the researcher offers the following recommendations for each school to consider. These recommendations are in no way conclusive of what needs to be done but offers an opportunity to initiate a direction in which conflict issues can be diminished and the schools may, therefore, invest more time in moving forward. Madsen and Mabokela (2005b) mention the following criteria needed in order for schools to develop a diversity plan:

Leaders and teachers must understand their own cultural identity and its relationship to others who are racially or ethnically different from them. Even though the school administrators in the study were able to get teachers involved in the decision making process by forming committees composed of teachers meeting and collaborating, their expectation that teachers would automatically all work together as one happy family was indicative of their need to understand their staff to a much deeper level. As

mentioned in Chapter II, Palmer (1998) reminded us, “We teach who we are” (p. 10). The same can perhaps be said of administrators—they lead based on who they are, expecting teachers to be like them, have the same expectations, and apply the same disciplinary measures to students, regardless of the teachers’ or students’ cultural backgrounds. The teacher who taught *Romeo and Juliet* to students was aware of how he understood Shakespeare, but also knew that if he wanted to get the story across to his students, he needed to be cognizant of the students’ cultural identity and, thus, because of this was able to adjust his methodology to include an elaboration into the musical, *Westside Story*. He was teaching who he was as well as who his audience was, too.

Schools must have a clear rationale for why the plan is important and how the process will improve organizational outcomes and effectiveness. Research on diversity plans emphasizes that organizations need to have a very clear rationale for why the plan is important and how the process will improve organizational outcomes and effectiveness (Cox, 2001; Dass & Parker, 1996). Many of the organizational structures in the schools, policies (or unquestioned practices that may not be policies), expected and traditional practices of instruction that have been utilized for years at the school, can lead to disempowerment. Because “this is the way we have always done things” no longer suffices if schools are to improve. These include the overall control orientation of policy, the general similarity of curriculum and schedules, particular patterns of resource allocation, and an unswerving faith in test scores as measures of ability of success (Nieto, 2004, p. 92). Tye (2000) has suggested that many of these structures represent “powerful patterns of schooling that are held in place by society’s assumptions about

what schooling should be” (p. 117). Addressing organizational school structures are central to the development of a comprehensive multicultural/diversity plan that will improve outcomes and effectiveness.

School participants must be conscious of the importance of effective management of intergroup conflict. Affirmation, solidarity, and critique, the highest level of support for diversity, is based on the premise that the most powerful learning results when people work and struggle with one another, even it is sometimes difficult and challenging (Nieto, 2004). This means accepting the culture. Madsen and Mabokela (2005b) note that intergroup conflict, if not managed, may compromise efforts to create inclusive schools. Because multicultural education is concerned with equity and social justice for all people and because basic values of different groups are often diametrically opposed, conflict is inevitable. As one teacher in this study mentioned that they would like to learn from others but no one seems to want to share their ideas (bulletin board ideas), is evidence of the need to resolve the issue of working in isolation and its deeper cause. Leaders must perceive the problem of intergroup conflict and must have the insight into the culture and its dysfunctional elements. Such boundary-spanning perceptions may be difficult because it requires leaders to see their own weaknesses, to perceive that their own defenses not only help in managing anxiety, but can also hinder their efforts to be effective. The most successful architects of change are those who have a high degree of objectivity about themselves and their organizations (Schein, 1985).

Schools must be aware of diversity and thus engage all members in culturally relevant practices to enhance the educational outcomes of all students. The mere fact

that a diversity plan is created and implemented in no way guarantees its implementation, positive effects on changing the school, or acceptance of groups or individual differences. Simply instituting a plan that addresses cultural awareness, without fully engaging all members into practices may prove to be ineffective. The actual participation in active engagement, that does more than assimilate but instead acculturates participants, is critical to the acceptance and “buy in” of the plan.

There must be ongoing professional development addressing the cultural concerns. Unfortunately, at both schools, because the attitude from administrators and from teachers is that everything seems to be going well, no one at the time felt the need to address deeply embedded cultural concerns among the staff and the administration that exist. Staff development is focused on instructional practices and in teaching teachers methodologies and strategies for addressing state assessments. Until professional development that addresses the cultural concerns is attended by everyone at both schools with emphasis on systemic change, the group boundaries that exist between the diverse groups, and the established norms, expectations, and values set by the majority groups, will continue to prevail.

Schools should have expert individuals available to assist with emotionally-laden concerns to smooth out dialogue across differences. During the interview, a European American teacher commented on the “motherly” connection that a teacher of color exhibited toward her students. The lack of empathy that many of the European American teachers exhibited could perhaps be grounds for a staff development opportunity in cultural awareness training. Fortunately, existing differences at the schools were not at

the point of boiling over or causing extenuating emotional concerns where mediators had to be called in to assist in remediating and or mediating situations. If leaders would only become aware of the benefit of becoming culturally aware of the diversity that exists among themselves and some of the teachers, as well as the diversity that exists among the teachers of color and the European American teachers, proper planning on their part could help launch the schools into a new dimension of cohesiveness and success for students. In the event that there would be an “emotional explosion (or collapse)” due to ongoing or increasing intergroup conflict, the district should, in fact, be prepared to bring in outside assistance. One of the unique things about the school district is that it is located in the close proximity of two universities who could, in fact, partner up with the schools to assist with group differences.

Schools should foster diversity through targeting qualified people from underrepresented groups. By fostering diversity, Cox (2001) asserted that the school environment will demonstrate a value for such existing diversity. The expectation of always searching out a particular individual when it is convenient, such as to address language issues because that person fits the role and exhibits cultural commonality, may lead to implications, when, in turn, all personnel should be educated to address such issues. This is evident in the comment by one of the European American administrators who would rather avoid Spanish-speaking parents and have another administrator who can communicate with parents rather than attempt to address them himself. Also, one of the teachers of color in her response mentioned the need to be a model for students and

how she shared her struggles on her way to success with her students. She mentioned, “I hope that if students can see that I have succeeded, that they can, too.”

Finally, schools should have a method of evaluating the diversity competency. As with any plans that are implemented, the need for a method of evaluating them is indispensable. The evaluation should include all persons affected by the plan so that a true understanding of its effectiveness or ineffectiveness can be assessed. Also, evaluating a diversity plan should lead to improving the plan and personalizing it to meet the needs of the diverse individuals who collaborate on a daily basis for the time in which the plan is implemented. A plan that works well in a particular year may not be as effective in a following year due to the personnel dynamics that may exist at a school. Therefore, continuous evaluation will lead to continuous improvement.

According to Bryk and Schneider (2002), “trust within a faculty is grounded in common understanding about what students should learn, how instruction should be conducted, and how teachers and students should behave with one another” (p. 12). Leaders in diverse context must become cultural integrators and consensus builders who acquire understanding of their constituents’ backgrounds and perspectives and establish leader-member trust (Dovido, Gaertner, & Bachman, 2001). Part of working with others, especially diverse groups of people, involves the concept of trust.

Students are unlikely to focus on academic learning if they feel threatened. Maslow (1968) theorized in the 1950s that a sense of safety and security are a prerequisite for higher levels of human development. If we want to increase learning among European American students and children of color, then schools must create a

strong foundation for their learning. This foundation includes freedom from slurs and harassment based on ethnicity, language, religion, and other aspects of identity (Henze, 2002). If teachers of color and European American teachers do not exhibit positive relationships among themselves and their school leaders, students can also feel a sense of threat toward themselves as well and a feeling of insecurity.

Developing the concept of trust and establishing an environment of good exchanges requires several steps. First, administrators should engage the full faculty in activities and discussions related to the school's mission, vision, and core values. For teachers to sense integrity among colleagues, a faculty member must not only share these views but also perceive that the actions taken by other teachers are consistent with them. Teachers need to be viewed as capable decision-makers, with the obligation and the responsibility to make curricular decisions (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). Teachers are called upon to teach students how to be empowered and yet, they are not allowed the same privilege. In like manner, education is about empowering youth, as opposed to schooling, which is about conformity, obedience, hierarchies and one's place in them (Ayers, 1992). Furthermore, in this affirming relationship, the teachers are given real power and authority to cultivate a variety of venues for change. They are not given ultimatums to bring about the desired objectives. That is, teachers are viewed as experts who have been given the authority to implement curriculum revisions (Moore, 2001).

Secondly, making all teachers feel welcome is another component administrators should implement as cultural integrators of their school. In the first few busy weeks of a school year, it is not uncommon for not only experienced teachers but new teachers to be

overlooked (Gordon, 1991). Developing a lunch gathering, introducing them to others in the school, offering to help locate supplies, and so on—goes a long way toward reducing patterns of isolation and building teacher-teacher trust. Principals can support relationship-building between new and returning faculty by creating opportunities throughout the school year for teachers to meet and get to know one another. In today's increasingly multicultural schools and work environments, students and adults need more than ever to learn how to get along and work productively with those who are different from themselves. Relations across lines of difference are always in need of preventive attention so that they do not escalate to violence (Henze, 2002). The lunch gathering that one teacher commented on where sometimes the meal does not always turn out as expected and yet they are able to laugh about it, is a way to build on this camaraderie and begin to establish a culture of trust. Also, the teachers' comments on the need to work together during planning and collaborating in extracurricular activities as a way of assisting them to excel each day, are ways of seeking the means to build relationships that appear to be somewhat lacking between the cultural groups.

Teachers in the study at both schools had very little to no time to work together and plan during the school day. There were times when teachers were seen by the observer staying after school to work on projects; but this was not the norm nor was there a set time in the campus plan for this so that it occurred more on a consistent basis. Principals can support collaboration by making time in the schedule for teachers to work together, providing training on effective strategies for team-building, and offering incentives for teachers to collaborate (Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, Uline,

Hoy, & Mackley, 2003). Teachers can also seek out opportunities to work with—or simply get to know—teachers in other buildings, content areas, and grades.

Administrators should also help create-and support-meaningful opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively. Too often, schools are structured in ways that prevent teachers from working together closely. Authentic relationships, however, “are fostered by shared responsibilities. As individuals interact with one another, they tend to listen across boundaries—boundaries erected by disciplines, grade levels, expertise, authority, position, race and gender” (Lambert, 1998, p. 79).

Communication is important to all organizations. Administrators should help identify ways to increase and/or improve faculty communication. One possibility that requires little additional time for teachers is to set up a faculty Website. Depending on teachers’ interests, the site could be used to host a discussion board about areas of common interest or concern, to report on the work of different school committees, to post invitations to social gatherings, to share lesson ideas, to post articles and Web links that may be of interest to other teachers, or simply to exchange information about upcoming activities at school. Providing teachers and other staff members with training on effective communication skills may be useful, too.

In the study, there appeared to be a lack of relationship building for the faculty and for the administrators. There was no evidence of time allotted for this and perhaps this was the case because most of the school went on as if nothing was wrong or perhaps the need to address this was not priority. School administrators should also attempt to make relationship-building a priority. As a faculty, select a small but diverse group of

teachers to do some initial legwork: locating an assessment tool, measuring teacher-teacher trust in the school, talking to faculty about perceived strengths and areas of concern, and investigating relevant professional development strategies. This information can then be presented to the whole faculty and used to set goals and identify appropriate next steps.

Finally, administrators should choose a professional development model that promotes relationship building. Peer coaching, mentoring, teach teaching, professional learning communities, and networking are all models that can be used to strengthen teacher relationships by bringing individuals together around issues of mutual interest and/or concern. Whichever model the faculty chooses, it is important that it not be linked to formal performance evaluation. Mentoring and peer coaching models, for instance, are generally more effective when mentor teachers are not a new staff member's supervisor or department chair (da Costa & Riordan, 1996; Israel, 2003)

Building new relationships, whatever their circumstances, takes time; rebuilding relationships in which trust has been damaged can take far longer (Young, 1998). If we hope to make meaningful, lasting change within school communities, however, identifying increased educator trust as a priority and taking the time to develop it looks to be well worth the investment. "Without trust a school cannot improve and grow into the rich nurturing micro-society needed by children and adults alike" (Blase & Blasé, 2001, p. 23). With trust established, courageous conversations should be held so that the needs of the teachers of color are properly addressed.

Summary

Our goal in this chapter is to not only to summarize the findings of the research but also to provide a possible solution to assist with the day-to-day intergroup conflicts that may arise between administrators and teachers. In this chapter, conclusions, study limitations, recommendations, and implications for further study, are provided. As stated in Chapter IV, of Cox's (1994) and Alderfer's (1982) Nine Properties of Intergroup Conflict, six were found in the study. They were: (a) incompatible goals, (b) cultural differences, (c) power differences, (d) group boundaries, (e) competition for resources, and (f) leadership behaviors. The establishment and use of a detailed diversity plan by school administrators is explained along with the proposition of a staff development model that enhances relationship building. A suggestion for team building and trust enhancement, which does not require a great deal of effort from either teachers or administrators, is also discussed.

Future Research

Additional qualitative studies regarding diverse groups of individuals working together and conflicts that arise due to their cultural differences are warranted. Future studies should pay more attention to the interactions of the school principals and their involvement with their staff, especially staff that is of a different ethnicity than themselves, most teachers in the school, and who differ or are similar to the population they teach. Using some of the procedures and techniques similar to those utilized in this study would allow others to perform analyses of other schools, in other communities, with different cultural groups from those in this study. Such implications for future

research could perhaps lead to either similar findings or to different finds that could identify new ways of addressing intergroup conflicts. The works of Madsen and Mabokela (2005a) and Bell (2002), which also address topics of diversity similar to the topic of this study, are indicators of the great need for such studies to be done in our ever changing society. Much research exists between teachers and students and the diversity between them and the pedagogies that are implemented to teach students, but research specific to the daily involvement and interactions of diverse adults who work with students is still at minimum—especially the implications of their day-to-day exchanges on student learning. We know very little regarding the following questions:

- How is the role and impact of diverse parents who participate as volunteers in the schools, on teachers and administrators and their day-to-day exchanges, impacting teacher-to-teacher and/or teacher-to-administrator relationships?
- What teacher and administrator preparation programs regarding diversity issues that affect them, as opposed to issues that arise between the students they teach and themselves, exist if any?
- How are colleges and universities, not to mention Alternative Certification Programs, promoting faculty development to address demographic shifts in schools that occur among teachers and administrators?

As populations begin to shift in America where minorities are now majorities (not only in student populations as seen in many schools but also in teacher and administrative populations working in schools), the need for additional research has never been greater.

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This dissertation was typed and edited by Marilyn M. Oliva at Action Ink, Inc.