The Dissertation Committee for Daniel Dewayne Spikes certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Assessing the Impact of Cultural Proficiency Training for Central Office Administrators

Committee:

_____
Mark A. Gooden, Supervisor

_____
Jennifer J. Holme

_____
Richard J. Reddick

_____
Betty Jeanne Taylor

_____
Uri Treisman

Assessing the Impact of Cultural Proficiency Training for Central Office Administrators

by

Daniel Dewayne Spikes, B.A.; M.Ed.

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

August 2014

Dedications

This dissertation is dedicated to my beautiful wife, Garisa Spikes, and my three beautiful children: Madeline, Hannah, and Gabriella. Without their prayers, support, patience, and encouragement, this would not have been possible. I love all of you, and I appreciate all that you have done and given up for me to pursue my doctoral degree.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, my siblings, and my in-laws. Thank you for believing in me and for your prayers and support. Thank you for those much-needed breaks as well!

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my dissertation chair, Dr. Mark A. Gooden, who has been a tremendous advisor. Thank you for your guidance and support. You've been more than an advisor. You've been a friend. Thanks for all of the talks and all of the lessons. I'll always keep them with me.

I would also like to acknowledge my dissertation committee: Dr. Jennifer J. Holme, Dr. Richard J. Reddick, Dr. Betty Jeanne Taylor, and Dr. Uri Treisman. Thank you for supporting me during this entire process. Some of you I met when I first became a student, and some of you I met along the way. Throughout, you all have made me feel valued. Thank you for believing in me.

I want to acknowledge Dr. Gregory Vincent and my four supervisors (Dr. Wanda Nelson, Dr. Kenya Walker, Dr. Aileen Bumphus, and Celina Ruiz-Snowden) from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement. I want to also recognize all of my work colleagues as well. Thanks for all of the great laughs and for all of your support.

I'd like to acknowledge my family from the U.T. Black Graduate Students Association (BGSA). I definitely could not have made it without your friendships. Thank you to Nigel Pierce, Juanita Chinn, Nedra Lee, Nicholas Gatlin, Spencer Platt, Natasha Phillips, Alysia Childs, Richelle Thomas, and all of the other members. You all are the best!

I'd also like to recognize my Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) family. I grew in so many ways while serving in this wonderful organization. Thank you, Bradley Carpenter, for being a great mentor and for getting me involved. I would also like to thank all of the administrators who supported me while in the Graduate Student

Assembly (GSA) and while in school. I would especially like to thank our sponsors and advisor: Dr. Victoria Rodriguez, Dr. Soncia Reagins-Lilly, Dr. Juan Gonzalez, and John Dalton. Thanks to all of the staff at the Graduate School as well.

I must also acknowledge my EPP cohort members who have been a constant source of inspiration and fun. It has been a great ride, and I look forward to watching our friendships continue to blossom. Thank you to my extended EDA family as well. That includes the faculty, staff, and students. I have to give a special shout-out to Dr. Terrance Green, Dr. Martha Ovando, Dr. Jeffrey Wayman, Hortensia Palomares, and Linda Overton.

I'd like to recognize the UTCULP staff and research team under the leadership of Dr. Mark A. Gooden. Working there has been a wonderful experience. Thanks to Dr. Gooden, Dr. Dottie Hall, Scott Blackshire, Jacinda Deleon, Dr. Linda Lee, Amy Lippa, Meghan Lehr, Dr. Bradley Davis, Dr. Leslie Coward, and Dr. Barbara Pazey.

I would also like to thank my church family and my pastor and his lovely wife, Pastor Anthony Walker and First Lady Judy Walker. I would also like to acknowledge my church family from back home in Lufkin, TX. Thank you for your love, prayers, and encouragement. Continue to pray for us as we pray for you.

Finally, I would like to thank my immediate and extended family. That includes my wife, daughters, parents, siblings, in-laws, uncles, aunts, and cousins. I'm here because of you.

Assessing the Impact of Cultural Proficiency Training for Central

Office Administrators

Daniel Dewayne Spikes, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

Supervisor: Mark A. Gooden

The purpose of this study was to explore participants' perceptions of the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that discussed concepts of race and racism. Moreover, I was interested in understanding the factors and experiences associated with a greater likelihood that people would want to engage in dialogue on race and racism. The literature suggests that when discussions like these are broached, people can often become disinterested and disengaged (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Tatum, 1997). Therefore, if it is indeed pertinent for educators to be presented with knowledge that can be critical to student success, it is vital to understand what aspects of the training and what qualities of the participants lend themselves to a higher level of engagement and interest.

To research these phenomena, a mixed method study design was employed. School district central office personnel were required to attend a culture proficiency professional development session which covered concepts of race and racism. I surveyed these participants to gather their perceptions about the impact of the training. In addition, several participants were interviewed. To

answer the second research question, certain participants were asked to participate in a follow-up interview to determine the qualities and characteristics that created a greater likelihood that these individuals would see the importance of race-based discourse and continue these conversations.

Findings suggest that workshop participants perceived that the workshop helped to increase their level of racial awareness and change their behaviors or disposition. However, it was found that additional follow-up was needed to sustain these efforts. They also expressed that these kinds of workshops are essential.

For those who were likely to engage in race-based discourse, it was found that these individuals were racially aware, rejected notions of colorblindness, discovered race at a young age, were more likely to attend diverse schools and live in diverse neighborhoods and were likely to have faced discrimination as a person from an oppressed group or due to a close relationship with someone who was.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One

Introduction

Despite claims that we have entered a post-racial society, inequities still exist in many of our nation's public schools (Howard, 2010) and have led to disparate outcomes for White students and students of color (Banks, 1997; Brown, 2004). For example, research suggests that the "achievement gap" between Black and Latino high school seniors and their White peers have steadily increased since the late 1980s (EdTrust, 2010). McKinsey & Company (2009) estimate that due to the achievement gap, Black and Latino students are two to three grade levels behind White students of the same age. So why does the "achievement gap" exist and persist?

Several hypotheses have been offered for this phenomenon's existence, and many of them promote deficit thinking by placing the burden and blame on students for their lack of academic success (Darder, 2012; Garcia & Guerra, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2007; Milner, 2012). This perspective suggests that students of color perform poorly because of conditions endemic to this particular demographic. These perceived reasons detract from the real work of reforming schools. Focusing on such reasons prevents educators from examining other systemic and oppressive forces that have contributed to and are perpetuating unequal educational outcomes for children based on race. Deficit thinking rhetoric frees schools from examining their own practices to see if they could be directly contributing to achievement disparities.

Even the term "achievement gap" itself is problematic as proffered by Ladson-Billings (2007) who coined a more befitting term: "educational debt". This term more appropriately turns the focus away from the individual student and towards the efforts of

1

what educators could do to repay what has been taken from poor students of color over a series of decades. A similar phrase that focuses on the institutions is the opportunity gap (Milner, 2012), and it speaks to the lack of opportunities for certain groups of students.

Scholars contend that disparate outcomes could be a direct result of educators' actions or due to unfavorable treatment that Black and Latino students face in schools throughout the country (Banks, 1997; Brown, 2004). For instance, the literature suggests that students of color lack access to certain types of curriculum (Blosveren, 2006; McKinsey & Company, 2009) and resources (Brown, 2004) and are more likely than their White peers to be placed in non-college preparatory tracks (Oakes, 1985) and special education classes (Howard, 2010). Additionally, students of color often face lowered teacher expectations (Brown, 2004) and are placed at a disadvantage because of teachers' perceptions of students' academic abilities based on race (Baron, Tom, & Cooper, 1985; Feagin & Barnett, 2004; Lightfoot, 1978). It is important to note that this phenomenon can happen in many cases without ill intent and also to understand that intent is irrelevant to outcome (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997).

Research suggests that school leaders play a vital role in the educational achievement of all students, regardless of race (Brown, 2004; Bustamante, Nelson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2009; Theoharis, 2007). Moreover, Howard (2010) argues that a "more comprehensive understanding of race and culture can play an important role in helping to close the achievement gap" (p. 1). To improve the educational experiences of students of color will require school leaders who are culturally proficient (Howard, 2010) and can respond to the unique needs of diverse populations in ways that foster academic growth (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2003).

Introduction to Chapter

  This chapter will discuss the problem that this study seeks to address and will give an overview of the purpose of the study. Those sections will be followed by the research questions, a brief overview of the methodology, definitions, the delimitations and limitations of the study, and the assumptions. Finally, this chapter will conclude with the significance of the study. Next, the problem statement will be addressed.

Problem Statement

  The disparities in academic performance between White students and students of color (as measured by standardized test scores) continue to be a perplexing problem for many educators (McKinsey & Company, 2009). Black and Latino students continue to lag behind their White peers in academic performance (EdTrust, 2010; NCES, 2014). Despite major school reform efforts that have sought to provide equal educational opportunities and outcomes for *all* students, little progress has been made overall. Some scholars contend that in order to best address this problem, schools need to have more conversations about race and racism in their schools (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Howard, 2010; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Tatum, 1997).

  However, not all school leaders are equipped with the necessary skills to adequately address these difficult topics. Further, many are unaware of the racism that is subtle, though pervasive in today's schools. Specifically, educators are also unaware of their own individual biases which greatly impact how they educate students. This is why many of today's education scholars are suggesting that school leaders be required to take anti-racist training (Skrla, Scheurich, Johnson, and Koschoreck, 2001).

  A review of the literature reveals that certain teacher preparation programs have

provided this type of training to pre-service teachers (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997;

Tatum, 1997). In addition, there has been a movement towards integrating anti-racist

training into school leadership preparation programs (Gooden & Dantley, 2012). There is

also some evidence that this type of professional development has been provided to in-

service teachers (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Vaught &

Castagno, 2008). These programs and trainings have extended beyond other recent efforts

by school leadership programs to address more broad issues of social justice by

specifically centering these trainings on racism, anti-racism, Whiteness, and racial

identity development.

However, little evidence exists that these efforts have extended to central offices.

Research supports that school districts do not experience significant academic

improvement throughout the district without meaningful involvement by their central

office (Honig, Copeland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010). Districts who *have* made

substantial gains in academic achievement for *all* students engage all district central

office personnel in reform efforts. Moreover, the literature notes that in order to achieve

district-wide improvement in the areas of teaching and learning, the central office should

be continuously learning (Copeland, 2003; Gallucci, 2008; Honig, 2008; Honig et al,

2010; Swinnerton, 2006).

Since the literature is scarce with regards to the prevalence of these workshops

with central office staff, little is known about the effectiveness of these workshops.

Moreover, studies reveal that people are often resistant to race-based training and

disengage or become disinterested when concepts of race and racism are broached

(Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Singleton & Linton, 2006;

4

Tatum, 1997). However, little is known about those who *do* choose to engage. As a result, it would be important to understand the qualities and characteristics of individuals who are willing to engage in further conversations about race and racism. Knowing these factors could be valuable information for those who conduct these types of trainings.

One particular large, urban school district in the South wanted to address diversity and cultural competency with their staff. As a result, they decided to implement a staff development session on cultural proficiency[1] which addressed concepts of race and racism and provided transformative learning opportunities. District leaders believed that this type of training would help address disparate academic outcomes for students of color. It is the district's belief that a person's personal culture and background impacts the students with whom they work. All central office administrators and staff were required to attend one of these staff development sessions. These sessions presented an opportunity to address this gap in the literature.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of this study was to evaluate how these central office leaders and staff perceived the impact of this training. An additional goal of this study was to investigate the factors and experiences of individuals who see the value of having conversations about race and racism. The following research questions guided this study.

Research Questions

1) What are central office administrators' perceptions about the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that engages participants in conversations on race and racism?

2) What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?

---

[1] For the purpose of this project, cultural proficiency and anti-racist training/workshop/professional

5

Brief Overview of the Methodology

All district central office administrators and staff were required to attend the workshop which was entitled: *Developing an Inclusive Workplace*. The same workshop was offered nineteen (19) times over the course of three months (February through April), and the central office administrators and staff could sign up for the session that was most convenient for them. The district office responsible for securing the training did ask, however, that participants not sign up for the same session as others in their same department.

As stated, the training was four hours long and consisted of the following agenda items:

- Introductions
- Dialogue and Debate
- Definition of Terms
- Race Worksheet
- Color Arc Activity
- Role Play
- Intersections of Identities

This training engaged workshop participants in activities that encourage school leaders to become more racially aware. As part of the workshop, racism, White privilege, colorblindness and similar concepts were discussed.

Pragmatism was the philosophy that undergirded this project (Creswell, 2009). A pragmatist focuses more on the research problem and less on the methods and uses any and all approaches to investigate a particular phenomenon. As a result, to answer the research questions, a mixed-method research design was used.

The particular mixed-method strategy used was the concurrent embedded strategy. With this strategy, one set of data serves as the primary method while the other

method serves as background information and is nested in the primary data. For this study, the qualitative data served as the primary data, and the quantitative data was nested.

The concurrent embedded strategy also allows the researcher to use one method to answer one research question while using another method to answer the other. For this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to answer the first research question, and a qualitative method was used to answer the second question. Quantitative data consisted of workshop evaluation surveys, and qualitative data consisted of semi-structured interviews.

The quantitative design used for this study was the survey design. The workshop evaluation surveys allowed me to get an overall picture of participants' perceptions of the impact of the training. Again, these data served as background information.

Phenomenology was used as the qualitative method of inquiry. It allowed me to explore the interview participants' perception of the impact of the workshop as they experienced it. Moreover, it gave me a method to understand the qualities and experiences of individuals who are likely to continue conversations about race and racism.

Definitions

Achievement gap – refers to the disparity in academic performance between groups of students (Ed Week, 2011)

Anti-racism - having the self-awareness, knowledge, and skills—as well as the confidence, patience, and persistence—to challenge, interrupt, modify, erode, and eliminate any and all manifestations of racism within one's own spheres of influence (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997)

Cultural Proficiency – Holding the vision that you and the school (or organization) are instruments for creating a socially just democracy; interacting with your colleagues, your

students, their families, and their communities as advocate for lifelong learning to serve effectively the educational needs of all cultural groups (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2003)

Disadvantaged – lacking the things (such as money and education) that are considered necessary for an equal position in society (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Disproportionate – having or showing a difference that is not fair, reasonable, or expected (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Dysconscious racism – an uncritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given; dysconscious racism is a form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant White norms and privileges (King, 1991)

Equality - the quality or state of being equal; the quality or state of having the same rights, social status) (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Equity - fairness or justice in the way people are treated (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Institutionalize - to cause (a custom, practice, law, etc.) to become accepted and used by many people (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Marginalize - to put or keep (someone) in a powerless or unimportant position within a society or group (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Meritocracy - a system in which the talented are chosen and moved ahead on the basis of their achievement (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Multiculturalism – of, relating to, reflecting, or adapted to diverse cultures (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Oppression – The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life in our society (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 2007)

Power – the ability or right to control people or things; political control of a country or area (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Privilege -- Unearned access to resources and social power that is only readily available to certain people as a result of their agent social group membership (Cross Cultural Center, The University of California, Davis)

Racism -- A system of institutional policies and cultural messages that is advantageous to White people and disadvantageous to people of color; a system of advantages based on race (Wellman, 1993)

Segregate - to separate groups of people because of their particular race, religion, etc (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Socioeconomic - of, relating to, or involving a combination of social and economic factors (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Stratification - the state of being divided into social classes (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.)

Tracking – the process whereby students are divided into categories so that they can be assigned in groups to various kinds of classes (Oakes, 1985)

Delimitations of the Study

For this study, the sample will only consist of central office administrators who participated in the cultural proficiency staff development session (*Developing an Inclusive Workplace*) at a large, urban school district in the South. As a result, school principals and teachers will not be involved with this study.

Limitations of the Study

The *Developing an Inclusive Workplace* workshop was just a four-hour introductory session over cultural proficiency/racial awareness. To be most effective, these trainings require much more time. Most trainings like these have been held anywhere from two days to an entire week. Some principal preparation programs and teacher education programs discuss these topics over an entire semester (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Gooden & Dantley, 2012).

Although racial awareness training is touted as an effective means to address the achievement gap, this study does not examine the impact of this training on student achievement. This particular study is more concerned with the process and in

understanding how receptive educators are to the training. Moreover, I am interested in understanding the qualities or experiences of individuals who are likely to continue conversations about race and racism.

Since participants self-selected to participate in the first round of interviews, responses to the first research question could have been biased towards only those who had a positive experience and were willing to participate. It should be noted, however, that this was one of the reasons the research took a different direction. The fact that these individuals were willing to have these conversations and because certain themes emerged during these conversations, other workshop participants were not interviewed.

In addition, the sample size for the first round of interviews was small. Only fourteen individuals were interviewed during that round, and 433 people participated in the workshop. As a result, this study only provides the interview participants' perception of the impact of the training.

Finally, because this study is being conducted in one particular district in one state, the results may not be generalizable to the entire population. It could provide some important implications but may not be able to address the specific contexts of other states, especially since political and social dynamics vary by state. Further, this study does not take into account the unique conditions of each local education agency and their capacity to implement this type of workshop with fidelity.

Assumptions

There are several assumptions associated with this study. First, this study assumes that the findings will be relevant to schools that are looking at alternative approaches to addressing achievement disparities. There is an assumption that because people self-selected to participate in the interviews, that they were interested in having conversations about concepts like race and racism. Finally, some of the data produced from this investigation will be the direct result of interviews with workshop participants. It is assumed that the interview respondents will be truthful in their responses because some research suggests that depending on the stakes involved, some respondents may give what they view as acceptable responses rather than truthful ones (Prelec, 2004).

Significance of the Study

Due to the persistence of the academic achievement gap and despite other systemic efforts aimed at addressing these differing outcomes, it seems only natural that educators would be interested in investigating alternative approaches. In addition, because these disparities are delineated by race, it would be beneficial to discuss race and determine how our racial identity assumptions affect how we interact with others. Research has shown that having these conversations about race with educational staff could impact student achievement (Singleton, 2006). In addition, understanding what qualities and experiences contribute to the likelihood that someone will be willing to discuss race and racism has important implications for the development of professional development trainings.

As a result, this research has implications for how large, urban school districts with large populations of students of color consider conducting their professional

development. Additionally, the concepts and findings presented in this study can reframe educators' thinking regarding the "achievement gap" and to think of innovative solutions to address it.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a brief overview of the achievement gap and the deficit thinking (regarding certain groups of students) that comes along with it. In addition, the problem statement, purpose of the study, definitions, delimitations/limitations, assumptions and significance of the study were presented. The next chapter (the review of literature) will provide background information that provides an overview of the achievement gap and the beliefs and practices that may contribute to it and how they can be addressed. Moreover there will be an overview of the literature on courses and trainings on race and racism. That will be followed by a discussion on the premise behind the training and the concepts presented in these types of trainings. Finally, the conceptual framework that was used to guide this study will be provided.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter will provide a brief overview on the current state of academic achievement, followed by a discussion on the impact of race and racism on schooling. This will include a description of beliefs and school practices that oppress students. This will be followed by a discussion on the role of central office leaders in eliminating barriers. Then, I will provide the literature on preparation programs, which will include recommended racial awareness practices and research on the impact of raced-based preparation programs. Next, the literature on race-based professional development sessions will be discussed. The chapter will conclude with an overview of the cultural proficiency workshop that was the focus of this study and the conceptual framework that guided the conceptualization of this study.

The Current State of Student "Academic Achievement"

The "achievement gap" has continued to be a perplexing problem for federal policy makers to address (Harris & Herrington, 2006; Singleton & Linton, 2006). Although there have been local, state, and federal efforts to address achievement disparities, a gap still exists (NCES, 2014). If not addressed, the future prospects for our disadvantaged youth and for the economy look bleak (McKinsey & Company, 2009).

Although there are various other achievement gaps, "the term [achievement gap] usually refers to the disparity in academic outcomes between African American, Native American, and Latino students, and their White and certain Asian American peers" (Howard, 2010, p. 12). Singleton and Linton (2006) refer to this particular gap as the

racial gap. They use this specific term to clarify that regardless of parental income, an achievement gap between races still exists.

Academic performance is usually based on standardized test scores, dropout rates, and college enrollment rates (EdWeek, 2011). For the purposes of this chapter, the author will only focus on standardized test results. Standardized tests are the instruments most often utilized by schools to measure whether or not learning is taking place. Thus, student academic performance will be provided by reviewing test results on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP). First, an overview of the NAEP will be provided.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress

According to the U.S. Department of Education, "the NAEP is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subjects." The NAEP is administered uniformly and periodically across the nation by the U.S. Department of Education in the following subject areas: math, reading, writing, science, economics, the arts, civics, geography, and U.S. history. In this regard, the "NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states and selected urban districts" (NCES, 2014). These results are based on representative samples of students in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade who represent the student population of the nation as a whole.

Reading and math assessments are administered every two years for students in fourth and eighth grade and every four years for students in twelfth grade. The results from NAEP are released via a document named the Nation's Report Card.

Recent NAEP Results

Based on recent results on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), the so-called "achievement gap" has not narrowed by much in recent years, and in some cases, the gap has widened (NCES, 2014). For example, fourth-grade Black students, on average, scored 25 points lower than White students on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) mathematics of 2011 and 26 points less on the NAEP reading. Results of the 2013 fourth-grade NAEP reveal that the gap in math increased to 26 points and remained at 26 points on the NAEP reading.

Hispanic students scored 20 points lower than White students on the 2011 math assessment and 25 points lower on the reading assessment. On the 2013 assessments, the gap was 19 points in math and remained at 25 on the reading test.

For the eighth-grade NAEP math, Hispanic students, on average, scored 23 points lower than White students (NCES, 2014) in 2011 and 22 points lower on the 2013 assessment. On the reading assessment, the gap decreased slightly from 22 points to 20 points. Black students, on average, scored 31 points lower than White students on both the 2011 and 2013 NAEP math. On the reading test, the gap increased from 25 points to 26. Although all scores have been trending upward as a whole, the gaps have remained largely unchanged since 1990.

The NAEP for seniors is given every four years as opposed to every two years. However, the achievement disparities between White students and students of color are just as glaring. The Black-White test score gap for the NAEP math exam is 30 points and has remained steady at 30 points since 2005. For Hispanic students, the gap has slightly

narrowed since 2005 but not by much. In 2005, the gap was 24 points; in 2009, it was 23 points; and in 2013, it was 21 points.

For the NAEP reading, the test score gap between Hispanic students and White students was 21 points in 2013 and was also 21 points in 2005. That gap has actually increased since 1992 when it was 19 points. The reading test score gap between Black and White students is an astounding 30 points and has steadily increased since 2005 when the gap was 26 points. Unlike with the math exam, overall scores are not trending upward. Reading scores for White students were the same in 2013 as they were in 1992, and the scores for Black and Hispanic students are less than they were in 1992.

Seeing these data, it is clear that these academic disparities are pervasive and that there is an obvious disparity by race. However, schools and school districts seldom discuss race in constructive ways that could help to eliminate the gap (Singleton & Linton, 2006; Howard, 2010). Usually the conversation regarding the gap is broached from a deficit perspective that often places the burden on the student to improve these outcomes (Bomer & Bomer, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2009, Milner, 2012; Valencia, 2010). When the focus is on the students and what they may be lacking, the role of the institution (and all of its players) can be overlooked.

There is an abundance of literature that supports the idea that schools may, in fact, be the *cause* of these disparate outcomes (Darder, 2012; Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Gooden, 2012; Howard, 2010; Milner, 2012; Tatum, 1992; Young & Liable, 2000). Scholars contend that this is due to the racism that is embedded in institutions (Darder, 2012; Howard, 2010; Singleton, 2006; Young & Liable, 2000). To be clear what is meant, racism is a system of advantages based on race, and in America, the privileged

race is White (Wellman, 1993). This means that White privilege is pervasive in schools, and this serves to disadvantage people of color (Gooden, 2012; Tatum, 1992).

Given this evidence, central office leaders, who play a critical role in school districts that have been successful in improving teaching and learning in schools (Honig, Copeland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010), *must* engage in productive conversations about race and racism. The problem cannot be addressed if it is not first acknowledged. However, not all school leaders are equipped with the necessary skills to adequately address these topics. Further, many are unaware of the racism that is subtle, though pervasive in today's schools.

To begin focusing on what can be done to address these outcomes will first necessitate that these leaders become more racially aware. This will allow leaders to recognize beliefs and practices that can serve to create and perpetuate unequal academic outcomes. These beliefs and practices will be discussed below.

The Impact of Racism in Schooling: Certain Beliefs and Practices in Schools

As stated, the literature reveals that certain obstacles persist that stand in the way of progress for certain groups of students (Darder, 2012; Milner, 2012; Teranishi, 2002). These next sections while provide an in-depth description of what those barriers are. Oppressive beliefs will be covered first.

Oppressive Beliefs

Certain beliefs have served to marginalize students of color and to benefit Whites (Teranishi, 2002). For example, socially constructed notions of intelligence (Darder, 2012; Hatt, 2011; Oakes, Wells, Datnow & Jones, 1997), the myth of meritocracy (Darder, 2012; McIntosh, 1988; Milner, 2012), and colorblindness (Bonilla-Silva, 2010;

Gooden; 2012; Milner, 2012; Ullucci & Battey, 2011) are ideologies that have largely

protected the status quo and perpetuated inequities in schools. Notions of intelligence will

be discussed first.

      Notions of Intelligence. According to Oakes, Wells, Datnow, and Jones (1997),

"definitions and understandings of intelligence, like all meanings, are sensitive to the

cultural contexts in which they are constructed" (p. 486). In diverse environments, the

cultural understandings that are generally accepted are the messages generated by the

dominant culture. These perspectives are tacitly accepted due to the economic, political,

and social positions of those who are in power (Oakes et al., 1997). As such, these

definitions and understandings appear to be natural and logical. In this way, this narrative

becomes an ideology (Gramsci, 1971; Manhein, 1936; Oakes et al., 1997).

      The ideology of intelligence is implemented to privilege White ways of knowing

and to equate this way of knowing with genetic ability. This is reinforced and validated

through standardized testing that assesses students' attainment of this way of knowing.

Obviously, this inordinately benefits those from White families and wealthy backgrounds

(Oakes et al., 1997).

      Oakes, Wells & Serna (1997) find in their study that "beliefs that ability overlaps

with race are salient in the schools" (p. 490). These beliefs were revealed both implicitly

and explicitly. It was also found that the more students "acted White" the more they were

likely to be viewed as more intelligent.

      Similarly, Hatt (2011) posits that "smartness" is socially constructed. In her study

of kindergartners, she states that "the figured world of smartness signified not only a

cultural practice of social control but a process of ascribing social power defined along

lines of class and race" (p. 116). In this way, this belief served to oppress certain groups of students.

The Myth of Meritocracy. Another, often unacknowledged, belief that has served to subjugate students of color is the belief that schools are a meritocracy (Darder, 2012). Meritocracy suggests that rewards are granted based on hard work, achievement and ability. On the flip side, if one does not succeed, meritocracy attributes this to a lack of effort or bad decisions on the part of the individual (Milner, 2012). As Milner notes (2012), "educators often believe that their own success is merited because they have worked hard, followed the law, had the ability and skill, and made the right choices and decisions" (p. 704).

This belief is problematic because this way of thinking ignores the unearned privilege that might have placed them in better positions to be more successful (Darder, 2012; Milner, 2012). More importantly, this belief assumes that everyone starts off on equal footing, and therefore, have the same opportunity to be successful with individual effort. However, as Milner (2012) states, this is just simply not the case.

> …educational practices and opportunities are not equal or equitable. There is enormous variation in students' social, economic, historic, political, and educational opportunities, which is in stark contrast to the American dream—one that adopts and supports meritocracy as its creed or philosophy (p. 704).

In this way, Milner (2012) argues that meritocracy is a myth. Educators who buy into the myth of meritocracy can exacerbate achievement disparities between students of color and White students (Milner, 2012). By operating under the assumption that student effort and ability alone will lead to student success, educators may ignore structural barriers, racist behaviors and practices that can negatively impact those students.

Further, Darder (2012) argues that viewing schools as meritocratic institutions

19

that exist to benefit *all* who work hard is troublesome. While some might view schools as being value free and neutral, they are, in fact, organizations that serve to perpetuate the stratification of society. Schooling rewards students of the dominant culture whose values directly coincide with the knowledge and skills that are valued in schools (Darder, 2012). This colorblind belief is problematic and can be detrimental to students if it is left unacknowledged.

  Colorblindness. Bonilla-Silva (2010) argues that racism has taken on a more obscure form: colorblindness. According to Diem and Carpenter (2012), "colorblind racism essentially allows Whites to 'blind' themselves when attempting to make meaning about race" (p. (102). In this way, Whites claim to not see color, just people. As a result, there's the belief that discrimination is no longer the central factor determining the life chances of people of color (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). According to Bonilla-Silva (2010), colorblindness operates through four frames: abstract liberalism, naturalism, cultural racism, and minimization of racism.

  Abstract liberalists tend to ignore all of the residual effects of past and current discrimination and assume that everyone has the same opportunity to be successful. Naturalism suggests that people attribute racial phenomena to natural occurrences. Cultural racism occurs when people attribute inequities to cultural deficiencies. Those who minimize racism believe that racism or discrimination no longer plays a significant role in the lives of people of color.

  While the idea of living in a colorblind society seems ideal, the fact is, people do see color, and people are often treated differently because of the color of their skin (Bell, 1987). Choosing *not* to see color then is a privileged position that conveniently allows

certain people not to have to acknowledge different lived experiences for most people of color and allows them to ignore inequities based on race (Banks, 2001; Milner, 2012). Moreover, if we are to believe in one of the basic tenets of critical race theory (CRT) that racism is pervasive in today's society (Bell, 1987; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997), then choosing to be colorblind serves to perpetuate this racism (Banks, 2001; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Gooden, 2012; Milner, 2012; Parker & Villalpando, 2007).

Left unchallenged in school districts, racism can then manifest itself through inequitable school practices like tracking, disproportionate administration of school discipline, harsher punishments meted out to students of color, disproportionality of special education placement, educator bias, and the inequitable placement of high quality teachers. Moreover, when educators are blind to their own racial identity and those of others, what they may view as a fair and "normal" curriculum, could very well be a curriculum that overvalues White norms and marginalizes students of other cultures and backgrounds (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Milner, 2012). These unfair school practices will be discussed in the next section.

Unfair Practices

School practices have also been shown to exacerbate racial academic inequalities (Teranishi, 2002). The following practices have served as barriers to success for students of color: the curriculum (Darder, 2012); school tracking (Oakes, 1985); disparate administration of school discipline (Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, & Thomas, 2012; McFadden et al, 1992; U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Wallace et al, 2008; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986), disproportionate placement in special education (Hosp &

Reschly, 2004), and the lack of access to high quality teachers and instruction (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Irvine, 2010). Each of these practices and their outcomes on schools will be explained next.

The Curriculum. In a given school, the curriculum generally refers to the course requirements needed to obtain a degree or similar credential (Darder, 2012). The content chosen for a given curriculum is generally based on the knowledge and skills that those in power deem as legitimate and worth knowing (Darder, 2012). More often than not, this knowledge reflects and promotes the values and ideals of the dominant culture (Darder, 2012). This inherently advantages one particular group of people and places all other groups at a disadvantage. As such, the curriculum becomes a tool of oppression that perpetuates White supremacy. Darder (2012) suggests that this has been the function of schooling in the United States.

> Hence the underlying principles related to both curriculum content and teaching methodology are derived from what is considered to be the function of education in American society; namely, the perpetuation of values and social relations that produce and legitimate the dominant worldview at the expense of a vast number of its citizens (p. 19).

For example, she states that social studies textbooks contain various themes that promote and spread a specific ideology or narrative concerning the dominant culture. They include: *an overvaluing of social harmony, social compromise, and political consensus, with very little said about social struggle or class conflict; an intense nationalism and chauvinism; a near-exclusion of labor history; and a number of myths regarding the nature of political, economic, and social life* (Anyon, 1980 as cited in Darder, 2012). Brown and Brown (2010), in their analyses of social studies textbooks, validate Darder's (2012) findings.

In their analysis of racial violence in social studies textbooks, Brown and Brown (2010) find that these books often misconstrue, misinterpret, and downplay the connection between racial violence and White supremacy, White privilege, race, and racism. They often relegate racism and violence to the acts of autonomous "bad" individuals and explicitly ostracize them as independent agents who acted against the ideals of American democracy. However, there is little attention paid to systemic and institutional racism and how it served to benefit all Whites, those who participated in these violent acts, and those who silently overlooked these acts.

Research in the areas of textbook and curriculum bias has also shown that various cultures are misrepresented or underrepresented in classroom texts (Brown & Brown, 2010; MacPhee & Kaufman, 2014; Swartz, 1992). As a result, textbooks and other instructional sources perpetuate skewed perspectives and stereotypes about Blacks and other people of color (Brown & Brown, 2010). This becomes problematic because as Fitzgerald (1979) states, much of what students learn about people of color, they learn at school. These experiences can leave indelible impressions about people of color in the minds of students (MacPhee & Kaufman, 2014).

The hidden curriculum. Giroux (1983) defines the hidden curriculum (Jackson, 1968) as "those unstated norms, values, and beliefs embedded in and transmitted to students through the underlying rules that structure the routines and social relationships in school and classroom life" (p. 47). For example, Milner (2012) argues that by not including content about Blacks in the curriculum, one is still learning about Blacks through this absence. In this regard, when something is omitted from the curriculum, then it can be perceived as "less than", not valuable, or knowledge not worth knowing (Brown

23

& Brown, 2010; Swartz, 1992). These omissions coupled with the overrepresentation of White/European culture reinforce the idea that White/European culture is the superior culture and relegates all other cultures to inferior status (Darder, 2012).

The hidden curriculum also refers to who has access to which curriculum (Darder, 2012). White students are typically exposed to a curriculum that teaches them to be critical thinkers and one that prepares them to be leaders, etc. It is this curriculum and pedagogy that is directly tied to success in U.S. society.

Students from marginalized populations, on the other hand, are often taught to be rule followers and provided with a curriculum that usually teaches basic knowledge and skills (Darder, 2012; Giroux, 1983). Research suggests that when controlling for background factors and prior achievement, students who are given a more challenging curriculum perform better than those who are placed in classes with less rigor (Feagin & Barnett, 2004). This disparate access to a more challenging and liberating curriculum (Swartz, 1992) occurs through a practice known as tracking (Oakes, 1985).

School Tracking. According to Oakes (1985), tracking is defined as "the process whereby students are divided into categories so that they can be assigned in groups to various kinds of classes" (p. 3). For example, students who are considered fast learners will be placed in a higher-level and faster-paced class while those who are considered slower learners will be placed in a lower-level and slower-placed class (Oakes, 1985). Tracks are generally labeled as general (or remedial), vocational, business, or college preparatory (or advanced placement) (Dickens, 1996).

Oakes (1992) posits that tracking is based on three norms. First, students' educational ability and needs vary greatly. Second, schools have a responsibility to

impart cultural values and knowledge and train students for the workforce. Third, it is believed that schools can accomplish this by separating students by their abilities and potential vocational futures (Oakes, 1992). Considering that the American educational system is commissioned to provide an adequate education for *all* children, tracking appears to be a viable option to accomplish this tall order (Dickens, 1996). However, history suggests that tracking may have been used for other purposes as well.

History of tracking. In line with the norms mentioned in the preceding section, Dickens (1996) argues that tracking began in the early 1900s due to the belief that a "school's role was to equip students to enter an economy that required workers with different types and levels of knowledge and skills" (p. 471). As a result, advanced placement classes were reserved for students who would be entering college or beginning careers that required a specialized set of professional skills. Remedial and vocational classes were reserved for students who would be taking low-wage jobs or jobs that would require low-level technical training (Dickens, 1996). As such, tracking was viewed as a mechanism that would provide each child an opportunity to maximize his/her potential to learn.

According to Dickens (1996), from this perspective, tracking was "both democratic and functional" (p. 471). It provided society with a cadre of workers with varying skill sets who could contribute to the nation's workforce, and at the same time, students were provided with an education that were thought to match their innate abilities. Consequently, students were grouped into classes based upon what was perceived to be their inherent abilities (Dickens, 1996).

As a practice, tracking had greatly declined by the early part of the 1950s as educators found that it offered little benefit and could even be potentially harmful (Dickens, 1996). However, with the *Brown v Board* decision in 1954, the practice found new life as states in the South attempted to lessen the impact of this ruling, and states in the North attempted to deal with the influx of Black students. As a result, tracking was used as a mechanism for separating Black students from White students (Dickens, 1996).

Tracking and segregation. Dickens (1996) argues that after *Brown*, Blacks were placed into lower tracks. While some may argue that tracking was reintroduced to accommodate the varied ability levels of the students, Dickens questions the timing of its reintroduction. She questions if it was just another way to avoid *Brown's* desegregation ruling.

Black and Latino students are still disproportionately overrepresented in low-track classes while most White students are placed in high-track classes (Condron, 2007; Greene, 2014; Futrell & Gomez, 2008; Wyler, Bridgeland & DiLulio, 2007). These types of track assignments place students of color at a disadvantage in terms of educational achievement and attainment (Oakes, 1985). Students in low-track classes generally perform worse than students in high-track classes (Oakes, 1985).

School Discipline and Special Education Placement. Within the literature, much consideration has been given to the perceived "achievement gap" while less consideration has been given to the discipline gap (Gooden & Spikes, 2014; Gregory, Skiba & Noguera, 2010). Yet, students of color are overrepresented in the number of students who are suspended and/or expelled from school (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). This disproportionate administration of school discipline can contribute to

academic achievement disparities (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Gooden & Spikes, 2014).

Research suggests that students of color are usually given more severe punishments than Whites for the same offenses (Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, & Thomas, 2012; Gooden & Spikes, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). For example, Wallace and colleagues (2008) found that for the same minor infractions, Black male students are 30% more likely than White students to be referred to the principal's office and are more likely to be suspended or expelled from school.

Recent data from the U.S. Department of Education (2014) reveal that Black students are three times more likely to be suspended or expelled as their White peers. This disparate treatment of students occurs even in preschool. Black students make up 48% of those who are suspended more than once although they only make up 16% of the preschool population.

When examining these data, it is obvious that race is playing a big part in these outcomes. Due to these disparities, the Office for Civil Rights of The U.S. Department of Education (2014) has subsequently issued guidelines that schools and school districts must follow to ensure equitable administration of school discipline.

Similar disparities also exist in the proportion of students who are referred to special education classes (Ahram, Fergus, & Noguera, 2011; Gooden & Spikes, 2014). In their case study in two urban districts, Ahram, Fergus, and Nogurea (2011) also found that in their attempts to address disproportionality in special education, *some* "institutional fixes" occurred. However, it was found that educator's beliefs and/or biases

did not change, which suggests that the practice of disproportionate placement will continue in those schools.

Educator Bias. Research shows that the discriminatory views held by Whites affects Whites' expectation of Black students (Baron, Tom, & Cooper, 1985; Ferguson, 2003; Lightfoot, 1978). Consequently, educators do not expect the same performance of Black students as they do of White students, and they do not give the same level of support to Black students as they do White students when "they are matched for ability or randomly assigned" (Feagin & Barnett, 2004, p. 11). Many of them have deficit perspectives regarding the abilities of students of color (Bomer & Bomer, 2001; Milner, 2012; Valencia, 2010). Additionally, in some studies, teachers have been shown to give more critical academic feedback to Whites than Blacks, and Whites are encouraged (more than Blacks) to participate in class (Gibbs, 1988).

Moreover, Steele (2010) purports that students of color often suffer from what he calls stereotype threat. Stereotype threat refers to being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group. It has been found that this particular threat can negatively impact the academic achievement for Black students who are often stereotyped as being less intelligent.

Feagin and Barnett (2004) posit that "Black children must regularly confront this [type of unfavorable treatment] - a symbolic reality that affects everyday interactions and achievements [and] undermines[s] the self-confidence of students of color and make learning difficult" (p. 11). Crosnoe et al. (2007) explains how this can impact students.

> When students internalize negative feedback into their own academic self-concepts, they lose resources that are very important to academic success: confidence, motivation, and self-belief. Independent of prior experiences or abilities, these resources help students meet the risks and/or challenges of

enrolling in demanding but rewarding classes like trigonometry and chemistry II and, more than that, to keep going in math and science even in lower-level classes (p. 135).

What is alarming is that these biases operate at a subconscious level (Darder, 2012). This occurs through what King (1991) would describe as dysconscious racism. According to King (1991), dysconscious racism "is a form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant White norms and privilege" (p. 135). It is an uncritical way of thinking about inequities in schooling and society in general.

Access to High Quality Teachers. Due to school tracking policies (Oakes, 1985) and educator beliefs, students of color not only lack access to rigorous courses (Clune, 1989), they also lack access to high quality teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2014). In Darling-Hammond's (2004) study of California Public Schools, she chronicles the poor conditions of the schools that are mostly populated by poor students of color. She posits that many uncertified and low-quality teachers are assigned to these schools more frequently than they are to schools where White students are the majority. She posits that these placements serve as a barrier to student success. This is not just a phenomenon that is germane to California schools. Research shows that this uneven placement of untrained teachers occurs in schools throughout the country (Darling-Hammond, 2000; U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

For example, a recent study, conducted by the Office for Civil Rights for the U.S. Department of Education (2014), found that students of color have less access to veteran teachers. In addition, more Black students are likely to be in schools with teachers who are not fully credentialed. Also, for twenty-five percent of school districts, teachers, who

teach in schools that have large populations of students of color, are generally paid $5000 less annually than those who do not.

All of this occurs even despite the idea that education is often touted as the "great equalizer" (as quoted by Horace Mann). Unfortunately, the institution that is supposed to be viewed as the place to ameliorate inequities could actually be the place that creates it (Darder, 2012). This is evident in disparate schooling outcomes which directly correlates to social and economic prosperity in the larger society. Now, in seeing this evidence of the inequitable beliefs and practices that persist and create these "gaps", what are school districts to do?

<center>**Addressing These Inequitable Outcomes**</center>

The role of the central office has changed drastically over the years, and policymakers and educational researchers believe that school central offices play an instrumental role in ensuring that *all* of their students receive a quality education (Rothman, 2009). With that said, school district central offices have a direct hand in perpetuating or eliminating the beliefs and practices described above. The role of the central office will be outlined in the next section.

Role of the School District's Central Office

In the past, school district central offices have often been viewed as being loosely coupled from school campuses (Meyer & Rowan, 1992). Recent literature suggests, however, they have become more involved in school improvement efforts (Honig, 2008; Honig, et al, 2010; Mac Iver & Farley, 2003). Additionally, research shows that in schools where there have been gains in academic achievement, the central office played a significant role (Honig, et al, 2010). This is likely because central offices have certain

responsibilities that can lead to the eradication of structures that oppress students (Mac Iver & Farley, 2003).

For example, Mac Iver and Farley (2003) found that the roles of central offices are to: (1) advise on good curriculum and instructional practice; (2) recruit and equip principals and teachers; (3) help staff analyze data and determine what instructional changes should be made; and (4) provide administrative support so that good instruction can occur (this would include providing the necessary professional development to principals and teachers in order to promote student learning). They also mention that school central offices play a substantial role in the development of assessments for the district's schools. To this end, if central office staff are culturally proficient, then they are in a unique position to address beliefs like the ideology of intelligence; the myth of meritocracy, and colorblindness. They could also address practices like inequitable access to a rigorous and non-oppressive curriculum, tracking, disproportionate administration of discipline and special education placement, educator bias, and access to quality teachers.

For example, one of the unfair practices identified was lack of access to high quality teachers. If central office personnel are able to identify this lack, then they can directly address it because they are responsible for the recruitment and developing of both principals and teachers. Moreover, one of their roles is to advise on good curriculum and instruction. In this regard, if they are able to recognize where the curriculum is being oppressive, then they are in prime position to do something about it.

All of this assumes that one would recognize that these issues need to be addressed in the first place, because, as mentioned, in order to adequately acknowledge racial barriers and thereby attack the "achievement gap", people must first be made aware

of systemic privilege (Gooden, 2012; Roediger, 1991; Tatum, 1992). In addition, they must be made aware of their own identities and the assumptions under which they may be operating (National Education Agency, 2008).

This type of identity development and awareness raising can come about through active discussions centered on race and racism (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Singleton, 2006; Tatum, 1992). In addition, there are other experiences that scholars contend can aid in helping with this development (Brown, 2004; Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Singleton, 2006; Tatum, 1992). There have been various efforts to increase educators' racial awareness in small pockets throughout the U.S. For example, several teacher (Derman-Sparks & Phillips; Lawrence & Tatum, 1997; Tatum, 1992) and school leadership and principal preparation programs (Hernandez & Marshall, 2009; Marshall & Theoharis, 2007) have engaged in discussions and activities on concepts of race, racism, and privilege with the intent of increasing educators' level of racial awareness. This literature will be discussed in the next section.

The Literature on Preparation Programs

Several scholars have given recommendations for what preparation programs can do in order to aid in the racial identity development of educators (Brown, 2004; Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Singleton, 2006). Additionally, other scholars have shared findings on the impact of their discussions and activities around race, racial identity, racism, and White privilege in their courses (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Lawrence & Tatum, 1997; Tatum, 1992). First, the recommendations will be provided, and it will be followed by a discussion of

the research on the impact of these race-based conversations and experiences (Hernandez & Marshall, 2009; Marshall & Theoharis, 2007).

Recommended Racial Awareness Practices by Researchers

In their book, *Teaching/Learning Anti-Racism: A Developmental Approach*, Derman-Sparks and Phillips (1997) provide a handbook that is based on the conversations and activities they present to their pre-service teachers in their teacher preparation program. Their approach is broken into phases: (1) beginning explorations of racism; (2) exploring the contradictions; (3) transformation to an understanding of self and society; and (4) anti-racism as a new beginning. In each of these phases they provide discussions and activities. The first phase involves getting their pre-service teachers to explore aspects of their own racial identity. In the second phase, they acknowledge institutional racism, and the instructors get them to "think critically about the beliefs and behaviors that keep them enmeshed in racist behaviors" (p. 66). During the third phase, they are guided toward learning how to behave as anti-racists in their line of work. During the last phase, these teachers are required to take action to change something.

Various professors of principal and leadership preparation programs spoke of the need to integrate certain concepts of identity development and/or anti-racist pedagogy into preparation programs. For example, Gooden and Dantley (2012) call for preparation programs to "include a prophetic voice, a grounding in critical theoretical traditions, the notion of praxis and a pragmatic edge, and the race language" (p. 244). Brown (2004) calls for preparation programs to develop socially just leaders through transformative learning experiences (Mezirow, 1990). These include providing opportunities for awareness through critical self-reflection, rational discourse, and action as policy praxis.

Further, Diem and Carpenter (2012) similarly advocate for school leadership preparation programs to provide a transformative curriculum. This would include (1) refuting color-blind ideologies, (2) counteracting the misconceptions of human differences, (3) recognizing that student achievement is not always based on merit, (4) engaging in critical self-reflection, and (5) examining the silencing of voices. The next section will discuss research findings on the impact of some of these pedagogical techniques.

Impact of Race-Based Conversations and/or Experiences in Preparation Programs

Referring back to Derman-Sparks' and Phillips' (1997) work with pre-service teachers, their approach is to work with these individuals by (1) beginning explorations of racism; (2) exploring the contradictions; (3) working towards transformation to an understanding of self and society; and (4) adopting anti-racism as a new beginning. Derman-Sparks and Phillips (1997) found that after completing the first phase, Black pre-service teachers (1) accepted society's view of their group and of racism; (2) denied society's beliefs about equality for their group; (3) avoided the conflict of contradictory messages. White pre-service teachers, on the other hand, "opted for a web of beliefs that espouse the basic equality of all humans as members of the same race and a focus on people as individuals" (p. 64).

At the conclusion of phase two, all students experienced an increased racial awareness. After phase three, students of color (1) reclaimed their group identity; (2) constructed a frame of reference; (3) and built new relationships. White students (1) constructed a new extended group identity; (2) developed a critical understanding of racism; and (3) built real relationships. At the conclusion of the course, most of the pre-

service teachers had become anti-racist educators. They provide the following definition of anti-racism:

> Having the self-awareness, knowledge, and skills—as well as the confidence, patience, and persistence—to challenge, interrupt, modify, erode, and eliminate any and all manifestations of racism within one's own spheres of influence (p. 3).

Hernandez and Marshall (2009) conducted a study over one of the activities they completed in one of their educational leadership program courses. This course covers concepts like identity, equity and social justice. For this exercise, students were required to reflect on their racial/ethnic identity. The researchers state that in this program, most of their leadership preparation students are White who live in a predominantly White, Midwestern area. As a result, many of them have never come to terms with their racial/cultural identity. They found that: (1) students were willing to engage and reflect on their experiences and cultural identity; (2) students used their worldviews as filters for these experiences; (3) students were not necessarily willing to experience discomfort for the sake of learning about difference; and (4) students thought about their identities in a range of distinct developmental ways.

Similarly, Marshall and Theoharis (2007) describe their experiences as instructors of an educational foundations course for aspiring school leaders. In their paper, they talk about the activities and the discussions that take place in the class. They engage in dialogue about race and begin the conversations talking about Whiteness since they serve predominantly White students. They also engage in reading over issues of social justice, reflect through journaling, take an "educational plunge", where they visit somewhere outside of their usual setting and reflect. For their final project, students complete a case study that requires them to complete an action related to one of the readings or

discussions in the course. The article by Marshall and Theoharis (2007) is basically a reflection about the challenges of having difficult conversations with predominantly White students. However, they acknowledge that they understand the value in doing so and notice the impact that it makes on their students.

Each of these studies reveals that, to some extent, students in preparation programs benefited from their experiences in courses that engaged in some aspect of anti-racist pedagogy. These also speak to the fact that scholars place a great emphasis on wanting educators to be prepared in a way that makes them racially aware. However, what about for school leaders who are already out in the field?

There are few studies that speak to the need for this type of professional development for school leaders. Lawrence and Tatum (1997) have spoken about how critical this type of training is, but there is not much of a call for this type of training, which is surprising because the ones who are already in the field probably need it most.

Further, few studies exist that speak to the impact or experiences of K-12 educators at any level who participate in cultural proficiency workshops or workshops engaging in conversations about race and racism. Moreover, the literature is scarce on these workshops and their impact on central office staff. The next section will provide a review of the literature over the professional development sessions for educators that cover objectives associated with cultural proficiency and/or anti-racism.

Literature on the Impact of Race-Based Professional Development Sessions

Vaught and Castagno (2008) studied teachers from two urban schools, who attended an in-service training that covered concepts of White privilege, identity, racial awareness, and racism. They found that the participants achieved a new level of

awareness as a result of the training, but it did not lead to empathy or action. Instead, it led to "a reinvention of meaning that reified existing, culturally constructed, racist frameworks" (p. 110). In addition, other than providing an opportunity for their teachers to attend the training, the district did not make any additional institutional or structural changes or provide any follow-up trainings. As a result, this "allowed the structural dimension of racism to persist unchallenged" (p. 110).

This is unfortunate because Vaught and Castagno state that these sessions were offered, in part, due to public pressure but also because the leadership thought it would be an effective approach to address racial academic disparities. However, teachers were not required to attend. As a result, attendance was low.

In another study by Lawrence and Tatum (1997), teachers, who were part of a voluntary school desegregation program, attended a similar professional development session. This session was offered as an intervention to help teachers make a positive impact on the Black students who were part of the desegregation program. They found that after the training, 48 out of 84 participants took actions that were considered anti-racist. These actions were related to one of three things: interactions with school or community members, the curriculum, or school policies related to support services for students of color.

In one final study, Singleton and Linton (2006) in their book, *Courageous Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools,* found that as a result of a sustained commitment to engaging in courageous conversations and its accompanying steps, school districts have seen drastic improvement in student achievement. His workshops usually include educators at all levels.

As the literature review shows, little is known about the impact of these types of professional development sessions on educators at any level, much less on school leaders and/or central office staff. Moreover, the literature conveys that participants are often resistant to the concepts presented in these types of courses and trainings (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Hernandez & Marshall, 2009; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Singleton, 2012; Tatum, 1997). Concepts like race, racism, and privilege evoke certain emotions of anger, discomfort, guilt, frustration, etc. This can likely result in people disengaging from the conversation (Singleton & Linton, 2006), and it can serve to sabotage the intent of the training. As a result, understanding what qualities and characteristics of individuals lead to engagement in these types of conversations is important, especially for sessions that are condensed into smaller time periods than university preparation courses. Engaging participants and making an impact in the time allotted is paramount. The present study creates an opportunity to contribute to this gap in the literature. The next sections will provide an overview of the workshop that was at the center of this study and a discussion of how this research project was conceptualized.

The Workshop

As mentioned, the workshop was facilitated by faculty from The University of Texas at Austin (U.T.). Much of the content in the workshop was influenced by Glenn Singleton's and Curtis Linton's (2006) *Courageous Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools.* They define courageous conversation as "utilizing the agreements, conditions, and compass to engage, sustain, and deepen interracial dialogue about race in order to examine schooling and improve student achievement" (p. 16).

The first activity in the workshop is to discuss the *Four Agreements of Conversation.* Facilitators ask participants to:

- stay engaged,
- speak [their] truth,
- experience discomfort, and
- expect and accept non-closure.

These agreements serve as guides for a safe and inviting conversation although it is discussed that there will be some uncomfortable moments. In addition, the next activity requires participants to engage in an exercise titled "Dialogue and Debate." In this activity, the goal is to get everyone to acknowledge that this conversation is a dialogue and not a debate. In that regard, everyone's experience is his/her own and is not debatable.

Next, the facilitators give everyone a Definition of Terms handout (see Appendix A) so there could be a common language. There is a brief discussion for anyone who wants clarification on any of the terms. In addition, participants are given the opportunity to voice any disagreement with the term although it is stressed that the given terms are the accurate ones, and research is offered as validation.

The Six Conditions

Singleton and Linton (2006) also provide six conditions that should exist for a courageous conversation.

1. *Establish a racial context that is personal, local, and immediate.*

2. *Isolate race while acknowledging the broader scope of diversity and the variety of factors and conditions that contribute to a racialized problem.*

3. *Develop an understanding of race as a social/political construction of knowledge and engage multiple racial perspectives to surface critical understanding.*

4. *Monitor the parameters of the conversation by being explicit and intentional*

about the number of participants, prompts for discussion, and time allotted for listening, and reflecting.

5. *Establish agreement around a contemporary working definition of race, one that is clearly differentiated from ethnicity and nationality.*

6. *Examine the presence and role of Whiteness and its impact on the conversation and the problem being addressed.*

For the first condition (*establishing a racial context*), participants are given a worksheet (see Appendix B) to make race personal. This worksheet asks them to give a percentage of how much race impacts their life in specific areas. For example, questions ask: *how does race impact your decision to buy a car or house,* and *how much does race impact your social activities for the weekend*?

This is a racial consciousness raising activity. How people respond determines how conscious of race they are. If they place 0% next to one of the questions, then it might suggest that they have a low level of consciousness when it comes to race and racism.

For the second condition (*isolating race*), participants are given a scenario. They are asked to respond to the following question. If a reporter were to ask you *what are three factors that contribute to the achievement gap*, how would you respond (see Appendix C)? Participants are asked to share. Responses usually vary with some of the workshop participants espousing deficit perspectives. The facilitators will bring the focus back to the impact of institutional racism if the participants do not do so. The activity in Singleton's and Linton's (2006) handbook differs from the activity used by the facilitators from U.T., perhaps due to time constraints.

For the third condition (*developing an understanding of race*), the facilitators engage in a role play activity to reveal multiple perspectives to a given scenario. The

scenario involves a situation where the facilitator (a Black male) states that he was told by his supervisor that he needs to speed up his work efforts or she would "crack the whip." Obviously seeing this as a racist statement, he takes this up with the Human Resource office. The facilitator asks one of the workshop participants to volunteer to serve as the Human Resource officer to respond to this grievance. He usually asks for a White male or female to serve as the officer.

This scenario elicits multiple perspectives from the audience. Some do not see it as racist while others do. This exposes multiple perspectives based on lived experiences. While this is the third condition, this activity was usually done towards the end of the workshop.

The fourth condition (*monitoring the parameters of the* conversation) is one that is maintained by both the district leadership and the facilitators and is maintained throughout the workshop and beyond. The district ensures that the workshop sessions are interracial and balanced. The facilitators ensure that multiple perspectives are heard and that no one person dominates the conversation.

For the fifth condition (*establish agreement around a contemporary definition of race*), participants are asked to define race. This generally occurs when participants are completing the worksheet regarding how race impacts their life. There is a discussion around everyone's definition, and then facilitators guide them towards an agreement.

The sixth condition requires one to *examine the presence and role of Whiteness and its impact on the conversation and the problem being addressed*. To address educators' deficit perspectives regarding student achievement requires one to focus on Whiteness and White privilege. This is the facilitator's attempt "to make the invisible

visible." In addition, this is where the facilitators take it to the interpersonal level so that educators can see their roles in either perpetuating and/or ameliorating achievement disparities.

The activity used to reveal White privilege and to generate discussion on privilege and different lived experiences is titled: *The Color Arc Activity* (see Appendix D)*.* This activity, informed by Peggy McIntosh's (1990) *Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*, asks participants to complete a worksheet that has a number of statements. Each individual places a value next to each statement ("0" if the statement is seldom true for you; "3" if the statement is sometimes true; and "5" if the statement is mostly true for you). An example of a statement would be: *I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.*

After completing the worksheet, participants tally up their totals and then arrange themselves in an arc around the room, based on their number from 0 to 65. Typically, the arc follows a specific pattern and is usually obvious by skin color. Whites are usually at one end of the arc (with higher totals), and people of color are at the other end of the arc (with lower totals). Even more, the arc usually follows a specific color and gender pattern where people with the darkest skin color are at one end and the skin color becomes lighter as you get to the other end of the arc. Black males are usually at one end while White males are at the other end. This activity reveals privilege. There is a discussion about this activity after the arc is formed.

When time permits, the workshop usually closes with a discussion of the intersection of identities. In this discussion, facilitators walk participants through other

target/agent identities one might possess. Workshop participants complete workshop evaluation surveys at the conclusion of the workshop.

Conceptual Framework

As shown above, the workshop, at the heart of this research study, focuses on raising the racial awareness of the participants. In doing so, activities associated with transformative learning opportunities are utilized. Transformative learning theory suggests that in order for transformation to take place, these opportunities are necessary.

Transformative Learning Theory

According to Mezirow (1997), transformative learning is the process of bringing about a change in one's frame of reference. He defines frames of reference as "the structures of assumptions through which we understand our experiences" (p. 5). They mold how we view the world, how we think, and how we behave. Once our frames of reference have been established, it becomes increasingly difficult to understand perspectives that do not match our own. According to this theory, however, through critical reflection, transformative learners become aware of and challenge the assumptions "upon which our interpretations, beliefs, and habits of mind or points of view are based" (p. 7).

Mezirow (1997) suggests that educators play an integral role in facilitating transformative learning by helping adult learners become aware of and critically reflect on their own assumptions. Educators can also help by providing opportunities for adult learners to engage in rational discourse, which Mezirow (1997) argues is necessary in order for adults to confirm *how* they understand and *what* they understand.

Finally, he offers that transformative learning opportunities should be "learner-

centered, participatory, interactive, and involve group deliberation and group problem solving" (p. 10). Activities can include role plays, simulations, consciousness raising, learning contracts, etc. Cranton (1992) adds that one's behavior, perspective, and/or assumptions would change as a result of experiencing transformative learning.

The transformative learning opportunities, provided in the professional development sessions offered to the participants of this study, centered race in these activities. Race was also at the center of the discussions. Thus, this workshop also employed aspects of critical race theory in its efforts to raise the consciousness of the central office staff.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) presupposes that racism is pervasive in American culture and that racism seems natural in our society because it is institutionalized (Bell, 1987; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Lopez, 2003; Parker & Villalpando, 2007). CRT aims to expose this racism in its different forms.

It suggests that race is incorrectly viewed as an individual phenomenon rather than a social construct that is connected to larger issues of job distribution, affluence, power, etc. (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Lopez, 2003). By relegating racism to an individual experience, it encourages the belief that colorblindness will eradicate discrimination (Lopez, 2003). This view neglects "invisible" forms of racism that have become institutionalized, and as a result, people think that racism no longer exists. As a result, we are part of a society that promotes colorblindness (Parker & Villalpando, 2007).

However, racism does exist, and Lopez argues that our current theories of educational politics and policy are inadequate in addressing inequities inherent within

school structures. As a result, he and others advocate for employing CRT as a theory to interrogate how policies replicate, perpetuate and normalize racism in the U.S. (Lopez, 2003; Parker & Villalpando, 2007).

Further, Solorzano (1998) explains that a critical race theory (CRT) in education "challenges the traditional claims of the educational system and its institutions to objectivity, meritocracy, color and gender blindness, race and gender neutrality, and equal opportunity" (p. 122). CRT challenges any discourse that does not take into account the history of racism within this nation and how laws prohibited Blacks' access to education. Instead it centralizes racism in education and situates it in the context of its history and the present.

As the literature review revealed, little is known about the impact of race-based professional development trainings on educators. There is even less known about the effects of the sessions on school district central office staff. Further, the literature also reveals that people are often resistant to discourse centered on race and racism (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Singleton & Linton, 2006). However, there is a dearth in the literature on those who *do* choose to engage. These cultural proficiency professional development sessions provided a unique opportunity to address these gaps in the literature.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview on the current state of academic achievement, followed by a discussion on the impact of race and racism on schooling. It also included a description of beliefs and school practices that oppress students. This was followed by a discussion on the role of central office leaders in eliminating barriers. The literature on

preparation programs was provided, which included recommended racial awareness

practices and transforming learning activities and research on the impact of raced-based

preparation programs. This was followed by an overview of the literature on race-based

professional development sessions. The overview of the cultural proficiency workshop,

that was the focus of this study, was then provided, and the chapter concluded with a

discussion of the conceptual framework that guided this study.

Chapter Three

Design and Methodology

Studies suggest that when school educators engage in structured conversations on race and racism and its impact on schooling, it can lead to better academic outcomes for students (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Howard, 2010; Singleton & Linton, 2006). However, very few school districts promote this kind of dialogue, and even fewer districts offer professional development opportunities for these types of discussions to take place. As a result, little is known about the effectiveness of these professional development sessions. Less is known about the impact of these trainings on school district central office staff.

Furthermore, the literature suggests that some people are often resistant to race-based discourse and when introduced to the concepts offered in these types of workshops, they can often become disinterested and disengaged (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Singleton & Linton, 2006). Therefore, if it is indeed pertinent for educators to be presented with knowledge that can be critical to student success, it is vital to understand what aspects of the training and what qualities of the participants lend themselves to a higher level of engagement and interest. For this reason, it is important to assess participants' perceptions of the impact of a professional development session over cultural proficiency. I was also interested in understanding what characteristics or qualities (if any) contribute to the likelihood that individuals would be interested in engaging in conversations around race and racism. With this in mind, the following research questions were used to guide this study.

Research Questions

1) What are central office administrators' perceptions about the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that engages participants in conversations on race and racism?

2) What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?

This chapter will describe the research design and methodology that was used to answer these questions. First, a historical overview will be provided. This will be followed by a description of the design. Then, the quantitative method, instrument, unit of analysis, data collection, and analysis will be described. Subsequently, the qualitative method, strategy of inquiry, description of the population and sample, the sampling method, and the data instruments will be explained. Then, I will speak to my role as the researcher and how my life experiences led me to this research project. Finally, the chapter will conclude by describing the data collection and analysis. Next, a historical overview of the research design, mixed methods research, will be defined.

Research Methods and Design

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), mixed methods, "as a distinct research design or methodology," is relatively new. The idea of using a mixed method research approach in the social sciences began with scholars who saw the benefits of using both quantitative and qualitative perspectives and methods to address their research questions (Creswell, 2009). This next section will provide a brief historical overview of the evolution of mixed methods research.

Historical Overview

What Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) refer to as the *formative period*, the 1950s through 1980s witnessed a growing interest in the use of multiple research methods in a

single research project. Campbell and Fiske's (1959) article, *Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix*, is often credited as being the first in the social sciences to use more than one research method in a lone study. Termed multiple operationalism in their article, these researchers used multiple quantitative methods as a way to validate their findings, a concept that would later be referred to as triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Jick, 1979). Other researchers like Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, and Sechrest (1966), Denzin (1978), and Jick (1979) expanded on the ideas of Campbell and Fiske.

While these researchers and methodologists were advancing the idea of triangulation (Crewswell, 2009; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007), others were working towards "the development of a distinct methodology of inquiry" (Creswell, 2009, p. 204) and describing the purposes and advantages of utilizing a mixed methods research design (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Sutton, 2006; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Rossman & Wilson, 1985; Sieber, 1973). Green, Caracelli, and Graham's (1989) article, *Toward a Conceptual Framework for Mixed-method Evaluation Designs*, is viewed as the piece that established the foundation for mixed methods research design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). These authors analyzed 57 mixed method evaluations and established a mixed method conceptual framework that identifies five purposes for these studies: *complementarity, development, initiation, triangulation,* and *expansion*.

A *complementarity* mixed method study uses multiple methods to allow the researcher to use one method to elaborate on the findings from another method. Some researchers utilize both quantitative and qualitative approaches for *development* purposes. In this type of study, one method is used to develop another method. According to Green, Caracelli, and Graham (1989), "in a mixed method study with an *initiation* intent, the

major aim of combining qualitative and quantitative approaches is to uncover paradox and contradiction" (p. 268). Mixed method research designs also allow for the *expansion* of a study's scope because the researcher can use different approaches to answer separate research questions.

Later, other writers began to develop and describe mixed method designs and design qualities (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). For example, Creswell (1994) developed six types of mixed method strategies or models (two sets of three), and discussed four design factors that impact the design of procedures in these types of studies. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) and Newman and Benz (1998) outlined mixed method procedures while Morgan (1998) created a guide to help one to determine which particular design to use when conducting a mixed method study.

Mixed Methods Research Defined

Mixed methods research has been defined in various ways over the years. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) in their article, *Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research*, attempted to pinpoint the main components of mixed methods research in order to develop a comprehensive definition. In doing so, they asked leading scholars in the field of mixed methods research to provide their definition. From their cross case analysis of these definitions, they came up with the following definition for mixed methods research.

> Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (p. 123).

While Johnson et al's definition succinctly captures an adequate explanation of this research approach, I like Creswell and Plano Clark's (2007) definition because it gives a more comprehensive description.

Mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone (p. 5).

In this definition, they explain that certain philosophical assumptions guide the collection and analysis of data.

The thinking that undergirded my research was based on a pragmatic worldview (Creswell, 2009). A pragmatist focuses less on methods but instead focuses on the research problem and utilizes any and all methods available to research a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Rossman & Wilson, 1985). Pragmatism is not attached to any one specific ideology or way of seeing. As Creswell (2009) puts it:

Truth is what works at the time. It is not based in a duality between reality independent of the mind or within the mind. Thus, in mixed methods research, investigators use both quantitative and qualitative data because they work to provide the best understanding of a research problem (p. 11).

Next, I will discuss how I decided to use a mixed method design, and I explain the specific mixed method strategy used for this research.

Design

It should be acknowledged that this study does not necessarily follow what some would consider to be a true mixed method design. Some scholars would argue that valid mixed method research involves the utilization of sophisticated statistical quantitative data analysis along with in-depth and rigorous qualitative data analysis. While this project required that I analyze the qualitative data in such a way, it was not required during the quantitative data analysis (this will be explained later in the chapter). In

51

addition, the quantitative data do not serve as the focal point of this study but as background information.

However, it is difficult to ignore the instruments that were used in order to answer the research questions. To understand the perceptions of the impact of the training, a brief survey (utilizing Likert-scaled questions) was given to all workshop participants (see Appendix E). This particular instrument is generally associated with quantitative approaches to data collection (Creswell, 2009).

I also interviewed certain participants in order to explore this question further. Moreover, interviews enabled me to examine the second research question. The interview protocol is associated with qualitative approaches to data collection (Creswell, 2009).

Because of these multiple approaches employed to answer the research questions and because of the pragmatic approach to this project, it was necessary to name this a mixed method study with the qualification that this is primarily a qualitative study with some quantitative data used to help set the stage. Mixed method research designs allow for this privileging of one particular approach over the other as described by Creswell (2009).

For example, the ideal mixed method design for this project is aptly named the *concurrent embedded strategy* (Creswell, 2009). With this particular model, quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously, and one set of data serves as a primary method that guides the study while the other method serves a secondary role and is embedded in the primary method (see figure below). For this particular study, the qualitative data served as the predominant method, and the quantitative data was embedded or nested.

Figure 3.1 Concurrent Embedded Design
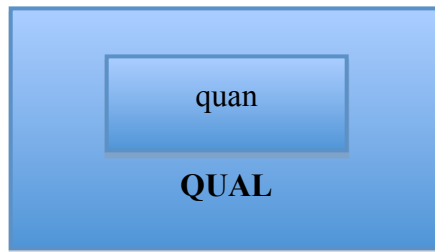
This strategy is also particularly useful because it allows the researcher to use one method to address one research question and use another method to address a different question. For example, the quantitative data may be used to explore expected results from a specific treatment, and the qualitative approach may be used to examine how participants experienced the treatment or to assess a different but related phenomenon. With that said, I employed a quantitative and qualitative approach to explore the first research question and a qualitative approach to address the second research question. As a reminder, here are the research questions used to guide this study:

> 1) What are central office administrators' perceptions about the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that engages participants in conversations on race and racism?

> 2) What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?

The purpose of this concurrent mixed methods study is to better understand a research problem by converging both quantitative and qualitative data. In this approach, I used a survey to measure the participants' perception of the impact of the cultural proficiency workshop. At the same time, I evaluated participants' perceptions using qualitative interviews. Additionally, I conducted qualitative interviews to examine what factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations

about race and racism. These next two sections will describe the quantitative and qualitative approaches and/or designs in more detail.

Quantitative Method

In the original iteration of the research design, I was interested in understanding the impact of the professional development workshop on participants' level of racial awareness and their identity development. However, to do so would require that the participants be assessed before and after the workshop. Unfortunately, the time frame from finding out about the workshops and to when the workshops would actually occur resulted in an insufficient amount of time to prepare the necessary instruments and get the necessary approvals to implement such a study. As a result, the research design had to be re-evaluated. However, I was still interested in exploring what participants thought about this workshop, especially since this workshop covered concepts that are considered somewhat taboo in today's society.

As the research design was being developed, I was able to analyze the workshop evaluation surveys in the interim. The information gathered from these surveys would help to provide a general overview about the participants' perceptions of the workshop. Next, I will describe this quantitative instrument in more detail.

Survey Design

According to Creswell (2009), "a survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population" (p. 145). A survey was chosen for this study as a way to evaluate workshop participants' overall perceptions about the impact of the workshop. The information gathered from the survey responses served as background information for the larger study.

Babbie (1990) notes that "surveys are frequently conducted for the purpose of making descriptive assertions about some population" (p. 52). These types of surveys do not necessarily address questions of *why* but normally address questions of *what.* For example, descriptive research might seek to answer what percentage of a population is likely to buy a new car rather than a used one (Babbie, 1990). The survey used for this project served a similar purpose. In a very general sense, I wanted to know what percentage of workshop participants felt that the workshop benefited them, and I also wanted to know *how* it benefitted them. The evaluation surveys allowed me to answer a part of this question.

The workshop evaluation surveys consisted of a series of Likert-scaled questions and open-ended questions (see Appendix E). There were five (5) Likert-scaled questions, two (2) open-ended questions, asking what was liked most and least about the training, and one (1) final question, asking for additional comments. Workshop participants were asked if they *strongly agree, agree, disagree,* or *strongly disagree* with the following statements (or if they are *neutral*) with the following statements:

The session increased my awareness of my own identities.
This session increased my awareness of perspectives different from my own.
Overall, this session was valuable to me.

Next, I will provide the unit of analysis for the quantitative method.

Unit of Analysis

The participants of the cultural proficiency workshop were central office administrators and staff of a large, urban school district in the South. These school district officials were required to attend a staff development session entitled: "Developing an Inclusive Workplace." This workshop was offered nineteen (19) times over the course of

three months (February through April of 2012), and the central office administrators and staff could sign up for the session that was most convenient for them. The district office responsible for securing the training did ask, however, that participants not sign up for the same session as others in their same department.

According to the school district's website, there are 581 central office administrators and staff. Seventy percent (404) are women, and their average age is 49.41. Thirty percent (30%) are men (177), and their average age is 50.19. The average age of all employees is 49.64, and their average years of experience is 15.17.

Twenty percent (20%) (116) identify themselves as Hispanic. Six percent (6%) (35) identify themselves as American Indian/Alaskan Native. Ten percent (10%) (55) identify themselves as Black/African American. Three percent (3%) (19) identify themselves as Asian American. Eighty-five percent (85%) (490) identify themselves as White. Four percent (4%) (20) identify themselves as one or more races.

This background information and the descriptive information gathered from these survey responses were used as context for this study. Surveys are often used to collect data about certain aspects of an individual's environment to be used to describe those individuals (Babbie, 1990). It is acknowledged that this is often done in a way to provide a more comprehensive description of study participants. For example, data may be collected from a person's family to be able to describe her as having a middle-aged, politically conservative father who grew up in the Midwest (Babbie, 1990). For this study, however, I used these data to situate individual study participants' beliefs and perceptions within the context of the general beliefs and perceptions of other central

office administrators and staff within the school district. In addition, the survey questions were used as a starting point to ask more in-depth questions of interview participants.

Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis

Data were gathered from the nineteen (19) four-hour training sessions. In all, 451 participants attended the sessions. All were asked to submit an evaluation at the end of each session. The surveys were given out at the end of each session, and workshop participants were asked to place the survey on the table as they exited or to hand it to one of the workshop assistants. Over 96% responded to the evaluation for a total of 433 responses.

The survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Babbie, 1990) to analyze responses given by study participants, including range, mean and frequency (Coldarci, Cobb, & Minium, 2010). After each session, I entered all closed-ended responses into a table, using the Excel software program with one tally given for each participant's response to each question. All tally marks were added for each response for each question and then divided by the total number of responses for each question to determine the percentages for each Likert-scale indicator for every question. For example, if four people chose *strongly agree*, three people chose *agree*, two people chose *disagree*, and one chose *strongly disagree* for the first question, the percentages would be that 40% chose *strongly agree*, 30% chose *agree,* twenty percent chose *disagree*, and 10% chose *strongly disagree*. I entered these totals and percentages into a final reporting document. In April 2012, after all workshop sessions had been conducted, the totals from each document were computed to determine the overall response percentages for each indicator for every question. Those percentages will be presented in the next chapter.

Now that I have described the quantitative portion of this mixed method study, I will now turn my attention to the qualitative method. In this section, I will also explain how my research questions changed during the data collection and analysis phase of the study. First, I will provide a brief overview of qualitative research.

Qualitative Method

Creswell (2009) lists several basic characteristics particular to qualitative research which include: *research in the study participants' natural setting, researcher as key instrument, inductive analysis, interpretive inquiry, multiple sources of data, a focus on participants' meanings*, and *holistic design*. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) add that qualitative research aims to provide a comprehensive explanation of the perspectives of its study participants by learning about their life's circumstances and experiences. It also includes small sample sizes and data collection that involves "close contact between the researcher and the research participants, which are interactive and developmental and allow for emergent issues to be explored" (p. 5). Qualitative data are thorough and elaborate, and the analyses of these data attempt to describe connections or attempts to establish categories or definitions. The outputs of qualitative research often center on the analysis and explanation of social meaning through mapping the perspectives of the members of a particular study.

In addition, qualitative methods are also useful in conducting evaluative research (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Evaluative research focuses on examining the effectiveness of a specific program, intervention, policy, etc. To effectively evaluate a particular phenomenon requires input and output data. Qualitative methods are very proficient in examining processes or *how* things function as well as aiding in an "understanding of

outcomes by identifying the different types of effects or consequences" (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) of a particular program, policy, or intervention.

As Ritchie and Lewis (2003) describe, these data can then be used to pinpoint certain aspects that make a program successful. Moreover, they add that this information can also be used to analyze the impact of this program on its participants. Qualitative research can then also become generative in that the findings generated from these analyses can be used to make improvements to a given program.

Because part of this study was concerned with understanding the impact of cultural proficiency training on central office administrators and staff, for the reasons listed above, qualitative research provided an opportunity to uncover this impact at a deeper level by hearing directly from those who experienced the workshop. While the survey data were used to foreground the study by providing a broad, bird's-eye view of participants' perceptions about the impact of the training, the qualitative data provided a more in-depth picture. In addition, by focusing on the participants, their dispositions and life experiences, the effect of the workshop was made clearer. Recall that this research is primarily a qualitative study, and as a result, much of the data and analyses were qualitative in nature.

Creswell (2009) posits that another key aspect of qualitative research is that the process is *emergent*.

> This means that the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and all phases of the process may change or shift after the researcher enters the field and begins to collect data. For example, the questions may change, the forms of data collection may shift, and the individuals studied and the sites visited may be modified. The key idea behind qualitative research is to learn about the problem or issue from participants and to address the research to obtain that information (p. 176).

Creswell's quote highlights that when conducting qualitative research, certain aspects of the project can change. This occurred in the present study.

The initial research was concerned with understanding how the workshop impacted the racial identity development of the central office administrators and staff. However, without having the necessary time and instruments to adequately measure this impact, the focus shifted to exploring how the study participants *perceived* the impact of the workshop. At that point in the study, the following research questions were being explored:

1) What are central office administrators' perceptions about the effectiveness of the cultural proficiency workshop?

    a. Will there be participants resistant to the trainings?

2) Specifically, how did they perceive the workshop's impact on their level of racial awareness?

    a. Where are these educators in regards to their identity development?

    b. Did they perceive that the workshop impacted the way they approached their work?

However, the direction of this project shifted on a couple of occasions once data began to be collected. Once the first round of interviews were complete, some consistent themes began to emerge from the interview data. The study became less about the workshop and became more about the participants in the workshop who had self-selected to participate in the study. The stories and experiences of the interview subjects were quickly becoming the real story. Their perceptions about the impact of the workshop on their level of racial awareness was important, but what was becoming more apparent through the interviews, was that there was something about each of them that made the workshop meaningful for them, and they seemed comfortable discussing race and racism.

In other words, there were some qualities and characteristics they possessed that made the concepts more salient and engaging.

If one of the purposes of the workshop was to encourage more conversations about race and racism, then it would seem vitally important to understand the characteristics of people who appear to want to engage in these discussions. According to Creswell (2009), with qualitative research, the researcher is concerned with the "meaning that the participants hold about a problem or issue" (p. 175), and according to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), "qualitative research provides a unique tool for studying what lies behind, or underpins, a decision, attitude, behavior or other phenomena" (p. 28). In true evaluative fashion, that information could perhaps then be used to make improvements to professional development around issues of race, racism, and schooling. As a result of this new line of thinking, various aspects of the project changed.

For example, the research questions changed, and the follow-up interview was approached differently. The research questions were now as follows:

1) What are central office administrators' perceptions about the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that engages participants in conversations on race and racism?

2) What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?

As stated, qualitative research allows for these kinds of adjustments.

Limitations to Qualitative Research

While there are many strengths to conducting qualitative research, there are also some limitations. First, the time required to conduct qualitative studies have often been cited as a drawback (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Creswell, 2009). Second, the findings generated from these kinds of studies are often not generalizable.

Phenomenological Research Design

The qualitative research design chosen for this study was a phenomenological research design. Creswell (2013) states that "phenomenological research is a design of inquiry coming from philosophy and psychology in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants" (p. 14). This process involves researching a small sample of people through extended and in-depth engagement in order to establish patterns and relationships (Creswell, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). This approach was desirable because it provided a tool to interview participants who attended a cultural proficiency workshop and to explore their experiences and their perceptions of the workshop's impact.

Just as importantly, it provided a design to explore why certain participants were more likely to be engaged in conversations about race and racism than others. As Rossman and Rallis (1998) mention, "Those engaged in phenomenological research focus in-depth on the meaning of a particular aspect of experience, assuming that through dialogue and reflection the quintessential meaning of the experience will be reviewed (p. 72). As such, after initial interviews, I was interested in finding out more about why particular individuals were likely to be interested in conversations about race and racism.

Description of the Population and Sample

A superintendent of an urban school district in the South implemented a cultural proficiency workshop and required that all of the central office administrators and staff attend. Like most large, K-12 public school central offices, the number of different job titles and roles in the district is quite extensive. A brief summary of the various titles will

be listed next, but for a more extensive listing, please see the organizational chart in the appendix (see Appendix F).

In the Superintendent's Office, there is a Superintendent and a Chief of Staff, who supervises both the Executive Director of the Communications and Community Engagement Office and the Executive Director of the Innovation and Development Office. Also in the Superintendent's office is the Public Information and Strategic Projects Supervisor, the Legal Services Office and the school's law attorney, the Any Given Child Development Director, the Intergovernmental and Policy Oversight Director, the Ombudsman, and the Title IX Coordinator. Each of these central office leaders generally supervises an office of additional central office personnel. These staff members can include administrative associates, assistant directors, program coordinators, etc.

The school district has six chief officers and five associate superintendents. The chief school officers are the Chief Academic Officer, the Chief Schools Officer, the Chief Performance Officer, the Chief Human Capital Officer, the Chief Operations Officer, and the Chief Financial Officer. There are nine additional executive directors (for a total of eleven), twenty-three additional directors (for a total of twenty-six), and a number of assistant directors and supervisors. The various offices that these executive directors and directors oversee include the Athletics Office, the Police Department, Social/Emotional Learning, Human Resources, Professional Development, Leadership Development, Early Childhood, Fine Arts, Special Education, Bilingual/ELL, System Wide Testing, Early Childhood, ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Contract and Procurement Services, and

many more. Most of these offices have additional staff, and each of these individuals, in addition to the ones listed, were required to attend the training.

The subjects of this study were chosen from the attendees of the cultural proficiency workshop. Since only participants of the workshop were asked to participate, only school personnel from the central office were part of this research. Thus, a combination of convenience sampling and purposive sampling was used to select the subjects of this study.

Sampling method. This study involved a combination of convenience and purposive sampling, with convenience sampling being the most prominent sampling method. According to Lavrakas (2008), "convenience sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling in which people are sampled simply because they are "convenient" data for researchers" (p.149). With purposive sampling, participants are chosen because of some characteristic (Patton, 1990).

When choosing participants for this project, I sent an email to all central office administrators and staff of the school district (see Appendix G). These email addresses were all collected from the district's website. The email stated that I was seeking individuals who had attended the professional development workshop entitled, *Developing an Inclusive Workplace* and would be willing to take part in an interview regarding their experiences and the impact of the workshop on their level of racial awareness. A flyer was also attached with the email (see Appendix H).

The sample was thus convenient and purposive. The workshop, and my involvement as an assistant, provided a convenient sample of interview participants for the students. However, *only* people who attended the training were asked to participate in

the interview. As a result, it was purposive in that regard. There were sixteen people who initially responded to the interview request, and fourteen were ultimately interviewed (two eventually backed out) during the first round of interviews.

As stated, qualitative research can be emergent and such was the case with this particular project. In the initial interviews, there was some evidence that for a majority of the participants, they perceived that the workshop increased their level of racial awareness, and there appeared to be other shared traits between the interview participants. In the follow-up interview, I wanted to follow up and expand on the conversation. I was particularly interested in discussing their racial awareness, and I wanted to have more discussions about race and racism and their lived experiences.

As these participants were being interviewed a second time, certain themes began to emerge that validated that these participants appeared to be interested in having conversations about race and racism. I also operated under the assumption that by volunteering to participate in the interview and accepting my follow-up request, they were invested in these conversations. In addition, additional themes emerged revealing that these interviewees did, in fact, share some common traits and characteristics. I decided to change the second research question to reflect this. Qualitative research allows for this kind of adjustment.

From the original fourteen participants, not everyone responded to the follow-up request, with four having left the district and two not responding. However, I still had a way to contact two of these members and elected not to because they no longer fit with the new direction of the research. As a result, I felt that their interview would contribute very little to the second research question.

Data Instruments

Semi-structured interviews were used as the qualitative method for this project (Bernard, 1988) (see Appendix I). These kinds of interviews usually involve the use of an interview guide or interview protocol (Creswell, 2009). However, as the name implies, this document is only meant to serve as a guide, unlike with structured interviews where only questions from the interview protocol are asked. In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer follows the interview guide (see Appendix I) but can deviate from the questions, depending on where the conversation leads, especially if it is felt that this new direction would help the researcher to better answer the research questions.

These interviews took on some of the features of in-depth interviews (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). In-depth interviews are much like conversations with a purpose (Webb & Webb, 1932) and some structure (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). However, they also allow for some flexibility.

In-depth interviews are interactive, and the data are developed from the conversations between the person being interviewed and the researcher. The interviewer will ask a question that will provoke a free and open response from the person being interviewed. The next question in the interview is predicated on the answer provided by the interviewee (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). Another aspect of in-depth interviews involves 'digging deeper' through follow-up questions. This allows the researcher to gain a more thorough understanding of the essence of the participants' responses. As Legard, Keegan, and Ward (2003) posit, the in-depth format "permits the researcher to explore fully all the factors that underpin participants' answers, reasons, feelings, opinions, and beliefs" (p. 141).

In-depth interviews are also generative, meaning that new insights are likely to be gained by the participants. They may be forced to think of certain things they may not have thought of before, and/or these individuals may be forced to think of things from a different perspective. This may not always be the case, and the degree to which this occurs largely depends on the research questions to be addressed.

According to Legard, Keegan and Ward (2003), the emphasis on depth, nuance and the interviewee's own language as a way of understanding implies that interview data needs to be captured in its natural form" (p. 142). As a result, all interviews for this study were tape recorded to capture the authentic conversations that took place. While taking field notes to supplement the interview data is promoted, note taking, in lieu of recording and transcribing the interview is discouraged. I recorded all interviews for this study. I also transcribed seven of the first round of interviews, and all of the others were transcribed by Verbal Ink, a professional transcription service. As the primary data collection instrument, I must disclose my role and provide my story in the following section.

Role of the Researcher

Since the inquirer is the primary data collection instrument in qualitative research, it is necessary to acknowledge any biases, values, and any background information that may frame the researcher's analysis and explanation of a particular research topic (Miller, 1992; Creswell, 2009). The researcher's direct involvement in the research can actually serve as a benefit rather than a limitation (Creswell, 2009). However, the researcher's role and any relevant information should be disclosed for the reader.

My views on the need for cultural proficiency training and conversations on race and racism stem from my personal experiences as both a Black male, who has experienced the deleterious impact of racism directly, and as an educator who helped to perpetuate institutional racism. There have been instances in life where I have felt the sting of racism in very specific, acute, and noticeable acts. However, I have also been the object of a more insidious form of racism that I was not able to recognize as racism until attending a cultural proficiency workshop.

Facing Racism in My Youth. As I reflected on how my life was shaped by my race, I thought about how, in my youth, I always wanted to be like my White friends. I tried to change my speech, my appearance, and my interests so that I could sound and appear to be more White. I was very intentional about which social circles I joined and which friends and romantic partners I chose. I tended to date White young women simply because they were White. I tried to befriend White people, simply because they were White. If I dated young women of color, I consciously thought about how they would be received by my White friends. Would they be received well by them? Would they fit in? I even recall not bringing some of my Black friends around my White friends out of fear that those White friends would see that I, too, was Black (even though I was visibly Black by skin color).

In a sense, I saw myself as White, and I felt like Whites saw me like them too. There were a couple of specific instances in my youth that made me realize that Whites did not see me as White (I did not realize until later that even if they did, that still wasn't a good thing). When I was in junior high, I was walking home from school after a heavy rain. As I walked down the sidewalk, a couple of White, young men in a truck sped by

and intentionally drove through a large puddle next to the sidewalk so that the water would splash on me. As they did this, they yelled, "Nigger!" out of their window multiple times.

I was angry, terrified, and sad all at the same time. As tears welled in my eyes, I looked at myself to see what I was wearing. They hadn't heard me speak. I was by myself, and I wasn't with my other Black friends. What gave me away? How did they know I was Black? As I was thinking, the truck turned around and came barreling toward me again, and I ran because at this point, I began to fear for my life. I ran away from my normal path so that I could lose them, and either I lost them, or they never intended to pursue me but wanted me to think they were. As I walked the rest of the way home, I thought about what I needed to do to appear to be more White so that I would not feel that way again, but I did.

When I was a senior in high school, I had become really close friends with this young, White sophomore who was also a student at the same high school I attended. For the purposes of this study, we will call her Christy. Over the course of the year, we had become best friends, and we spent a lot of time together. We were not involved romantically because during the time of our friendship, I actually had a girlfriend, and I had never thought of this friend in a romantic way. Close to her birthday, her mother wanted to throw Christy a surprise birthday party, and the mother called me to help plan the party. She knew how close Christy and I were, and she wanted to be sure I was involved in some capacity.

We had the party and had a wonderful time. The mother and I met for the first time during that party although we had spoken several times by phone. She and I hit it off

as well. A couple of days after the party, Christy did not show up to school one day. This was unlike her because she never missed. I assumed she was sick, but we were close enough then that I felt like she would have told me. I tried calling her after school and was unable to reach her.

The next day at school, I received a note in class that I needed to go to the principal's office. I had never been in trouble before so I was afraid. When I sat down in front of the principal, who was seated at this desk, he proceeds to inform me that Christy's mother had called and asked the principal to make sure that Christy and I stayed apart during the school day. The principal said he informed her that he could not do that, but he wanted to let me know so that I would be careful. He feared that the family could do something drastic if I continued to associate with Christy.

I was floored. I had no idea how we had gotten to this point. I had just met the mother, and she seemed to like me. What did I do to warrant these feelings from Christy's mother? Needless to say, I did not see Christy that day, the next, or the one after that. I finally received a call from a mutual friend of ours, another young, White woman, and she told me that Christy had been sent to live with her dad in California.

Her mother had found a letter that Christy had written me where Christy had expressed that she had romantic feelings for me. Out of respect for my current romantic relationship, Christy had never given me the letter but kept it with her personal belongings. Her mother discovered it and became very upset that Christy was romantically interested in a Black person. Christy was afraid to contact me out of fear of what her family would do to me if we stayed in contact.

Needless to say, I heard from Christy maybe once or twice after that, and they were very short conversations. She just called to say hi and was usually sneaking a call from a friend's house and couldn't stay on the line longer than a minute or two. The last time I heard from Christy was about two to three years ago, and she told me everything. She told me what happened that night her mother discovered the letter. She told me of how her family kept close tabs on her to ensure that she did not contact me. She told me of how she never forgot about me and how after all of those years, she still had feelings for me although all of that time had passed. Christy later died in a car accident a few months after finally speaking with me.

Perpetuating Racism as an Adult Educator. While I was an administrator, I was faced with several scenarios where race and racism played a significant role in my decisions. I remember one specific incident when a young, Black student named Andrew was sent to my office because he was accused of hitting a White female teacher. Andrew, now in the 11th grade, was a student I had known since he was in seventh grade. I was a seventh grade teacher when Andrew was a seventh grader, and he would often come by my room in between classes just to say hello.

When Andrew left the middle school to go to high school, he played basketball. The high school's basketball gym was located on the middle school's campus so Andrew and the rest of the team would come to the middle school for basketball practice at the end of the school day. Andrew would still stop by room every day before going to practice. At times, he would come by, stay a little longer than usual and sit in the back of my class to wait for me to finish lecturing so that he could chat with me for a few

minutes. In short, Andrew and I had developed a special student-teacher relationship by the time I moved to the high school to become the eleventh grade principal.

Now, an eleventh grader, Andrew was giving his version of what had transpired between the White teacher and him. He explained to me that he did not hit her and that he had actually gotten into an altercation with the teacher's son who was also an eleventh-grade student at the school. He went on to say that as he and the son were pushing each other, the teacher came to break them up and grabbed only Andrew. Andrew, in the heat of the battle, stated that he did not know who grabbed him at the time, but he just flailed his arms, going after the son, lightly brushing the person holding him. It was then that he said that the teacher started screaming that he hit her when he says he did no such thing.

He proceeds to tell me that prior to the altercation, that he and the son were actually good friends, but that the mother did not like their friendship because Andrew was Black. She was very suspicious of Andrew and would always watch him closely when he came to their house. She would never let her son come to Andrew's house. He felt that she was finally using this as an opportunity to "get rid of him."

As Andrew was telling me this, I asked Andrew if he was sure about this, and he said he was sure. Being a person who espoused a colorblind ideology, I began to ask Andrew if there was any other reason that she could have felt like he hit her. Was it possible that he hit her and did not realize it? I told him that it was hard for me to believe that she would make all of this up just because she did not like him because of his race. We were well past that in this society. She was a teacher after all, and she was at a school with a lot of people of color. She couldn't possibly be a racist. Perhaps Andrew was just using this as a convenient excuse to keep from getting in trouble. I convinced myself of

this even though I had never known Andrew to lie to me before. Sure, he had his share of ups and downs and was not necessarily the model student, but he had never lied to me.

I never investigated Andrew's claims. I never talked to the student with whom he had the altercation. I never interviewed other student witnesses. I took the teacher's word. I never allowed race to enter the equation. I automatically ruled it out because we were all now colorblind. Surely no one made decisions based on race anymore, and those who did could be easily identified, right? Furthermore, I felt like I would have been ridiculed and marginalized by my teachers and supervisors if I was to suggest, in any way, that race was a factor.

Andrew was suspended for fighting, and I assigned him to our alternative learning center. Andrew refused to go and dropped out of school instead. The last I heard, he moved out of state to live with other family members and never returned to school. At the time, I blamed Andrew for not stepping up and taking care of his responsibilities, and I never thought about how I played a part in his dropping out of school and not receiving the education that he was due. Andrew was a good child and saw me as someone he could trust. He believed in me and felt that as a fellow Black man I would understand how racism works.

As a reminder, I was not as racially aware during the times of the incidents, and I did not realize the damage that was being wrought on me as an individual and on the students I served. It wasn't until I attended the cultural proficiency workshop (the same workshop the central office administrators and staff from this study attended) did I begin to understand my role in perpetuating inequalities and how I could have helped a lot more students.

These experiences and my own attendance at the cultural proficiency workshop shaped how I view these types of workshops and conversations about race and racism. Furthermore, because of my guilt of not recognizing institutional racism, I become concerned when others resist the types of concepts presented in the workshop, particularly concepts like race and racism.

It should also be disclosed that my access to the participants for this study was through my involvement in the workshop. My advisor, Dr. Mark A. Gooden, was one of the facilitators for the workshop. By virtue of me being his research assistant at the time, I served as his assistant at all of the workshops. Therefore, it should be acknowledged that I was perhaps viewed by the workshop participants as more than just an outside research assistant to the study participants because of my direct involvement to the consultants who were brought in to facilitate the workshop.

The Institutional Review Board at The University of Texas at Austin approved the study. It was also approved by the External Research Department at the school district where the workshop was hosted. I also received permission from my advisor to interview participants from his workshops.

Data Collection

Workshop participants were initially informed about the study in person during the workshops, which were held at the school district's administration offices. I also contacted them via email to request their participation in a study regarding their experiences and perceptions about the workshop. In the email, workshop participants were provided with a description of the study and were asked if they would be interested

in sharing their workshop experiences and their perceptions of its impact on their level of racial awareness.

After interested subjects responded to the email seeking interviews, I established a time to meet in order to conduct the interview. At that time, a consent form (see Appendix J) was emailed to the participant for him/her to review prior to the interview. Once we met for the interview, I reviewed the purpose of the interview.

I gave the participant an opportunity to ask any questions, and I responded accordingly. Once the participant agreed to participate in the study, he/she signed the consent form at that time and submitted it to me. The interviewee received a copy of the consent form for his/her records.

Interview participants were asked to commit to 60 minutes for an initial interview, and some were asked to commit to an additional 30-minute follow-up interview if necessary. A total of twenty-two interviews were conducted. The interviews took place at a location convenient and safe for the participants. No interviews were conducted at their place of employment unless safe and private space was provided. Some chose to meet at a local coffee shop while others chose to meet at a nearby restaurant. One person asked to meet at my office while a few others asked to meet at their office. After the first interview, some were asked to participate in a follow-up interview to further explore the second research question.

Data Analysis

Data analysis for phenomenological studies occurs through a process of reduction (Creswell, 1998). The goal of these kinds of studies is to identify shared experiences or

patterns that emerge from the data. This section will discuss the data analysis for this research study.

Coding. For this research project, I utilized a coding scheme that was emergent (Merriam, 1999). I listened to each interview and went line by line through each transcript to discover themes or patterns through a process known as open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). These codes were then applied to the transcripts, using NVivo, a qualitative research program. Then, these codes were grouped into themes and reapplied to the transcripts. This process continued until core themes were established.

Once the second or follow-up interview was complete, these interviews were transcribed as well. New codes were developed since most of the second interview addressed the second research question. Through open coding, initial codes were developed by listening to the recorded interviews and by reading each transcript. Then, these codes were grouped into themes and reapplied to the transcripts. This process continued until core themes were established.

As part of the second or follow-up interview, in addition to asking general follow-up questions and questions about them and their lived experiences, I asked some questions inspired by an interview protocol developed by Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2010) in the research that informed his book, *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*. The questions from this protocol were ideal because the questions were crafted in such a way to uncover colorblindness without asking direct questions about colorblindness. In addition, questions from this protocol gave me a foundation to ask questions about their background and their understanding of race and racism.

In addition, this was a way to assess participants' racial awareness since the literature supports the idea that colorblindness is a form of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Milner, 2012). According to Bonilla Silva's racism without racists framework, responses of people who espouse colorblind beliefs can be categorized into one of four frames: abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, and minimization of racism. Please refer back to Chapter Two for the explanation for each of these frames.

I thought it was useful to verify that participants rejected colorblindness since that was one of the themes that emerged during the data collection. As a result, the four frames were used as pre-established codes when I coded the second interviews. The themes that emerged from these codes will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with an introduction that provided a restatement of the purpose of the study and the research questions that were used to guide this study. The next section included details on how the study was designed, noting that this research project was primarily a qualitative study with quantitative data serving a secondary role. In addition, since the philosophy undergirding this study was based on pragmatism, this study took on a mixed method approach.

Quantitative data consisted of workshop evaluation surveys and provided a general overview about participants' perceptions about the impact of the workshop. Qualitative data consisted of qualitative interviews and followed a phenomenology research design. The data collection and analyses were all discussed.

I also discussed my role in the research and disclosed any biases that might impact the analysis of the data. The next chapter will present the findings of these analyses.

Chapter Four

Findings

This chapter will provide an overview of the quantitative and qualitative data used to answer the research questions and will be followed by a detailed description of the findings. This study employed a mixed methods concurrent embedded research design. A quantitative survey design and a phenomenological qualitative research design were used.

For the first research question, workshop evaluation surveys were used as a quantitative means to capture the workshop participants' overall perception about the impact of the workshop. These surveys were given to all central office administrators and staff who attended the four-hour cultural proficiency workshop required by the school district. The responses from these data serve as background information. Additional qualitative data were used to expound upon these perceptions. Moreover, qualitative data were used to answer the second research question.

Qualitative data consisted of interviews with workshop participants. Those who engaged in the interviews were chosen using a combination of convenience and purposive sampling. It was a convenient sample because participants self-selected to participate based on an invitation extended during and after their workshops they were required to attend. It was also purposive because only those who participated in the workshop were allowed to be interviewed. As certain additional themes began to emerge after the first set of interviews, people were asked to complete a follow-up interview to expound on those themes. As a reminder the research questions are:

> 1) What are central office administrators' perceptions about the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that engages participants in conversations on race and racism?

2) What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?

First, the findings from the quantitative data, used to answer the first question, will be discussed. Next, I will provide participant profiles of those who participated in each round of interviews. Then, findings from the qualitative data will be provided.

Quantitative Data Findings for Research Question #1

The first research question asks: *What are central office administrators' perceptions about the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that engages participants in conversations on race and racism?* This question will first be addressed using responses from the workshop evaluation survey. The survey consisted of a series of Likert-scaled statements and two open-ended questions. The Likert-scaled questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and the open-ended questions were grouped and categorized into themes.

As mentioned in chapter three, survey data were gathered from participants from the nineteen (19) four-hour training sessions. In all, 451 participants attended the sessions. All were asked to submit an evaluation at the end of each session. Over 96% of the workshop participants responded to the evaluation for a total of 433 responses. The following Likert-scaled statements/questions were asked on each survey:

- *This session increased my awareness of my own identities.**
- *This session increased my awareness of perspectives different from my own.**
- *This session helped me consider elements of an inclusive workplace.*
- *The presenters for this session were effective.*
- *Overall, this session was valuable to me.**

However, this analysis will only address the questions/statements with an asterisk. I considered these to be the most relevant to the purpose of this study.

Responses reveal that workshop attendees' overall perception of the impact of the cultural proficiency workshop was largely positive. For example, 367 respondents (85%) either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement: *This session was valuable to me.* To explore what participants found to be valuable about the workshop, one of the open-ended questions asked: *What did you find MOST valuable about this session?* Answers to this question were grouped and categorized into themes. Participants found that the most valuable aspects of the training included: the focus on increasing participants' awareness, the activities, and the dialogue and perspectives. Each of these themes will be discussed in the following sections. Responses to the remaining Likert-scaled questions will also be found in each respective heading.

Increased Awareness

Workshop participants indicated that the training impacted their level of racial awareness. Some expressed that it increased their level of awareness in general. Others stated that it helped them to be more aware of institutional and systemic barriers while others stated that the professional development session helped them to become more aware of their own racial identity and associated privileges. Representative responses are listed in the table below. These are actual responses to the survey question: *What did you find MOST valuable about this session?*

Table 4.1

First theme from open-ended responses from survey data

General Awareness	Awareness of Systemic Barriers	Awareness of Own Identity
Comments from colleagues, raising awareness, opportunity for considering my own perspective	*Recognizing systemic flaws*	*The awareness about me as a white, female*
Increased awareness	*Racial discrimination still exists in [the school district]*	*Self-awareness—both personal and professional*
"The Privileged" status— didn't know the form	*That just by ignoring that racism is still out there; "colorblind" is not the best way to go*	*Provided a focus to examine my own identity*
Bringing privilege into light	*Colorblind[ness] is really a problem because we don't recognize the problem*	*Awareness of own privilege*
Heightened my awareness	*The definition of racism and its impact*	*I thought of myself as not being racial, but this made me realize this isn't so true*
The opportunity to increase the awareness of a dominant society	*Emphasis on power of privilege*	*Provided a focus to examine my own identity*
Glad to be more aware of race & issues that do go on in the workplace	*I found that racism still exists and how we handle those situations vary*	*Learning more about self (forced to evaluate position in society)*
Increased awareness of racial issues in everyday situation	*Realizing the power [that] institutions still have on segregating people and how people still have a hard time gaining access to the same things that privileged classes have*	

The responses about identity coincide with responses given by participants to one of the Likert-scaled questions. This question/statement was: *This session increased my awareness of my own identities.* Three hundred forty-six respondents (80%) either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement. This largely occurred through some of the workshop's activities which will be explained next.

Activities

Many of the central office administrators and staff who attended the training stated that the handouts and activities were the most valuable part of the workshop. Some listed the role play activity and the race worksheet as being valuable, but a majority of the participants listed the color arc activity as the most valuable aspect of the session. As a reminder, the color arc activity, adopted from Peggy McIntosh's *Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,* was an exercise designed to show privilege. In addition to the activities, participants also found the conversations to be enlightening.

Dialogue and Perspectives

The most common response, about what participants found most valuable, centered on dialogue and perspectives. Some attendees wrote that they appreciated the open and honest dialogue. Others expressed that they thought that it was valuable to hear alternative views and perspectives. Representative responses are included in the table below. Again, these are actual responses taken directly from submitted surveys.

Table 4.2

Second theme from open-ended responses from survey data

Dialogue	Perspectives
Open dialogue on race	*Hearing other people's experiences*
Interaction with others	*Listening to perspectives, learning more about others*
Time to talk and listen to others	*Learning others' perceptions on such "touchy" subjects*
Starting a conversation about issues we do not generally discuss	*Hearing others' perspectives-how our feelings tie back to race/inclusion*
Open discussion on difficult views	*Perspective of different individuals; Info given that allows me the opportunity to acknowledge race differences*
Ability to speak and be heard	*Identifying others' feelings/perspectives*
Honest conversations	*Opportunity to think about others different than me*
The discussions and interactions	*I found that hearing other people talk about their experiences allowed me to see things differently*
Collegial discussion	*Realizing other people's perspective*
The chance to share opinions and feelings with others without judgment	*Very interesting hearing so many different stories, situations & opinions*

Moreover, one of the Likert-scaled questions addressed the session's impact on the attendees' awareness of other perspectives. The statement/question was: *This session increased my awareness of perspectives different than my own.* Three hundred eighty-one respondents (88%) either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with this statement.

84

The last two open-ended questions asked participants to share what they found to be *least* valuable in the session and to provide any additional comments. A few respondents expressed that a couple of the activities/handouts were not as valuable. Those activities and handouts included: the intersections of identities handout, the definitions handout, and the role play activity. While few in number, others mentioned that they found the organization and format of the session to be less than desirable. They would have preferred to have more small-group discussions and more frequent opportunities to move around.

A larger number of people stated that the *least* valuable aspect of the training was the limited amount of time. Many felt like four hours was not enough time to cover the necessary content and to have the necessary dialogue and conversations. One particular person, described in detail how more time could have benefitted the group.

> I participated in [a similar] 8 hour [workshop] and believe the identity activity provided time to reflect individually and pair with a partner that allowed us to share. Then we discussed in whole group. That activity led to the development of taking risks to share personal information and really address some challenges we face in our educational system. The activity also led to [developing] a foundation of trust in the group. In many cases, individuals shared powerful stories that influenced how we act and behave. Reading a few paragraphs from the book was also very powerful because it allowed everyone to read the same literature and discuss perceptions, beliefs and opened the door to our reality of facing issues in our schools.

When asked for additional comments on the survey, respondents expressed their happiness with the district's decision to offer this type of training, providing comments like, "This is great work that is needed!" and "I'm glad our district is embracing or being exposed to this."

There were, however, some who were not entirely pleased with every aspect of the training. Some felt that the session was "biased/slanted only to the 'race' factor for

African American culture and failed to recognize [that] there are stereotypes based on ethnicity of all populations." Others stated, that the workshop focused too much on African Americans and "needs to address other races." Finally, there was some concern that the workshop was "geared towards not liking White men" and was "focused on Black/White" although there are other types of discrimination.

Summary of Survey Data

Survey data revealed that, overall, workshop participants perceived that the workshop was effective. Findings suggest that they perceived that the workshop increased their level of awareness and increased their awareness of perspectives different than their own. They also found the increased awareness, the activities, and the dialogue and perspectives to be the most valuable aspects of the training. Time was reported to be a downside to the training because they felt that the workshop should have been longer. Finally, workshop attendees expressed some concerns that the training was too focused on African American culture and on Black/White race relations. The qualitative data and findings will be covered in the next section.

<div align="center">

Qualitative Data for Research Question #1

</div>

Interview participants for the first round of interviews self-selected to participate in this study by responding to an email request. The email clarified that this round of interviews would focus on their experiences in the cultural proficiency workshop. Sixteen people originally responded to the request, stating that they would participate. Two individuals eventually backed out of the interview for various reasons. For example, one person stated that his schedule had become packed and asked if he could be excused from the interview. Another young woman had a sick child and attempts to reschedule were

unsuccessful. In total, fourteen people participated in the first round of interviews. In this round, the first research question was addressed: *What are central office administrators' perceptions about the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that engages participants in conversations on race and racism?* Several themes from the interviews emerged and will be discussed after an overview of the participants is provided.

Participant Profiles

The study participants for this research project are all district central office employees. Thirteen interviewees identified as female, and the other interview participant identified as male. Two of the participants were Black, three were Latinas, two identified as biracial, and the other participants (7) were White. It should be noted that the two biracial participants each have one White parent and mentioned that they frequently pass as White. The participants' ages range from their early 30's to their late 60's. They serve in various capacities in several departments throughout the central office. Each of these participants (pseudonyms given) and their backgrounds and roles in the district will be described next.

Shannon Reeves is a middle-aged, middle class, White female. She works as an assessment specialist and has been in education for over twenty-two years.

Kathryn Williams is also a middle-aged, middle class, White female. She serves in a leadership capacity as a director for one of the district programs. She has been in education for over twenty-five years.

Caron Short is a middle class, White female in her thirties. She works in a leadership role in the curriculum department and has been in education for almost ten years.

Mary Knight is a middle-aged, middle class, White female who serves in a leadership role in the district. She has been in education for over twenty years.

Elizabeth Lopez is a middle-aged, middle class, Latina. She works as a supervisor in one of the departments in the central office. She has been with the district for over two years.

Jessica Aleman is female and identifies as biracial: Latina and White. She is middle-aged and middle class and works in the Budget and Finance Office. At the time of the interview, she had only been with the district for less than a year.

Lorrie Chastain is also female and identifies as biracial: Asian and White. She is middle-class and in her thirties. She works as a research analyst in the Department of Research and Evaluation and has been in education for three years.

Michael Page is the only male who participated in this research study. He is White, middle-aged and middle class. He works in the Budget and Finance Office as one of the supervisors. He has been in education for twelve years, four of which were in K-12 education. The other eight years was spent in higher education in a similar role.

Jeanetta Thomas is a middle-aged, middle class, Black female. She works as a district leader in the Superintendent's office. She has been in education for almost ten years.

Aracely Horta is a middle-class Latina who is in her sixties. She works as an administrative associate for the district. She has been in education for almost ten years.

Nancy Ackerman is a middle-class, White woman in her sixties. She works in the State and Federal Accountability office for the district and has been with the district for over twenty years.

Isabella Mendez is a middle-aged, middle class Latina. At the time of the interview, she served as one of the executive directors in one of the district programs. She has been in education for almost twenty-five years.

Maya Hill is a middle-aged, middle-class, Black female who serves as a district leader and has been in education for thirteen years.

Marissa Hurley is a middle-aged, middle-class White female who serves as a leader in the district's Office of Educator Quality. She has been in education for over twenty years.

Table 4.3

1ˢᵗ Round Interview Participant Profiles

Name	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Years of Experience
Shannon Reeves	White	Female	22
Kathryn Williams	White	Female	25
Caron Short	White	Female	10
Mary Knight	White	Female	20
Elizabeth Lopez	Latina	Female	2
Jessica Aleman	White/Latina	Female	6 mos
Lorrie Chastain	White/Asian	Female	3
Michael Page	White	Male	12
Jeanetta Thomas	Black	Female	10
Aracely Horta	Latina	Female	10
Nancy Ackerman	White	Female	20
Isabella Mendez	Latina	Female	25
Maya Hill	Black	Female	13
Marissa Hurley	White	Female	20

Qualitative Findings for Research Question #1

The first round of interviews was aimed at understanding how workshop participants perceived the impact of the cultural proficiency training. Questions were asked about their general perceptions of the training, and questions were asked about specific activities. Finally, participants were queried about their feelings about the value

of the training and how the training may have impacted their behavior. Interviews were analyzed and coded using NVivo qualitative research software.

Four major themes emerged. First, most interview participants believed that the workshop increased their level of awareness around issues of race and racism. For others, it served as a much-needed reminder or "refresher" of sorts. Second, a majority of participants suggested that the workshop changed their behavior or their disposition in some way. Third, interviewees stated that the training provided an opportunity to begin the discussion but that additional discussions and follow-up were needed. Finally, it was stated that this type of professional development was essential and that educators at all levels could benefit from this training. Each of these findings will be discussed in more detail below.

Finding #1: Increased Awareness. A consistent theme that emerged from the interview data involved an increased awareness. This increased level of awareness occurred in several ways. People of color expressed that the workshop gave them an opportunity to share their perspectives-perspectives which they felt are often ignored. Some interview participants expressed that the professional development session provided an opportunity for people to hear these and other perspectives. Perhaps by hearing these accounts it would help people to recognize different lived experiences based on race.

Interview data also revealed that certain workshop activities helped to increase attendees' level of awareness around issues of privilege and racism. The color arc activity was mentioned most frequently. This activity caused participants to reflect on their own identities.

90

Sharing perspectives. For the people of color who were interviewed, many of them suggested that the cultural proficiency training provided a safe and welcoming space for them to share how their lives are shaped by race. Moreover, there was a sense that sharing these anecdotes in the workshop was liberating and validating because of the presence of others in the group who may have shared similar experiences. Lorrie, who is biracial, expresses these feelings in her response.

> In my office, it's not as diverse, and so it was kind of nice to go to the race workshop and actually be able to talk to other people and share some more experiences. With the people I work with, I don't feel like I have the same level of experiences.

> And even trying to talk about some of my experiences, I felt choked up. Because there's certain things that I haven't thought about in a long time, and it was kind of neat or maybe neat's not the word.

In Lorrie's emotional response, she shared that she was relieved to finally be able to discuss an important aspect of her life that she has had to keep silent for years. In this way, the workshop not only provided an avenue for her to share these experiences, but it provided an opportunity for her to reflect on certain aspects of her identity. In the interview, she opened up even more and shared some painful interactions that occurred with some of her work colleagues who made disparaging comments about Asians, without realizing her heritage.

Many felt that their stories would be instrumental in helping others to become more racially aware. It was discussed by the interview participants that there are many people who feel that racism no longer exists. However, these individuals argue that it does but in more subtle and covert ways. Jeanetta, a Black female, says that in order to get people to see the prevalence of racism, people of color must share their stories.

[People] believe that racism no longer exists because we have a Black president. And so, you know, in order for us to be able... for African Americans to be leading organizations like they are, racism must be over. [But], it's not as in your face as it was. People aren't wearing the hoods. They're not burning crosses in people's front yards. However, things still happen so that's when I think the stories come in. When I'm going into a store, a boutique, and I still have people following behind me, you know? That's racism. But, people don't realize that so unless we're telling our stories to others, they will look at their surroundings as a whole and make the assumption that we're done.

She felt like the workshop provided a great setting to share these stories. The hope is that people listened and absorbed these stories. The next section suggests that the workshop attendees did indeed listen because another finding is that the workshop provided them an opportunity to hear different perspectives.

Hearing different perspectives. Interviewees shared that the workshop provided them with an opportunity to hear other viewpoints on the impact of race and racism. Most suggested that hearing these perspectives helped them to become more aware. This finding coincides with survey data which revealed that a majority of respondents agreed that the workshop increased their level of awareness about perspectives different from their own. Michael, a White male, reveals this sentiment and his workshop experiences in one of his responses.

[I was] trying to get a perspective on what some of the others in the room might be thinking, might be saying, 'cause maybe I really need to be dealing with it right here.

He goes on to say that:

I think you made a good step toward seeing [to it that] people recognize the differences in people and the way people perceive themselves versus [how others perceive] them.

So I would think – you know I still think most of our problem, we have a wide, wide variety of people and we have a wide – and we have too many people who

don't know how to deal with each other, whether it's from lack of training [or] lack of effort.

People of color also saw the value of hearing from others. For example, after discussing her understanding of the impact of race and racism based on her own lived experience as a Black woman, Jeanetta discussed how her eyes were opened to someone's else's lived reality. She shares a conversation presented in the workshop that she found to be enlightening and particularly relevant to her job because of the large Latino population in the school district. Jeanetta's response revealed that this dialogue probably heightened others' awareness too.

> But, the lady who was...wow...I can't remember where she was from… She worked in the food service department, and she was saying that she was able to pass. [However], she was actually a Latina so depending upon what world she was in at that moment, it would determine how she would be treated. There [were] some...looking around the room as she was speaking. There [were] some people who appeared to be shocked at that statement-like you live in one world [but have] your feet in two. Everything appears to be Black and White [but in Texas especially], it's Black, White, and Brown, and that was kind of it for me.

Jeanetta expresses that she was made more aware of the lived experiences of Latinas who are sometimes able to "pass" as a White person. It helped her to empathize a little more with people from other backgrounds. She also mentioned in her interview that hearing stories like these served as a reminder, that she, too, could perpetuate oppressive behavior if she fails to pay attention to others' realities.

Activities increased awareness. According to a majority of the interview participants, a couple of the workshop activities were instrumental in increasing their level of awareness. When asked which of the activities stood out the most, interview participants overwhelmingly mentioned the color arc activity. This activity was also

referred to most often in the survey when respondents were asked what they found to be most valuable about the workshop.

Participants suggested that this exercise allowed them to reflect on their own identity and to recognize their privilege. In addition, some stated that it was a great visual that helped to expose institutional racism. Michael discusses all of these aspects in his reaction to the color arc activity.

> It was somewhat what I expected, but there's still the surprise there. [An] African American male was directly across from me, and there was no African American male even at the mid-point. I just would have thought we would have made more progress than that. It's just - it made it clear where we are.

> One of the things I [took] away from that [that] was more of a surprise/concern [was] when the African-American police officer was way over [there], and he just really had a low number. So that's telling me, "Okay, there's a lot of things about those questions that had to do with him being an African-American [and not just about making] money. Something created different circumstances for him than for me.

In his response, Michael recalls how the color arc led to some cognitive dissonance for him. On the one hand, he realizes that there were certain advantages afforded him because he was White. For instance, he recognized the economic privileges of being White. However, he was really surprised to find that an African-American police officer, who he assumed would be as economically privileged as him, would still be standing at the other end of the color arc. This caused him to reflect on the idea that there may be other privileges associated with his skin color than just economic ones.

Others also mentioned that the color arc made them aware of their own privilege. For example, Nancy, a White female, commented that after the activity and subsequent discussion, she realized how her race granted her more opportunities than perhaps she was ready to admit prior to the workshop. Similarly, Jessica, who is biracial (White and Latina), stated that the arc helped her to see that "her life is much easier" and "that the

94

experiences of society in general are more tailored for somebody like [her] who looks White…and culturally [fits] in with the majority."

Nancy stated that she was surprised after seeing the color arc. She stated that it caused her to "examine [herself] closer after [viewing the arc]." Several others, including Aracely, who is Latina, stated that they, too, were astonished. At the time of the interview, Aracely mentioned that she was "still oblivious" as to how the arc turned out the way that it did. She was surprised that in 2012, opportunities were still denied people because of their race.

Interview participants also noted that the exercise provided a "strong visual" and brought "dark to light." In addition, Lorrie mentions that it exposed institutional racism and revealed that racism is alive and well, even in her own school district. She states that what she saw in the arc was a visual of how the school district's organizational structure is broken down by race. In her words, "the people who are at the top end of the spectrum actually do represent the majority" of those who are in leadership positions.

Marissa, a White female, further comments about how the arc provided a clear representation of the impact of race on people's opportunities and experiences.

> I think it shows you [that] an African American can never change the color of their skin, right? You always have that color of your skin no matter where you go. Do you know what I mean? And so [it] took this kind of uncomfortable thing that people have a hard time talking about with people they don't know or people that they just work with or who aren't used to it and made it just very, very visual.

In this quote, Marissa captures the idea that race is a salient factor for African Americans and other people of color. However, as Maya, a Black female, suggests, race is actually salient in *everyone's* life because there is an often ignored reality that Whites receive certain benefits because of their race, and people of color are often denied these

benefits. This aspect of racism, known as institutional racism, is often ignored. Maya

says,

> I think they don't understand the institutional component to it, that, institutionally, people are being locked out and that they have an upper hand. And I just think they sort of see [it] at sort of a micro level. [They think that if] 'I'm open to everyone, [then] I'm not being a racist.'

The earlier quote from Marissa also expresses the fact that people often have a

difficult time discussing concepts like race, racism, and privilege. Despite the difficulty

of these conversations, she posits that they are very necessary. As a result, activities, like

the color arc, provide value because of its unique way of introducing these concepts.

Isabella echoes this in the following quote.

> People don't choose to have conversations that are reflective, that make you grow in a way that can be uncomfortable. So, some people commented to me, for example, in the arc. They didn't like that they were placed-like they found it personally revealing to be there and almost incriminating. So, people don't choose to have those experiences on their own.

> And I just say, "Well, it's a good exercise. You get to learn a hard [lesson], but people don't [often] put themselves in those situations. So schools have a cultural responsibility and can perpetuate or change anything generationally. So the schools have an opportunity, and I think an obligation. I mean it's just an ethical and a moral obligation.

This quote further reinforces the fact that this activity served to bring some to a

level of awareness, even through their discomfort. Additionally, it presents the notion that

these learning experiences do not usually occur on their own because people will not

often put themselves in these types of uncomfortable situations. As a result, the workshop

is deemed to be unique in the type of learning opportunities it creates.

Not all interview participants felt as though the workshop increased their level of

awareness. These individuals believed that they were already racially aware but were still

appreciative of the training because it provided a much-needed refresher. Individuals, like

Lorrie, disclosed that it is easy to forget about the concepts presented in the workshop if you are not reminded frequently so it is good to have a reminder.

Finding #2: Changes in Behavior or Disposition. Another consistent theme that emerged from the interviews involved changes in behavior or disposition. These changes occurred in a couple of different ways. Some individuals stated that the workshop caused them to reflect while others felt that the workshop empowered them to work towards creating better opportunities for their work colleagues and the students in their district. Finally, others revealed that the workshop actually changed their practice. Each of these facets will be discussed in detail in this section.

Self-reflection. Several interview participants commented that the concepts presented in the workshop caused them to think about things that they had not thought of before. For some of them, they discussed how they now reflect on how race and racism impact their personal lives while others reflected on how race and racism impact the work that they do.

For example, Nancy explained that the workshop caused her to do some "self-reflection on how [she] was raised." During the interview, she openly reflected on how she was raised to "stay with her own kind-out of fear." While she acknowledges that her parents also raised her to treat people as individuals, she now wonders if these seemingly conflicting messages impacted her in any way. She goes on to say that when she sees certain individuals in public, she wonders what assumptions are being made by her and what are the "real reasons behind what she's thinking and feeling."

Similarly, Michael says that he now thinks about certain things when he is at home and in his neighborhood. He wonders about who is in his neighborhood and who is

97

not. He says that now, after the workshop, he "can't help but [to] look around and say, 'Well, I never thought about that before. Why are there no Asians in my neighborhood?"

During the interview, Shannon, a White female, explained that after the training, she began to reflect on race and its impact on her work. Specifically, she reflected on the achievement gap. She says now she is perhaps thinking of it in a different way.

> The main thing that I think about now is…. and for our district as a whole….this whole idea of an achievement gap and really what is…what [are] the underlying causes and is there a possibility of ever….I mean we're narrowing it little by little, but it's not closing the way that it really should.

This quote by Shannon is very revealing. As mentioned in the literature, the "achievement gap" is generally determined by results from standardized test scores. Shannon, as an assessment specialist, deals with the district's standardized tests on a daily basis. It is encouraging that she is beginning to think about the *underlying causes* of the gap.

Feeling empowered. Other interview participants said that the training empowered them to act against racism. Some began to think about what they could do to create more equitable opportunities. Kathryn, a White female, talks about this in her interview.

> The thing that the workshop has done for me is helped me to explore what I can do and say because prior to going to any of those workshops, even though I thought that I had a pretty good understanding of invisible structures of racism, I was trying in my little corner of the world to work on it, whether it was when I was a campus principal or what.

> What I have always struggled with and still struggle with is *what is the best thing for me to say and do*? I still don't fully know the answer, but going to the workshop has helped me feel more comfortable in talking about racism. It's helped me feel more comfortable in approaching people who believe that there are no structures of racism in our district. I still don't know if I can do it effectively or really make a difference, but at least I'm doing more, I guess, saying more.

Kathryn's quote reveals that she feels empowered to continue conversations about racism now that a common language has been established. In addition, she explains that she believes that in order to create change, people need to move from beyond their "corner of the world" in order to do so. With this in mind, some participants expressed that they would do just that and would use these conversations from the training as a springboard to implement certain initiatives in their departments.

For instance, Marissa, a White female, said that she could now make anti-racism "a focus of [her] work." She says that she "[doesn't] have to fight something" and that she "can call on work that's being done (the workshop) and help move it." She describes several initiatives that her department was developing that she feels now is safe to roll out since the workshop opened the door.

Michael also reveals how the workshop will serve to bring about a change in his department. For instance, he mentions that in meetings, he thinks about how certain schools are struggling and what can be done about it. Although he works in the Budget Office, he now sees that he has a fundamental role in helping *all* students to achieve success. In fact, at the time of the interview, he said that his department was having a meeting to identify key action steps that they could take in order to improve student learning. He concludes by saying that, "for me, that's—what's the word? Empowering."

These comments by Michael and Marissa reveal that at the time of the interview, they were on the cusp of actually changing their practice, based on conversations in the workshop. Others, on the other hand, shared that they had already gone about changing their practice in their roles in the district.

Change in practice. When interviewing Maya (a Black female), she expresses that "there are things that [she] can't let die." As a result, she explains that in the meetings she runs, they discuss topics like disproportionality, the achievement gap, and what they could be doing to help Black and Latino students achieve. In this regard, Maya reveals that she not only feels empowered, but she is actually moving towards changing her practice.

Caron, a White female, recalled a specific incident that was a direct result of her attending the workshop. In her role within the curriculum department she noticed something in one of the district benchmark assessments that did not sit too well with her. She discusses this issue in the quote below.

> I was reading a high school reading passage, and as I was reading it, one of the characters in this story…it said Black man, and I thought to myself…he is the only character that is defined by his race in this whole thing, and he's homeless. And so, I asked them to change it. Why does he have to be the Black man? I thought about the insensitivity of this statement and the message it was sending because this is something that is going to be read by all of the high schoolers in the district, and so I really try to think about what they are getting from it even though I know it's just a benchmark or a test. It could be that *one* kid who's really reading.

In our conversation, Caron revealed that this action would have likely not occurred if she had not attended the cultural proficiency workshop. She discusses how the training helped her to see things differently. The courageous action taken by Caron is one that directly impacted hundreds of high school students in the district.

Finding #3: The Workshop Is Just the Beginning. Many of the interviewees stated that the four-hour workshop was not enough to make a lasting change, but with the necessary follow-up and support, sustained transformation can occur. As Lorrie states,

the "discussions are good, but going in to something that's so deep, it's not just good enough to just see the roots are there." Isabella, a Latina, expressed a similar sentiment.

> Feelings [are] that it needs to continue. I think it's good to make people a little uncomfortable and to talk about things that people don't usually talk about, and I think it's a cultural shift. To make a cultural shift, you have to either stop and make a shift, or you let it go. I think, historically, people let it go, so I think it's good to stop [and] focus. I think follow-ups are important because, you know, it's the I V drip method. You need to continue it, or it's just – it's a shot.

Isabella's comments were echoed by several other interview participants. For example, Maya said that, "it has the potential to be something that could be transformative for the organization if it continued." Moreover, Mary mentioned that people were generally "glad that they'd had an opportunity to just start thinking about it, [but] time is always a factor." She, like many others, thinks, in addition to follow-ups, the training should have been at least a full day.

A host of interview participants stated that the four-hour session did not allow people enough time to adequately dig deep enough into the concepts presented. As a result, some people did not grasp the objectives. Kathryn stated as much when she said that,

> I do think more time would have helped. I think the demo was great. I saw some people really getting energetic behind their answers but still not quite getting the message.

Michael said that he feels that people did not fully understand institutional racism because the four-hour training did not allow enough time for that to be discussed. As such, he suggests that people may have not been able to see their roles in perpetuating racism since they were likely to only understand racism as an individual phenomenon.

Additionally, there was no time to debrief. As Aracely, a Latina, stated, "a full day would have been better [because] we would have not been rushed, and maybe people

could've been given a little bit more time to discuss and debrief." Likewise, Mary, a White female, believed that people would have walked away with more of a feeling of "self-actualization" if they had been provided with more time to debrief.

Finding #4: These Trainings Are Essential. Interview participants were asked to share the importance of this training. All of them said that workshops like these were very important, and some went on to say that it was essential. Kathryn was one of those individuals.

> Just to underscore important, it's above and beyond important. It's essential. It's more important than any curriculum [or other] workshops we're going to have. It's absolutely essential. I wish that we could get the message planted up and down to everybody in the district that it doesn't matter what your curriculum is, it doesn't matter what your textbook is. You're still going to have kids not achieving until you take care of this and that it's personal.

> And that professionals [are] never going to be a part of the solution until they recognize that they're a part of the problem. I think that the trainings like this give people the opportunity to recognize their own biases and their own denials.

In this quote, Kathryn alludes to the impact that educators make on the schooling experiences of children. She suggests that a person's own biases and lack of understanding about institutional barriers could be detrimental to the success of students. Omitted from this quote, but discussed in the interview, Kathryn also shares that everyone from the custodians to the superintendent need to attend this type of cultural proficiency training. This suggests that she believes that every adult has some impact on the schooling experience of children.

Nancy also believes that this training is "essential." She says that it's "just as essential as teaching teenagers to write a check. It should be an everyday, practical process."

Many of the participants provided specific examples as to why training was

102

needed throughout the district (beyond just the central office). For instance, Jeanetta alluded to the lack of Black males in prominent leadership roles in the district. She shares that it is really difficult for Black males to be promoted to campus principals in her district, but yet, they leave and go to other districts where they are promoted easily. She thinks more workshops like this one can help to mitigate these types of disparities.

> If the right people attend those workshops, I think it will make the powers that be look in the mirror to see the practices that are going on. [They can] hear how people interpret some of the practices and actually become more self-aware. A lot of people...some people may not realize how their actions impact others. I think they will have the opportunity to see or better define some of these terms.

Jeanetta further adds that the people of color are grossly underrepresented or misrepresented in the curriculum. She recounts how Black history is often relegated to covering one or two influential figures like Martin Luther King, Jr. Native American and Latino history are incorrectly portrayed in the school texts. She believes that perhaps by increasing others' awareness of this curriculum bias, perhaps it will spur change.

Finally, Lorrie discusses her work as a research analyst. She says that while there may be a discussion about the disparities in graduation rates, "we don't have those conversations of the root causes, and we try to just put a happy face on it, and try to work at it and try to use all of the literature [that] can sometimes make things sound benign." In addition, she argues that people who are put in position to examine these disparities are often so unaware and so far removed from the people they are serving, that they are likely doing more harm than good.

Summary of Qualitative Findings for Research Question #1

Four major themes emerged from the analysis of interview data with regards to research question #1. Interview participants perceived that the cultural proficiency

workshop impacted their level of awareness. Second, they perceived that the workshop changed their behaviors and/or dispositions. Third, it was suggested that while important, the workshop should be just the beginning. There should be additional follow-up. Finally, interviewees believed that workshops like these were essential for educators.

Qualitative Data for Research Question #2

After engaging in follow-up interviews with some of the participants, themes emerged validating that these participants were open to having discussions about race and racism. In addition, these participants relayed the importance of having these conversations. As a result, I was interested in understanding what it was about them that could have contributed to their ease and willingness to discuss race and to understand its importance. A total of eight people, out of the original fourteen, participated in the follow-up interviews. As mentioned, some were lost due to attrition. A few of the original interviewees were no longer with the district, and a couple of people did not respond to follow-up emails. I would have been able to contact at least two of these individuals. However, I chose not to pursue them further because I felt that based on some of their responses from the initial interview, their contributions would not contribute significantly to the discussion. Table 4.4 lists the central office administrators and staff who participated in the follow-up interview.

Table 4.4

2nd Round Interview Participant Profiles

Name	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Years of Experience
Caron Short	White	Female	10
Mary Knight	White	Female	20
Elizabeth Lopez	Latina	Female	2
Jeanetta Thomas	Black	Female	10
Aracely Horta	Latina	Female	10
Nancy Ackerman	White	Female	20
Maya Hill	Black	Female	13
Marissa Hurley	White	Female	20

Qualitative Findings for Research Question #2

The second research question asks: *What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?* To answer this question, transcripts were reviewed and coded using NVivo qualitative research analysis software. Four major themes emerged from this analysis.

First, a majority of these participants were racially aware and rejected colorblindness. Second, these individuals became aware of race at a very young age. Third, most of these individuals attended what they described as diverse schools or lived in self-described integrated neighborhoods. Finally, all of them were either members of groups that have been traditionally marginalized and had experienced some form of oppression as a result, or they were closely connected to someone who was. Each of these findings will be discussed next.

Finding #5: Understanding Racism and Rejecting Colorblindness. In the first round of interviews, each of these interview participants acknowledged the prevalence of racism in today's society. In addition, many of their responses suggested that they were quite racially aware. To gauge their level of awareness, several questions were asked regarding their understanding of racism and its existence. Open coding was used during this analysis.

Additional questions were asked to determine whether or not they espoused colorblind views (using questions adopted from Bonilla-Silva's Detroit Area Study interview protocol). In this way, conceptual coding (using Bonilla-Silva's colorblind racism framework) was used to code instances of colorblindness. In this analysis, I was searching for instances of abstract liberalism, naturalism, cultural racism, and blaming the victim. First, their understanding of racism will be discussed, then colorblindness will be reviewed.

Understanding of racism. It was verified that a majority of these participants had a firm understanding of racism and its pervasive nature. Many of them recognized the institutional aspect of racism and defined racism in ways that were similar to how it was defined in this study's review of the literature. For example, Mary stated that "I've learned all this stuff, and I know it has to do with power, and I think I understand now the difference between racism and discrimination." Marissa defines it as "the mechanisms and structures and systems we have in place that are always going to oppress."

These two definitions reveal that they recognize that there is a power component to racism and that it is institutionalized. Mary makes the power element clear when she stated that she understood the difference between racism and discrimination. She later

notes that anyone can discriminate, but to be racist, there has to be an element of power associated with it. When Marissa uses terms like "mechanisms and structures", she is referring to the institutionalized aspect of racism.

Interview participants also acknowledged the prevalence of racism. They did not believe that racism was a thing of the past or that we are living in a post-racial society. As a matter of fact, they attributed many of the racial educational and societal disparities to racism.

For instance, when asked *why do Whites generally make more money and have better jobs than Whites* (Bonilla-Silva, 2010), Nancy responded that it was probably due to practices "that do not give the same treatment to African-Americans [as] Whites." Further, Jeanetta states that she believes some of these disparities are due to unfair hiring practices.

> Sometimes we're (referring to Black people) just not able to get those jobs because of what we look like or what our names are. We may not even get to the interview process because they have assumed that we're of a certain race based on our names. I talk about that all the time.

With regards to educational disparities, interview participants were asked about their thoughts about what accounts for the perceived achievement gap. Most acknowledged that much of it had to do with institutional racism and racial biases. For example, Maya states that schooling was not designed for all students.

> Well I think a lot of it is – I think we're like trying to force a square peg into a round hole. I think the system is structurally designed to like not support all kids. Like it's like you've got a one-size-fits-all approach for many different kids who have different needs.

In this quote, Maya is recognizing the institutional aspect of racism in schooling. She mentions it as a structure that serves to support a particular group or groups at the

expense of others. She goes on to say that she believes that the institution was designed with young, White females in mind.

In line with this thinking, Elizabeth acknowledges how certain aspects of her identity were not valued in U.S. schools.

> I saw a documentary not too long ago about us Hispanics, how we were always being kept down. One of the biggest things was the language barrier. Because of the language barrier, they were looked at as dumb and ignorant, not having no value.

> I recall when we were being brought into the educational system, parents were told from the get go that we were not allowed to use our Spanish-speaking language in class at all.

She believes that this way of thinking and some of these practices impact the learning opportunities for Latino students.

Others mentioned that achievement disparities are likely due to historical aspects of schooling in the U.S. For example, Mary noted that "it's the history of race in our country. It's who's in power and who they want to keep in power, and it's a [result of] a lot of bad mistakes over time that we just haven't fixed yet." Marissa validates this idea when she says that "when your country was founded on disenfranchising even personhood from a whole group of people, that's probably it."

When asked what accounts for the racial disparities in discipline outcomes, participants specifically talked about racial biases. For example, Caron shares that White, middle class women, who grew up in White neighborhoods and attended upper middle class White schools, are not likely to understand the experiences of children of color.

Maya also states that "there's less of a tolerance [when it comes to] people of color." She states that people are "wired to already presume that there is maliciousness-

108

they are automatically nervous or concerned." She conveys that Whites often have this preconceived notion that people of color are always doing something wrong.

Rejection of colorblindness. As noted, questions were asked to determine interview participants' level of racial awareness as well as if they espoused colorblind ideologies. Many of the responses presented above where a result of questions that attempted to reveal colorblindness. As the responses reveal, a majority of them provided answers that spoke to their recognition of the prevalence of racism.

Questions allowed for opportunities for participants to resort to "victim blaming" and to make claims that espouse cultural deficit views. However, while very few responses revealed these particular aspects of colorblind racism, there were some that did. This should not be surprising, however, because one could still be racially aware but may need growth in certain areas.

Two frames of colorblind racism that were particularly evident in one particular response should be noted, however. These frames were abstract liberalism and naturalism. When asked if affirmative action was needed (Bonilla-Silva, 2010), interview participants overwhelmingly stated that it was. For instance, Jeanetta said that she believes "that there's still a need for it," and "until we can say that opportunities are available for everyone and that the process is fair, I still think it needs to be." Elizabeth also states that it is needed because people of color are often passed over for certain opportunities. These responses still reveal an awareness of the prevalence of racism. However, when asked if the government should get involved (Bonilla-Silva, 2010), a majority of the respondents exhibited evidence of advocating views consistent with abstract liberalism and naturalism.

As a reminder, abstract liberalists tend to ignore all of the residual effects of past and current discrimination and assume that everyone has the same opportunity to be successful. Naturalism suggests that people attribute racial phenomena to natural occurrences. Thus, naturalists similarly ignore other structural and institutional factors that have historically and currently serve to marginalize certain groups of people.

For example, Mary stated that she does not think that the government should get involved in things like this. In addition, when asked why she thinks that people are still residentially segregated by race (Bonilla-Silva, 2010), she suggests that it's a natural occurrence.

> I think because people are more comfortable with people that are like them. It's just that people gather with those that are like them-where they feel comfortable because everybody thinks the same way, and they can have the same conversations. It's why I don't go hang out with people on the west side. I don't have anything in common with those people. I mean our lives are so divergent from one another that sometimes I'm like who are you, and why do you think the way you do?

This answer by Mary is a colorblind response that ignores racial components to neighborhood segregation patterns. Similar responses were given by other interview participants and were somewhat surprising, especially considering all of the other comments that rejected notions of colorblindness. Again, just because the participants shared these views, does not suggest that they were colorblind. It just shows that they have room to grow in their level of awareness. Overall, the candidates who participated in this interview were very racially aware.

Finding #6: Race/Ethnicity Discovered at a Young Age. Another consistent theme that emerged was that several of the interviewees learned about their race or ethnicity at a very young age. Many of them were able to recall the exact moment they

110

discovered this aspect of their identity. What is interesting, however, is how they learned

of their identity. The Black women who participated in the interview typically learned

about their identity in dramatic and negative ways. For example, Jeanetta recalled when

she first came to understand that people saw her differently.

> When I was a very young child, we lived in an affluent subdivision, and once
> again, I was the only Black student in the class. I had two best friends-one was
> Asian, and one was White. There was a little girl named Chrissy, and she was
> White. Anyway, we were friends at school, but she told me one day that her mom
> said that I couldn't come to her birthday party because I was Black. I think [that
> was] second grade. I was very upset because I really didn't think about it before
> then. I don't want to say I didn't see color, but I didn't really think that the
> differences were something that would have a negative impact.

For the two Latinas in the study, they conveyed that they became aware of their

identity at a very young age as well. However, they learned about their identity in school

and from their native country. Aracely spoke about how she attended a private Catholic

school that was majority Latino. She learned much about her heritage there. Elizabeth

related that she learned about her identity when she "was a little girl."

> I wouldn't say my first trip to Mexico but maybe my 15th trip to Mexico. My
> grandpa was from Monterey, Mexico so we used to go back to visit the family
> quite often, and I used to read his letters to him. I didn't even know Spanish yet,
> but I would read the letters. I would read them to him and he would tell me what I
> was saying. It was funny.

Elizabeth also describes how her grandparents explained Mexican cultural

traditions to her. She also recounted her holiday experiences there, calling Christmas in

Mexico "full-flavored" with "so much color." Elizabeth's and Aracely's first encounters

with learning about their identity stand in stark contrast to Jeanetta's story.

The White women expressed that they, too, became aware of their identity at a

young age. Three out of 4 of the women expressed that they became aware of who they

were through their experience with or knowledge of Blacks. For example, Caron says that

she became aware that she was White when she was in the fourth grade. A young, Black male asked her to be his girlfriend. She describes her reaction.

> I just remember panicking. Like, is that okay? Am I allowed to do that? I think it was the first time I really considered – I want to say that's probably the first time that I consciously remember freaking out about being White and being Black and having this whole new situation come up.

She also remembers being afraid that her dad would be upset. She says that she never responded to the young, Black male, and Robert (pseudonym for the Black male who asked to be her boyfriend) never became her boyfriend.

Mary says that she had a similar reaction when her father, joking with her, told her that she had "Black blood" in her because someone in her past was Black. She says she recalls protesting that it couldn't be true because "it went against everything [she'd] ever been told." She does not recall being upset about it, but it "was something [she] was having to wrap her brain around." Her dad kept telling her "yeah, you do," and she kept rejecting this new information. He finally said, "No, not really." She recalls thinking to herself what if it had been true? How would that make her different?

Marissa did not remember a specific incident that helped her to realize she was White, but she does recall when she became aware of her ethnicity. She recalls often being referred to as "Black Irish" for most of her childhood. She recalled that most of her family were referred to in these terms.

These recollections, while vastly different across racial lines, show that another thing that these women had in common was that they learned about their race/ethnicity (in one way or another) at a very young age. Other than Marissa's account, they remembered these stories very vividly. As a result, it is probably safe to say that these moments had a great impact on them.

Finding #7: Attended Racially Diverse Schools and Living in Integrated Neighborhoods. All but two of the interview participants attended schools that they considered to be racially diverse. Although many of them lived in residentially segregated neighborhoods as children, they still attended racially diverse schools, mostly due to busing. In addition, most of them currently live in integrated neighborhoods.

Racially diverse schools. As a Black woman, Jeanetta describes growing up in a primarily White neighborhood but attended a racially diverse middle school and high school due to busing. She describes that she and her neighborhood friends were bused while she was in middle school. In high school, she attended her neighborhood school, while other students were bused in to the predominantly White school.

Similarly, Marissa describes living in a predominantly White neighborhood as a White female and attending her predominantly White elementary school. When she entered middle school, the district was busing, and Black students were bused into her school. She states that, "it was the first time that we went to school with Black kids." She remembers befriending many of the Black students through her involvement in the school band.

> I was in the band, so of course I had a lot of great Black friends that were in the band. You know it just seemed to be the place where you could…like, that again, it didn't matter.

This quote reveals that not only did she attend the same school as Black students, but that there was something unique about the band experience that made it acceptable for them all to be friends. During the interview, she reminisced about the times she had with her friends. Others, like Elizabeth, shared similar stories.

Elizabeth attended elementary and middle schools that were predominantly Latino. There were some White students who attended her elementary and middle schools, but she cannot recall there being any Black students. When she went to high school, however, it was what she described as more racially mixed.

> In high school, everyone comes together. So then, it was way better. It was way more mixed. [During] my sophomore or junior year, I went to a dance with a Black guy, and I remember *[laughter]* when he came to pick me up, my mom was super nice.

It is interesting that Elizabeth described her "mixed" high school as "way better." Moreover, like Marissa, she describes some close relationships with students of other races. Because of these relationships, Elizabeth said she felt like she was "of the world."

Maya conveys that the neighborhood elementary school she attended was fairly diverse, and she had a good experience while there. However, her middle and high school years were not as exciting. During this period of her life, she was bused over from her Black, working-class neighborhood to a school that was predominantly White. She states that although it was majority White, twenty-five to thirty percent of the students were Black. She rarely saw any of them, though, because she was in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program of which only two of its students were Black. This program was located in a separate corridor, and they even had a separate lunch hour from the other students. She felt socially isolated so much so that it eventually led to her dropping out of the program in the eleventh grade. In addition to attending racially diverse schools, a majority of these individuals currently live in what they described as racially diverse neighborhoods.

Integrated neighborhoods. Although most of the follow-up participants grew up in neighborhoods that were fairly racially segregated, they now live in what they

described as racially diverse neighborhoods. As a matter of fact, all but two (six out of eight) of the participants currently reside in self-described integrated neighborhoods. Their responses are discussed below.

Nancy described her current neighborhood as being "much more diverse [than her childhood] neighborhood", stating that her neighborhood is largely Latino now, but there are a number of Black and White people who live there.

Jeanetta also described her current neighborhood as racially diverse. She reveals that her immediate neighbors consist of three Black families, three White families, and two Latino families. Mary's neighborhood is also very integrated with less than half of the residents being White. The other fifty percent are almost evenly split between Black and Latino families. Aracely mentioned that there are several races evenly represented in her community: Whites, Asians, Blacks, and Latinos.

It should be noted that Caron is one of the only participants who lives in a racially segregated neighborhood. She openly talks about how she lives in a mostly White, upper-class neighborhood, where few, if any, people of color live. This is an interesting finding because Caron also attended schools that were majority White and grew up in a racially isolated neighborhood as well. She mentions in the interview that since the workshop, she has wondered about her choice of residency and has even contemplated moving into more racially diverse neighborhoods. She admits, however, that the thought of living in an area where she may be the minority makes her uncomfortable. However, Caron admits that she continues to reflect on this so that she can better understand the genesis of these feelings.

Finding #8: Oppressive Experience as a Result of Being Part of an Oppressed Group or Being in a Close Relationship with Someone from an Oppressed Group.

During our conversations, several people recounted particular oppressive events that were a direct result of one of their personal identities. Others told of events that impacted people to whom they were closely connected. Some of the stories will be shared next.

Personal oppressive experience. Five of the women discussed some traumatic episodes at various points in their lives. They recounted stories of mistreatment due to their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender. A couple of these stories have already been shared. For example, Jeanetta described her experiences as a young child who was not invited to a White friend's house because she was Black. Nancy, who is White, recalled an almost identical experience, except she was discriminated against because of her ethnic heritage. Nancy, who is Jewish, tells of the incident.

> I remember in grade school one of the girls and I got pretty close. I remember she had invited me over, you know, to spend the night or something, and for some reason, she cancelled it. It really hurt my feelings, and I was upset and didn't understand why until she told me. Her mother thought that because I was Jewish that I shouldn't be there.

> [After that], I didn't open up anymore. We still got along and did our work. The two of us did not – well, I was gonna say we didn't change, but I did change. You didn't allow the feelings – you didn't – you closed up.

Nancy reveals how this event impacted her, causing her to "close up." She was more reluctant to open up to people. She also mentions that this was not the first time that she was oppressed because of her Jewish heritage. She discusses how her neighborhood was majority Christian and how she was often marginalized.

Moreover, she recalled another specific occurrence when she had to be taken to

116

the emergency room because of a sledding accident on Christmas Day. One of the nurses

asked her what Santa brought her, and when she responded that "Santa doesn't come to

our house", the nurse gave her dad an angry glare. The nurses then gave her what she

called "some plastic junk," and she went home.

Mary, who is White, also expressed that she was oppressed because of one of her

identities. She did not give a specific incident, but she briefly discussed her mistreatment

because of this aspect of her identity.

> I'm gay so I have those issues that I grew up with and that I've had to deal with as
> an adult. I was thinking [that] marginalization can happen for many reasons:
> because you're gay, because you're a woman, because you're Hispanic, because
> you're African American, because you're Asian…There are all these ways that
> people are stereotyped, and many of us…I think, the majority of us, there's
> something...there's something in us that makes us different from the norm.

This quote and the subsequent discussion reveal that Mary was discriminated

against in the past and currently suffers discrimination. She also highlights that people

can be marginalized if they do not fit into dominant views of normalcy. "Normal" from

this perspective are White, heterosexual, Christian males.

Elizabeth provides us with another example of being treated unfairly because of

the color of her skin.

> Many times in life when I was growing up, you [were passed up for work]
> because you weren't White. The White [person] didn't even have half of the
> knowledge that you did, but they got the position. Not only did they get the
> position, but they turned around and asked you how to do the work when they got
> it.

Elizabeth also conveyed that this was really surprising to her because she grew up

in an area that was largely Latino. She later describes how even though Latinos may be

the majority in certain areas, they do not have power. In addition, she discusses how

those in power typically are in positions to determine who is "qualified", and their

117

definition of qualified may be based on their racial biases. While these individuals shared their own individual accounts of oppressive encounters, others spoke of encounters experienced with someone from a marginalized group.

Experience through others. In the interview with Elizabeth, she mentioned that she noticed that Whites are often unable to see when something is racist unless it is completely overt (e.g., like name calling). When asked why she believed this to be the case, she gave the following response.

> Unless they experience something with a friend, you know, if they had a close friend that was Black or Hispanic or Asian, and they witnessed something happen, then maybe [they would understand].

This section covers the relationships the interview participants revealed and certain events that helped open their eyes to racism.

Nancy, who is White, stated that when she was in high school, she dated a Black man. When asked if her parents were fine with her relationship, she said, "Oh, no!" She stated that upfront, they would have been okay, but "she would have heard about it when she got home. There would have been pressure." As a result of the pressure, she opted not to tell her parents of the relationship.

Elizabeth, a Latina, was also reluctant to tell her parents about her romantic involvement with a Black man. While Nancy's relationship consisted of a few casual dates, Elizabeth had become engaged. This news was not welcomed by her mother.

> I was engaged to a Black guy--sad story. I was in the Army, and I met this guy. When I got home, I told my mom [that I was engaged]. I didn't want to tell her over the phone that he asked me to marry him. I always regretted telling her. I wished that I had just eloped. She never showed me any signs of prejudice or ill feeling or thinking about [marrying] outside of the race--ever.

> When I told [her], I thought the world was gonna open up. She went on about how horrible my life was gonna be and that my children were gonna be hated and that

she would not go to my wedding. I tried to talk her out of it. I did. Oh my God, I cried so much, and she says no, you can't, and I listened. It was the worst thing that I think I have ever done in my life.

This traumatic event described by Elizabeth is unfortunate and really impacted her in a profound way. As Elizabeth states, her mother seemed to be perfectly fine when he was just a friend and even when he was a boyfriend. However, when it became a real possibility that they could get married, the mother's attitude changed drastically. As the quote above relays, she did not marry him because of her mother's rejection of him. It was a decision that Elizabeth says that she regrets to this day.

Maya, a Black woman, discusses how she realized that she was oppressed as a Black female but realized that she did not understand how much Black men were oppressed until she became married to one.

> I only experienced [oppression] from my life as a Black woman working in a male-dominated kind of industry. But I see that my husband has a harder battle to face
>
> But [for] him, [it's even the] little things, like getting on the elevator. If there's only one Caucasian lady on the elevator, he'd much rather get on the elevator with another person. It's just little things about just his old dating experience in college--what his dad told him to do in terms of dating women and women of different races, and how you have to make sure you protect yourself.
>
> His voice – his voice is deeper naturally. But he's changed it, and he's literally changed the deepness of his voice so that he isn't so aggressively perceived. I'm like, 'How do you become a freak of nature and have to change your voice?' In certain neighborhoods, he's always like, 'You know I'm gonna get pulled over.' It's a matter of time. So those sort of things opened my eyes to what it is [to be] a Black man.

In this quote, Maya, through her close relationship with her husband, reveals that she was also able to comprehend the oppression of Black men. She mentioned how he has to go to great lengths to alter his identity in order to make others feel comfortable.

119

She expresses that she was quite oblivious to this level of marginalization prior to becoming involved with him.

Another one of the interview participants was better able to understand the experiences of Black men through her marriage and her relationship with her children. Marissa, a White female, was previously married to a Black man. They have two biracial children together. She provides a couple of specific incidents that opened her eyes to the treatment that people of color endure.

One time, she and her husband took a road trip to her husband's college which was located in a small town. They were pulled over six times by law enforcement during this trip—three on the way there and three on the way back. She mentions that she had been warned by her mother before the trip that she would have to be careful on some of those roads because they were a mixed-race couple.

Marissa describes how frustrated she became after about the second time she was stopped. She admits that the first time or two, they were stopped for legitimate reasons (maybe speeding), but she says the other times, the police officers made up some excuse whenever they stopped them. She also said once that the police officer leaned over and said, "Are you okay, mam?"

At that point, she said she "lost it." She blurted, "Of course, I'm okay! Are you asking me that just because he's a Black man?" All the while, her husband was feeling both "nervous and mad" at the same time. She talked about the difficult predicament he was in because he could not become too "forward" with the police officers, nor could he ask Marissa to calm down because he might be perceived by the police officers as controlling her and "telling her what to say." According to her, any misstep could land

him in jail and/or in a more precarious situation because of the police officers' racist attitudes.

Another incident involved her biracial children. Upon returning from a ski trip, she and her children decided to go for a swim. She noticed this older White couple at the pool staring at them in a menacing way. She noted that they refused to get in the water until after her children got out.

Other interview participants described close relationships with individuals from oppressed groups. For example, Aracely stated that her sister is married to a Black man. Caron's sister has biracial children and has dated Black men. She also stated that mostly all of her sister's friends are Black, and these relationships have helped her to become more aware.

Summary of Qualitative Findings for Research Question #2

To address the second research question, a phenomenological qualitative research design was employed. Qualitative data consisted of interviews. Findings reveal that interview participants were racially aware and rejected notions of colorblindness and learned about race at a young age. They also went to middle and/or high school in racially diverse schools and currently live in integrated residential neighborhoods.

<div align="center">Chapter Summary</div>

This chapter covered the quantitative and qualitative data that were used to answer the research questions. Quantitative data consisted of workshop evaluation surveys that were aimed at understanding participants' perceptions of the impact of the training. The survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and it was found that a majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the workshop was valuable to them. Respondents also agreed that the workshop increased

their level of racial awareness and helped them to understand perspectives different from their own.

Several themes emerged from the open-ended survey questions. When asked what they found to be most valuable about the sessions, three themes emerged: increased awareness, the workshop activities, and the dialogue and perspectives. When asked what was least valuable, respondents stated that the four hours for the workshop were not long enough. Other general comments included people showing their appreciation for the workshop, while others offered up critiques, stating that the workshop was too focused on Black and White.

Qualitative data for the first research question were analyzed, coded and grouped according to themes. Interview participants self-selected to participate in the interview in order to share their perceptions about the impact of the workshop. Four findings emerged from the analysis of these interviews. Participants perceived that the workshop: 1) increased their level of racial awareness; 2) changed their behavior or disposition; 3) began a conversation that needs to be continued; and 4) provided essential training.

The second research question was also addressed. Some of the interviewees from the first round of interviews participated in follow-up interviews in order to help answer the second research question. This research questions asks: *What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?* Interview transcripts were analyzed, coded, and grouped into themes. Findings suggest that these individuals 4) were racially aware and rejected notions of colorblindness; 5) became aware of race at a young age; 6) attended racially diverse schools when they were school age and are currently living in integrated neighborhoods; 7) are members of

traditionally marginalized groups or are involved in close relationships with those who are. As a result of these associations, they have experienced or witnessed oppression. The next chapter will provide a discussion of these findings.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

Studies suggest that when school educators engage in structured conversations on race and racism and its impact on schooling, it can lead to better academic outcomes for students (Howard, 2010; Singleton & Linton, 2006). However, very few school districts promote this kind of dialogue, and even fewer districts offer professional development opportunities for these types of discussions to take place. As a result, little is known about the effectiveness of these professional development sessions. Furthermore, the literature suggests that some people are often resistant to race-based discourse and when introduced to the concepts offered in these types of workshops, they can often become disinterested and disengaged (Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Hernandez & Marshall, 2009; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Singleton, 2012; Tatum, 1997). Therefore, if it is indeed pertinent for educators to be presented with knowledge that can be critical to student success, it is vital to understand what aspects of the training and what qualities of the participants lend themselves to a higher level of engagement and interest. For this reason, this study explored participants' perceptions of the impact of a professional development session on cultural proficiency. Additionally, this study investigated the characteristics or qualities that contribute to the likelihood that individuals would be interested in engaging in conversations around race and racism.

This chapter will provide a discussion of the findings along with the implications and recommendations for practice. First, the statement of the problem will be reintroduced along with the research questions and methods. It will be followed by the

limitations of the study, the significance of the study, and directions for future research. This chapter will end with the conclusion and chapter summary.

Statement of the Problem, Research Questions and Method

The disparities in academic performance between White students and students of color (as measured by standardized test scores) continue to be a perplexing problem for many educators (McKinsey & Company, 2009). Blacks and Latino students continue to lag behind their White peers in academic performance (EdTrust, 2010; NCES, 2014). Despite major school reform efforts that have sought to provide equal educational opportunities and outcomes for *all* students, little progress has been made overall. Some scholars contend that in order to best address this problem, schools need to have more conversations about race and racism in their schools (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Howard, 2010; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Tatum, 1997).

Specifically, educators are also unaware of their own individual biases which greatly impact how they educate students. This is why many of today's education scholars are suggesting that school leaders be required to take anti-racist training (Skrla, Scheurich, Johnson, & Koschoreck, 2001).

A review of the literature reveals that certain teacher preparation programs have provided this type of training to pre-service teachers (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Tatum, 1997). In addition, there has been a movement towards integrating anti-racist training into school leadership preparation programs (Gooden & Dantley, 2012). There is also evidence that this type of professional development has been provided to in-service teachers. (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Vaught & Castagno, 2008). These trainings have extended beyond other recent efforts by school leadership

programs to address more broad issues of social justice by specifically centering these trainings on racism, anti-racism, Whiteness, and racial identity development.

However, little evidence exists that these efforts have extended to central offices. Research supports that school districts do not experience significant academic improvement throughout the district without meaningful involvement by their central office (Honig, et al, 2010). Districts that *have* made substantial gains in academic achievement for *all* students engage all district personnel in reform efforts. Moreover, the literature notes that in order to achieve district-wide improvement in the areas of teaching and learning, the central office should be continuously learning (Copland, 2003; Gallucci, 2008; Honig, 2008; Honig et al, 2010; Swinnerton, 2006).

Since the literature is scarce with regards to the prevalence of these workshops with central office staff, little is known about the effectiveness of these workshops. Moreover, studies reveal that people are often resistant to race-based training and disengage or become disinterested when concepts of race and racism are broached (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Tatum, 1997). However, little is known about those who *do* choose to engage. As a result, it would be important to understand the qualities and characteristics of individuals who are willing to engage in further conversations about race and racism. Knowing these factors could be valuable information for those who conduct these types of trainings.

One particular large, urban school district in the South wanted to address diversity and cultural competency with its staff. As a result, the district Superintendent and leadership team decided to implement a staff development session on cultural proficiency which addressed concepts of race and racism. District leaders believed that this type of

126

training would help address disparate academic outcomes for students of color. It is the

district's belief that a person's personal culture and background impacts the students with

whom they work. Moreover, the district's leadership articulated their belief that racism is

a contributing factor to the "achievement gap." As a result, they felt that cultural

proficiency training would be a useful strategy to address achievement disparities. Thus,

as part of the district's goals, all staff were required to attend one staff development

session on cultural proficiency.

This session presented an opportunity for me to address this gap in the literature.

As a result, the following research questions guided this study:

1) What are central office administrators' perceptions about the impact of a cultural proficiency workshop that engages participants in conversations on race and racism?

2) What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?

To explore the research questions, I employed a concurrent embedded mixed

method approach (Creswell, 2009). Quantitative data were nested in the qualitative data

for the first research question. The qualitative data served as the primary data to answer

the research question, while the quantitative data provided general background

information.

Quantitative data consisted of workshop evaluation surveys. The surveys were

given to all central office personnel who attended the professional development sessions.

The evaluations were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

The qualitative data for both research questions consisted of semi-structured

interviews. The interview protocol contained questions aimed at understanding interview

participants' perception of the impact of the training. Responses from the initial interview

led to the development of the second research question, and follow-up interviews built on these data.

Convenience and purposive sampling was used to recruit participants for the interview. Interview data were analyzed and coded, using open coding. Codes were grouped according to themes (Creswell, 1997).

Discussion of Findings

For the first research question, workshop evaluation surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and open-ended questions were grouped according to themes. Interview transcripts were analyzed using open coding and were grouped into themes. The next section summarizes the findings from the first research question and provides any relevant research that supports the findings.

Findings from Research Question #1

Survey Data. Survey data suggest that, overall, perceptions of the cultural proficiency workshop were quite positive. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the workshop participants found that the professional development session was valuable. An open-ended question asked what they thought was most valuable. Three major themes emerged.

First, some participants expressed that the increased level of awareness was the most valuable aspect of the training. Some stated that they appreciated that they became more aware of concepts like privilege, racial barriers, racism, and power. Others found value in learning about their own identity. This theme coincided with participants' responses to the Likert-scaled question which addressed identity. This question asked if the professional development session increased their awareness of their own identity.

Eighty percent (80%) of the respondents either *strongly agreed or agreed* with this statement.

Second, participants found the activities to be valuable. The most frequently mentioned activity was the color arc activity. This activity was aimed at exposing privilege, specifically White privilege.

Third, participants found the dialogue and being exposed to other perspectives to be valuable. One of the Likert scaled questions addressed perspectives as well. The question asked if the workshop increased their awareness of perspectives different from their own. Eighty-eight (88%) percent of survey respondents either *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with that statement.

Qualitative Data. Findings from the interviews reveal that participants perceived that the training: (1) impacted their level of racial awareness; (2) changed their disposition or behavior (3) was not sufficient to make lasting change; and (4) is essential.

Interview participants reported that the workshop helped them to become more racially aware. According to the data, this happened in a couple of ways. First, they expressed that their awareness was increased by being able to hear others' perspectives. Second, participants stated that their awareness was increased through their participation in some of the activities.

Interview participants expressed that the professional development session provided an opportunity for them to hear other perspectives, and it helped open their eyes to issues of race and racism. This occurred largely by engaging in dialogue with people of color. People of color discussed how the environment felt safe for them to share their perspectives. They relayed that this was a critical and beneficial aspect of the training for

them because in environments outside of the workshop, they are not made to feel comfortable to do so. This is unfortunate because interview and survey data support that White people benefited from hearing these perspectives from people of color.

Interview participants also stated that the training increased their awareness through its use of certain activities. Some mentioned the role play activity, but a majority mentioned that the color arc activity as being an impactful activity. They conveyed that the color arc provided a "strong visual" that allowed them to see privilege and to better understand institutional racism.

Other findings reveal that some interview participants felt that the training caused a change in their dispositions. These individuals expressed that the workshop caused them to critically reflect on aspects of their personal life and their professional lives. Others felt empowered, stating that they felt motivated to continue these conversations and to implement anti-racist initiatives in their respective departments.

Some participants commented that the session caused a change in their behavior. For example, some mentioned that they were now leading discussions about racial disparities in their departments. Another person revealed that she approached her work with a different lens which led to her discovering an aspect of one of their district student assessments that was racist. She made a necessary change to the test as a result.

The next finding was that the participants did not feel as though the workshop would be sufficient to make a lasting impact. They reported that additional follow-up and more training would be needed. Furthermore, they explained that four hours was not long enough to unpack some of the concepts presented. As a result, they feared that some people were not deeply impacted.

Finally, the participants felt like this kind of training was essential for true change to occur. They expressed that if schools were going to increase the academic achievement for students of color, then everyone should be required to attend this training and additional training should be provided. They conveyed that it needed to be a total district effort.

Discussion and Implications of Research Question #1

As a reminder, district-wide improvement in teaching and learning rarely occurs without the involvement of the school's central office (Honig et al., 2010). Moreover, districts that have made substantial gains in academic achievement have done so because they required the involvement of *all* district office personnel in reform efforts. With these understandings in mind, it appears that the school district in this study understands the importance of the central office's role in school improvement efforts. This is evident in the fact that in their efforts to ameliorate "achievement gaps", they began their reform efforts with the central office and required *all* central office administrators and staff to participate.

The school superintendent and part of their leadership team believe that in order to address achievement disparities, educators must become aware of their own identities and biases. It is their belief that a person's personal culture and background impact the students with whom they are responsible for educating. In this regard, unexamined privilege and biases and lack of awareness of institutional racism and other oppressive structures could potentially serve to create and perpetuate disparate learning outcomes.

As Wells (2014) argues, educational policy has often been developed and implemented in a colorblind way. Although these policies may be race neutral on the

surface, they have real racial implications because of existing racist structures and barriers that are ignored in the policy. In order to get people to a state of awareness of these structures and barriers, some transformative learning has to occur. According to Brown (2006), "transformative learning changes the way people see themselves and their world" (p. 84).

Mezirow (1997) describes it this way: transformative learning is bringing about a change in one's frame of reference. In other words, one's perspective changes as a result of being involved in a transformative learning experience.

Mezirow (1997) gives four ways that learning can occur: by elaborating existing frames of reference, by learning new points of view, by transforming our point of view, and by transforming habits of mind. He suggests that educators play an integral role in facilitating transformative learning by helping adult learners become aware of and critically reflect on their own assumptions. Brown (2006) purports that this critical reflection involves helping future school leaders recognize hegemonic structures and inequitable policies and practices.

Mezirow (1997) also posits that transformative learning can occur through engagement in rational discourse. He suggests that this form of discourse is vital for adult learners to interrogate and validate what they know and how they know it. Transformation can also occur through consciousness-raising activities, role plays, and simulations, among other activities.

To determine whether transformative learning has occurred, we should notice a change in assumptions, a change in perspective, and/or a change in behavior (Cranton, 1992). When reviewing the data, the professional development sessions seemingly

provided an opportunity for transformative learning to occur. To be sure, let us examine the data.

To recap, the first two findings revealed that the workshop impacted participants' level of racial awareness and changed their disposition or behavior. If we recall, transformative learning changes one's frame of reference, habit of mind, or point of view. The finding of increased awareness suggests that participants' frames of reference, habits of mind, and/or points of view might have been impacted. Further, interview participants expressed that it was the conversation and the hearing of other perspectives that led to their increased awareness. Mezirow (1997) states that transformative learning experiences involve rational discourse.

Rational discourse involves structured conversations that allow for one to hear other perspectives on specific issues and "how each of us differently constructs those issues" (Brown, 2006, p. 93). Further, Brown (2006) argues that engaging in rational discourse about issues of social justice can provide opportunities for growth (Brown, 2006). It appears that the workshop served as an opportunity for participants to engage in rational discourse (Mezirow, 1997; Brown, 2006).

Interview participants also explained that a couple of the activities, including the color arc and role play exercises heightened their awareness. Transformative learning opportunities involve activities, like role plays, and other consciousness-raising activities, like the color arc. These two activities were interactive and learner-centered.

Finally, in order to adequately determine if transformative learning has occurred, one will notice a change in assumptions, perspectives, or behavior (Cranton, 1992; Mezirow, 1997). Interview data and survey data support that workshop participants

perceived that the training changed their perspectives. Interview data suggests that it changed some behavior. These findings are consistent with transformative learning experiences. In sum, the data support the idea that the professional development workshop was a transformative learning opportunity and that some transformative learning occurred.

Recommendations

Based on information expressed in the discussion section, this section will provide recommendations for district leaders on how to improve and sustain efforts to help their educators become more culturally proficient. First, recommendations will be given for district leaders. Then, recommendations will be given for central office personnel.

District Leaders. For the school district in this study, the superintendent and his/her Office of Educator Quality have led cultural proficiency efforts in the school district. In addition to the professional development session, they have provided other opportunities. For example, they held a screening of the documentary *Race: The Power of an Illusion*, and they have hosted other professional development sessions. However, none of these other sessions were required. They were considered to be optional.

In addition, (Honig et al., 2010) note that school districts that have improved academic outcomes for students have school central offices that created strong partnerships with the campus leaders. Moreover, they have supplied the necessary resources to campuses to implement reform efforts. With this in mind, recommendations for district leaders are listed below.

- Create a department specifically to address cultural proficiency of educators.
- Offer professional development opportunities (not just workshops).

- Require all central office personnel to attend professional development opportunities that are provided by this office.

- Strengthen partnerships between the central office and the campus leaders.

- Establish a plan to roll out initiatives to campuses but ensure trainings lead to the development of shared goals and a common language across all levels.

- Provide the necessary support to campuses.

Central Office Personnel. As mentioned, central office personnel were required to attend the cultural proficiency workshop. There were plenty of other activities available that supported the district's cultural proficiency initiative. For example, they were invited to a screening of the documentary, *Race: The Power of an Illusion* (as mentioned above), they were invited to a "mix-it-up lunch", and they were invited to participate in a book study. However, central office staff were not required to attend these events.

Working towards social justice requires a long-term commitment. Additionally, it is hardly likely that one transformative learning experience will make a lasting change. In addition, interview data revealed that participants felt like the one four-hour workshop would not be sufficient in making a long-term impact. With this in mind, recommendations for central office personnel are listed below.

- Work with district leaders to establish a department specifically to address cultural proficiency of educators.

- Attend all professional development opportunities provided by this office.

- Strengthen partnerships between the central office and the campus leaders.

- Provide the necessary support to campuses.

- Self-educate. Take opportunities to read up on the prominent literature on these

issues.

- Provide opportunities within your departments to have race-based conversations.

- Reflect on these readings, discussions and upon your own racial identity. Also, reflect on ways race impacts your job and your daily activities.

Findings from Research Question #2

The second research question asks: *What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?* Findings were that these participants: (5) were racially aware and rejected notions of colorblindness; (6) became aware of race at a young age: (7) are members of traditionally marginalized groups and/or are in close relationships with those who are.

The data reveal that interview participants exhibited a high level of racial awareness and rejected notions of colorblindness. When asked various questions to probe for instances of colorblindness, participants' answers were racially conscious. In addition, these individuals had a firm understanding of racism and its prevalence.

Another major finding is that the interviewees became aware of race at a very young age. They could vividly recall the instances when they discovered race. The *way* they discovered race, however, was quite different. Black participants recounted that their first acknowledgement of race generally occurred as a result of racism. Latina participants reported that they became aware of race through attending Latino schools and visiting family in Mexico. White participants usually discovered race through an encounter with a Black person or reference to a Black person.

The next finding revealed that interview participants attended self-described racially diverse schools in middle and/or high school. Many of them attended these

schools as a result of busing. Currently, these same individuals live in what they described as integrated neighborhoods.

Finally, interview participants were either part of an oppressed group or were involved in a close relationship with someone who was. In addition, they were likely to have faced some sort of discrimination as a result of that identity or relationship. The next section will provide the discussion and the recommendations.

Discussion and Implications of Research Question #2

There are some common characteristics across the interview participants that are important to consider with regards to this research question. Let us first examine the finding that they became aware of race at a young age. The literature supports the finding that people often become aware of race and racial differences in their childhood (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010; Tatum, 1997). This is significant to consider when it is coupled with the additional finding that the interview participants became aware of their race in different ways. It was explained in chapter four that some of the interview participants became aware of race in *negative* ways, while others became aware of race in much more *positive* ways. Examining this through the literature, it reveals important implications.

The literature conveys that when children are taught in healthy ways to recognize bias and when their identities are affirmed, they are being provided with an opportunity to develop to their fullest potential (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). In addition, when children are taught in a constructive way to recognize differences and similarities, they can grow into adults who become racially aware and work to fight discrimination.

So what does this tell us? Being taught about race at a young age and in a constructive way *could* contribute to the likelihood that one would see the salience of engaging in race-based discussions. This finding is important because it confirms that: educators should be strategic in having discussions about race because as this research and other studies show, people learn about race one way or the other (Brown & Brown, 2010; Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010; Milner, 2012). In addition, since people learn about race at a young age, school districts should consider working with teachers and campus leaders on how to have healthy race-based conversations with children.

Another common characteristic amongst the interview participants is that a majority of them attended what they described as racially diverse schools. This usually occurred because of busing. Some were bused out, while others were at schools where other students were bused into the school. Additionally, all of the interview participants currently live in neighborhoods that they described to be more diverse in the neighborhoods in which they were raised.

This *could* suggest that by living what appeared to be more racially integrated lives, these interview participants may be more likely to engage in conversations about race and racism. These findings are significant because research is clear that residential neighborhoods (Iceland, 2009; Iceland, Short & Timberlake, 2013; Sharp & Iceland, 2013) and schools (Frankenberg et al., 2011; Stroub & Richards, 2013) are still highly segregated by race. As a result, outside of at work or school, people often live racially isolated lives with little to no contact with people from other racial backgrounds (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997). This point is especially salient for educators who work for racially diverse schools or districts or for educators who are at schools or districts where

they are the minority. Their days at school may be the only period where they spend an extended amount of time with people from a different race.

As discussed in the literature review, engaging in conversations about race with people from different racial backgrounds helps educators to better understand themselves, their students, and co-workers (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Tatum, 1997). It also helps them to recognize how structural barriers and their own biases and assumptions can perpetuate academic disparities (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Howard, 2010; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Tatum, 1997). Moreover, some evidence suggests that these discussions can lead to better academic outcomes for students (Koebler, 2011; Singleton & Linton, 2006). So, if schools and school districts are serious about addressing disparate achievement outcomes, then they should realize that schools may be the only place where this dialogue and subsequent growth can occur.

The final characteristic that these participants shared is that they were oppressed by one of their identities, and/or they witnessed an act of racism as a result of being in a close relationship with someone from a marginalized group. These interview participants reported that as a result of these experiences, it changed their perspectives, and for a majority of them (those whose encounter involved their relationship with Black men and biracial children), it increased their racial awareness. They also suggested that these experiences led to them feeling a sense of empathy for other oppressed groups.

This finding coincides with Reddick's (2009) study on cross-racial mentoring. Similarly, he found that the White faculty in his study were likely to be empathetic to the Black males they mentored. He argues this was because of their close relationship to

someone who had experienced "feelings of isolation, ostracization, or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or gender" (p. 84).

This is a critical finding when we think of its implications for professional development. Again, if part of the intent of these workshops is to bring people to a higher level of racial awareness, then workshop facilitators should think of ways to integrate aspects of this finding. This could involve simulating a powerful racist scenario (similar to the role play activity). Facilitators should also think of integrating additional alternative scenarios where other identities are oppressed (gender, religion, sexuality). Perhaps these exercises will create the necessary empathy to heighten awareness.

Intergroup Contact

These findings, alone, have important implications for professional development sessions over racial awareness. Taken together, they can be just as powerful. They imply that prolonged contact with people from other races may lead to a higher likelihood that one would be comfortable talking about race and racism. In her study of three, White teachers, who were skilled in educating students of color, Ullucci (2011) found similar themes. She found that her study participants (1) *shared life experiences with people of color;* (2) *understood how equity did (and did not) function in their community;* and (3) *experienced personal struggles.* Moreover, these teachers all grew up in diverse neighborhoods as well. As a result, she believes that these experiences made these teachers more empathetic and more racially conscious/aware.

A theory that somewhat speaks to the idea that prolonged contact with people of color leads to positive racial attitudes, is intergroup contact theory. According to intergroup contact theory (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Hewstone & Brown, 1986; Pettigrew, 1998), individuals who interact with members of

an "outgroup" are less likely to be prejudiced than those who do not (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013).

More specifically, close, cross-group friendships can lead one to comprehend the other's perspective and increase the ability to empathize (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). It must be noted that the level, quality, and frequency of the contact must be taken into consideration. Again, this is useful information for professional development sessions. To increase one's racial awareness may require that schools or school districts establish frequent opportunities for participants to engage in authentic mixed-group learning experiences. This could include activities like Sustained Dialogue and Intergroup Dialogue.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion for the second research question, recommendations will be provided next. Recommendations will be provided for district office leaders first. Then, recommendations will be provided for central office personnel.

District Leaders. The critical role that district offices play in the improvement of teaching and learning has already been discussed, but it was important to reiterate that importance. An additional role of the central office is to establish professional development priorities for the school district (Honig et al., 2010). With this in mind, the recommendations are listed below.

- Provide professional development for all school district staff on how to have positive race-based conversations in the classroom.

- Understand the reality that schools and the central office may be the only place where different racial groups interact for an extended period of time. Therefore, schools and the office may be the only place where schools and district offices can have multi-racial and multi-ethnic cultural proficiency workshops, even though schools are highly segregated as well.

141

■ Institute powerful experiences that simulate racist situations.

■ Institute powerful experiences that simulate other oppressive situations where other target identities are oppressed.

■ Consider other authentic exercises that might provoke empathy.

■ Schedule frequent mixed-group authentic learning opportunities

Central Office Personnel. The school district's central office has often been viewed as totally removed from the day-to-day operations of school campuses. However, that is changing as the central office has recognized the value that their involvement can bring to the campuses (Honig et al., 2010). Recommendations for central office personnel are provided next.

■ Continue to work to become more tightly coupled with school campuses. Work together on a shared vision for how your respective department can help improve teaching and learning at the campuses you serve.

■ Work closely with district leaders to develop professional development to train educators on how to have race-based dialogue with students.

■ Engage in frequent mixed-group authentic learning experiences.

Limitations

The *Developing an Inclusive Workplace* workshop was a four-hour introductory session over cultural proficiency/racial awareness. To be most effective, these trainings require much more time. Most trainings like these have been held anywhere from a full day to an entire week or longer (Singleton & Linton, 2006). Some principal preparation programs and teacher education programs discuss these topics over an entire semester (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997; Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Tatum, 1997).

Although racial awareness training is touted as an effective means to address the

achievement gap, this study does not examine the impact of this training on student achievement. This particular study was more concerned with how central office personnel perceived the impact of the training. Moreover, I was interested in understanding the characteristics and qualities that led them to continue conversations about race and racism.

In addition, the sample size used to address the first question was small. Only fourteen individuals were interviewed during the first round of interviews, and 433 people participated in the workshop. As a result, this study only provides the interview participants' perception of the impact of the training.

Since participants self-selected to participate in the first round of interviews, responses to the first research question could have been biased towards only those who had a positive experience and were willing to participate. It should be noted, however, this was one of the reasons the research took a different direction. The fact that these individuals were willing to have these conversations and because certain themes emerged during these conversations, other workshop participants were not interviewed.

Finally, because this study is being conducted in one particular district in one state, the results may not be generalizable to the entire population. This limitation is consistent with the limitations of qualitative studies in general (Creswell, 1997). It could provide some important implications but may not be able to address the specific contexts of other states, especially since political and social dynamics vary by state. Further, this study does not take into account the unique conditions of each local education agency and their capacity to implement this type of workshop with fidelity.

Significance of the Study

The achievement disparities between White students and students of color have been well documented throughout this study. More radical and dynamic approaches should be considered by schools that are attempting to find ways to address these disparate outcomes. In a society that promotes colorblindness and considers discussions of race to be taboo, *this* study promotes the idea that conversations about race are absolutely essential if schools are to adequately meet the needs of *all* students.

This research has implications for how large, urban school districts with large populations of students of color consider conducting their professional development. Additionally, the concepts and findings presented in this study can reframe educators' thinking regarding the "achievement gap" and to think of innovative solutions to address it.

Directions for Future Research

As mentioned in the limitations section, this study does not directly address the impact of cultural proficiency or anti-racist training on student academic achievement. Literature suggests that these trainings lead to higher academic achievement (Koebler, 2011; Singleton, 2006), but there is not a lot of research available on this topic. As a result, this would be an ideal research topic to pursue. The difficulties would be finding a district engaging in these types of workshops and figuring out how to isolate the effect of the training on academic outcomes.

It would also be interesting to assess the impact of the training on participants' racial identity development. Also, more research should be conducted in order to further investigate each of those common factors and characteristics that may have contributed to

the interview participants' proclivity to discuss race. Those qualities can be unpacked more.

Another study could involve interviewing those who are resistant to race-based trainings or who felt like the training did not impact them in any way. Lessons from them could be an additional way to improve professional development sessions. Since the goal is to provide a transformative learning experience for everyone, it would be important to find out what makes people *not* engage.

Conclusion

This study explored central office personnel's perceptions of the impact of a cultural proficiency development workshop. Additionally, it investigated the characteristics and qualities of individuals who chose to continue conversations on race and racism. The research employed a concurrent embedded mixed method research design. Data collection and analysis were done separately for these two questions.

For the first research question, survey data expressed that, overall, workshop participants found the training to be valuable, that it increased their level of racial awareness, and that it increased their awareness of perspectives different than their own. These data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The survey consisted of Likert scaled questions and three open-ended questions.

For the open-ended questions, survey data revealed that workshop participants found that the increased awareness, the activities, and the dialogue and perspectives were the most valuable aspects of the training. Additionally, they found that the short amount of time were drawbacks. Moreover, they felt like the training focused too much on Black and White race issues.

Using a phenomenological qualitative research design, it was discovered that interview participants perceived that the workshop increased their level of racial awareness through the dialogue and through their participation in the activities, namely the color arc and role play exercises. They also perceived that the training changed their dispositions or their behavior. They also felt like the conversation was just the beginning and probably would not make a lasting impression due to the time. Finally, they believed the training was essential for all educators.

For the second research question, a phenomenological qualitative research design was used. This question asked: *What factors and experiences contribute to participants' proclivity to continue conversations about race and racism?*

It was found that these interview participants were racially aware and rejected notions of colorblindness. They learned about race at a young age. The participants attended what they described as racially diverse middle and high schools and currently live in self-described racially integrated neighborhoods. Finally, they were members of oppressed groups and/or experienced racism or discrimination as a result of being in a close relationship with someone from an oppressed group.

These findings have great implications for the school districts that are focused on eliminating gaps and want to provide race-based training. First, the data suggest that a four-hour workshop that this district implemented provided a transformative learning opportunity and some transformative learning took place. To make it more impactful will require additional time and more of a sustained effort.

Second, since people largely live racially segregated lives, schools might be the only opportunities where they may be able to engage in race-based dialogue. In addition,

146

it would be valuable if these types of trainings can implement authentic learning experiences that might allow them a simulated oppressive situation. Moreover, those who seemed to spend more time with people from other races/backgrounds were likely to discuss race. As a result, it was recommend that workshop facilitators should explore having frequent authentic mixed-group learning experiences. Finally, it would behoove district leaders to consider adding a component to the training where educators are trained on how to dialogue about race with their students.

Chapter Summary

This chapter included an overview of the findings for each research question, followed by a discussion and implications of the findings. Recommendations were given for both central office leaders and central office personnel. The limitations and significance of the study was then provided, and the chapter concluded with directions for future research.

Appendices

Appendix A

Developing an Inclusive Workplace

Spring 2012

Definition of Terms

Ableism: The all-encompassing system of discrimination and exclusion of people who live with developmental, medical, neurological, physical, and psychological disabilities [Castañeda, C., Hopkins, L. E., & Peters, M. L. (2010). Ableism: Introduction. In M. Adams, W. J. Blumenfeld, C. Castañeda, H. W. Hackman, M. L. Peters, & X. Zúñiga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice* (2nd ed., pp. 457-464). New York, NY: Routledge.]

Classism: The institutional, cultural, and individual set of practices and beliefs that assign differential value to people according to their socio-economic class; and an economic system which creates excessive inequality and causes basic human needs to go unmet [Cross Cultural Center, The University of California, Davis]

Cultural Proficiency: Policies, practices and behaviors that enable individuals within the School District to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment to promote the success of all members of the community [AISD Council on Cultural Proficiency & Inclusiveness, April 2011]

Holding the vision that you and the school (or organization) are instruments for creating a socially

just democracy; interacting with your colleagues, your students, their families, and their communities as advocate for lifelong learning to serve effectively the educational needs of all cultural groups [Lindsey, R., Robins, K.N., & Terrell, R. (2009). *Cultural proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.]

Heterosexism:
The system of oppression that reinforces the belief in the inherent superiority of heterosexuality and heterosexual relationships, thereby negating gay, lesbian, and bisexual peoples' lives and relationships [Gender and Sexuality Center, The University of Texas at Austin]

Inclusiveness:
The active and purposeful strategy of AISD to create an atmosphere of respect, understanding and acceptance in which diversity is an asset that strengthens community connections and enhances learning opportunities for all [AISD Council on Cultural Proficiency & Inclusiveness, May 2011]

Linguicism:
(or Language Domination) is used to describe prejudice and discrimination based on language [Darder, 1991; Nieto (2003)]

Oppression:
The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturates most aspects of life in our society [Adams, M., M.L., & Zúñiga, X. (Eds.). (2007).*Teaching for diversity and social justice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.]

Power (Social Power):   Access to resources that enhance one's chances of getting what one needs or influencing others in order to lead a safe, productive, fulfilling life [Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W.J., Castañeda, C., Hackman, H.W., Peters, M.L., & Zúñiga, X. (Eds.). (2007).*Teaching for diversity and social justice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.]

Privilege: Unearned access to resources and social power that is only readily available to certain people as a result of their agent social group membership [Cross Cultural Center, The University of California, Davis]

Racism: A system of institutional policies and cultural messages that is advantageous to white people and disadvantageous to people of color [Tatum, B. (1999). *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?* New York, NY: Basic Books.]

Religious Oppression: The historic and systemic pattern of domination and subordination of religious minorities at cultural, institutional, and interpersonal levels. [Joshi, K.Y. (2010). Religious oppression of Indian Americans in the contemporary united states. In M. Adams, W. J. Blumenfeld, C. Castañeda, H. W. Hackman, M. L. Peters, & X. Zúñiga (Eds.), *Readings for diversity and social justice* (2nd ed., pp. 254-258). New York, NY: Routledge.]

Sexism: Systematic attitudes, conditions, or behaviors that promote stereotyping and oppression based on sex and gender [Minnesota Human Rights Education Experience]

Stereotype Threat: Stereotype threat refers to being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group [Steele & Aronson (1995)]

Target/Agent Identity: Targets are members of social identity groups that are
                           disenfranchised, exploited, and victimized in a variety
                           of ways by the dominant system and institutions.
                           [Nieto, L. (October 2002). Strategic Interventions for Anti-
                           Oppression]

                           Agents are members of dominant social groups who
                           have unearned privilege, who knowingly or
                           unknowingly exploit and reap unfair advantage over
                           members of target groups. [Nieto, L. (October 2002).
                           Strategic Interventions for Anti-Oppression]

Appendix B- Race Worksheet

Building A Community of

Trust Through Racial Awareness[2]

Define Race:

Estimate the percentage that race impacted or would impact your decision in buying a car._____

Estimate the percentage that race impacted your decision of where to live._____

Estimate the percentage of how race will impact your social activities next weekend._____

Average_____

Determine the percentage of your life, from 0-100%, that is impacted by race.

Appendix C-Achievement Gap Questions

Start Here

Percent that Race
Impacts my life

If you were approached by a news reporter and asked the top 3-5 reasons for the achievement gap between African American and White students, what reasons might you offer?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Add more here if you wish to:

Four Agreements
1. Stay Engaged
2. Speak Your Truth
3. Experience Discomfort
4. Expect & Accept Non-Closure
(Singleton & Linton, 2006)

Reflect Here

Percent that Race
Impacts my life

If you were approached by a news reporter and asked the top 3-5 reasons for the achievement gap between African American and White students, what reasons might you offer?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Add more here if you wish to:

Total Score
Color Arc

The race I self-identify with is:

Appendix D- Color Arc Activity

Because of my race or color...	My response	Friend's response
If I wish, I can arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.		
If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.		
I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.		
I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.		
I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the newspaper and see people of my race widely represented.		
When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.		
I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.		
I can go into supermarkets and find the staple foods that fit with my cultural traditions; I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented; I can go into any hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut or style my hair.		
Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.		
I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.		
I can swear, or dress in secondhand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.		
I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.		

I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.		
TOTAL SCORE		

The Color-Arc Exercise[3]

Respond to each question using one of the following scores:

5   if the statement is mostly true for you

3   if the statement is sometimes true for you

0   if the statement is seldom true for you

Appendix E- Workshop Evaluation Survey

Developing an Inclusive Workplace

Evaluation

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

1. **This session increased my awareness of my own identities.**
   Strongly Agree   5
   Agree   4
   Neutral   3
   Disagree   2
   Strongly Disagree   1

2. **This session increased my awareness of perspectives different from my own.**
   Strongly Agree   5
   Agree   4
   Neutral   3
   Disagree   2
   Strongly Disagree   1

3. **This session helped me consider elements of an inclusive workplace.**
   Strongly Agree   5
   Agree   4
   Neutral   3
   Disagree   2
   Strongly Disagree   1

4. **The presenters for this session were effective.**
   Strongly Agree   5

Agree	4
Neutral	3
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

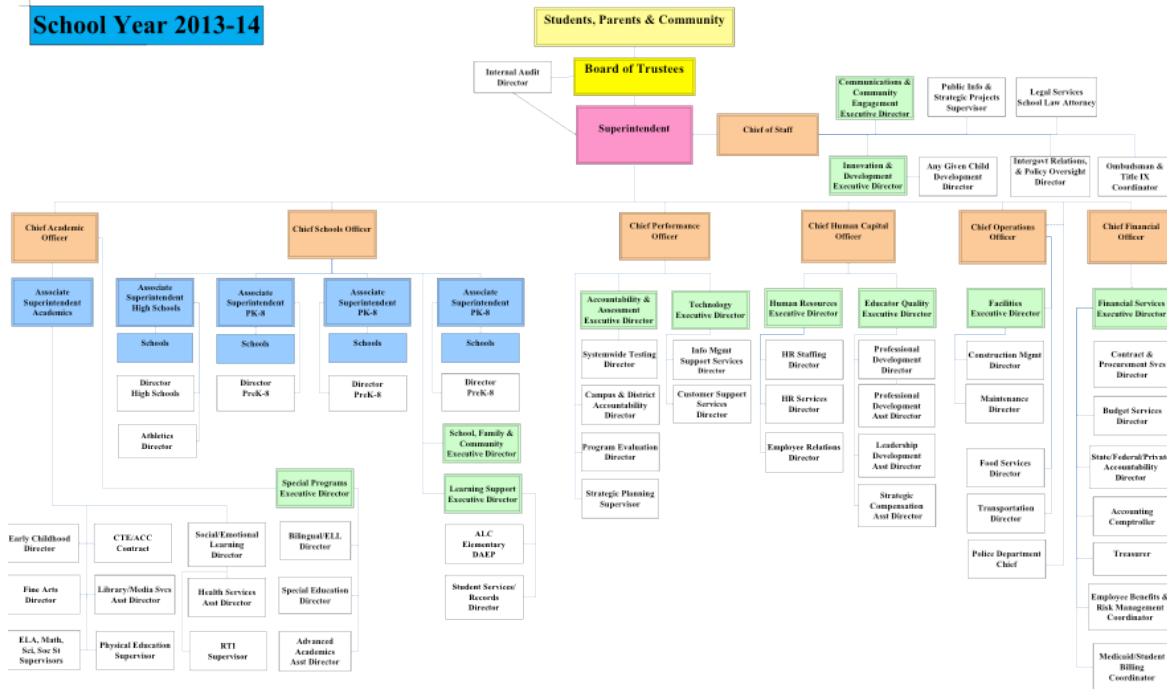**5. Overall, this session was valuable to me.**

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

6. What did you find MOST valuable about this session?

7. What did you find LEAST valuable about this session?

8. Additional comments (please use the back if needed):

Appendix F- Central Office Organizational Chart

Appendix G- Request for Participation

Good morning!

My name is Daniel Spikes, and I am a fourth-year doctoral student at The University of Texas at Austin. I was able to meet many of you during the AISD workshop: Developing an Inclusive Workplace.

As mentioned by the workshop's facilitators, we are conducting an investigational research study about the experiences of central office staff in this cultural proficiency workshop. Specifically, this study will assess your perceptions about the workshop. We are hoping that you would be willing to speak with us about your experience in this session. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete a 60-90 minute interview.

This study is confidential. Findings will be discussed in generalities, and when it is necessary to include specific quotes, pseudonyms will be used. All information that can be used to identify the respondents will be coded and/or removed so that you cannot be identifiable and/or associated with the study. Your participation is voluntary. Refusing to participate will not affect your relationship with The University of Texas at Austin.

This study has been approved by The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board and by the Austin Independent School District's Department of Research and Evaluation.

Please see the attached flyer for a few additional details. If you are interested in participating, please contact me on or before Monday, May 14, 2012.

Thank you so much, and I look forward to hearing from you!

Daniel Spikes
Doctoral Student
Educational Policy and Planning Program
Department of Educational Administration
The University of Texas at Austin

Appendix H- Participation Flyer

Seeking Research Study Participants

Interested in Participating in a Research Study?

We are conducting an investigational research study about the experiences of central office staff in a cultural proficiency workshop. Specifically, this study will assess their perceptions about the effectiveness and importance of this workshop and its impact on their level of racial awareness.

To be able to participate, you must be a central office administrator or staff member who has participated in the district workshop: Developing an Inclusive Workplace. As part of the study, you will be asked to participate in a 60-90 minute interview at a location that is convenient for you.

If you are interested, please contact Daniel Spikes at dspikes@austin.utexas.edu.

This study has been approved by The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board and by the Department of Research and Evaluation for the Austin Independent School District.

Appendix I - First Round Interview Protocol

Research Questions

1. What are central office administrators' perceptions about the effectiveness of the cultural proficiency workshop?

2. Specifically, how did they perceive the workshop's impact on their level of racial awareness?

3. How do central office administrators perceive the importance of this type of training?

Background Questions

1. Describe your role for the district.
2. How long have you been with the district?
3. Have you had similar workshops in the past?
4. To which race do you self indentify?

Questions about the Workshop

5. Which of the activities presented during the workshop had the greatest impact on you?
   a. Probe: Why? What was the impact?

6. What are your thoughts about the definitions of terms?
   a. Probe: Do you disagree with any of the definitions?

7. Will the training that you received during the workshop change the way you approach your job?
   a. Probe: If so, how?
   b. Probe: If not, why?

8. Do you think other educators would benefit from this type of training?
   a. Probe: If so, who (teachers, principals, etc)?

Impact on Level of Racial Awareness

9. Describe your comfort level in having discussions about race.

10. Describe your comfort level in having discussions about race with your work colleagues.

11. What are your thoughts about the color arc activity?

12. What are your thoughts about the questions regarding how race impacts your decisions?

13. How did this workshop impact your understanding of race and racism?

14. Do you believe that this workshop increased your level of racial awareness?
    a. If so, how?

15. What role do you think race/racism plays in schooling?

16. What role do you think schools/educators play in perpetuating racism?

Importance of This Workshop

17. What are your general feelings about workshops like these?

18. Do you think this type of training is relevant for your school district?

19. Describe the value of this type of professional development.

Concluding Questions

20. What challenges would you foresee in having conversations like these at the campus level?

21. Is there anything about the workshop that we ***have not*** discussed that you would like to talk about?

22. Is there anything about the workshop that we ***have*** discussed of which you would like to elaborate further?

Appendix J - Consent Form

Consent for Participation in Research

Title: Assessing the Impact of Cultural Proficiency Training for Central Office Administrators

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. The person performing the research will answer any of your questions. Read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to be involved in this study, this form will be used to record your consent.

Purpose of the Study

You have been asked to participate in a research study about your experiences in a cultural proficiency workshop. Specifically, this study will assess your perceptions about the effectiveness and importance of this workshop and its impact on your level of racial awareness.This research has implications for how large urban school districts with large populations of students of color consider conducting their professional development.

What will you to be asked to do?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a 60-minute interview, and if necessary, you might be asked to complete a 30-minute follow-up interview. In total, this study will take 60-90 minutes to complete and will include approximately 15 study participants.

Your participation will be audio recorded.

What are the risks involved in this study?

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

The results of the study can provide valuable information for administrators who are responsible for providing authentic and worthwhile professional development opportunities for their campuses. Perhaps more importantly, the findings from this research will help the individuals in this study to assess their level of cultural proficiency and racial awareness.

In a general sense, the knowledge gained from this study can help ensure equality of educational opportunity for all students. This means that steps can be taken to help improve the achievement gap and to ensure that schools are better prepared to break down the barriers that impede the progress of certain groups of students.

Do you have to participate?

No, your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate at all or, if you start the study, you may withdraw at any time. Your decision not to participate will not impact your participation in the workshop. Withdrawal or refusing to participate will not affect your relationship with The University of Texas at Austin in anyway. Neither your participation nor your responses will be shared with district administrators or supervisors.

If you would like to participate, please sign the form and return it to me prior to your interview session time. You will receive a copy of this form.

Will there be any compensation?
You will not receive any type of payment for participating in this study.

What are my confidentiality or privacy protections when participating in this research study?
This study is confidential. Findings will be discussed in generalities, and when it is necessary to include specific quotes, pseudonyms will be used. All information that can be used to identify the respondents will be coded and/or removed so that you cannot be identifiable and/or associated with the study.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be audio recorded. Any audio recordings will be stored securely and only the research team will have access to the recordings. The digital files will be coded so that the interview participants cannot be personally identified. The files will be kept in a secure place (a locked file cabinet in the investigator's office). The recordings will be heard only for research purposes by the researcher and his associates. The data resulting from your participation may be used for future research or be made available to other researchers for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. Once the audio has been transcribed, all digital files will be destroyed.

Whom to contact with questions about the study?
Prior, during or after your participation, you can contact the researcher, Daniel Spikes at **(936) 674-7113** or send an email to **dspikes@austin.utexas.edu.**

Whom to contact with questions concerning your rights as a research participant?
For questions about your rights or any dissatisfaction with any part of this study, you can contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board by phone at (512) 471-8871 or email at orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

Signature
You have been informed about this study's purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks, and you have received a copy of this form. You have been given the opportunity to ask questions before you sign, and you have been told that you can ask other questions at any time. You voluntarily agree to participate in this study. By signing this form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.

_____
Printed Name

_____   _____
Signature   Date

As a representative of this study, I have explained the purpose, procedures, benefits, and the risks involved in this research study.

_____
Print Name of Person obtaining consent

_____   _____
Signature of Person obtaining consent   Date

References

Adams, M., Bell, L.A., & Griffin, P. (3rd ed.). (2007). *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Ahram, R., Fergus, E., & Noguera, P. (2011). Addressing racial/ethnic disproportionality in special education: Case studies of suburban school districts. *Teachers College Record*, *113*(10), 2233-2266.

Al Ramiah, A., & Hewstone, M. (2013). Intergroup contact as a tool for reducing, resolving, and preventing intergroup conflict: Evidence, limitations, and potential. *American Psychologist*, *68*(7), 527.

Applebaum, B. (2008). White privilege/White complicity: Connecting "benefiting from" to "contributing to." *Philosophy of Education Yearbook*, 292-300.

Babbie, E. R. (1990). *Survey research methods* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Banks, J. (1997). *Educating citizens in a multicultural society*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Banks, J. A. (2001). Citizenship education and diversity implications for teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *52*(1), 5-16.

Baron, R., Tom, D. Y. H., & Cooper, H. M. (1985). Social class, race and teacher expectations. In J. B. Dusek (Ed.), *Teacher expectancies*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Bell, D.A. (1987). *And we will not be saved: The elusive quest for racial justice.* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Bell, D. A. (1992). *Faces at the bottom of the well: The permanence of racism*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Bernard H. (1988). *Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. Newbury Park, California: Sage.

Bloom, B. S. (1964). *Stability and change in human characteristics*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Blosveren, K.R. (2006). *The impact of high school curriculum on college enrollment rates* (Masters thesis). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database.

Bomer, R., & Bomer, K. (2001). *For a better world: Reading and writing for social action.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2010). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States* (3rd ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Brown, K. M. (2004). Leadership for social justice and equity: Weaving a transformative framework and pedagogy. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 40*(1), 77-108.

Brown, K. (2006). Leadership for social justice and equity: Evaluating transformative framework and andragogy. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 42*(5), 700-745.

Brown, A., & Brown, K. (2010). Strange fruit indeed: Interrogating contemporary textbook representations of racial violence toward African Americans. *Teachers College Record*, *112*(1).

Brown, R., & Hewstone, M. (2005). An integrative theory of intergroup contact. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 37*, 255–343

Bryan, J.; Day-Vines, N.L.; Griffin, D.; Moore-Thomas, C. (2012). The
disproportionality dilemma: Patterns of teacher referrals to school counselors for
disruptive behavior. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *90*(2), 177.

Bustamante, R.M., Nelson, J.A., & Onwuegbuzie, A.J. (2009). Assessing schoolwide
cultural competence: Implications for school leadership preparation. *Educational
Administration Quarterly*, *45*(5), 793-827.

Calman L. (2006). Patients' views of nurse competence. *Nurse Education Today*, *26*, 719-725.

Campbell, D. T., & Fiske, D. W. (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the
multitrait-multimethod matrix. *Psychological Bulletin*, *56*(2), 81.

Carbonaro, W. (2005). Tracking, students' effort, and academic achievement. *Sociology
of Education, 78*, 27-49.

Charmaz K. (1990). 'Discovering' chronic illness: Using grounded theory. *Social Science
and Medicine 30*(11), 1161-1172.

Closing the Gaps. (2010). Education Trust. Retrieved from
http://www.edtrust.org/issues/pre-k- 12/closing-the-gaps.

Clune, W. H. (1989). The implementation and effects of graduation requirements: First
steps toward curricular reform. New Brunswick: Rutgers University, Center for
Policy Research in Education.

Cochran-Smith, M. (2000). Blind vision: Unlearning racism in teacher education.
Harvard Educational Review, *70*(2), 157-190.

Coladarci, T., Cobb, C. D., & Minium, E. W. (2010). *Fundamentals of statistical
reasoning in education*: Hoboken, NJ: Wiley

Coleman, J. S., Campbell, E., Hobson, C., McPartland, J., Mood, A., Weinfeld, F., &
York, R. (1966). *The Coleman Report.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Collins, K. M., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Sutton, I. L. (2006). A model incorporating the
rationale and purpose for conducting mixed methods research in special education
and beyond. *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal*, *4*(1), 67-100.

Condron, D.J. (2007). Stratification and educational sorting: Explaining ascriptive
inequalities in early childhood reading group placement. *Social Problems, 54*(1),
139-160.

Condron, D.J. & Roscigno, V.J. (2003). Disparities within: Unequal spending and
achievement in an urban school district. *Sociology of Education, 76*(1), 18-36.

Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Information. (2011). Texas Education Agency.
Retrieved from
http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=2147486144&menu_id=2147483671&
menu_id2=794.

Copland, M. (2003). Leadership of inquiry: Building and sustaining capacity for school
improvement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *25*(4), 375-396.

Cranton, P. (1992). *Working with Adult Learners*. Middleton, OH: Wall & Emerson, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (1994). *A qualitative procedure. Research design: Qualitative &
quantitative approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (1997). *Composing a mixed-method study*. Paper presented at the annual
meeting of the American Educational Research Association*,* Chicago, IL.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five
traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cresswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Brown, M. L. (1992). How chairpersons enhance faculty research: A grounded theory study. *Review of Higher Education*, *16*(1), 41-62.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crosnoe, R., Riegle-Crumb, C., & Muller, C. (2007). Gender, self-perception, and academic problems in high school. *Social Problems, 54*(1), 118-138.

Cross, W. (1991). *Shades of black: Diversity in African-American identity.* Temple Philadelphia, PA: University Press.

Cranton, P. (1992). *Working with adult learners.* Toronto, Ontario: Wall & Emerson.

Darder, A. (2012). *Culture and power in the classroom: Educational foundations for the schooling of bicultural students.* Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of the policy evidence. *Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, (December).*

Darling-Hammond, L. (2004). Inequality and the right to learn: Access to qualified teachers in California's Public Schools. *Teachers College Record*, *106*(10), 1936-1966.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of

    State Policy Evidence. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *8*(1), 31.

Darling-Hammond, L. & Post, L. (2000). Inequality in teaching and schooling:

    Supporting high-quality teaching and leadership in low-income schools. In R.

    Kahlenberg's Ed.), *A notion at risk: Preserving public education as an engine for*

    social mobility. New York, NY: Century Foundation Press.

Delgado Bernal, D. (2002). Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-

    gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of

    knowledge. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *8*(1), 105-126.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical race theory: An introduction*. New York,

    NY: New York University Press.

Denzin, N. K. (1978). Triangulation: A case for methodological evaluation and

    combination. *Sociological Methods*, 339-357.

Derman-Sparks, L., & Edwards, J. O. (2010). *Anti-bias education for young children and*

    ourselves. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young

    Children.

Derman-Sparks, L. & Phillips, C.B. (1997). *Teaching/Learning anti-racism: A*

    developmental approach. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Dickens, A. (1996). Revisiting Brown v Board of Education: How tracking has

    resegregated America's public schools. *Columbia Journal of Law and Social*

    Problems, 29, 469-506.

Diem, S., & Carpenter, B. (2012). Social justice and leadership preparation: Developing a

    transformative curriculum. *Planning and Changing*, *43*(1/2), 96-112.

Disadvantaged. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online*.

Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disadvantaged

Disproportionate. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online*.

Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disproportionate

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L. (1995). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Equality. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online*.

Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/equality

Equity. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online*.

Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/equity

Feagin, J.R. & Barnett, B.M. (2004). Success and failure: How systemic racism trumped the *Brown v Board of Education* decision. *University of Illinois Law Review, 1099*, 1-27.

Ferguson, R.F. (1991). Racial patterns in how school and teacher quality affect achievement and earnings. *Challenge, 2*(1), 1-35.

Ferguson, R. F. (2003). Teachers' perceptions and expectations and the black-white test score gap. *Urban Education*, *38*(4), 460-507.

Fine, M. (1997). Witnessing Whiteness. In M. Fine, L. Powell, L. Weise, & L. Mun Wong (Eds.), *Off White: Readings on race, power, and society*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Fitzgerald, F. (1979). *America revised*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co.

Frankenberg, E., Siegel-Hawley, G., & Wang, J. (2011). Choice without equity: Charter school segregation. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *19*(1), n1.

Frankenberg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of Whiteness*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Frankenberg, R. (1997). Local Whitenesses, localizing Whiteness. In R. Frankenberg (Ed.), *Displacing Whiteness: Essays in social and cultural criticism* (pp. 1-33). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Futrell, M.H. & Gomez, J. (2008). How tracking creates a poverty of learning. *Reshaping High Schools 65*(8), 74-78.

Gallucci, C. (2008). District-wide instructional reform: Using sociocultural theory to link professional learning to organizational support. *American Journal of Education*, *114*(August), 541–581.

Gamoran A. (1987). The stratification of high school learning opportunities. *Sociology of Education, 60*, 135–55.

Gamoran, A. (1992). The variable of effects of high school tracking. *American Sociological Review*, *57*(6), 812-828.

Gamoran, A. & Mare, R.D. (1989). Secondary school tracking and educational inequality: Compensation, reinforcement, or neutrality? *American Journal of Sociology, 94*, 1146-1183.

García, S. B., & Guerra, P. L. (2004). Deconstructing deficit thinking: Working with educators to create more equitable learning environments. *Education and Urban Society*, *36*(2), 150–168.

Gay, G. (1997). Multicultural infusion in teacher education: Foundations and applications, *Peabody Journal of Education*, *72*(1), 150-177.

Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New

York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Gibbs, J. T. (1988). *Young Black males in America: Endangered, embittered, and embattled. Young, Black and Male in America: An Endangered Species.* Dover, MA: Auburn House Publishing Co, 1-36.

Giroux, H. (1983). Schooling and the politics of the hidden curriculum. *Theory and resistance in education*, 42-71.

Glaser, B. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity.* Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded research: Strategies for qualitative research*. New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction.

Gonzalez, N. & Moll, L.C. (2002). Cruzando el puente: Building bridges to funds of knowledge. *Educational Policy, 16*(4), 623-641.

Gooden, M. A. (2012). What does racism have to do with leadership? Countering the idea of color-blind leadership: A reflection on race and the growing pressures of the urban principalship [Special Issue]. *Journal of Educational Foundations 26*(1-2), 67-84.

Gooden, M.A. & Dantley, (2012). Centering race in a framework for leadership preparation. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education, 7*(2), 237-253.

Gooden, M.A. & Spikes, D.D. (2014). *The risks of cultivating care in an urban high school: Exploring a Black high school principal's experience and his castigation.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

Grant, C.A. (1988). The persistent significance of race in schooling. *The Elementary School Journal*, *88*(5), 561-569.

Grant-Thomas, A. & Powell, J.A. (2006). Toward a structural racism framework:

Poverty and Race, *November/December*.

Greene, A. D. (2014). Tracking work: race-ethnic variation in vocational course placement and consequences for academic and career outcomes. *International Journal of Educational Studies*, *1*(1), 09-18.

Greene, J. C., Caracelli, V. J., & Graham, W. F. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *11*(3), 255-274.

Greene, J.P. & Forster, G. (2003). *Public high school graduation and college readiness rates in the United States* (Education Working Paper No. 3). New York, NY: Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. Retrieved May 7, 2011, from http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/ewp_03.htm.

Gregory, A; Skiba, R.J.; Noguera, P.A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational Researcher, 39*(1), 59-68.

Gutiérrez, R. (2008). A" gap-gazing" fetish in mathematics education? Problematizing research on the achievement gap. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 357-364.

Hale, J. (2004). How schools shortchange African-American children. *Educational Leadership*, *62*(3), 34-39.

Hallinan, M.T. (2003). Ability grouping and student learning. *Brookings Papers on Educational Policy,* 95-124.

Harris, D.N. & Harrington, C.D. (2006). Accountability, standards, and the growing achievement gap: Lessons from the past half-century. *American Journal of Education*, *112*(2), 209-239.

Hatt, B. (2011). Smartness as a cultural practice in schools. *American Education Research Journal, 49*(3), 438-460.

Harvey, D.G. & Slatin, G.T. (1975). The relationship between child SES and teacher expectations: A test of the middle class bias hypothesis. *Social Forces,* 140-159.

Helms, Janet E. (Ed.). (1993). *Black and white racial identity: Theory, research, and practice*. New York, NY: Greenwood Press.

Hernandez, F. & Marshall, J.M. (2009). "Where I came from, where I am now, and where I'd like to be": Aspiring administrators reflect on cultural identity. *Journal of School Leadership, 19*(3), 299-333.

Hewstone, M., & Brown, R. (1986). Contact is not enough: An intergroup perspective on the 'contact hypothesis.' In M. Hewstone & R. Brown (Eds.), *Contact and conflict in intergroup encounters* (pp. 1–44). Oxford, England: Blackwell.

Heyns, B. (1974). Social selection and stratification within schools. *The American Journal of Sociology, 79*(6), 1434-1451.

Honig, M. I. (2006). Street-level bureaucracy revisited: Frontline district central office administrators as boundary spanners in education policy implementation. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, *28*(4), 357-383.

Honig, M. I. (2008). District central offices as learning organizations: How sociocultural and organizational learning theories elaborate district central office administrators' participation in teaching and learning improvement efforts. *American Journal of Education*, *114*, 627–664.

Honig, M.I., Copland, M.A., Rainey, L., Lorton, J.A., & Newton, M. (2010). Central office transformation for district-wide teaching and learning improvement.

Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, University of Washington.

Hosp, J. L., & Reschly, D. J. (2004). Disproportionate representation of minority students in special education: Academic, demographic and economic predictors. *Exceptional Children*, *70*, 185-199.

Howard, T.C. (2010). *Why race and culture matter in schools: Closing the achievement gap in America's classrooms.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Iceland, John. (2009). *Where we live now: Immigration and race in the United States*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Iceland, J., Sharp, G., & Timberlake, J. M. (2013). Sun belt rising: Regional population change and the decline in black residential segregation, 1970–2009. *Demography*, *50*(1), 97-123.

Ingersoll, R. & May, H. (2011). Recruitment, retention, and the minority teacher shortage. Philadelphia, PA: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania and Center for Educational Research in the Interest of Underserved Students, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Institutionalize. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.* Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/institutionalize

Irvine, J. J. (2010). Culturally relevant pedagogy. *Education Digest*, *75*(8), 57-61.

Jackson, D. L. (1968). *A study of underachievement as it is related to race, socio-economic status and curriculum in high School*. Unpublished doctoral Dissertation. Calif. State College, Hayward.

Jean-Marie, G., Normore, A., & Brooks, J. S. (2009). Leadership for social justice:

Preparing 21st century school leaders for a new social order. *Journal of Research on Leadership in Education, 4*(1), 1-31.

Jick, T. D. (1979). Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 602-611.

Johnson C. & Klitsonis, W. (2006). The national dilemma of African American students: Disparities in mathematics achievement and instruction. *National Forum of Applied Education Research Journal, 20*, 1-8.

Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, *33*(7), 14-26.

Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Turner, L. A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *1*(2), 112-133.

Joseph A. (1998). The impact of tracking: An examination of outcomes. *Journal of Poverty*, *2,* 1–21

Kao, G. & Thompson, J.S. (2003). Racial and ethnic stratification in educational achievement and attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *29*, 417-442.

King, J. (1991). Dysconscious racism: Ideology, identity, and the miseducation of teachers. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *60*(2), 133-146.

Koebler, J. (2011, July 11). Close achievement gaps by discussing race, expert says. *U.S. News & World Report.* Retrieved from http://www.usnews.com/.

Kozol, J. (2005). *The shame of the nation: The restoration of apartheid schooling in America.* New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.

Knapp, M. S. (2003). Professional development as a policy pathway. *Review of Research in Education*, *27*, 109-157.

Kubitschek, W. N., & Hallinan, M. T. (1996). Race, gender, and inequity in track

    assignments. *Research in Sociology of Education and Socialization*, *11*, 121-146.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice

    field like education? *Qualitative Studies in Education*, *11*(1), 7-24.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American*

    children. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2007). Pushing past the achievement gap: An essay on the language

    of deficit. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *76*(3), 316-323.

Ladson—Billings, G. (2013). Lack of Achievement or Loss of Opportunity?

    Closing the Opportunity Gap: What America Must Do to Give Every Child an

    Even Chance, *11*.

Lavrakas, P. J. (2008). *Encyclopedia of survey research methods: AM* (Vol. 1). Los

    Angeles, CA: Sage.

Lawrence, S., & Tatum, B. (1997). Teachers in transition: The impact of anti-racist

    professional development on classroom practice. *The Teachers College*

    Record, *99*(1), 162-178.

Legard, R., Keegan, J., & Ward, K. (2003). In-depth interviews. *Qualitative research*

    practice: A guide for social science students and researchers, 138-169.

Leonardo, Z. (2009). *Race, Whiteness, and education.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Lightfoot, S. L. (1978). *Worlds apart: Relationships between families and schools*. New

    York, NY: Basic Books.

Lindsey, R.B., Robins, K.N., & Terrell, R.D. (2003). *Cultural proficiency: A manual for*

    school leaders. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Lopez, G.R. (2003). The (racially neutral) politics of education: A critical race theory

  perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *39*(1), 68-94.

Louis, K.S., Dretzke, B., & Wahlstrom, K. (2010). How does leadership affect student

  achievement: Results from a national survey. *School Effectiveness and School*

  Improvement: An International Journal of Research, Policy and Practice, 21(3),

  315-336.

Louis, K. S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K., Anderson, S., Michlin, M., Mascall, B., &

  Moore, S. (2010). Learning from districts' efforts to improve student

  achievement: Final report of research to the Wallace Foundation. NY, NY:

  Wallace Foundation.

Lumby, J. & Foskett, N. (2011). Power, risk, and utility: Interpreting the landscape of

  culture in educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 47*(3),

  446-461.

Mac Iver, M. A. & Farley, E. (2003). Bringing the district back in: The role of

  the central office in improving instruction and student achievement. (CRESPAR

  Report No. 65). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.

MacPhee, D. A., & Kaufman, K. (2014). Exploring bias in elementary history

  curriculum with preservice and practicing teachers in professional development

  schools. *The Social Studies*, *105*(3), 124-131.

Marginalize. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.*

  Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/marginalize

Marshall, J. M., & Theoharis, G. (2007). Moving beyond being nice: Teaching and

    learning about social justice in a predominantly White educational leadership

    program. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, *2*(2), n2.

Marx, S. (2004). Regarding Whiteness: Exploring and intervening in the effects of White

    racism in teacher education. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *37*(1), 31-43.

Meritocracy. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.*

    Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/meritocracy

Mezirow, J. (1997, Summer). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. In P. Cranton

    (Ed.), *New directions for adult and continuing education: No. 74. Transformative*

    learning in action: Insights from practice (pp. 5-12). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-

    Bass.

McFadden, A. C., Marsh, G. E., Price, B. J., & Hwang, Y. (1992). A study of race and

    gender bias in the punishment of school children. *Education and Treatment of*

    Children, *15*, 140-146.

McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Race, Class,*

    and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study, 4, 165-169.

McIntosh, P. (1990). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Independent*

    School, *49*(2), 31-35.

McIntyre, A. (1997). *Making meaning of Whiteness: Exploring racial identity with White*

    teachers. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

McWhorter, J. H. (2000). *Losing the race: Self-sabotage in Black America*. New York:

    NY: Simon and Schuster.

Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San

    Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Meyer, J., & Rowan, B. (Eds.) (1992). *The structure of educational organizations, organizational environments: Ritual and rationality.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miller, D. (1992). *The experiences of a first-year college president: An ethnography.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Milner, H. R. (2012). Beyond a test score: Explaining opportunity gaps in educational practice. *Journal of Black Studies*, *43*(6), 693-718.

Mizell, H. (2010). Why professional development matters. *Learning Forward.*

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Multiculturalism. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.*
Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/multiculturalism

Moynihan, D. P. (1965). The Negro family: The case for national action. Washington, DC: Office of Policy Planning and Research, US Department of Labor.

Murray, C., & Herrnstein, R. J. (1994). Race, genes, and IQ–An apologia. *The New Republic*, *211*(18), 27-37.

National Research Council. (2002). *Minority students in special and gifted education* (Committee on Minority Representation in Special Education, M.S. Donovan & C.T. Cross , Eds., Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences Education). Washington , DC: National Academy Press.

Newman, I. & Benz. C.R. (1998). *Qualitative-quantitative research methodology: Exploring the interactive continuum.* Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.

Oakes, J. (1992). Can tracking research inform practice? Technical, normative, and

political considerations. *Educational Researcher, 21*(4), 12-21.

Oakes, J. (1985). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Oakes, J. (1995). Two cities' tracking and with-in school segregation. *Teachers College Record, 96*(4), 681-690.

Oakes, J., Wells, A.S., Datnow, A., & Jones, M. (1997). Detracking: The social construction of ability, cultural politics, and resistance to reform. *Teachers College Record*, *98*(3), 482–510.

O'Connor, C. & Fernandez, S.D. (2006). Race, class, and disproportionality: Reevaluating relationship between poverty and special education placement. *Educational Researcher, 35*(6), 6-11.

Oppression. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.* Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/oppression

Parker, L., & Shapiro, J. (1992). Where is the discussion of diversity in educational administration programs? Graduate student voices addressing an omission in their preparation. *Journal of School Leadership, 2*(1), *7-33.*

Parker, L. & Villalpando, O. (2007). A race(ialized) perspective on educational leadership: Critical race theory in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *43*(5), 519-524.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. *Annual Review of Psychology, 49*, 65–85. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.65

Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2008). How does intergroup contact reduce prejudice? Meta-analytic tests of three mediators. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 38*, 922–934. doi:10.1002/ejsp.504

Power. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.* Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/power

Prelec, D. (2004). A Bayesian truth serum for subjective data. *Science, 306*(5695), 462-466.

Privilege. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.* Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/privilege

Reddick, R. J. (2009). Fostering cross-racial mentoring: White faculty and African American students at Harvard College. In S. Sánchez-Casal and A. Macdonald (Eds.), *Identity in education* (pp. 65-102). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Riehl, C. J. (2000). The principal's role in creating inclusive schools for diverse students: A review of normative, empirical, and critical literature on the practice of educational administration. *Review of Educational Research, 70*(1), 55-81.

Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (Eds.). (2003). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Roediger, D. (1991). *The wages of Whiteness*. London, UK: Verso.

Roediger, D. (1994). *Toward the abolition of Whiteness*. London, UK: Verso.

Rosenthal, R. (1973). The Pygmalion effect lives. *Psychology Today*, 56-63.

Rossman, G. B., & Wilson, B. L. (1985). Numbers and words: Combining quantitative and qualitative methods in a single large-scale evaluation study. *Evaluation Review, 9*(5), 627-643.

Rossman, R. B., & Ralllis, S. F. (1998). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rothman, R. (2009). Redesigning the central office. *Voices in Urban Education, 22*.

Segregate. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.* Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/segregate

Sharp, G., & Iceland, J. (2013). The residential segregation patterns of Whites by socioeconomic status, 2000–2011. *Social Science Research*, *42*(4), 1046-1060.

Sieber, Sam D. (1973). The integration of fieldwork and survey methods. *American Journal of Sociology, 78*, 1335-1359.

Singleton, G. & Linton, C. (2006). *Courageous conversations about race: A field guide for achieving equity in schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Singleton, M. G. E. (2012). *More courageous conversations about race*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Skrla, L., Scheurich, J. J., Johnson, J., & Koschoreck, J. (2001). Accountability for equity: Can state policy leverage social justice? *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, *4*(3), 237-260.

Slavin, R.E. & Braddock J.H. III. (1993). Ability grouping: on the wrong track. *College Board Review, 168*, 11–17

Sleeter, C. E. (1994). White racism. *Multicultural Education*, *1*(4), 5-8, 39.

Sleeter, C. E. (2001). Preparing teachers for culturally diverse schools: Research and the overwhelming presence of Whiteness. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *52*(2), 94-106.

Socioeconomic. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.*

Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/socioeconomic

Solórzano, Daniel G. (1998). Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experience of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 11*(1), 121-136.

Steele, C. M. (2010). *Whistling Vivaldi: And other clues to how stereotypes affect us (Issues of our time).* New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Steele, C.M. & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *69*(5), 797-811.

Stratification. (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online.* Retrieved from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stratification

Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: grounded theory procedures and research*. New-bury Park (CA): Sage.

Stroub, K. J., & Richards, M. P. (2013). From resegregation to reintegration trends in the racial/ethnic segregation of metropolitan public schools, 1993–2009. *American Educational Research Journal*, *50*(3), 497-531.

Swartz, E. (1992). Emancipatory narratives: Rewriting the master script in the school curriculum. *Journal of Negro Education*, 341-355.

Swinnerton, J. A. (2006). *Learning to lead what you "don't (yet) know": District leaders engaged in instructional reform*. Unpublished Thesis (Ph D), University of Washington, 2006.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches* (Vol. 46). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (Eds.). (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tatum, B. D. (1992). Talking about race, learning about racism: The application of racial identity development theory in the classroom. *Harvard Educational Review*, *62*(1), 1-24.

Tatum, B.D. (1994). Teaching White students about racism: The search for White allies and the restoration of hope. *Teachers College Record*, *95*(4), 462-476.

Tatum, B.D. (1997). *"Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?"* New York, NY: BasicBooks.

Taylor, E. (2006). A critical race analysis of the achievement gap in the United States: Politics, reality, and hope. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, *5*(1), 71-87.

Teranishi, R. T. (2002). Asian Pacific Americans and critical race theory: An examination of school racial climate. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, *35*(2), 144-154.

The economic impact of the achievement gap in America's schools. (2009). McKinsey & Company. Retrieved from http://www.mckinsey.com/clientservice/Social_Sector/our_practices/Education/Knowledge_Highlights/Economic_impact.aspx.

Thernstrom, A., & Thernstrom, S. (2004). *No excuses: Closing the racial gap in learning*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Theoharis, G. T. (2007). Social justice educational leaders and resistance: Toward a theory of social justice leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *43*, 221-258.

Ullucci, K. (2011). Learning to see: The development of race and class consciousness in White teachers. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *14*(4), 561-577.

Ullucci, K., & Battey, D. (2011). Exposing color blindness/grounding color consciousness: Challenges for teacher education. *Urban Education*, *46*(6), 1195-1225.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2009-10.

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2010, Table 11.

U.S. Department of Education, Directory of Federal School Climate and Discipline Resources, Washington, D.C., 2014.

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), various years, 1990–2013 Mathematics and Reading Assessments.

Valencia, R. R. (2010). *Dismantling contemporary deficit thinking: Educational thought and practice*. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis.

Vaught, S. E., & Castagno, A. E. (2008). "I don't think I'm a racist": Critical race theory, teacher attitudes, and structural racism. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *11*(2), 95-113.

Wallace, J. M., Jr., Goodkind, S., Wallace, C. M., & Bachman, J. G. (2008). Racial, ethnic, and gender differences in school discipline among U.S. high school students: 1991–2005. *Negro Educational Review*, *59*, 47–62.

Webb. S. & Webb, B. (1932). *Methods of Social Study*. London: Longmans, Green.

Wehlage, G. G., & Rutter, R. A. (1986). Dropping out: How much do schools contribute to the problem? *Teachers College Record*, *87*, 374–393.

Wellman, D. T. (1993). *Portraits of white racism*. New York: NY: Cambridge University Press.

Wells, A.S. (2014). Seeing past the 'colorblind' myth: Why education policymakers should address racial and ethnic inequality and support culturally diverse schools. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved [August 2014] from http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/seeing-past-the-colorblind-myth.

Wyner, J. S., Bridgeland, J. M., & DiIulio, J. J. (2007). *Achievement trap: How America is failing millions of high-achieving students from lower-income families*. Lansdowne, VA: Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

Young, MD & Liable, J. (2000). White racism, antiracism, and school leadership preparation. *Journal of School Leadership*, *10*(5), 374-415.