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Teacher Perceptions of African-American Principal Leadership

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TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF
AFRICAN-AMERICAN PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Educational Administration

by

Darlene Morgan Brown

B.S. Northeast Louisiana University, 1983
M.Ed. University of New Orleans, 1998

May, 2005

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the following people:

Myme, my sweet grandmother, thank you for the strong Christian foundation that you provided to me.

Heart-felt thanks go to my soul mate and biggest fan, my husband, Joel Brown, who always believed that I would complete this educational journey. Your patience, love, support, and sacrifice allowed me to accomplish this goal.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated teachers' perceptions of African-American principals' leadership and the extent to which those perceptions varied according to their race, gender, years of teaching experience, and years working with the principal. The results of this exploratory study are intended to enhance the empirical data reflecting the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal and to contribute to the research on leadership in general.

The participants in this study consisted of 32 African-American principals and 164 teachers in schools representing 12 states during the 2004-2005 school year. Each teacher participant completed either an electronic or paper version of the Leadership and Management of Schools Survey Instrument (LMSS) which addressed the leadership and management traits of the principal and the demographic data on the teachers.

The findings indicated that African-American principals are perceived as using high levels of transformational and transactional leadership. Additionally, results indicated that race influences the leadership credibility of the African-American principal. There did not appear to be a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions and gender of a teacher, gender of the principal, or both, and no relationship was found between the years of teachers' experience and their perceptions of the African-American principals. However, teachers' perceptions of African-American principals' leadership and management qualities increased positively with the number of years of experience working with the principal.

Indications from these findings can be useful to universities, colleges, and school districts in making informed decisions concerning the training, recruitment, and placement of African-American principals.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The American public education system is undergoing massive challenges because of its increasingly multilingual, multicultural, and diverse socio-economic student population. One major challenge that has remained constant is the long-reported academic gap between the various student groups. Many factors have been reported to contribute to this disparity, and as many factors have been identified which contribute to the success of a school. Yet, a key factor of a successful school has been reported to be the principal. Principal leadership has been indicated to influence the success of a school and, more specifically, the instructional practices within a school, (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004). Hence, the need for effective school leadership continues to be essential to closing the academic gap between the “haves” and “have-nots.”

Research supports that European-American leaders are successful in leading students and teachers from various cultures, just as empirical evidence, although limited, tells us that African-American principals also are successful in leading low-performing schools that are largely populated by students of various cultures and from low socio-economic backgrounds (Lomotey, 1989; Shujaa, 1994). Furthermore, their leadership history evidences success in leading groups of followers of various ethnicities (Lomotey, 1989). Researchers have found that the interactions between school leaders and their teachers play a key role in the effectiveness of the school (Cawelti, 1987; Valverdi, 1987). This indicates that effective principals possess a strong

ability to work with different kinds of people who have various interests and expectations. Unfortunately, the race of the principal appears to influence how his or her leadership ability is judged (Pettigrew, Jemmott, & Johnson, 1984), just as race appears to influence all other aspects of life in the United States (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Even the best principal cannot succeed if teachers do not support his or her vision. It must be remembered that a person's socialization has an influence on his or her perception of and interaction with people who are different (Jones, 1983). Concomitantly, race, gender, and experience also have proven to influence the social constructs surrounding the role of the leader (Pollard, 1997). Simply stated, "We are what we know" (Pinar, 1993, p. 61).

While "perception in the process of leadership is controversial..." (Ayman, 1993, p. 137), the followers' perceptions have proven useful in the understanding of leadership. Followers' perceptions are rooted in "...complex contingencies involving situation, personality, and communication..." (Barrow & Mulburne, 1990, p. 304). Perceptions are constructed by an individual's personal beliefs and life experiences. Personal beliefs are premised on the individual's cultural background. Culture refers to the way of life that is learned and shared by a group of people (Carter, 1995). Most important, culture provides the context for a person's worldview and thereby gives meaning to espoused beliefs and practices.

Researchers have noted variations in cultural values when comparing the cultural tenets of African-American and European-American citizens (Carter, 1995). Unfortunately, these differences are often viewed in a negative vein with respect to the African-American citizen, unfortunately, and have led to the development of stereotypical beliefs about African-Americans. More specifically, these variations affect the perceived leadership effectiveness of African-American principals, whose credibility, for example, is often stifled by stereotypes of African-

American leaders (Chemers & Murphy, 1995). Chemers and Murphy found that stereotypes affected the view of, interaction with, and collaborative efforts of African-American leaders.

When addressing the educational challenges of the day, effective leadership should certainly be on the agenda. When exploring effective leadership, especially the leadership effectiveness of the African-American principal, one must remember that leadership credibility is judged based on the followers' perceptions (Ayman, 1993), and different voices and different experiences comprise the community of leaders in America (Chemers, 1993). The literature suggests that the differences in variety and leadership experiences of the African-American principal must do battle with the assumed American standard of what "normal" looks and sounds like. The mythic norm of what constitutes the standard of leadership in American society remains European-American and male (Lord, 1985). Many cultural scholars believe that race matters greatly in leadership perceptions (Banks, 1991; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lomotey, 1989). Therefore, understanding the interactions among people from different cultural backgrounds can inform the creation of an environment conducive to learning at high standards. These reasons support the need for increasing the body of research on African-American principals and for understanding the leadership characteristics they are perceived to possess.

Statement of the Problem

During this era of educational reform, more states are reporting a large percentage of schools that are academically failing. In the face of these failures, "...the need for strong, responsible, and enlightened leadership should be of priority..." (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003, p. 9). In other words, the need for principal leaders who are equipped to meet the demands of the 21st century is of paramount importance to the academic success of the nation's youth. While leadership that promotes and implements educational change has not been uniform (Roza, Celio,

Harvey, & Wishom, 2003), the limited research does tell us that, even though African-American principals lead differently, they can be successful in leading academically failing schools (Lomotey, 1989).

Despite the attention that has been devoted to understanding the multifaceted nature of leadership, relatively few studies have concentrated on the interaction among race, gender, and leadership. With the changing face of the public school student, the face of the classroom teacher no longer reflects the face of the majority student. Teacher-principal relationships facilitate constructive teacher-student relationships in the classroom. African-American principals serve as role models who encourage positive teacher-student relationships within schools (Valverde, 1987). Unfortunately, African-American principals do not represent a large percentage of the principal population. The proven effectiveness of the African-American principal in schools where students from various ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds are successful lends credence to the need for examining the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal.

The body of knowledge of leadership from African-American male and female perspectives remains inadequate, incomplete, and noticeably void in the literature surrounding the principalship (Dillard, 1995; Roza et al., 2003). What many scholars do agree on is that leadership is a process of social influence which does impact the behavior of African-American principals leading diverse followers (Valverde, 1987). Therefore, the need to include the different voices and experiences of the principals from various ethnic groups has reached a pinnacle. Both European-American researchers of diverse organizations (Chemers & Murphy, 1995) and scholars of various ethnicities are calling for more research on the relationships of race and gender on leadership effectiveness (Banks, 1991).

Background of the Study

The elements of leadership have been studied and debated for centuries. Put simply; leadership is defined differently by different people. Still, leadership scholars mutually agree that first, leadership can only be exercised in groups (Ayman, 1993), and second, leadership is premised on an exceedingly intricate interpersonal relationship (Bennis, 1986; Chirichello, 1999). Because public schools can be viewed as diverse organizations, and relationships within them clearly play a significant role in leadership effectiveness (Kouzes & Posner, 1987), understanding the complexities of relationships between people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds is of paramount importance to the academic success of America's schools. Understanding leadership is truly contingent on understanding the relationship between leaders and followers and is especially important to consider when addressing the leadership effectiveness of the African-American principal.

“The phenomenon of leadership is probably the most extensively researched social influence process known to the behavioral sciences” (Barrow, 1977, p. 231). The elements of leadership have been studied for centuries and characterized as “...unintegrated, piecemeal, and heterogeneous” (p. 232). Researchers mutually agree, however, that leadership influences the success of an organization (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). Over the course of time, voluminous data have been published regarding leadership. Barrow classified studies of leadership into four primary orientations: leader behavior investigations, situational and reciprocal causation investigations, leadership effectiveness theories, and normative leadership approaches. Although leadership models are nonintegrated, they are not mutually exclusive.

In an effort to diminish the “great man” approach to leadership, researchers attempted to identify exactly what leaders do when leading. Situational leadership studies were then conducted to determine the influence of situational factors on leader behavior. Studies on leadership effectiveness were conducted to further explain the interaction of leadership style and situation. The emphasis on leadership effectiveness research then shifted to a more normative base regarding what leaders should do to be perceived as effective in any situation.

Leadership has been defined differently by many; however, of the different theories of leadership that have developed over time, it would appear that the African-American principal has been all but eliminated from the dominant theoretical discourse (Anzaldúa, 1990; Chemers & Murphy, 1995). The leadership style and practices of the African-American principal have not been adequately described or included in the literature. The available data tell us that the African-American principal lead differently based on their race and that they use many different leadership styles (Lomotey, 1987). Because leadership is influenced along social lines, scholars from various ethnic groups stress the importance of exploring the leadership effectiveness of the African-American principal from a social aspect; particularly, the leader-follower relationship (Banks, 1991; Bell, 2001; Jones, 2002).

Transformational leadership, as a theory, focuses on the leader-follower relationship (Northouse, 2001). Moreover, both teachers and principals have identified effective leadership to be transformative (Bennis, 1986). Principals who are perceived to exhibit transformational behavior greatly influence a teacher’s motivation to exceed his or her personal expectations (Ingram, 1997). Because transformational leadership has dominated the recent school leadership literature and is generally perceived to be most effective in effective leader-follower relationships, it is the framework within which African-American principal leadership is

described in this study. The background section of the study addresses transformational leadership, transformational leadership in the context of school reform, and the effects of race and gender on schooling and the principalship.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership highlights the social aspect of leadership more than the behavioral, trait, or contingency leadership models. Minority researchers suggest that understanding the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal requires more emphasis on the social aspect of leadership than has been examined in the past (Banks, 1991). Therefore, this study further investigates the social aspect of leadership from a transformational theoretical position. Transformational leadership studies have long been popular in the context of politics, the armed forces, and business (Bass, 1985). Not until late in the 20th century, however, did Leithwood (1994) popularize transformational leadership in the context of education.

Just as there are countless leadership definitions, there are several different interpretations of transformational leadership in the context of education. Bass (1985) implied that transformational leadership built upon transactional leadership, while Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) conceptualized transformational and transactional leadership along ten domains. In this study, transformational leadership is defined as a process whereby "...individuals engage in the development of a relationship, which raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and his or her followers" (Bass, 1985, p. 5). Transformational leadership has been identified as the form of leadership most favorable to organizational growth (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000) and therefore most effective overall (Bennis, 1996). Leithwood and Jantzi use the term "Leadership" to refer to the transformative behaviors of school principals. In referring to the transactional behaviors, they use the term "Management." Like Bass, they believe that both

leaders must display both leadership (transformational) and management (transactional) behaviors.

Leadership in the Context of School Reform

During the mid-1980s the focus of school leadership research shifted. Over the last decade, educational leadership has been researched in the context of one of the most vigorous trends in American education. This trend is the widespread adoption of comprehensive school reform models (Datnow, 2000). With the birth of educational reforms such as site-based management, researchers began to focus on the leadership exercised by others, such as teachers and external change agents. Of course, this literature continues to emphasize the importance of principals to successful programmatic changes and instruction in school settings (Doyle & Smith, 2001).

Researched-based comprehensive school reform models are plentiful, but vary in respect to the role of the principal and teacher. The model of focus in this study was initially the Accelerated Schools Model. The leadership role in this model advocates site-based management. Leadership in an Accelerated School requires individuals to assume leadership responsibilities that may look and sound different from the norm. However, some roles remain formal, such as the role of the principal (Christensen, 1992).

Research reveals that in an Accelerated School, the principal's primary role is that of a transformational leader (Christensen, 1992). Transformational leadership influences attitudinal changes in the teachers whom principals are leading. The principal must serve as a facilitator of change, encouraging the materialization of leaders within the school community (Christensen, 1992). Additionally, in the context of change, leadership literature has focused extensively on transformational leadership (Leithwood & Duke, 1999).

The Effects of Race on Schooling and the Principalship

Education has not always been an available option for the African-American citizen, even though they too have historically embraced the strong belief in the power of knowledge.

“Lacking worth, the greatest gift an African-American family has been able to give its children has been the motivation and skill to succeed in school.... (Higginbotham & Cannon, 1992, p. 262). In the midst of oppression, a small number of African-Americans still were successful in acquiring a formal education. In the late 1700s, educated African-American citizens were called upon to help educate others. Through the financial support of many, a system of education for Blacks, known as “Freedom Schools,” was instituted for the sole purpose of educating the emancipated slave in a separate but perceived equal manner (Nash, 1988). “Freedom Schools” lost their financial support during the 1800s, but, nonetheless, a system of Black schooling was continued with private funding (Pollard, 1997).

Highly experienced male and female African-American principals, with a long history of service, led this Black school system. From the 1870s to the 1950s, the Black school system was perpetuated through a racially segregated public school system (Pollard, 1997). Yet, African-American citizens, especially in the southern region of the United States, continued to struggle for equal protection under the law. This struggle included the right to an equal education; an education that had for so long been a “white privilege” afforded to the European-American citizen (Anderson, 1988). Still, the invaluable presence of African-Americans as educational leaders was crucial for the academic success of the children and the economic and social development of the African-American community. At the same time, discontent with “separate but equal” education became more evident.

In the 1950s, massive changes occurred in the American educational system; segregation was deemed illegal. The *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) decision was the catalyst for the shift in education that occurred during this era. Desegregation proceeded guardedly and unhurriedly for a decade after the *Brown* decision (Dillard, 1995; Pollard, 1997). Eventually, both systems of schooling were affected by desegregation, with many changes occurring in the enrollment and leadership of schools. A shift in school enrollment allowed African-American children the right to attend the nearest school of their choice, without regard to their race (Fairclough, 1999). The shift in leadership, due in part to the changing enrollment of White schools resulted in the displacement of African-American principal leaders (Foster, 1990), with female principals declining in greater numbers than males (Haney, 1978). Unfortunately, a perception of the inferiority of African-American leadership prevailed throughout the United States (Delpit, 1995).

Because of this inferiority myth, it was rare for an African-American principal to keep his or her leadership position in the new desegregated system. For example, between 1968 and 1970, the percentages of African-American principals declined in the four southern states of Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi by 27 %, 19.7 %, 19.6%, and 21.4%, respectively (Weinberg, 1977). African-American principals who were fortunate enough to maintain their leadership positions were relocated to large school systems with high concentrations of African-American students. However, perhaps due to the Civil Rights Act, districts began hiring African-American principals in leadership roles in both Black and White schools (Sizemore, 1986). Nonetheless, the number of African-American principals did not increase greatly.

Moody (1973) indicates that African-Americans in school administration continue to be underrepresented nationally. The number of African-American principals leading the nation's

schools is small when comparing the total population of principals. As reported by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL; 2002), the percentage of principals from various ethnicities actively serving as leaders in 2002 was 16%, with a 9.8% African-American representation rate. Additionally, approximately 88% of the African-American principal population is employed in urban schools predominantly populated by students from various ethnic groups (Jones, 1983).

Purpose of the Study

There is a complex range of definitions regarding what good leadership is within the context of mainstream America. However, until recently, research on the effects of race and gender on leadership has been relatively unexploited. In a society where identities are defined by physical characteristics (i.e., race, gender, age, height, weight), it is surprising that there isn't more research on the effects of race and gender on leadership. We know that interactions between teachers and their school leaders play a key role in the success of a school (Valverde, 1987). Furthermore, we know that the leader's race may cause followers to react differently to them (Parker, 1976). We must ensure that not only do we recruit the right leaders, but in addition, ensure that they are prepared to gain the acceptance and respect of teachers who may not be of the same racial or ethnic background (Chemers, 1993).

The present study was designed to develop a better understanding of the perceived leadership characteristics of the African-American principal, as well as to further our knowledge about recruitment and placement of non-European-American principals. Specifically, this study serves to determine (a) how teachers perceive the leadership and management characteristics of African-American principals and (b) the extent to which the teachers' personal characteristics (i.e., race, gender, years of experience, and years working with their principal) affect their

perceptions of their African-American leaders. The present study uses a descriptive and comparative design with survey data collected from teachers. The data collection instrument used in this study, with the authors' approval, was developed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) and is known as the *Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (LMSS)*.

Significance of the Study

The face of leadership remains colorless in the literature, while the face of the public school student and teacher population changes. Current statistics indicate that 50% of principals nationwide are European-American and male (NCSL, 2002). Most of the elementary and secondary school teachers are female (74%) and European-American (87%) (American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, 1999). Snyder (1999) indicated that some estimates suggested that the percentage of European-American teachers in public schools has increased to as high as 90%, while African-Americans comprise 7% of public school teachers. Approximately 40% of public school students today are from various ethnic groups. The enrollment of students from various ethnicities is projected to increase 50% by 2030, specifically in the states of Illinois, California, and Texas. In the face of the educational challenges of the 21st century, the interaction between race and leadership is relevant to the issue of leadership effectiveness. With only 9.8% of principals in our nation being African American, while 12.8% of the general U.S. population is African-American (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 2004), clearly there is a need to study the disparity.

African-American principals have been successful in leading schools largely populated by poor students and students from various ethnicities (Banks, 1991; Lomotey, 1989). Furthermore, their leadership tenure indicates success in leading followers of various ethnicities (Chemers, 1993). Nonetheless, differences in the leadership effectiveness of African-American

principals when compared to European-American principals lead some scholars to perceive their ability as inferior, thereby hindering leadership credibility and recruitment (Carter, 1995).

Because African-American principals lead differently based on their race (Banks, 1991), other scholars perceive these differences as contributors to the development of culturally relevant educational environments (Banks, 1991). The evidence, regardless of how minute, suggests that African-American principals lead differently based on their race and that these differences are subject to conflicting interpretations. These conflicting interpretations warrant further investigation.

Expanding the body of research on the interaction between race and leadership will contribute to the leadership effectiveness debate. Because American society is a place where people are judged on their physical attributes, this exploration can contribute to a deeper understanding of the influence of race on leadership credibility. This research will serve to fill a void in the literature on African-American principals. Additionally, it can lend clarity to interactions between people from different cultural backgrounds, specifically, the interrelatedness between African-American leaders and European-American followers. These empirical data can assist in dispelling the inferiority myth concerning the effectiveness of the leadership qualities of principals from various ethnic groups and can further advance the development of appropriate training, recruitment, and placement of 21st century principals from various ethnicities.

Research Questions

Four research questions are explored in this study.

1. How do teachers perceive the leadership and management qualities of African-American principals?

2. To what degree do these perceptions differ with the race of the teacher?
3. Are the differences in teachers' perceptions of African-American principal leadership and management qualities based on the gender of the teacher and the gender of the principal?
4. Are years of experience in teaching and years experience with the principal related to teachers' perceptions of principal leadership and management?

Delimitations

The scope of this study was confined to the leadership and management characteristics of African-American principals as rated by both European-American and African-American teachers. *The Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (LMSS)*, designed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997), was used to measure leadership and management qualities.

Methodology

A descriptive and comparative research design was used to compare the leadership and management characteristics of African-American principals, as reported by European-American teachers to those reported by African-American teachers. Survey data collected from teachers in schools were analyzed using multivariate analyses of variance.

Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this quantitative study of the perceptions of African-American principal leadership by African-American and European-American teachers, the following definitions apply:

African-American – a widely-diverse group of people in American society with different ethnic backgrounds consisting of Caribbean and African cultures, and the American Black experience (Cohen, 1996).

Ethnicity – an ancestry, history, and/or culture common to a group of people (Carter, 1995).

European -American – a U.S. resident of European ancestry (Carter, 1995).

Race – a biological term used to differentiate people based on physical characteristics, often bearing a sociopolitical meaning frequently used to make judgments about a person's character (Carter, 1995).

Transformational Leadership (also called “Leadership” by Leithwood and Jantzi, 1997) - the process whereby an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both leaders and followers (Bass, 1985). Six categories have been identified as follows:

1. Symbolizing good professional practice – leaders' behaviors that set an example for staff members, which reflect the espoused values of leaders.
2. Developing collaborative decision-making structure – leaders' behaviors to motivate and encourage individuals to strive for excellence.
3. Providing individualized support – leaders' behaviors that indicate respect and concern about the personal feelings and needs of staff members.
4. Providing intellectual stimulation – leaders' behaviors that challenge staff members to reexamine personal assumptions about work and their performance.
5. Holding high performance expectations – leaders' behaviors that demonstrate expectations for excellence, quality, and high performance of the staff.
6. Providing vision and fostering commitment to group goals – leaders' behaviors aimed at identifying new opportunities for the school and developing, articulating, and inspiring others with personal vision of the future, and promoting cooperation

and assisting teamwork among the staff members to work together toward common goals.

(Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997).

Transactional Leadership (also called “Management” by Leithwood and Jantzi, 1997)

– relies on a series of exchanges or bargains between the leader and follower. The transactional leader primarily relies on the follower’s compliance, which leads the follower to do what the organization expects of him or her (Burns, 1978). Four categories have been identified as follows:

1. Establishing effective staffing practices – this dimension involves behaviors on the part of the leader in response to problems arising from the practices of others in the school.
2. Providing instructional support – the leader tells staff what to do to be rewarded for their efforts in the classroom.
3. Monitoring school activity –the leader actively monitors the work performed and uses methods to ensure the work is completed at high standards.
4. Providing a community focus – the leader seeks to incorporate community characteristics and values in school operations by attempting to plan and work with community representation.

(Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Many studies describe the characteristics and behaviors of effective principals. However, until recently, the characteristics and behaviors of minority principals were not a priority. This literature review encompasses empirical data that address African-American principals. This chapter is organized into four areas. First, a brief historical overview of the African-American principal in the United States is offered so that the reader will better understand the current social context for this study. Section two offers a discussion of classical leadership theories, with a focus on transformational leadership, transformational leadership in the context of school reform, and African-American principal leadership. The final section addresses the social theory most applicable to this study, including factors that influence leadership credibility, such as race, gender and experience.

Historical Perspective: The African-American Principal

A focused discussion of principal leadership requires a brief historical overview of the experiences of the African-American principal in the United States. Therefore, this section documents the historical trends experienced by African-American principals in America. The historical registry revealed that, in Philadelphia, as early as 1793, African-American teachers and principals were hired to teach African-American students in segregated schools (Nash, 1988). “Despite school segregation and harassment from the White population, the African-American population of the United States made one of the greatest educational advancements in

the history of education” (Spring, 2004, p. 191). For example, a meager 7% of the African-American population was literate in 1863, but within a 90-year period, the literacy rate jumped to 90% (Spring, 2004).

Evidence of the leadership success of African-Americans was found in schools instituted for the sole purpose of educating emancipated slaves. In 1787, African-American leaders in Boston petitioned the legislature for schools because African-American children at that time “...receive[d] no benefit from the free school....” (Spring, 2004, p. 110). Therefore, during the 1800s, in an effort to further educate the emancipated slave, African-Americans established a system of schooling (Pollard, 1997). This system was initially established with private aid, but later supported through a segregated public school system. From the 1800s to the 1950s, African-American teachers and principals were successful in not only educating African-American students, but also in maintaining a form of schooling for African-American children in the face of major oppression (Pollard, 1997).

African-Americans have long viewed education as a vehicle of upward mobility (Delpit, 1995). But the education of the African-American child was greeted with dismay in many regions of the United States. Many court cases indicated a continual struggle for African-Americans to have an equal right to an education. However, during the 1950s, massive legal changes occurred in the American public education system; segregation was ruled illegal by the Supreme Court (Delpit, 1995; Pollard, 1997). Although the impetus for desegregation did not originate in the 1950s, the *Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) court case spawned the change in how all Americans should be educated. *Brown* was one of five school segregation lawsuits to reach the Supreme Court in 1953 (Spring, 2004). Unfortunately, changes in law did not spawn changes in practice.

In 1955, the Supreme Court issued its enforcement decree for the desegregation of schools (Spring, 2004), but desegregation proceeded slowly and cautiously for another decade. The 1964 Civil Rights Act finally brought the financial impetus for change; schools refusing to desegregate would not receive federal funding. Eventually, both the Black and White systems of schooling were affected by desegregation. Many changes occurred in the structure, operations, and enrollment of schools. The shift in school enrollment caused schools that were once totally of the Caucasian population to become colored. One unintended consequence of desegregation was that the change in enrollment of Caucasian schools led to the displacement of the African-American principal (Foster, 1990).

African-American principals rarely kept their leadership positions in the “new desegregated system” (Banks, 1991; Delpit, 1995; Lomotey, 1989; Pollard, 1997). Furthermore, African-American female principals became virtually extinct (Haney, 1978). The displacement of the African-American principal occurred partially due to the perceived belief that African-American principals were not capable of effective leadership in an integrated school (Delpit, 1995); hence, an inferiority myth was born (Jones, 1983). In *A Black Principal's Struggle To Survive*, Bonner (1982) states that the school handbook of the school at which he was one of two principals contained a paragraph saying, “in the absence of the superintendent, all decisions made on Shurling campus should be discussed with the white principal who would act as the superintendent” (p. 49).

Those African-American principals who were fortunate enough to maintain their leadership positions were relocated to large school systems with high concentrations of African-American students. Eventually, districts began hiring African-American principals in leadership

roles in both Black and White schools (Sizemore, 1986). Thus, the upward mobility of the African-American principal began.

Unfortunately, African-American principals continued to remain underrepresented (Moody, 1983). A national average for African-American principals was 7.7%, with a 2% representation of African-American females in 1970. In 1997, more than 25 years later, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Education Research and Improvement reported a meager 10.8 % of the nation's principals as being African-American. As recently as 2000, African-American principals represented 9.8% of the principals nationwide, with a total of 16% principals from various non-European-American groups (NCSL, 2002). For instance, in the state of Kentucky during 2000, out of a total population of 1,243 principals, there were 68 principals from various minority ethnic groups (Pitsch, 2000).

African-American principals continue to face not only institutional barriers that restrict access to educational administrative opportunities, but attitudinal barriers as well (Leonard & Papa-Lewis, 1987). In 1992, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement published a list of attitudinal issues principals from various ethnic groups must be prepared to address: lack of peer acceptance; subjection to subtle or overt acts of racism and sexism; challenges of their authority from subordinates; limits placed on their decision-making responsibility; subjection to higher performance-level requirements; and lack of role models, mentors, or sponsors. Despite these barriers to obtaining and succeeding in educational administrative positions, many African-Americans have been successful in the leadership arena (Bell, 2001; Lomotey, 1989; Nash, 1988). As principals, they positively affect the educational experience of African-American students by functioning as role models and by encouraging positive teacher-student relationships in the classroom (Valverde, 1987). Empirical evidence also tells us that the status of race allows

principals from various ethnic groups a unique perspective that serves as an advantage, rather than a disadvantage. This perspective allows for the successful mediation between European-American staff and African-American students and colleagues, and successful parental and community involvement in enacting established policies and procedures (Pollard, 1997).

Successful non European-American leaders have been reported to possess skills needed to mobilize a diverse teaching staff, and create a learning environment in which all children, but more specifically, children from various ethnic groups, succeed academically (Jones, 1993).

Leadership

Until the 1900s, many scholars believed the adage that “leaders are born, not made.” Over the course of five decades, four major leadership models emerged to further explain or refute this phenomenon. Classical leadership models encompass trait theories, behavioral theories, contingency theories, and transformational theories. None of these theories is mutually exclusive or time-bound (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Regardless of the leadership model used, however, leadership has a tremendous impact on the triumph or failure of an organization, especially schools.

Trait theories were among the earliest bodies of research on leadership characteristics. Many studies identified personality characteristics that appeared to differentiate leaders from followers, regardless of the situation (Mann, 1959; Stogdill, 1948). This set of characteristics included: (1) physical vitality and stamina, (2) intelligence and action-oriented judgment, (3) eagerness to accept responsibility, (4) task competence, (5) understanding of followers and their needs, (6) skill in dealing with people, (7) need for achievement, (8) capacity to motivate people, (9) courage and resolution, (10) trustworthiness, (11) decisiveness, (12) self-confidence, (13) assertiveness, and (14) adaptability/flexibility (Gardner, 1990). Other personality characteristic

studies have found no significant differences between leaders and followers with respect to these characteristics. Furthermore, findings showed that people who did possess these traits were sometimes less likely to become leaders (Doyle & Smith, 2001). More recently, researchers who support this theoretical posture have tried to look at combinations of traits that can be identified as appropriate for particular situations. Unfortunately, the attributes associated with leadership on these leadership characteristics lists are often viewed as male and White and, therefore, open to dispute (Clement & Washbush, nd).

As early researchers exhausted their energies searching for common leadership traits, attention turned to the behaviors of leaders, especially their behavior toward followers. The research focus shifted from the leader to leadership. Researchers of this genre grouped together patterns of leaders' behaviors and labeled them "styles." Four major styles evolved: (1) concern for task, (2) concern for people, (3) directive leadership, and (4) participative leadership (Doyle & Smith, 2001). Because numerous differences and inconsistencies were noted among the various leadership behavior studies, researchers found it difficult to say that style of leadership was significant in enabling one group to work better than another (Doyle & Smith, 2001).

The main problem shared by researchers of leadership traits and those of behavior characteristics was that the context in which the behavior trait was exhibited was not adequately weighted (Wright, 1996). Empirical evidence tells us that other factors definitely influence leadership. For example, those with whom leaders work have been reported to influence leadership credibility and perceived leadership effectiveness (Valverde, 1987). Gradually, researchers began to consider the context in which leadership is exercised. The idea that leadership changes from situation to situation became popular. With this school of thought came

the contingency approach to leadership, which maintains that effective leadership depends on a mixture of factors.

Fiedler (1958) defines these factors as the relationship between the leaders and followers, the structure of the task, and position power. Just as with previous models, studies conducted using the contingency model are rooted in conflict (Doyle & Smith, 2001). Some scholars believe that the contingency model can help us to think about what we are doing in different situations. However, other scholars believe that not only do situations influence processes and procedures, but cultural factors also influence the way people carry out and respond to different leadership styles. Because these cultural factors were identified, concerns were raised that the contingency model of leadership was rooted in a North American bias premised on an androcentric philosophy. Additionally, this model has been criticized for a lack of focus on the structural, political, and symbolic components of the leadership framework (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

Chemers (1993) believes that leadership models are not mutually exclusive. For instance, not only have researchers tried to look at combinations of traits that can be identified as appropriate for particular situations, but also the influence of the leader-follower relationship as the core of leadership research in general (Fiedler, 1958). Leadership is a process that promotes the interchange between leaders, followers, and the situation (Finnan & Meza, 2002). Scholars generally agree that leadership can be exercised only in groups, and leadership requires an intensive interpersonal relationship (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). This knowledge concerning the leader-follower relationship leads us to a discussion of the last of the classical leadership theories, the Transformational Leadership Model.

The African-American principal was not considered specifically in the many leadership theories that evolved over time (Anzaldua, 1990). Scholars of diverse organizations and scholars from various ethnic groups suggest the need to include leaders from various ethnicities in the leadership effectiveness debate. It is also suggested that research on the African-American principal be conducted from a social aspect, particularly, the leader-follower relationship. Transformational leadership theories emphasize the importance of the social aspect of leadership by highlighting the importance of the leader-follower relationship (Clement & Washbush, nd), and have, therefore, emerged as the popular philosophy of leadership at this time (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). It is for these reasons that this study explored the transformational leadership qualities of the African-American principal.

Transformational Leadership

The conceptualization of transformational leadership Burns (1978) sparked interest in leadership processes that went beyond transactional (Avolio & Bass, 1988) and has dominated leadership research for the last 40 years (House, 1977). At their inception, transformational leadership studies were popular in the context of politics, the armed forces, and business. In this context, Burns (1978) argued that transformational and transactional leadership styles represented opposite ends of the continuum, with transactional leadership being ineffective. Transactional leadership is generally considered to consist of management behaviors such as contingent reward wherein workers are rewarded or rewards are withheld depending on performance. Bass (1985) posited that transformational leadership built upon transactional leadership. Sergiovanni (1990) considers transactional leadership a first stage and central to the completion of task.

Regardless of the definition, research clearly advises that organizational improvement cannot take place via transactional leadership alone (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinback, 2000). Transactional relationships between leaders and followers have been described as exchange processes whereby followers' needs can be met if their performances are adequate (Burns, 1978). Avolio and Bass (1988) proposed a two-factor theory, claiming that transactional leadership is necessary for organizational maintenance but does not stimulate growth. A leader using this style alone influences followers, but changes very little. If used as the primary behavior by a leader, transactional leadership can lead to an environment permeated by position, power, perks, and politics (Liontos, 1992). Still, it is important to remember that the transformational leader also uses transactional methods in many day-to-day activities.

“Learning organizations...require transformational leadership because, through its several dimensions, it empowers staff to strive for personal and collective mastery” (Leithwood Aitken, & Jantzi, 2001, p. 83). Key components identified to define transformational leadership, according to Bass and Stogdill (1990) were as follows: (1) charismatic leadership: followers show complete faith in the leader; (2) inspirational leadership: the leader expresses his or her high ideals and expectations of the followers; (3) intellectual stimulation: the leader encourages followers to think creatively in order to solve problems; and, (4) individualized consideration: the leader shows compassion, expresses empathy, and caring for his followers. The symbolic relationship between the leader and follower promotes achievement and positive reinforcement for each of the parties.

The transformational leadership model developed in non-school contexts (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Yukl, 1981) was adapted for educational purposes. This model, designed by Leithwood (1994), builds on the four major components of transformational leadership identified

by Bass and Stogdill (1990) as well as their definition of transactional leadership. However, Leithwood conceptualized leadership and management along ten domains. He equates leadership with transformational behaviors and management with transactional behaviors. This model consists of six leadership sub-scales which include: (1) symbolizing good professional practice; (2) developing collaborative decision making structure; (3) providing intellectual stimulation; (4) providing individualized support; (5) holding high performance expectations; and (6) fostering development of vision and goals (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997). There are four management domains which are constructs equivalent to transactional leadership. These domains include: (1) establishing effective staffing practices; (2) providing instructional support; (3) monitoring school activities, and (4) providing a community focus. Liontos (1992) asserts that regardless of whether it is in a business setting or school setting, leadership characteristics are similar in nature.

Leithwood and associates conducted a series of more than fifty studies addressing transformational leadership in all aspects of schooling: effects on students, effects of the leaders, effects on behavior of the follower, effects of the followers' psychological states, and organizational-level effects. These studies, as well as those conducted by other researchers, used both quantitative and qualitative methods of research in studying teachers and principals (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Chemers, 1993; Doyle & Smith, 2001; Leithwood, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinback, 2000; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramanian, 1996; Northouse, 2001).

There is a compelling body of empirical evidence concerning the effects of transformational leadership on a wide array of organizational and student outcomes when exercised by principals (Leithwood, Tomlinson, & Genge, 1996). Effects of leadership are often

found in teacher-level outcomes and only indirectly in student-level outcomes (Gurr, 1996; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). The studies of transformational leadership in schools had several similar findings. First, studies conducted by Leithwood and Jantzi (1990) and Hallinger and Heck concentrated on “teacher-perceived” student outcomes. Significant indirect effects of transformational leadership on teacher-perceived student outcomes were revealed. But it appears that the largest proportion of school leadership effects on students are mediated by school conditions.

The second group of studies was of teacher perceptions of leaders along both transformational and transactional dimensions. Chirchello (1999) found that principals were perceived to exhibit many characteristics of transformational leadership. Ingram (1997) reported that 66% of the teachers who participated in his study indicated that their principals exhibited transformational patterns of behaviors “fairly often” and transactional patterns of behavior “sometimes.”

In a third group of studies, effects of leadership on the behavior of followers were assessed. The effects of transformational leadership are both indirect and direct, with the direct effects primarily impacting teachers’ personal goals. The significant direct effects of leadership on teachers’ commitment were largely accounted for by leadership practices concerned with vision. Leithwood (1994) inferred that vision building activities influence teachers’ personal goals, supporting a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and extra effort. Extra effort was accounted for by charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. A direct effect on employee motivation and commitment, leading to the kinds of extra effort required for significant change was found.

Studies on the effects of leadership on followers' psychological states also were conducted. Evidence from these studies showed that teachers who experience transformational leadership are more committed, change their attitudes and behaviors, feel they must adhere to central demands, and are more satisfied (Helms, 1990; King, 1989; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990). It seems that principals who are perceived to exhibit highly transformational behaviors have a greater impact on teachers' motivation to perform beyond original expectations. According to Leithwood and Jantzi (1999, p. 468), "transformational leadership practices have a modest but statistically significant effect on the psychological dimensions and student engagement."

Organizational-level effect studies found that transformational leadership practices are helpful in fostering organizational learning. Of four school conditions-- purposes and goals, school structure and social networks, people, and organizational cultures--Hallinger and Heck (1998) found that only purposes and goals consistently mediated perceptions of principal leadership. Leithwood and Jantzi (1990) found that leaders affect school outcomes through those factors of the school to which they have direct access. This body of literature suggests that transformational leadership is a powerful stimulant for improvement. According to Chemers (1993, p. 312), "transformational leaders, by meeting followers' needs for a visionary goal, a challenging and interesting job, and an authentic relationship with their leader, change the ways that followers think about themselves and their job."

Transformational Leadership in the Context of School Reform

Educational reform has existed for centuries, yet the focus of leadership research has shifted periodically. Over the last decade, education has been researched in the context of one of the most forceful trends in American education -- the widespread adoption of comprehensive school reform models (Datnow, 2000). The popularity of school reform models has caused a

shift in the role of the principal in America. Most school reform initiatives require capacity building on the part of individuals, as well as whole organizations. Studies of effective schools and successful school change often highlight the importance of principals' leadership abilities (Chemers, 1993).

In recent years, the principal has been viewed as the primary agent in raising student achievement and improving the quality of schools. The emphasis on school improvement has caused the principal to be subjected to the unprecedented pressure of accountability. For example, the wide sweeping national reform initiative instituted by the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 continues to emphasize the need for sound leadership in every one of its multiple facets. It would appear that during this time of educational reform, the responsibility for school improvement efforts fall on the shoulders of the school principal.

Transformational forms of leadership have been advocated as productive under conditions fundamentally the same as those found by schools targeted for reform (Leithwood, 1994). Therefore, it is not surprising that with the birth of educational reforms such as site-based management, researchers began to focus on the leadership exercised by others, such as teachers and other external change agents. Still, this literature emphasizes the importance of principals to the successful schooling of America's youth. Leithwood and associates reported that principals hold positional power and influence to bring about school wide change.

In the many researched-based comprehensive school reform models that have evolved, the roles of principals and teachers vary. The comprehensive school reform model initially used for this study was the Accelerated Schools Model, which advocates site-based decision-making. The Accelerated Schools Project (Gaziel, 2001; Levin, 1987) is one of the oldest comprehensive reform models and seeks to improve the effectiveness of schools serving a large population of

impoverished students and students from various ethnic groups who typically have been underserved by traditional schools (Gaziel, 2001; Levin, 1987, 1996). In recent years, the ASP model has been modified, but the model's tenets remain intact. Leadership in an accelerated school requires all individuals to assume responsibilities that may look and sound different from the traditional roles that they are accustomed to playing. The role of the principal remains formal; however, research tells us that, in an Accelerated School, the principal's primary role is that of transformational leader (Christensen, 1992).

The evidence summarized in this section supports the claim that transformational leadership is effective in the context of school reform. Although the role of the principal has shifted, the importance of the principal's leadership has not diminished. The right kind of leadership continues to be needed for organizational success to be realized. Voluminous data imply that transformational leadership is judged by both teachers and principals to be effective overall (Bennis, 1986). To better understand whether or not African-American principals possess leadership qualities such as these, the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal are examined in the section that follows.

African-American Leadership

While it is certainly true that there is a complex range of definitions of what good leadership is within the mainstream of public life in the United States, that range is actually very limited when defining effective leadership qualities of leaders from various ethnicities (Scheurich & Laible, 1995). "During the 1990s, scholars took notice of African-American teachers for the primary purpose of projecting a shortage of minority teachers and principals" (Dillard, 1995, p. 10); yet, still little is known about the leadership style of African-American principals. Some researchers have shown that the academic performance of students from

various ethnicities, as well as the overall climate of the school, improved under the leadership of African-American principals (Lomotey, 1989). The limited body of research that exists, however, describes only the following: the kinds of problems African-American administrators face (Montenegro, 1993); school administrators as change agents of schools serving African-American students (Lomotey, 1989); and the leadership styles of principals from various ethnic groups.

The first category of research reviewed in this section addresses the challenges that African-Americans encounter as principal leaders. These challenges include institutional and attitudinal barriers. Institutional barriers have been identified as isolation, marginalization, and the need to handle conflicting pressures from the district, parents, and community at large (Montenegro, 1993). Attitudinal challenges, on the other hand, have been characterized as a lack of peer acceptance, being subjected to both subtle and overt acts of racism, subordinates' challenging their authority, limitations of decision-making responsibilities, subjection to higher performance-level criteria, and a lack of role models. In addition to the highlighted attitudinal challenges, research reports that systematic biases influence leadership credibility, perceptions of being fair and just, and the coordination of followers to accomplish organizational goals. Unfortunately, these systematic biases affect the management of a school (Pettigrew, Jemmott, & Johnson, 1984), and can lead to disparity in the recruitment and placement of African-American principals.

Research on the role of the principal as a change agent, the second category of research reviewed in this section, indicates that leaders from various ethnic groups face built-in limitations that hinder leadership opportunity and perpetuate biases toward them (Chemers & Murphy, 1995). These organizational factors include conflicts in expectations as a leader

(Chemers, 1993), legitimacy of their relationship with followers (Hollander, 1964), and the maintenance of a balance between ethnic groups and professional identities (Ayman, 1993; Jones, 1993). According to Ayman, leaders of various ethnicities are faced with a setting in which their own assumptions do not always accurately predict the appropriate behavior, and these leaders may not have access to the expectations of others. In other words, leadership credibility is premised on the European-American culture. Therefore, principals from various ethnic cultures may not know what is expected of them in a given situation, based on the perceived actions of European-American male principals.

The last body of research reviewed in this section addresses the leadership style of African-American principals. Although African-Americans have been all but excluded from the general theoretical discourse, limited empirical data do attempt to explain leadership styles of African-American principals through traditional leadership models such as power-influence, traits, behaviors, and contingency frameworks. An alternative approach, such as the integrated leadership model (Chemers, 1993), has been used also. Research conducted on traditional leadership theories suggests that there are notable differences in leadership approaches of African-American principals when comparing the leadership styles of African-American and European-American principals (Jones, 1983). It has been found, for example, that African-American principals have both a strong commitment to African-American students and a deep understanding that all students can learn. These principals place a higher priority on community involvement than do their European-American peers (Lomotey, 1987). Lomotey (1989) also indicated that African-American principals in successful schools possess more than one leadership style. For instance, some African-American principals provide direct leadership in areas of goal development, energy harnessing, communication, facilitation, and instructional

management. In addition, research shows that the importance of African-American principals' functioning as role models to encourage positive teacher-student relationships (Valverde, 1987) is vital to the success of the diverse organizations we call schools.

The body of research discussed in this section tells us that the African-American principal's ethnic identity shapes the social constructs of his or her administrative role (Pollard, 1997). Empirical evidence, albeit limited, states that principals of various ethnicities lead in ways reflective of their ethnicity, and that their race influences how their leadership effectiveness is judged (Chemers & Murphy, 1993; Lomotey, 1993; Pedigrew, Jemmott, & Johnson, 1984). It would be helpful, according to Jones (1993), for leaders of various ethnicities leading successful diverse organizations to remember that "...they must...be smart but not too smart, confident but not too confident, honest and trusted by both minority and majority colleagues, and courageous about racial issues, but not too threatening to the majority" (cited by Bell, 2001, p. 20). Research increasingly emphasizes the importance of the legitimacy of African-American leadership with followers (Hollander, 1964).

Social Theory and Factors that Influence Leadership Credibility

Critical Race Theory

In a society in which racial and ethnic identities carry so much meaning for how we are judged and how we view ourselves, compounded by the changing faces of the students, and the uncolored face of school leaders, the impact of race on leadership is relevant to the issue of leadership effectiveness, and the recruitment of African-American principals. This research study is grounded in Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT has expanded from law, its field of origin (Delgado, 1995), into the area of education (Crenshaw, 1988; Lynn, 1999; Tate, 1996). Because the role of race is all too often ignored in both practice and theory, educators such as Ladson-

Billings and Tate (1995) encourage us to further explore how race affects educators, students, and schools.

For the purpose of this study “race” is defined as a biological trait used to differentiate people based on physical characteristics, often bearing a sociopolitical meaning frequently used to make judgments about a person’s character (Carter, 1995). Assumptions about people based on their appearance and biases concerning their race have long been the norm and have hindered the social, political, and economic growth of the citizens from various ethnic groups (George, 2002). Race has and continues to drive public policy in America. Furthermore, George implies that although the United States is viewed as the land of opportunity – the melting pot or salad bowl - it continues to be rooted in and shaped by the values and beliefs of the dominant White culture. Therefore, in order for citizens from various ethnic groups to realize acceptable social and economic rank in American society, they must conform to the dominant culture.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is premised on four tenets: (1) skepticism toward liberalism, (2) insistence that racism is a normal, acceptable facet of American life, (3) a critique of civil rights laws and the protection of Whites’ self-interest, and (4) the call for context in regards to racial equalities (Delgado, 1995). Although liberalism has been the dominant force in civil rights, the authenticity of the nation’s efforts to achieve equality for all citizens has come under scrutiny; combating oppression is still a slow process. Bell’s (1990) theory of “interest convergence” has often been used to criticize liberalism. For instance, historically, Whites in the United States have been willing to sacrifice the well-being of people from various ethnic groups for their own economic self-interests. The subordination of African-Americans continues to be sustained by those economic and legal structures that promote White privilege (Taylor, 1999).

The second tenet that critical race scholars observe as true is that racism is embedded in the fibers of American society and is therefore a normal fact of daily life. Racial discrimination grew out of the practice of enslavement, but outlasted the institution of slavery (Encarta Encyclopedia, 2004). The ideologies and beliefs of slavery continue to pervade American society, so much so that European-Americans could feel superior by virtue of their skin color (Delgado, 1995). Racial differences between African-Americans and European-Americans, however, are so deeply rooted in the American psyche that they continue to be replicated; therefore, it is reasonable to suspect that the long-standing inferiority myth, which surrounds African-American citizens, has also surrounded African-American principals. Hence, the inferiority myth has hindered and continues to thwart the credibility of African-American principal leaders.

The importance of analyzing civil rights laws is the third tenet of CRT. Historically, racial separation has insured the political and legal power of one group over another group, deeming European-American citizens superior to citizens from various ethnic groups (Calmore, 1995), whereas the Critical Race movement's intent was to renew concerns about racism and call to context constitutional guarantees of human equality (Encarta, 2004). Unfortunately, as a nation we often disregard the historic context in which racial conflict was spawned unless it promotes the interest of European-Americans. Bell's (1990) theory of interest convergence suggests that European-Americans will support advances of African-Americans only when the interests of European-Americans are also promoted in the process. For example, during the 1950's, the integration of public schools was delayed because negative racial attitudes served to perpetuate racial segregation; segregation of schools was not viewed as progress for Whites (George, 2002). Forty-five years later, negative racial attitudes that continue to exist have

perpetuated a shift back to the unofficial segregation of the public school system: a system of schooling viewed as “in the best interest” of European-American students. This supports the belief that America is a nation that is ignorant of its racial past (Bond, 1991), and offers lip service concerning the importance of protecting the civil rights of all citizens in the United States.

Critical race scholars “call to context” the issue of racial oppression, which they insist is crucial to understanding racial dynamics. CRT is grounded in the “...realities of the lived experiences of racism, which has been singled out with wide consensus among Whites, deeming African-Americans and others as worthy of suppression” (Crenshaw, as cited by Taylor, 1999. p. 28). This tenet is based on what Bell (1990) calls “racial realism.” Racial realism is defined as realities of the lived experience of racism. According to Crenshaw (1988), a large majority of European-American citizens has singled out African-American citizens and other ethnic groups as worthy of suppression.

Critical Race Theory, stereotypes of African-Americans, and social injustices that plague urban, suburban, and rural schools offer venues to understanding why ineffective education reforms and abysmal African-American student achievement scores continue to haunt public schools in the United States. Taylor (1999) sees this theoretical framework as more advantageous in that it is grounded in the experiences of people from various ethnic groups. This fact is especially important to the current study because people define leadership differently. Differences have been identified in the leadership characteristics of European-American leaders and leaders of various ethnic groups, as well as male and female leaders. Because these definitions are generally based on an androcentric perspective that are often equated with

inferiority, the present criteria used to judge leadership effectiveness remain a European-American standard of normalcy.

Embedded in the construct of race are the cultural beliefs and stereotypes that have been perpetuated throughout many generations. These biases can be viewed as evidence of inequity. Society, as a whole, educators, and scholars make assumptions about leaders on the basis of their appearance, socialization, and experience. Perceptions are premised on race. Shared constructs, with race being the dominant one, influence leadership effectiveness and credibility. The African-American principal is faced with many obstacles over which he or she has no control, thereby impeding their leadership integrity.

Gender

In recent decades, research on the female leader has gained ground as more and more women are stepping into leadership roles. However, conflicting evidence reveals that gender is no more than a diversion (Kakabadse, 1999). One body of research, for instance, tells us that women's leadership styles are different from men (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992; Vinnicombe, 1999). These scholars believe that gender affects both supervisory style and outcome (Shakeshaft et al., 1991, p. 1), while others view this as a myth (Kakabadse, 1999).

Research on women administrators has focused primarily on the issues of access and style. Shakeshaft et al. (1991) reported that as recently as 1977, women in the United States have made only minimal gains in educational administration. However, strong empirical evidence supports that administrative positions are more accessible to women than in the past (Mertz & McNeeley, 1990). According to Mertz and McNeeley more than 40% of principals today nationwide are female.

In respect to leadership style, background, and interactions of leaders, significant differences have been found when comparing male and female principals. Research data tell us that female principals lead in a more democratic and less directive style than male principals (Eagly et al., 1992). Furthermore, Mertz and McNeeley (1990) found that women exhibited more traits of effective leadership than men demonstrated. It has been reported that women encourage teacher empowerment, establish educational priorities, offer directives for improvement, and include teachers in the decision-making process; they attend to the social and emotional development of the students and focus on student relationships (Shakeshaft et al., 1991). Pevoto (2003, p. 66) found that overall, "...females rated higher as transformational leaders than their male counterparts." Women tended to be more transformational than men who tended to be more transactional.

The opposition purports that the differences reported depend on the man or woman in question as well as the organization in which he or she serves. Gender is viewed as only one demographic, and, accordingly, is not a significant differentiator of performance. Researchers who support this position suggest that the context, leadership style, and attitudes play a powerful role in leadership (Kakabadse, 1999). Although male and female leaders have comparable jobs, they will likely react differently to similar situations due to personality or socialization, as they reflect differences in the organization or context. Their responses may not represent dissimilarities.

Several problems have been identified when comparing the leadership effectiveness of men and women. In outlining the agreed-upon differences that male and female principal leaders possess, Eagly et al. (1992) raised concern about the strong presence of a male managerial stereotype in organizational life. Female managers are pressured to conform to this stereotype,

thereby confounding research results (Eagly et al., 1992). Additionally, because of the male-dominated organizational beliefs, leadership styles are narrowly defined by male researchers. Nonetheless, "...despite the obstacles females face in acquiring administrative positions, they seem to be succeeding and performing effectively" (Daughtry & Finch, 1997, p. 182).

Experience

Research indicates that leadership experience is one of the most important factors in selection and promotion decisions (Fiedler, 1994). Length of experience has been proven to influence leadership effectiveness. Nonetheless, experience alone does not contribute to performance of the leader (Fiedler, 1997). A universal definition of experience does not exist. However, commonly defined, experience refers to length of tenure at an organization, a job, or occupation.

Research does tell us that the greater the range of experience, the better the person performs (Fiedler, 1997). For example, in one study, results showed that the longer a manager has been in the job and been held to account for his or her performance, the more positive, outward-looking, and mature he or she. In another study conducted by Fiedler (1997), the .80 correlation between time in service (TIS) and performance implied that experience contributed strongly to performance.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter three addresses the methods and research design used in this study. In this chapter, the research questions, research design, subjects, instrumentation, procedures, data analyses, delimitations, and an overall chapter summary are provided.

Research Questions

How do teachers perceive the leadership effectiveness of African-American principals? Leadership research tells us that race influences leadership styles and the perceptions of leaders by followers (Valverde & Brown, 1988). In other words, perceptions of African-American leaders may be different based on the race of the teacher working with them. Research also tells us that a person's race can hinder leadership credibility (Valverde, 1997). Still, possibly due to the modest size of the minority principal population, this body of research remains limited. Therefore, this study purports to answer the following questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the leadership and management qualities of African-American principals?
2. To what degree do these perceptions differ with the race of the teacher?
3. Are the differences in teachers' perceptions of African-American principal leadership qualities based on the gender of the teacher and the gender of the principal?
4. Are years of experience in teaching and years experience working with the principal related to teachers' perceptions of principal leadership?

Research Design

For the purpose of this study, a descriptive and comparative research design was used. Comparative research serves to investigate relationships between and among groups. The comparative research design is used to "...investigate the relationship of one variable to another by simply examining whether the value of the dependent variable in one group is different from the value of the dependent variable in the other group" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p 287). The relationship being investigated can reveal either a negative or positive association. However, causal conclusions cannot be drawn from the findings. Relationships between variables allow for the identification of the possible causes of a problem, the identification of variables for further investigation, and the prediction of one variable from another (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001).

This comparative research design is applicable to this study because the purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship of one variable to another by examining to what degree differences exist across two groups of teachers. Teachers' perceptions of their African-American principals' leadership and management were compared for European-American teachers and African-American teachers. Additionally, teachers' perceptions based on the gender and experience of the teachers were compared.

Participants

The population of interest in this research study was African-American principals in schools across the United States. This section addresses the population, the accessibility of the population, the sampling method, and external validity.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the principal population. However, limited data exist on African-American principals. A possible cause for this could be the small percentage of African-American principals that exist nationwide. As recently as 2002, the

national percentage of African-American principals was 9.8 % (NCES). This number limits the potential for identifying research subjects. Due to the difficulty in accessing a nationwide sample, a convenience sample was used for the purpose of this study. The researcher's relationship with the Accelerated Schools PLUS Project provided access to a national database consisting of 101 principals, 21 of whom are African-American. An additional six former Accelerated Schools principals were also included, as well as 23 principals referred from other principals within the Accelerated Schools network.

Principals

A letter requesting approval to use the Accelerated Schools PLUS (AS Plus) database was submitted to the National Director for the Accelerated Schools Plus Project. Permission was granted and access to the database of 101 principals was obtained. The 101 principals served in the 98 elementary, middle, high and multi-level schools which had two principals and were active in the Accelerated Schools PLUS network. The population of interest was only African-American principals in those Accelerated Schools across the United States.

Accessible Population

The accessible population consisted of 101 principals leading 98 schools that are active in the National Accelerated Schools Plus network. These schools represented 71 elementary, 13 middle, 7 high, and 5 multi-level schools in 18 states. The targeted sample consisted of the 21 African-American principals who were members of this database, plus a convenience sample of an additional 29 African American principals. All principals had to have led their current schools for at least two years in order to be included in the study.

Teachers

The teacher population of interest was African-American and European-American teachers in the selected Accelerated Schools across the United States. The accessible population consisted of teachers in the schools led by 21 African-American principals identified from the National Accelerated Schools PLUS database, six schools that had implemented AS Plus but were at the time of the study not active for financial reasons, and 23 other schools led by African-American principals that were recommended by other participating principals. Packets were sent to each school during the spring of the 2004 – 2005 school year. Each packet contained a participant's letter and a survey.

Teachers were identified according to their ethnicity as European-American, African-American, or other (i.e., Hispanic & Asian American). Teachers had to have taught at the participating school site for at least one year. Two hundred forty-four teachers were randomly selected from the schools led by African-American principals. The sample represents 122 African-American teachers and 122 European-American teachers. Non-proportional stratified random sampling was used to ensure that five African-American teachers and five European-American teachers were selected from each school site. Because the sample of the teachers of other ethnicities was too small for comparison purposes, they were not included in this study. Upon identification of the usable sample, consent to participate in the research study was solicited from each teacher.

External Validity

This study examined the perceptions of African-American and European-American teachers in respect to the leadership ability of African-American principals leading elementary, middle, high and multi-level schools that are implementing a reform model. The results of this

study can be generalized to the population of African-American and European-American principals leading elementary, middle, high and multi-level schools that are implementing a similar reform model. Results of this study cannot be generalized to principals or teachers of other ethnicities or other cultures.

Data Collection Method

Various methods are utilized to collect data for comparative research. Standardized tests, questionnaires, and interviews are a few available methods. For this study, an electronic questionnaire was the data collection method originally selected. For respondents who preferred a paper copy of the survey, that method was used instead.

Instrumentation

Demographic Data

A demographic survey was used to acquire information on each teacher and principal participant. Demographic information from schools active in the Accelerated Schools Plus Model was collected with the assistance of members of the Accelerated Schools national faculty. The national faculty of the National Accelerated Schools Reform Project is comprised of 24 regional directors and site trainers who provide technical assistance in the implementation of the reform process. Demographic information from schools not active in the AS Plus network was collected with the assistance of the principals on each school site. The survey included information such as gender, race, length of tenure, and length of tenure working with the current principal. This information was utilized throughout data analysis in order to address research questions that pertained to participant characteristics.

Leadership and Management of Schools Survey

The Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (LMSS), (Leithwood, 1997), measures teachers' perceptions of the extent to which transformational and transactional leadership practices are evident in the school. The LMSS addresses the management of the school operations and school leadership. Section A: *The Nature of Leadership* of the LMSS consists of 32 items in Likert Scale format, and each item has five possible options (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree). Section B: *School Management* consists of 21 items in Likert Scale format, also offering the same five possible options. Each item on the LMSS requires an answer indicating the extent to which the respondent agrees or disagrees with the item. Perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership practices were measured by items such as:

Shows respect for staff by treating us as professionals, and expects us to be effective innovators.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

Scoring and Score Interpretation. Total scores were calculated only for participants responding to 80% or more of the items. Overall, a higher score on the school leadership or management subsets indicate positive perceptions toward a principal's leadership traits, a construct equivalent to transformational leadership qualities, or management traits, a construct equivalent to transactional leadership qualities, and a lower score indicates negative perceptions toward a principal's transformational or transactional leadership attributes.

Table 1 describes the verbal description of agreement levels associated with particular scoring ranges. To exemplify the interpretation of subscale scores, assume a principal had a total score of 4.3. The correct interpretation of this score would be that this teacher has a somewhat positive perception of the principal's transformational or transactional leadership characteristics.

If a teacher scored 2.3, the correct interpretation would suggest that the teacher possesses a somewhat negative perception of the principal’s transformational or transactional leadership characteristics. A summary scale was computed by taking a mean of each section for each teacher. This average was used for data analysis.

Table 1
Subset Score Interpretation

Score	Agreement Level
1.0 -1.5	Strongly disagree/very negative perceptions
1.6- 2.5	Disagree/somewhat negative perceptions
2.6– 3.5	Neutral/ neither positive or negative perceptions
3.6– 4.5	Agree/somewhat positive perceptions
4.6 – 5.0	Strongly agree/very positive perceptions

Validity and Reliability. The LMSS has been highly reliable in assessing teachers’ perceptions in school settings, as reported in *Making Schools Smarter: A System for Monitoring School and District Progress* (Leithwood, Aitken, & Jantzi, 2001). Evidence from previous uses of this instrument demonstrated high internal reliabilities of all scales (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1999). The total Cronbach alpha score for Section A: *Nature of Leadership* subset was .98 (Jantzi, 1997). The total Cronbach alpha score for Section B: *School Management* subset was .94.

Test validity is the most important characteristic that a measuring instrument can possess since it tests the degree to which scientific explanations of phenomena match the realities of the real world (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Construct validity, a type of external validity, refers to the degree to which the instrument measures what it claims to measure. Considering the clarity of survey instructions, the simplicity of the question items, and the series of original and replicated studies conducted utilizing this instrument, it is reasonable to suspect that the LMSS is

valid for the purpose of assessing teachers' perceptions of principals' transformational and transactional leadership characteristics.

For this study, leadership is operationalized as the ten subscales from the Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) *Leadership Management of Schools Survey*. The survey is divided into two sections. Section A is the Leadership scale, *Nature of School Leadership*. It consists of six subscales. Section B is the Management scale, *School Management*. It is divided into four subscales. Each subscale is described as follows.

Section A: Nature of School Leadership. Section A: *Nature of School Leadership* identifies six subscales to assess the perceived transformational leadership qualities of principals. The first subscale is *Symbolizing Good Professional Practice*. It consists of six items. An example item is #7: "Sets a respectful tone for interaction with students." This sub-scale score and all others is constructed by averaging the scores of each of these responses. Each sub-scale has a range of 5 (high level of performance with the regard to symbolizing good professional practice) to 1 (low level of performance with regard to symbolizing good professional practice). The reliability of the *Symbolizing Good Professional Practice* sub-scale, as reported by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) is .93.

Sub-scale 2, *Developing a Collaborative Decision Making Structure*, consists of six items. An example item is #23: "Facilitates effective communication among staff." The reliability of this sub-scale, as reported by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) is .93.

Providing Individualized Support is sub-scale 3. *Providing Individualized Support* sub-scale consists of four items. An example item is #24: "Provides moral support by making me feel appreciated for my contribution." Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) reported the reliability of this sub-scale at .90.

Sub-scale 4 is *Providing Intellectual Stimulation* and consists of seven items. An example item is #29: “Encourages me to try new practices consistent with my own interests.” The reliability of this sub-scale, as reported by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997), is .94.

Establishing High Performance Expectations is Sub-scale 5. This sub-scale consists of three items. An example item is #15: “Holds high expectations for students.” Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) indicated the reliability as .88.

Sub-scale 6 is *Fostering Development of Vision and Goals*. This sub-scale consists of six items. An example item is #6: “Encourages the development of school norms supporting openness to change.” The reliability of this sub-scale, as reported by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997), is .93.

Section B: School Management. Section B: *School Management* consists of four sub-scales that assess the transactional leadership qualities of a principal. The first sub-scale of Section B: *School Management* is *Establishing Effective Staffing Practices* which consists of six items. An example item is #1: “The teacher’s expertise is of paramount importance in staffing.” As with the *Leadership* sub-scales, each *Management* sub-scale score is constructed by averaging the scores of each of the responses and each has a range of 5 (high level of performance with regard to establishing effective staffing practices) to 1 (low level of performance with regard to establishing effective staffing practices). The reliability of the *Establishing Effective Staffing Practices* sub-scale is .76 (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997).

Sub-scale 2 is *Providing Instructional Support*. This sub-scale consists of five items. An example item is #21: “The school administrators frequently participate in discussions of educational issues.” Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) reported the reliability of this sub-scale as .85.

Monitoring School Activities is Sub-scale 3 and consists of five items. An example item is #11: “Our administrators are visible within the school.” The reliability of this sub-scale, as reported by Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) is .92.

Sub-scale 4 is *Providing a Community Focus*. This sub-scale consists of five items. An example item is # 4: “Our administrators are sensitive to the community’s aspirations and requests.” The reliability of this sub-scale is .90 (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997).

The items from the school leadership subset of the LMSS were used to gather information regarding the transformational leadership characteristics of African-American principals. The items from the school management subset represented the transactional leadership characteristics of African-American principals. The items for the demographic survey were used to gather demographic information from research subjects for the purpose of comparing perceptions based on their personal characteristics (i.e., race, gender, and the length of tenure).

Data Collection Procedure

The Human Subjects Review Board at the University of New Orleans was contacted prior to the onset of this study to request exemption [See Appendix A.] which was granted. The study was conducted in the Spring of 2005. The convenience sample in this study consisted of all those willing to complete the survey. The research literature states that there is no single standard response rate for surveys (Fink, 1995). However, as discussed in a previous section of this paper, it was estimated that an 80% response rate was needed to produce reliable results in this study. A letter requesting permission to utilize the Accelerated Schools Project’s national database was submitted and permission granted [See Appendix B]. Letters requesting participation in this study were distributed to the African-American principals and teachers [See Appendix C] and

teachers then completed an electronic or paper questionnaire. Confidentiality of the respondents was assured although the respondents' names were coded to allow for a second e-mail follow up to those who were not responsive to the first. This follow-up e-mail was sent two weeks after the first e-mail was sent.

Data Analysis

Statistical Analyses

Descriptive statistics, inferential statistics using multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) were the techniques used in this study. Descriptive statistics draw from indexed raw data for the purpose of characterizing an entire set of data. Inferential statistics allow for the formulation of inferences about a large group from a sample of that group (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2000). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to determine the main and interaction effects of categorical variables on a dependent interval variable. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) uses one or more categorical independent variables, and more than one dependent variable (Mertler & Vannatta, 2001).

Surveys were administered on-line, and the data were entered into an Excel database, which was transformed to a data file. The statistical software utilized in this study was SPSS-Windows 12.0. The procedures and their applicability to this study are discussed in this section. The Leithwood and Jantzi questionnaire was administered to the 244 teachers selected for this study. Basic descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, standard deviation, etc.) were used to describe the teachers' perceptions and characteristics.

Research Question 1: How do teachers perceive the leadership and management qualities of African-American principals?

Descriptive statistics were used to answer Research Question 1. Means and standard deviations were reported by sub-scale on the *LMSS*.

Research Question 2: To what degree do these perceptions differ with the race of the teacher?

Research Question 2 was addressed with three one-way multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs). The dependent variables were the leadership and management scales of the *LMSS* for the first MANOVA; the leadership sub-scales for the second MANOVA, and the management sub-scales for the third MANOVA. The analysis consisted of comparing the means of African-American or European-American teachers in the sampled schools on the indicated scales. The primary question was whether or not there was an overall difference in leadership and management qualities of African-American principals, when comparing the perceptions of African-American and European-American teachers. Follow-up analyses attempted to isolate the specific differences by sub-scale.

Research Question 3: Are the differences in teachers perceptions of African-American principal leadership qualities based on the gender of the teacher and the gender of the principal?

The primary focus of this question was whether or not there would be a significant interaction between the gender of the teachers and the gender of the principals they were rating. To address this for the leadership and management scales of the *LMSS*, a 2X2 multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used. The design is depicted in Table 2. The primary focus of the analysis was on the significance and nature of the interaction represented.

Table 2
Gender Analysis

Teacher	Male Principal	Female Principal
<u>Male Teacher</u>	Transformational Leadership Mean	Transformational Leadership Mean
<u>Female Teacher</u>	Transformational Leadership Mean	Transformational Leadership Mean

Research Question 4: To what degree are the teachers’ years of experience and years working with the principal related to teachers’ perceptions of the leadership of their principal?

To address this question, actual years of experience of the teacher and years working with the principal were correlated to the leadership scores assigned to the principals.

Summary

The methodology presented in this chapter described the research questions, the data collection method, and the data analysis procedures for this study. The research questions were explored using an electronic or manual survey. For this study, the independent variables were teachers’ race , teachers’ gender, teachers’ years of experience, length of time teachers worked with their current principal, and principals’ gender. All principals were African American and all had at last two years of experience as an administrator. All teachers had worked with the principal they were rating for at least one year. Transformational leadership was the primary dependent variable. Data analysis procedures included descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

Many definitions are used to describe good leadership within the context of education. It was not until recently, however, that the interrelatedness of race, gender, and leadership was viewed as critical to the leadership effectiveness discourse (Dillard, 1995; Roza et al., 2003). One would think that in a society where citizens are judged by their gender and/or the color of their skin that more attention would be devoted to research relative to the effects of race and gender on leadership. With the face of the public school student becoming more colored, the face of the teacher less colored, and the face of leadership remaining for the most part White, the effects of race and gender on leadership credibility in the diverse organization we call schools can no longer be ignored.

This comparative research examined the effects of teachers' race, gender, and experience on their perceptions of African-American principal leadership and management qualities. In this chapter, data analysis results of the study are presented. The description of the subjects is reported in section one. In the second section, a detailed discussion of the research questions and the statistical results from the analyses are presented.

Characteristics of Sample

The participants in this study were drawn from a convenience sample comprised of African-American principals leading elementary and secondary schools. Participants originally were to include only those African-American principals implementing the Accelerated Schools

Plus (AS Plus) Comprehensive School Reform Model in thirteen states: California, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, New Jersey, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. However, there were only 21 African-American principals in the AS Plus national database. Because this was not a large enough sample for the analyses being used in this study, an expert nomination or convenience sample method was used to identify 29 additional African-American principals.

A total of 50 principals were asked to participate in this research study. A packet was sent to the original 21 Accelerated Schools principals. Each packet included a letter of support from the national director of the Accelerated Schools Plus (AS Plus) Comprehensive School Reform Project and a letter requesting participation in the study. Packets were also sent to six schools that implemented AS Plus, but were at the time of the study inactive for financial reasons. Additionally, packets were sent to 23 schools led by African-American principals in the states of Louisiana, Georgia, Virginia, and Illinois requesting their participation in the study. These schools were recommended by other principals who were participating in the study. Packets were sent to each school during the Spring of the 2004 – 2005 school year.

African-American principals provided a roster of their teachers which included teacher race and subjects taught. The principals also provided e-mail addresses for their teachers, as well as identification of teachers with less than one year at that school. Depending upon the number of African-American and European-American teachers in each school, six (3 African-American and 3 European-American) to ten (5 African-American and 5 European-American) teachers were selected randomly from each school list. The packets containing the participants' letters were mailed to the individual teachers at the schools. One week after the packets were mailed, an

electronic survey was sent to each participant. Two weeks after the first mailing, a second copy of the survey was sent to each participant who had not responded.

Response Rate

Descriptive data for the participants' responses are presented in Table 3. A total of 32 schools, representing the states of Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, New Jersey, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin participated in this study. The principal response rate was 64%. The teacher response rate was 67%, with the average response rate of African-American teachers per school being 2.7, while the average response rate of European-American teachers per school was 2.4. On the average, more than a 50% response rate per school was realized.

Table 3
Principal and Teacher Response Rate

Principals contacted		Non-participants*		Principal response rate		Teachers contacted		Teacher response rate	
<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
50	100	18	36	32	64%	244**	100	164	67

*refused to participate or did not respond

**only schools from which principals returned teacher lists were sent teacher surveys; on average, schools received 8 packets each.

Teacher Demographics

The demographic data yielded statistics on four variables of interest--race, gender, years of experience, and years working with present principal.

Race and Gender. Descriptive data for the gender and race of participants are presented in Table 4. Nearly nine of ten respondents were female, as would be expected given the overall teacher demographics in the United States.

Table 4
Gender by Race of Teacher Respondents

	African American		Race European American		Total	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Gender						
Male	13	14.9	9	11.7	22	13.4
Female	74	85.1	68	88.3	142	86.6
Total	87	100.0	77	100.0	164	100.0

Experience. Participants were asked to indicate years of teaching experience and their number of years working with their present principal. Descriptive data illustrating the teachers' years of experience in the teaching profession and the number of years working with the principal are shown in Table 5. In this study, the typical teacher had about three times as many years of experience as years working with the current principal.

Table 5
Teacher Experience

Experience variable	n	M	SD
Years of teaching experience	151	13.47	10.40
Number of years working with principal	158	4.31	3.92

Principal Demographics

All of the principal participants were African-American. The principal participants were asked only to indicate their gender.

Gender. Descriptive data for the principal participants' responses are represented in Table 6. The results indicated that unlike the teachers, the representation of males and females was much closer for the principals. Females represented a larger percentage of respondents by almost two thirds.

Table 6
Principal Gender

Principal Gender	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Male	12	36.4
Female	20	60.6
Total	32	100.0

Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (LMSS)

The mean for the LMSS *The Nature of Leadership* of 4.20 (SD = .75) indicated that teachers had an overall positive attitude towards the transformational leadership qualities of African-American principals. The mean for *School Management* of 4.18 (SD. = .69) indicated that the teachers viewed their African-American principals as fairly strong in exemplifying the characteristics of transactional leadership. Overall, teachers rated their principals above 4 on a 5-point scale, or “strong” on all leadership and management sub-scales. Means and standard deviations for all ten sub-scales of the (LMSS) are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Descriptive Statistics for Teachers’ Perceptions of Principals’ Use of Leadership and Management

	<i>n</i>	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Symbolizing good professional practice	164	1.50	5.00	4.14	.82
Developing a Collaborative Decision-Making Structure	164	1.50	5.00	4.10	.84
Providing Individualized Support	164	1.00	5.00	4.04	.94
Providing Intellectual Stimulation	164	1.29	5.00	4.22	.76
Holding High Performance Expectations	164	1.33	5.00	4.51	.65
Fostering Development of Vision and Goals	164	1.33	5.00	4.22	.80
LEADERSHIP TOTAL	163	1.83	5.00	4.20	.75
Establishing Effective Staffing Practices	164	1.38	5.00	4.00	.78
Providing Instructional Support	163	1.40	5.00	4.16	.77
Monitoring School Activities	163	1.60	5.00	4.31	.75
Providing a Community Focus	163	1.40	5.00	4.25	.73
SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TOTAL	163	1.68	5.00	4.18	.69

Inferential Statistics

The specific statistical analyses and results of the analyses for each research question are discussed below.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked: “How do teachers view the leadership and management qualities of African-American principals?” The total mean score for *The Nature of Leadership* of 4.20 (SD = .75) was compared against a neutral value of “3” (on the 5-point scale). This indicated that teachers do perceive the leadership characteristics of African-American principals to be transformational. The total mean score for *School Management* of 4.18 (SD. = .69) was about the same as the mean for transformational leadership. Again, compared to the neutral value of “3” (on a 5-point scale), teachers perceived their principals as using transactional skills. Mean scores and standard deviations for all subscales on the LMSS were presented in Table 7.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked: “How does the race of teachers affect their perceptions of the leadership and management qualities of their African-American principal?” The mean scores for LMSS leadership and management scales based on the race of the teacher are presented in Table 8. The mean score for leadership for African-American teachers was 4.32 (SD = .68). The mean score for European-American teachers was 4.07 (SD = .80). The mean score for management for African-American teachers was 4.32 (SD=. 60), with the mean score for European-American teachers being 4.04 (SD=.75). Results indicated that the African-American teachers rated African-American principals about 1/3 point higher than European-American teachers on both the leadership and management sections of the survey.

Table 8
Descriptive Statistics for Leadership and Management by Teacher Race

	Race	Mean	SD	N
Leadership	African American	4.3253	.6756	86
	European American	4.0723	.8038	77
	Total	4.2058	.7474	163
Management	African American	4.3156	.6027	86
	European American	4.0354	.7455	77
	Total	4.1832	.6863	163

To determine whether differences based on the race of the teacher were significant, a MANOVA using race as the independent variable and leadership and management scales as dependent variables was computed. A statistically significant Wilks' Lambda of .957 ($p=.029$) was obtained. Because the MANOVA was significant, univariate ANOVAs were computed to determine which variables were statistically significant. These results are presented in Table 9. The results indicated that race was significant ($p=.03$) for both the leadership and school management sections of the LMSS. Although the mean differences by race were statistically significant, the effect sizes were small, explaining only about 3% of the variance in leadership and 4% in management.

Table 9
ANOVA Summary Table for Effect of Race on Teacher Perceptions of Leadership and School Management

Dependent Variable	SS	df	MS	F	p	Eta squared
Leadership	2.60	1	2.600	4.762	.031	.029
Management	3.19	1	3.189	7.022	.009	.042

Wilks' lambda=. 96; F= 3.63; $p=.029$

To determine which sub-scales of leadership and management differed by teacher race, two separate MANOVAs were conducted, using the individual sub-scales of the leadership and management sections of the LMSS as dependent variables. The MANOVA for leadership was

not significant (Wilks' Lambda of .935; $F=1.83$; $p=.096$), indicating that race does not significantly impact the teachers' perceptions of the transformational leadership qualities of the African-American principal. Because the Wilks' Lambda was not significant, univariate post hoc analyses were not computed.

Although the differences in the leadership sub-scales by race were not statistically significant, descriptive statistics for the leadership sub-scales by race are presented in Table 10. African-American teachers rated African-American principals higher on all transformational leadership subscales, with "Development of a Collaborative Decision-Making Structure" having the largest mean difference of .34 and "Holding High Performance Expectations" having the smallest mean difference of .15.

Table 10
Descriptive Statistics for the Leadership Sub-scales by Teacher Race

Leadership Subscale	Race	M	SD	N
Symbolizing good professional practice	African-American	4.285	.683	87
	European-American	3.976	.925	77
	<i>Total</i>	4.140	.818	164
Developing Collaborative Decision-Making Structure	African-American	4.261	.707	87
	European-American	3.918	.933	77
	<i>Total</i>	4.100	.836	164
Providing Individualized Support	African-American	4.149	.861	87
	European-American	3.912	1.021	77
	<i>Total</i>	4.038	.944	164
Providing Intellectual Stimulation	African-American	4.322	.691	87
	European-American	4.106	.816	77
	<i>Total</i>	4.220	.757	164
Holding High Performance Expectations	African-American	4.575	.609	87
	European-American	4.429	.692	77
	<i>Total</i>	4.506	.652	164
Fostering Development of Vision and Goals	African-American	4.326	.755	87
	European-American	4.093	.836	77
	<i>Total</i>	4.217	.800	164

The second MANOVA was conducted using the management sub-scales as dependent variables. The MANOVA was significant (Wilks' Lambda= .940; F=2.52; p= .044), indicating that race does significantly impact the management sub-scales. Descriptive statistics for

management subscales are presented in Table 11. African-American teachers rated African-American principals higher on all transactional leadership subscales, with “Providing Instructional Support” having the largest mean difference of .35, and “Monitoring School Activities” having the smallest mean difference of .22.

Table 11
Descriptive Statistics for the Management Sub-scales by Teacher Race

Management Sub-scale	Race	M	SD	N
Establishing Effective Staffing Practices	African-American	4.136	.730	86
	European-American	3.858	.821	77
	Total	4.005	.784	163
Providing Instructional Support	African-American	4.327	.625	86
	European-American	3.977	.866	77
	Total	4.162	.767	163
Monitoring School Activities	African-American	4.417	.660	86
	European-American	4.200	.824	77
	Total	4.315	.748	163
Providing a Community Focus	African-American	4.382	.658	86
	European-American	4.107	.772	77
	Total	4.252	.725	163

Because the Wilks’ Lambda of .940 ($p=.044$) was significant, univariate ANOVAs were computed to further determine which sub-scales were significantly different. These results indicated a significant difference on three of the four sub-scales, as shown in Table 12. No significant difference ($p=.06$) was reported for the sub-scale “Monitoring School Activities.”

Table 12
ANOVA Summary Table for Effect of Race on School Management Sub-scales

Management Sub-scale	SS	df	M	F	p
Establishing Effective Staffing Practice	3.122	1	3.122	5.205	.024
Providing Instructional Support	4.997	1	4.997	8.918	.003
Monitoring School Activities	1.914	1	1.914	3.478	.064
Providing a Community Focus	3.087	1	3.087	6.056	.015

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked: “Do gender of the teacher and gender of the principal influence teachers’ perceptions of African-American principal leadership and management qualities?” Descriptive statistics for teacher perceptions of the transformational and transactional leadership qualities of the African-American principal by gender of teacher and principal are presented in Table 13. Male teachers had higher mean scores for male principals on transformational and transactional leadership behaviors than did female teachers, yet results indicated that female teachers rated male and female principals similarly on both transformational and transactional leadership qualities.

Three MANOVAs were computed to determine whether the independent variables “gender of the teacher”, “gender of the principal”, and the “interaction of the two” had an impact on (1) leadership and management, (2) the leadership sub-scales, and (3) the management sub-scales. None of the MANOVAs was statistically significant. The Wilks’ Lambda for the two main sections, leadership and management, was .986 ($F=1.13$; $p=.327$), indicating that the gender of the principal does not significantly impact the teachers’ perceptions. Similar results were found for the leadership sub-scales (Wilks’ Lambda=.960; $F=1.08$; $p=.377$) and the management sub-scales (Wilks’ Lambda of .981; $F=.76$; $p=.556$). Because the MANOVAs were not significant, univariate post hoc tests were not computed.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Leadership and Management Sections Based on Principal and Teacher Gender

Scale	Principal Gender	Teacher Gender	n	M	SD
LEADERSHIP	male	male	13	4.5623	.4141
		female	53	4.2368	.6146
		Total	66	4.3009	.5924
	female	male	9	4.1497	.7424
		female	88	4.1401	.8461
		Total	97	4.1410	.8335
	Total	male	22	4.3935	.5925
		female	141	4.1765	.7664
		Total	163	4.2058	.7474
MANAGEMENT	male	male	13	4.5404	.4661
		female	53	4.1870	.6194
		Total	66	4.2566	.6059
	female	male	9	4.1611	.7917
		female	88	4.1304	.7336
		Total	97	4.1332	.7349
	Total	male	22	4.3852	.6320
		female	141	4.1517	.6912
		Total	163	4.1832	.6863

Research Question 4

Research Question 4 asked to what degree are the “years of experience” and “years working with the principal” related to teachers’ perceptions of the leadership and management of their principal. Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were computed to answer Research Question 4 (see Table 14). “Years experience” in teaching was not significantly related to teachers’ perceptions of principal leadership. There was no relationship between “years of experience” and scores on the leadership sub-scales. A significant but low positive correlation ($r=.163$; $p=.047$) did exist, however, between the “years of experience” and teacher perceptions of leadership on the management sub-scale, “Providing Instructional Support” (see Table 14). The correlation indicates that teachers with more years of experience rated their principals as giving more instructional support.

All leadership sub-scales were related to “years working with the principal,” with the exception of the “Holding High Performance Expectations” sub-scale ($r=.090$; $p= .259$). All management sub-scales also were related to “years working with the principal,” with the exception of the “Monitoring School Activities” ($r=.064$; $p=.423$) sub-scale. All of the reported relationships were positive but small, indicating that teachers who work with principals longer tend to have stronger beliefs that the principals exercise leadership and management skills.

Table 14
Pearson Correlation Between Teachers’ Years Of Experience And Years With Principal To Perceptions of Principal Leadership

Scale	<i>r</i> years experience	<i>p</i> years experience	<i>r</i> years with principal	<i>p</i> years with principal
Symbolizing good professional practice	-.004	.965	.174	.029
Developing Collaborative Decision-Making Structure	.075	.361	.216	.006
Providing Individualized Support	.064	.433	.261	.001
Providing Intellectual Stimulation	.055	.499	.243	.002
Holding High Performance Expectations	.007	.930	.090	.259
Fostering Development of Vision and Goals	.052	.527	.204	.010
Leadership	.047	.570	.218	.006
Establishing Effective Staffing Practices	.083	.310	.235	.003
Providing Instructional Support	.163	.047	.249	.002
Monitoring School Activities	.029	.725	.064	.423
Providing a Community Focus	.069	.402	.184	.021
Management	.095	.247	.202	.011

Summary

The participants in this study included 32 principals and 164 teachers in 11 states. The results indicated that overall African-American principals are judged by both African-American and European-American teachers to possess transformational and transactional leadership qualities. Results also indicated that race affects teachers’ perceptions of the African-American

principals' leadership qualities. African-American teachers tended to rate African-American principals higher on leadership and management qualities than did European-American teachers. A relationship did not appear to exist between the perceptions of the principals and the gender of teachers or principals. There did not appear to be a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions and teachers' years of experience. However, teachers' perceptions of African-American principals' leadership and management qualities increased positively with the number of years of experience working with the principal. These findings are discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter offers a summary of the present study of teachers' perceptions of African-American principals' leadership. It also presents a discussion of the research study's findings, the implications of those findings, and the limitations of the study. The chapter concludes with recommendations for further research.

Overview of the Study

The concept for this study was based on the ever-growing need for schools in the United States to be equipped to meet the educational needs of public school students. Jones (2002) suggests that there is an interrelatedness between leadership and diversity if the organization is ethnically and culturally diverse. Public schools of the 21st century can certainly be viewed as diverse organizations. This study examined the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal. Specifically, it served to determine how teachers' perceive the leadership and management traits of African-American principal leaders, and the extent to which race, gender, and years of experience affect these perceptions. The results of this comparative study were intended to provide information that would assist in closing the gap in the literature surrounding the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal. This data could be used to enhance leadership training programs. Furthermore, this research could assist school districts in the recruitment and placement of the African-American principal.

Participants

The participants in this study were drawn from a convenience sample comprised of African-American principals leading elementary and secondary schools in twelve states during the 2004-2005 school year. A convenience sample was used due to the small African-American principal population. A total of 32 schools participated in this study, with a 61% school response rate. Twenty-four (24) of the 32 schools were elementary level, with 27 schools having implemented or implementing the Accelerated Schools Plus Comprehensive School Reform Model. The principals received a packet that included a single page cover letter explaining that teacher participation was voluntary and confidential, as well as highlighting the usefulness and importance of participants' responses. The teachers' packet included a single page cover letter explaining the purpose of the study, highlighting the importance of their participation, and the voluntary and confidential status of the study. A total of 244 electronic surveys were distributed to the teacher participants. Of the 244 surveys distributed, 164 surveys were completed. The return rate of usable surveys was 67%.

Characteristics of Participants

Demographic information featuring the characteristics of the principal and the teacher participants, as obtained from the Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (LMSS), is summarized below.

Principal Demographics

The principals who were the subjects of this study were all African-American. The majority was female. Females accounted for almost 61% of the principal participants. This sample does not reflect the literature which tells us that males dominate the U.S. principal population (NCSL, 2002), and females comprise a smaller percentage of the African-American

principal population overall (Delpit, 1985). However, the sample in this study does reflect the literature which tells us that females comprise a larger percentage of elementary school principals (NCSL, 2002). Approximately 24 of the 32 principals who participated in this study were females leading elementary schools. Therefore, it is reasonable to suspect that females would represent a larger percentage of the principal sample in this study.

Teacher Demographics

Slightly more than 60% of the teacher sample was African-American, while slightly less than 40% of the sample was European-American. The ethnic backgrounds of the participants in this study do not reflect the demographic population of the teachers in the United States; however, the gender distribution does. Eighty-seven percent of the teacher sample was female. Current literature reports that 88% of the teacher population is European-American and female (NCSL, 2002). One explanation for the inconsistency of this sample as compared to the reported ethnic demographics on the teacher population in the United States could be that schools led by African-American principals have a smaller number of European-American teachers than African-American teachers. Historically, African American principals have been assigned to schools with high enrollments of non-European-American students which may also affect teacher hiring and teacher assignments. The average length of experience, and the number of years a teacher worked with the principal also were assessed. The average length of experience in the United States is 15 years (Snyder (1999). The years of experience of the participants in this study was 13 which is consistent with the average years of experience nationwide. The average number of years of experience working with the current principal for teachers in this study was four.

Discussion of the Findings

Perceptions of the Leadership Characteristics of the African-American Principals

The research question investigating teachers' perceptions of the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal was explored through the use of the Leadership and Management of Schools Survey (LMSS). Transformational forms of leadership have been deemed effective for addressing the challenges faced by schools (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996). The LMSS instrument assessed the transformational and transactional traits of the African-American principal. Thirty-two (32) questions focused on the teachers' perceptions of the principals' leadership traits, a construct equivalent to transformational leadership, and 22 questions centered around the management traits of the principal, a construct equivalent to transactional leadership.

The results of this study indicated that African-American principals are perceived to "somewhat strongly" possess transformational and transactional leadership traits. Holding high performance expectations was the leadership quality on which African-American principals received the highest rating. This implies that African-American principals are successful in helping teachers believe that the vision and goals of the school are in fact possible. Effective leaders help followers identify the gap between the schools' goals and reality (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Other studies on transformational leadership reported that "Holding high performance expectations seems marginally less sensitive to alterable variables than other leadership domains" (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997, p. 528).

Providing individualized support was the quality rated the lowest for African-American principals. This indicated that African-American principals can increase perceptions of their ability in that area by making an extra effort to show respect for staff and express empathy for

their feelings and needs. This can be accomplished by providing incentives, opportunities for individualized learning and effectively monitoring progress (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Because African-American principals are often assigned to inner-city schools which tend to have higher numbers of new teachers, it is particularly important that they develop mechanisms for supporting those teachers. Without such support, teachers are more likely to leave.

With respect to the management domain, the construct equivalent to transactional leadership, African-American principals are perceived as possessing “somewhat strong” transactional leadership characteristics. However, African-American principals were rated higher in monitoring school activities than the ability to establish effective staffing practices. This indicated that African-American principals are successful in monitoring the school’s activities, such as using time and space efficiently, and allocating and acquiring the necessary resources. They are perceived as adept in managing the day-to-day operations of the school. African-American principals must be conscious however of how tasks are assigned and performed, so that they establish positive conditions for teaching and learning (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003).

Although limited, data on the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal exists. However, there are conflicting interpretations in respect to their leadership characteristics. On one hand, African-American principals in more successful schools have been reported to exhibit more than one leadership style (Lomotey, 1989). For instance, Lomotey reported that some African-American principals in successful elementary schools provide direct leadership in areas of goal development, energy harnessing, communication, facilitation, and instructional management in a way that is similar to other principals. On the other hand, research has reported that African-American principals lead differently based on their race. According to

Cawelti (1987), some have interpreted these differences to suggest that African-American principals are inferior when compared to their European-American counterparts.

This study, among the first of its kind in studying a larger sample of African-American principals, indicated that African-American principals are perceived to be both transformational and transactional leaders. The findings in this study are consistent with other transformational leadership studies. African-American principals possess qualities that can help staff members develop and maintain a collaborative professional school culture, foster teacher development, and help teachers solve problems together more effectively, deeming African-American principal leadership effective. This study can assist in closing the gap in the literature surrounding the African-American principal, as well as assist in dispelling the inferiority myth that has plagued the African-American principal.

Factors Influencing Teachers' Perceptions of African-American Principal Leadership

Two of the teacher demographic characteristics influenced teachers' perceptions of African-American principals--race and years of experience. School level (elementary or secondary) and gender were not found to influence teacher perceptions; however, the majority of the participants were in elementary schools and female. If gender and school level differences exist, they possibly could be found in studies with larger samples.

Effects of Race on Teachers' Perceptions. The results of this study indicated that the teacher's race does shape his or her perceptions of the African-American principal. One possible explanation is that the perceptions of African-American and European-American teachers may vary with respect to the leadership credibility of the African-American principal. This is consistent with past research conducted in diverse settings that indicated that although they could not justify their perceptions (Bell, Jones, & Madsen, 2001), European-American teachers varied

in their perceptions of African-American principals (Chemers, 1993). Race can influence and hinder how leadership effectiveness of the African-American principal is judged (Banks, 1991; Cawelti, 1987; Chemers, 1993; Jones, 1989). Possible explanations for why leadership credibility is influenced along racial lines could be rooted in “kinship networks” and “homophily.” Critical Race Theory also offers some guidance.

Hill (1993, p. 4) found that “...one of the most important sources of mobility in African-American families has been a strong kinship network.” African-American teachers have reported that, as a cultural group, not only were they socialized initially to give unconditional respect to their leaders (Jones, 2002), but to be generally supportive of one another. The African-American teachers may have been more comfortable with their African-American principals due to racial kinship. A supporting explanation for this finding could be what is known as “homophily” (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971), which suggests that effective communication and interaction between people evolve when people are of the same cultural likeness.

On the other hand, European-American teachers may lack a sense of ethnic bonding with their African-American principals. Just as “homophily” is a possible reason why African-American teachers rate African-American principals higher than European-American teachers, it can also serve as one possible explanation why European-American teachers don’t feel that they effectively communicate and interact with their African-American principals, ultimately influencing how they perceive the leadership ability of the African-American principal. Another possible explanation for why race affects the interaction between African-American principals and European-American teachers is rooted in the Critical Race tenet that implies that racism is so embedded in American society as to be unrecognizable. European-American teachers likely would deny that race influenced their ratings of their school leaders.

But in this study, teacher perceptions did vary based on race. African-American teachers rated African-American principals higher than their European-American counterparts on possessing transformational and transactional leadership qualities. The greatest difference was in the degree to which teachers perceived the principals' ability to develop a collaborative decision-making structure, and the least degree of difference was in perceptions of the expectations of the principal. African-American principals must provide opportunities for teachers to participate in the decision-making process, a process that allows teachers to embrace shared goals (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003) and which could overcome obstacles created by homophily. African-American principals were rated high on all transactional/ management domains, with monitoring school activities rated most similarly by African-American and European-American teachers. Providing instructional support and fostering development of vision and goals were rated most differently. Again, this supports the explanations of kinship and homophily. African-American principals may feel more comfortable supporting African-American teachers who are more likely to share their expectations and experiences. African-American principals must identify their own potential biases and strive to provide support to all teachers, even when that support is not invited and may not be initially welcomed. Shared goals are not likely to be realized until communication, decision making, and support are open and uniform.

Effects of Gender on Teachers' Perceptions. This study investigated whether the gender of the teacher and the gender of the principal affected the teacher's perception of the transformational leadership of his/her principal. No significant relationship was reported. However, males rated male principals higher on transformational and transactional leadership qualities than did females, while females rated male and female principals similar on both transformational and transactional traits. Others have found that males are more likely to be

perceived as leaders because of the historical image of effective leaders as masculine and dominant (Mann, 1959).

Effects of Teachers' Years of Experience on Teachers' Perceptions. This study concentrated on the effects of the years of experience of the teacher, rather than the years of experience of the principal. It has been reported that leaders with experience are more likely to be rated higher as leaders than those at the early or very late stages in their career (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1990). Unlike the large body of empirical evidence that tells us years of experience influence perceptions, the results of this study indicated that years of experience do not affect teachers' perceptions of their African-American principals' leadership qualities. However, the results of this study indicated that the number of years working with their principal influenced the teachers' perceptions of the principal's transformational and transactional leadership traits. This finding is consistent with other research finding that the length of experience with a leader has an influence on the perceptions of a leader's credibility (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996). "A teacher's tenure in a school increases the chances he or she has of establishing an interpersonal relationship with their principal. ... Teachers in smaller schools, and with longer tenure in a school with the same leader, will form more accurate perceptions of the performance of their schools; ... [and] more favorable to women leaders and transformational leadership practices" (Jantiz & Leithwood, 1990, p. 522). Furthermore, Graen and Sandura (1986) found that "...followers who enjoy better relationships with their leaders also have higher levels of task performance and job satisfaction" (Chemers, 1993, p. 178).

Implications

Leadership Research

There has been minimal research on the leadership characteristics of non-European American leaders. This gap in the literature is particularly relevant with respect to African-American leaders in educational organizations. It is important for researchers and practitioners to have a better understanding of the issues surrounding the leadership characteristics of the African-American principal. Some researchers claim that African-American principals lead differently based on their race (Lomotey, 1989). For decades, these differences have been interpreted as inferior (Cawelti, 1987). The importance of African-American principals possessing transformational leadership traits is significant in that it can assist in first, closing the gap in the literature surrounding the African-American principal, and second, assist in dispelling the inferiority myth that has plagued the African-American principal for too long a time. There is a great need for more knowledge on the interrelatedness among leadership, followership, and diversity within schools. Additional studies that address this interaction between leader and follower in a diverse organization can greatly contribute to research and practice.

Additional research on the variable gender is important at this point because more and more schools are being led by females while so many leadership models were created using male samples. More than 75% of the schools in this sample were elementary schools led by African-American female principals. This supports the literature that females are perceived to possess transformational leadership qualities, and assists in closing the gap in the literature surrounding the African-American female principal. This finding has implications for the training and recruitment of female principals, if only to validate their effectiveness in a previously male-dominated position.

Training

Because leadership credibility is influenced along racial lines, the training and placement of the African-American principal are called to question. The interaction among leadership, followership, and diversity is also important in the training provided to future principals. The following information is intended to help African-American principals understand the role they play in the retention and recruitment of members of k-12 organizations. First, principals should be made aware that leadership is an intricate interpersonal relationship between the principal and his or her teachers. It is important to establish strong personal relationships with the individual teachers in the building. Next, principals should be informed that potential biases along racial lines exist in the perceptions of their actions. African-American principals should be aware that although research reported that effective leaders are judged on what they do, not on who they are, unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case for African-American principals. It may be important for novices to pay more attention to helping teachers get to know them personally in order to break down racial barriers as well as barriers created by the unfamiliar or unknown.

Next, African-American principals should be aware that they are perceived to possess high degrees of all transformational and transactional traits as identified by Leithwood. However, African-American principals should know that they are not perceived as effective in the areas of providing individualized support and establishing effective staffing practices as in other leadership areas. The area with the largest perceptual difference due to race was establishing a collaborative decision making structure. Nonetheless, African-American principals are perceived to possess the ability to set direction, develop people, and develop the organization --traits identified by Leithwood and Riehl (2003) as important for leadership success of any organization. Lastly, the length of time a person works with another person affects his or her

perception of that person. This finding also has implications for novice principals in that effective communication and interaction come about when people establish and strengthen a relationship over a period of time.

Training programs must expand the knowledge of African-American principals. Their knowledge base must include an understanding of diverse followers, an understanding of the leader-follower relationship, an understanding of how perceptions are formed, and strategies to create an inclusive environment where all ethnic groups feel accepted and valued.

Recruitment Policies and Procedures

With the knowledge that African-American principals possess transformational forms of leadership, African-American principals must be recruited based on their leadership characteristics and the different perspectives they bring to the leadership debate. Because organizations we call school are becoming more diverse, the need for more minority leaders is greater. It would seem that minority leaders, specifically, African-American principals, who have been traditionally locked out of the leadership arena, should be allowed to participate, to a greater degree, in leading the schools of the 21st century.

Recommendations for Further Research

This research is among the first to explore the transformational leadership of the African-American principal using quantitative methods. Based on the results, the following recommendations for future research are offered:

1. Further quantitative research exploring the perceptions of African-American principal leadership should be conducted. Very few studies to date have explored the characteristics of African American principals using sample sizes of 10 or more.

2. Further research exploring the effectiveness of African-American principals' leadership in schools undergoing reform and schools that are considered successful is needed. Different results may be found if only effective schools are studied; that is, positive school outcomes may diminish differences along racial lines.
3. Further research on the interrelatedness of diversity and leadership should be examined. What are the characteristics of principals who are able to overcome barriers naturally created by homophily and kinship?
4. Further research is needed to explore the differences between African-American principals and their European-American counterparts. Because no European-American principals were included in this study, it is impossible to know whether European-American teachers would rate them any higher than they rated African-American principals.

Limitations

This study was originally limited to African-American principals in schools active in the Accelerated Schools network where the principals and teachers have been trained in a particular school improvement process based on shared decision making. Due to the small available population, additional schools not actively engaged in a school reform model were included in the sample. For this reason, no conclusions could be drawn regarding school improvement and principal leadership. It is not known whether the school improvement process affects teachers' perceptions of their principals. The small sample size also limits confidence in the findings. Only teacher perceptions were measured. Perceptions do not reflect actual behavior. Finally, as mentioned earlier, we cannot know for certain whether differences in perceptions were caused by racial factors alone. European-American teachers could be harsher critics of school leadership

regardless of the principal's race. Only additional empirical research can help answer that question.

Concluding Remarks

Race is a highly charged subject even 50 years after the Brown decision. Exposing what may be racial bias is not intended as an indictment of one group of teachers or their principals. Instead, it is hoped that we can learn from the research that differences do exist - in expectations, behaviors, and judgments of others. African-American theories of kinship help explain these conditions in nonjudgmental ways. We are attracted to what is familiar and to others who share our experiences. It behooves us as future and current educators to learn to embrace these differences as we simultaneously learn how to meet one another's needs for support and involvement. Indeed, it is not only our futures as teachers and principals that depend upon our ability to do so.

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Appendix A

Human Subjects Permission

**University Committee for the Protection
of Human Subjects in Research
University of New Orleans**

Campus Correspondence

Darlene Brown
Dr. Peggy Kirby
ED 348-M

2/12/2005

RE: Teachers' perceptions of African-American principal leadership

IRB#: 02feb05

The IRB has deemed that the proposed research project is now in compliance with current University of New Orleans and Federal regulations.

Be advised that approval is only valid for one year from the approval date. Any changes to the procedures or protocols must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Use the IRB# listed on the first page of this letter in all future correspondence regarding this proposal.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best of luck with your project!
Sincerely,

Laura Scaramella, Ph.D.
Chair, University Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

Appendix B

Permission from Director of Accelerated Schools Plus



University of Connecticut
Neag School of Education

Accelerated Schools Project

January 10, 2005
Darlene Morgan Brown
2412 Timbers Drive
Harvey, LA 70058

Dear Darlene,

I am writing to confirm that the Accelerated Schools Project is pleased to support the research you are conducting. We will make our database available to you and will facilitate direct communication with affiliated schools. Additionally, all key staff members are committed to assisting you as you require. Requests for information contained in our database should be directed to the technology director, Soon-Nam Choi.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or require any specific information.

Sincerely,



Gene Chasin

Appendix C

Letter to Participants

University of New Orleans
2000 Lakeshore Drive
Education Building, 348M
New Orleans, LA 70142

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANTS NOTICE

Dear Selected Study Participant:

You have been selected to participate in a study concerning your perceptions of African-American principal leadership. However, your participation is voluntary and confidentiality is guaranteed. This study is entitled, "Teachers' Perceptions of African-American Principal Leadership". This research is being conducted as part of my dissertation. This study has been approved by the University of New Orleans IRB, as indicated by the IRB # 02feb05. My faculty advisor is Dr. Peggy C. Kirby. Results of this study will contribute to the research base addressing African-American principals, as well as contribute to research on transformational leadership specifically.

The study will require you to complete an electronic survey, which should require no more than 15 minutes of your time. Your responses are anonymous and no information identifying you will be collected. All responses, per the University of New Orleans guidelines and practices, will be kept strictly confidential and non-accessible to your principal. No individuals will be identified in any reports on the research. The purpose of this survey is to describe the leadership practices of school principals. The survey solicits agree, neutral, and disagree responses. Therefore, no answer is "right" or "wrong".

I appreciate the many demands of your time, including this request for information. But I urge you to complete this survey since only people actually involved in schools can provide an accurate picture of how the leadership effectiveness of principals is judged. Thank you in advance for participating in this study. Your cooperation in completing this survey is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Darlene Morgan Brown
PrincipleInvestigator

VITA

Darlene Morgan Brown was born in Lafayette, Louisiana. In 1983, she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Speech Pathology/Speech Education from the University of Louisiana at Monroe, and later, in 1998, earned a Masters degree in Educational Administration from the University of New Orleans. Darlene is a certified elementary school teacher, with 11 years teaching experience in the classroom and 12 years working in school reform.

During her tenure in the master's program at the University of New Orleans, Darlene worked as a Research Associate/Site Trainer for the University of New Orleans Accelerated Schools Center. In 1999, she entered the doctoral program in Educational Administration at the University of New Orleans. In 2001, Darlene became Assistant Director of the Accelerated Schools Center, began teaching undergraduate level education courses, and served as Professional Development Schools Coordinator for the University of New Orleans.

During the last year of her doctoral work, Darlene extended her school reform responsibilities to the national level, serving as the Midwest Regional School Support Director for the Accelerated Schools Plus Center, located at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, Connecticut. She also gained invaluable experience serving as Professional Development Coordinator for the University of New Orleans' Capdau Charter School.