Making the Difference in High Poverty; High Achieving Urban Elementary Schools: Selected Principal's Perspectives

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MAKING THE DIFFERENCE IN HIGH POVERTY; HIGH ACHIEVING URBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: SELECTED PRINCIPAL’S PERSPECTIVES

by

Penny Larsen

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Educational Leadership, Research and Technology
Dr. Van Cooley, Advisor

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 2008
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As I reach the end of my journey towards my doctoral degree, I must take the time to reflect on the process and those who assisted along the way.

I would like to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. Van Cooley for his time, efforts and patience. Without his kindness and support, I would have had great difficulty in obtaining my goal. I am forever in your gratitude. I give credit to my doctoral dissertation committee members Dr. Walter Burt and Dr. Mark Jenness for their willingness to review my dissertation and challenge me to think critically. Your lessons are invaluable and I thank you.

I give a special acknowledgment to my husband for his undying love and support, even in difficult times. You need to realize that without your support, I could never have fulfilled my dream. I thank you immensely for your support and your love.

To my son and daughter for accepting the fact that you have an atypical "crazy" mother who persisted in her mid-life educational crisis and won! I hope that you realize that you can never give up on your dreams, no matter your age or struggle. Sorry about the genes. To my extended sons and daughters, thank you for "putting up with me" and offering your sofas for sleeping on those long trips downstate. It is wonderful to have your assistance, even if it was "awkward" at times. I thank you all for your support.

Mostly, I need to acknowledge my spiritual relationship with my God and Lord Jesus Christ. I reflected on those countless "nudgings" of the spirit and realized that I was never alone with my struggles and frustrations at any point along this journey. This
relationship has made me stronger and confident for what I must endure. I am eternally grateful.

Penny Larsen
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The population of the United States has changed drastically over the last few decades. Americans have been consistently reminded that the population of the United States is rapidly becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. As examples, in 2003, the U.S. population was 12.1% African American; 13.9% Latino; 4.2% Asian or Pacific Islander; 0.8% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 76.2% non-Latino White (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). This increase in population is reflected in many arenas but none more critical than in our schools. In 2001, 53.9 million students were enrolled in our schools and it is projected that in the year 2013, 56.4 million will be enrolled (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2005).

The U.S. Census estimates that more than one million immigrants will enter the United States each year for the foreseeable future (Riche, 2000). Thirty-five percent of the students enrolled in the nation’s schools in 1995 were students of color (Pratt & Rittinghouse, 1998). The percentage of public school students who are racial/ethnic minorities increased from 22% in 1972 to 42% in 2003, primarily due to the growth in Hispanic enrollments. In 2003, minority public school enrollment (54%) exceeded White enrollment (46%) in the Western states (NCES, 2005). If the current demographic trends...
continue, students of color will make up 46% of the entire nations’ students in 2020 (Pallas, Natriello & McDill, 1989).

Today, many students entering our nation’s schools speak a first language other than English. The number of children ages 5 to 17 years who speak a language other than English at home more than doubled between 1979 and 2003 (NCES, 2005). The number of children who speak English with difficulty also grew during this period. For both of these groups of children, Spanish was the language most frequently spoken at home (NCES, 2005). The American Community Survey (ACS), 2000-04 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004) stated that 18.8% of the total population speaks another language besides English at home and 5.3% of the population has difficulty in speaking English (U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

As a direct consequence of the changing demographics, the characteristics of our public school student populations have also changed significantly. Projections for the school years 2000–2020 show a striking increase in the percentage of culturally and linguistically diverse students enrolled, and a decrease in the percentage of White students (NCES, 2005). Other demographic trends reveal that students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are more likely than White students to live in low-income, urban, single-parented households (NCES, 2005); and more likely to attend high-poverty schools in low-income districts, in which the majority of the students are from culturally diverse background (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999).

An implication of this change is that no longer are educators/administrators working with students who are homogeneous. Nor are educators/administrators working with students whose background and home culture is necessarily similar to their own. In
closer examination, these demographics reveal profound cultural differences between school educators/administrators and the students and families that they serve.

Educators/administrators frequently believe that elementary children are too young and naïve to develop understandings or judgments about race and ethnicity. Sometimes educators/administrators believe that discussing race and ethnicity brings children’s attention to differences that otherwise would go unobserved. They may hope that if nothing is said, children will mature thinking that race and ethnicity make no difference. By doing so, educators/administrators avoid discussions while ignoring research that states:

1. Children start developing attitudes about race and ethnicity early in life (Sheets & Hollins, 1999).

2. Prejudice and discrimination founded on race and ethnicity remains a prominent social dilemma (Banks, 2006; Gollnick & Chinn, 2004; Tatum, 1997).


4. Children’s consideration and acceptance of differences and ethnic prejudices is indispensable to create a society that values equality for all (Byrnes & Kiger, 2005; Davidson & Davidson, 1994; England, 2005).

Additionally, educators/administrators need to examine their own cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, bias, and expectations. Every educator/administrator brings their own cultural background into the school and classrooms. Traditionally, the majority of educators/administrators originated from Europe and therefore European students
benefited due to similar cultural patterns and styles associated with their teachers and principals (Anderson, 1988; Biddle, 2001; Byrnes & Kiger, 2005; Pine & Hilliard, 1990).

Acknowledging differences in values and behavioral styles between students of various racial and ethnic backgrounds and understanding how these differences may unintentionally influence educators/administrators’ attitudes, beliefs, attitudes, expectations, and behavior towards particular students in essential. As an example, White educators/administrators may not be conscious of the privileges they have as a product of their race and consequently they may not comprehend how students of color and their families experience life in urban schools and communities. Such a deficit may act as an unconscious continuation of prejudice and discrimination that still exists in our society (Kailin, 2002).

In urban areas, enormous demographic differences may exist between educators/administrators and their students and many issues of “teaching and learning” are being confronted. Over the last few decades, this educational disparity is frequently observed between the educators/administrators of the traditional White dominant culture and the educational outcomes of their minority students.

Recent conversation surrounding public education has focused on student achievement, with particular attention given to the unequal performance of African, Latino, Asian, and Native American students and their White European American peers. Historically, this phenomenon was predominantly focused on African American and White European American students. These studies have been well-established and documented (Banks, 2006; Howard, 1999; Sleeter & Grant, 2007; Tatum, 1997). The results from these studies have consistently found that African American students do not
perform as well as their White European counterparts on such measures as high school
grade point averages, scores on standardized tests, and high school graduation rates
(Banks & Banks, 2005). Although these disparities persist, the attention given to
improving the education of impoverished and minority youth resulted in a significant
narrowing of the achievement gap between African and European American students
between 1970 and late 1980s (Banks, 2006; Garcia, 1999; Sleeter & Grant, 2007; Tatum,
1997). The reason being that the 1970s education and social policies worked to narrow
the achievement gap by guaranteeing a minimally adequate level of achievement for
minorities through compensatory education, minimum competency testing, school
desegregation, equalization of school funding, and the war on poverty. However, in the
1990s, racial achievement gaps stopped narrowing or began to widen, signaling setbacks
in the progress that the nation made toward educational equity (Lee, 2006).

These setbacks implied that states seemingly were not capable of addressing
educational inequalities and achievement gaps in the 1990s (Braun, Wang, Jenkins, &
Weinbaum, 2006; Lee & Wong, 2004). A report to the National Education Goals Panel
(NAEP) notes that states made little advancement in narrowing the achievement gap in
mathematics between White and minority students and between poor and better-off
students during the 1990s. These gaps remain significant in 2005 (Lee, 2006). For
example, the NAEP report not only shows that the percentage of African-American and
Hispanic students performing at or above the Proficient level in mathematics is much
lower than that of their White peers (47% for Whites vs. 13% for African-Americans and
19% for Hispanics at grade 4; 39% for Whites vs. 9% for African-Americans and 13%
for Hispanics at grade 8), but it also states that a great majority of African American
students fail to meet the proficiency standard (Lee, 2006).

Noting the far-reaching social, political, and economic implications this pattern of
minority underachievement, and acknowledging the vast increase of ethnically,
linguistically, and culturally diverse students in urban, suburban, and rural school districts
(Banks, 2006; England, 2005; Garcia, 1999; Howard, 1999; Kozol, 1991; Lindsey,
Robins & Terrell, 1999; Nieto, 2004; Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Tatum, 1997), educators
and politicians spent the past several years probing this pattern of disparity closely. From
this examination, the federal law No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001) was implemented.
This legislation initiated by President Bush, embodied the “promise to end the soft racism
of low expectations by closing racial achievement gaps and bringing all students to
proficiency within the next eight years” (Lee, 2006, p. 5). Ultimately, this legislation was
designed to close the achievement gap between minority youth and their White
(European American), middle class, majority race peers. It creates the measurement of
academic progress in two subjects (with science being added afterward) through
mandated yearly tests in elementary and middle school and requires that all students from
all racial and ethnic groups attain 100% proficiency. Schools are required under strict
sanctions, to elevate achievement each year in math and reading and to eliminate the
achievement gap by race, ethnicity, language, and special education status (Lee, 2006).

This well intended section of legislation has enhanced the burden on educators
and administrators. Through the No Child Left Behind legislation, greater emphasis has
been placed on the fact that all students meet adequate yearly progress regardless of their
racial, ethnic, cultural, or linguistic backgrounds.
Historically, the fundamental underlying structure for White administrators is Helms’ (1984) White Racial Identity model essentially based on Erikson’s stage model. This model serves as the foundation for examining the perceptions, skills, knowledge, and dispositions of those White educators/administrators who are working in diverse student populated schools.

While White male administrators may have been prominent this trend is changing and more male and female minority educators/administrators are excelling in urban areas. As a consequence, it is imperative to investigate successful leadership models involving White and non-White principals in diverse student school populations especially in terms of student outcomes.

Since principals are the “chief educational leaders of their schools” and are ultimately accountable for the achievement of all students, it is essential to examine White and non-White elementary principals’ dispositions, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and strategies towards student diversity, their understanding of the student achievement gaps, and how they create a diversity-sensitive, inclusive school environment.

Although advocates of multicultural education and culturally proficient leadership acknowledge the significance of the principal in school environments, little is known about the specific impact and/or importance of the principal’s ethnicity and culture, and/or the principals’ direct experiences, dispositions, and insights impacting their leadership within their educational contexts. Much of the research in this area has focused on teacher/student interactions in the classroom (England, 2005; Garcia, 1999; Gay, 2003; Grant & Sleeter, 2007; Howard, 1999; Kozol, 1991; Kunjufu, 2002; Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999; Nieto, 1999, 2004, 2005; Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Tatum, 1997)
or on whole-school programs in which the principal's role is to lead and manage the shared school vision (Banks & Banks, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2004). The role of the principal is seldom discussed. This fact is unexpected given the importance of the principal's leadership role in diverse student achievement.

High academic achievement by diverse students in high-poverty elementary schools may not generally be the case in Michigan or throughout the nation. But some schools do succeed at helping all their students achieve, regardless of their background or socio-economic status. This study looks at a set of high-poverty, high-achieving elementary schools, led by White and non-White administrators. This study purposefully examined differences, if any, among the administrators in regards to their personal dispositions as they related to their school and community leadership and student achievement outcomes. It is hoped that the results from this study will be beneficial for other administrators facing similar challenges.

Problem Statement and Research Questions

We know that administrators in public schools are now facing student populations more diverse than at any other period in our public school history (Riche, 2000). Due to this increase in student diversity, administrators must examine their skills, knowledge, attitudes, experiences, and dispositions in order to meet the challenge of fostering inclusive diversity-sensitive environment strategies that meet the needs of all students thus impacting learning outcomes. This study asks the question, "Is there a difference in the perceptions of White and non-White urban elementary principals regarding their dispositions, inclusive school environments, community partnerships and student
achievement outcomes?" Consequently, the research questions for this mixed-method study is as follows:

1. How do White and non-White elementary school principals working in urban areas describe the achievement gap?

2. How do high poverty and high achieving White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas cultivate diversity-sensitive, inclusive school environments?

3. How do White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas promote partnerships within their community?

4. How do attributes, i.e. dispositions, beliefs, attitudes of selected White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas impact the socio-cultural and linguistic issues in their school context?

Significance of Study

In the past, public schools functioned largely within the accepted dominant cultural context of the White, European American, middle class value system. People of color have long stated their sense of unequal educational opportunity and significance of their cultures and languages within the larger dominate context (Garcia, 1999; Gay, 2003; Grant & Sleeter, 2007; Howard, 1999; Kozol, 1991; Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999; Nieto, 1999; Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Tatum, 1997). Despite educational reform efforts, White, middle class culture continued to dominate in subtle, yet effective ways of discrimination. For example, the expectation of assimilation and conformity of people of color persist in the educational system.
This study seeks to identify White and non-White elementary leadership structures used by principals to promote an inclusive school climate for diverse students. The study’s results may present principals with strategies that can be implemented to develop a more culturally, linguistically, inclusive climate at their school sites. This study may offer principals “best practice” measures regarding the preservation of effective instructional and informational strategies which ultimately impacts student learning outcomes.

Definition of Terms

**Culture** is a group’s program for survival and adaptation to its environment. Culture consists of knowledge, concepts, and values shared by group members through systems of communication. Culture also consists of the shared beliefs, symbols, and interpretations within a group (Garcia, 1999).

**Race** is a “concept that is derived from a genetic designation based on phenotypic characteristics (i.e., physical features such as skin color and hair texture)” (Sheets & Hollins, 1999, p. 7). The term race denotes large groups of people distinguished from one another by their physical appearances.

**Racial identity** is “a sense of group of collective identity based on one’s perception that he/she shares a common racial heritage with a particular group” (Helms, 1990, p. 3).

**Dispositions** are values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth.
Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice.

*Culturally proficient leaders* are guided by the theory of developing a vision and a mission that serves the needs of all students. Cultural proficiency has the following elements: (a) valuing diversity, (b) assessing culture, (c) managing the dynamics of differences, (d) institutionalizing cultural knowledge, and (e) adapting to diversity (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999).

The *achievement gap* (the average difference in test scores between different racial groups, language groups, and socioeconomic groups) has prompted a resurgence of deficiency talk. “The fact that schools do a better job with students who are White, middle class, and native English speaking than with students of color, students from poverty communities, and second-language learners is not new” (Sleeter & Grant, 2007, p. 41).

*High-performing schools* rank high on the Michigan Education Assessment Program’s (MEAP) standardized tests at the elementary level. These standardized tests comprise the content areas of Reading, Writing (now combined into English Language Arts), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. All MEAP tests have four performance levels.

*High Poverty Schools* are schools where at least 50% of elementary students qualify for the federal free or reduced price lunch program.
Limitations and Delimitations

This research contributes to the public school administrational leadership body of knowledge in terms of enhancing academic success with diverse students. The key features of this study that provide its direction are also the sources of several limitations. There are factors that could not be effectively controlled to the fullest degree possible in spite of how carefully the study was designed and conducted. These factors are related to the sample size, sample selection, researcher effects, and data collection procedures. The data generated from this study was provided from a small sample size. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized beyond the sample. However, the small sample set did meet the requirements of mixed methods research methodology, and provided some compensating strengths. It provided rich data that allowed emerging themes to be examined in greater depth. As a result, additional topics that were not originally considered during the preliminary stages of the research were explored. This all-inclusive examination made it possible to investigate complex factors more thoroughly and completely.

A limitation is the placement of the researcher within the study. It is imperative for the researcher not to exhibit biases including favoritism, based on previous knowledge and work experience in the public schools.

A limitation exists in the compilation for data collection. The majority of the data came from self-reports. These reports may be subject to error in recall and inaccurate reporting. A common interview protocol was used across the sets of participants that included open-ended questions. To exonerate errors in understanding, triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify
meaning, was used. Data from the principal interviews, observations, and the Quick Discrimination Index survey will neutralize potentially harmful effects of the limitation.

The length of the data collection period is another limitation. The research was conducted over a three-month period of time. While this is adequate time to conduct the interviews, it restricted the gathering of observational data. A longer time for data collection would have provided opportunities for the principals to be observed in comparable circumstances on a number of dissimilar occasions.

A delimitation of the study was the process used to select urban elementary principals. The principals were self-selected through positive e-mail inquiry responses and who met the criteria for this study.

Summary

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study. Previously, the nation’s urban public schools have been seemingly unsuccessful in educating culturally and linguistically diverse students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. One factor may be the limited success of White and non-White urban elementary principals working with diverse communities. As a consequence, these selected urban elementary principals were examined in order to identify and explore commonalities and differences that may lead to successful leadership that impacts student learning.

The principal, as the school’s chief instructional leader, initiates the improvements and sets the tone for change in the school climate which fosters high achievement components. This study explored the critical socio-cultural dimension of this leadership role as expressed in White and non-White urban elementary principals.
The findings of this study will illumine the influence of socio-cultural dimensions of leadership development designed to respond to the needs of diverse urban students, which has to date, received little attention.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

“It is important to work for those things that create life and to oppose those people, those attitudes, and those systems that distort life.”

(Bishop John Shelby Spong)

Racial and ethnic identities are important segments of the overall framework of individual and collective identity (Chavez & Guido-DiBriot, 1999). For some especially visible and legally defined minority populations in this country, racial and ethnic identities are recognized in conscious ways. First and foremost, conscious immersion into cultural traditions and values through religious, familial, neighborhood and educational systems provides a positive sense of ethnic identify. Second, individuals often must filter ethnic identity through negative treatment provided by others outside their own racial and ethnic groups. This chapter explores how racial and ethnic identity develops and how sensitivity to this process can improve education. It needs to be stated that although this study addresses racial and ethnic identities, it is not an inclusive study.

Worldviews may be defined as how people perceive their connection to the world (nature, other people, institutions, etc.). Worldviews are highly correlated with the person’s cultural upbringing, sociopolitical history, and life experience (Sue, 1998); they symbolize our philosophy of life and how we think the world operates. Therefore, how society perceives race, culture, ethnicity, and so forth becomes an important determinant of a worldview.
The development of this worldview has been influenced by many historical factors of European colonization efforts towards minority peoples. History tells us that conquering peoples exhibited poor conflict resolution skills and believed that they were more sophisticated than others. Therefore Europeans felt justified because their culture viewed itself as “superior” (Sue, 1998).

Since our founding days, the United States has produced several key human developmental theorists who deal with conflict resolution and identity. One of them was E.H. Erikson. The Eriksonian (1963, 1968) archetype introduced the concepts of life cycle, identity crisis, and identity, which predisposed how psychologists and educators examined children’s development (Gay, 1994). This developmental process can be seen in our historical foundation in reference to White cultural dominance and conflict resolution. This monoculture “perspective of development...based in individualism suggests that the ways individuals resolve and cope with psychological crisis at particular stages in life influences the quality of life” (Sheets & Hollins, 1999, p. 91). Conflict resolution is prominent in developmental identity theories and is reflected in American society as traditions of dominance and subordinate influences. Katz (1985) expressed dominance in terms of ordinary values and beliefs. Table 1 shows some of these traditions of dominance.

Historically, dominant groups “set the parameters within which subordinates operate. The dominant group holds the power and the authority in society relative to the subordinates and determines how that power and authority may be acceptably used” (Tatum, 1997, p. 23). The relationship between the dominant and subordinates is frequently based on the besieged groups as (subordinates’) being “labeled as defective or
Table 1

Traditions of White Cultural Dominance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rugged Individualism</th>
<th>Progress &amp; Future Orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual is primary unit</td>
<td>Plan for future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual has primary responsibility</td>
<td>Delayed gratification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence &amp; autonomy highly valued</td>
<td>Value continual improvement &amp; progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual can control environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Competition**
- Winning is everything
- Win/lose dichotomy

**Action Orientations**
- Must master & control nature
- Must always do something about a situation
- Pragmatic/utilitarian view

**Communication**
- Standard English
- Written tradition
- Direct eye contact
- Limited physical contact
- Control emotions

**Time**
- Adherence to rigid time
- Time is viewed as a commodity

**Holidays**
- Based on Christian religion
- Based on White history & male
  - Protestant Work Ethic
    - Working hard brings success

**Status & Power**
- Measured by economic possessions
- Credentials, titles & positions
- Believe “own” system
- Believe better than other systems
- Owning goods, space, property

**Family Structure**
- Nuclear family is ideal
- Male is breadwinner & head of house
- Female is homemaker & subordinate
- Patriarchal structure

**Aesthetics**
- Music & art based European culture
- Women’s beauty based on blonde, blue-eyed, thin, young
- Men’s attractiveness based on athletic power, economic status

**Religion**
- Belief in Christianity
- No tolerance for deviation from single god concept

**History**
- Based on European immigrants’ experiences (Katz, 1985)

A negative stereotype has on a group. A negative
stereotype about a group to which one belongs can result in negative performance, referred to as stereotype threat (Steele and Aronson, 1995). In situations where the stereotype can apply (i.e., stereotypes of lower performance on achievement tests as compared to Whites), “one is at risk of confirming it as a self-characterization, both to one’s self and to others who know the stereotype” (Steele and Aronson, 1995, p. 808). This influence makes it essential for educators/administrators to comprehend how their behavior can be interpreted by students and how they can manipulate the success of these diverse students. The “knowledge of how identity develops for these diverse students can help further the understanding needed to help students succeed” (Torres, Howard-Hamilton & Cooper, 2003, p. 16).

As a consequence of societal pressures with the need for conflict resolution, identity status and racial/ethnicity models have become important. This minority status comes within an historical and societal context that obligates us to view the consequences to this status.

Racial/Ethnicity in Schools—Introductory View

“A factor contributing to the dominant status of the European American ethnic group has been the institutionalization of their culture and their ability to display their ethnic identity as the norm in school settings” (Sheets & Hollins, 1999, p. 97). Students from ethnic groups of color or poor students have had to maintain their ethnic identities in situational contexts that often require them to restrict or suppress the exhibition of ethnic behaviors. Negotiating aspects of their racial/ethnicity identity or suppressing the
cultural dimensions of ethnic identity can be challenging (Tatum, 1997; Sheets & Hollins, 1999).

Sheets and Hollins (1999) “point out that the psychological dimensions of ethnicity, if compromised, can create conflict for individuals whose social relationships and cultural practices become removed from their sense of identity” (p. 97). In schools, teachers/administrators may not be aware of the emotional and cognitive stress caused by this psychological dissonance. In the school setting, students from some ethnic groups may be required to engage in unfamiliar tasks without the benefit of assistance. Some of these students learn to accommodate and succeed academically, while others become overwhelmed and do not succeed. “Students who fail under these conditions can be identified by race and ethnicity” (Sheets & Hollins, 1999, p. 97). Frequently, this adds up to the descriptions and expectations for a particular racial and ethnic group thus reinforcing stereotypes.

Theoretical frameworks to guide identity development must be designed to examine ethnic identity and how it impacts social interactions within and without relational aspects of other groups. Jones (1997) points out that we frequently lack adequate frameworks that “address the relationship between peoples’ perceptions of ethnic identity and the cultural practices and social relations in which they are engaged” (p. 65).

Altering educators/administrators professional educational preparation to contain understanding and knowledge of ethnic identity formation and development of self and others is essential to changing classroom and school practices (Sheets & Hollins, 1999). Educators/administrators must examine their own ethnic identity development as well as
understand the ethnic identity development of their particular students.

Educators/administrators must validate differences devoid of the need to oppress, idealize, or negate students and families who may not share the same ethnic group, life experiences and values.

Theoretical Framework

Erikson’s (1959, 1963) eight-stage model of psychosocial development is a significant life span developmental theory. Each of Erikson’s ages involves a convergence of biological, psychological, and social forces. Together these forces guide the progression of personality development over one’s life span.

Although each of Erikson’s eight stages is present in varying degrees at any given point in one’s life cycle, developmental progression through these stages is referred to as fixed, with each crisis having a time of special ascendancy. Each stage is defined by a bipolar affiliation with negative and positive endpoints. A crisis has been successfully resolved when the positive pole of the crisis stage predominates over the negative pole.

In accordance with Erikson’s principles the successful resolution of earlier crises provides the groundwork for the successful resolution of later crises. These stages are never complete; rather they are revisited to varying degrees throughout a lifetime.

The foundation of Erikson’s theory is the identity versus role confusion stage (conflict resolution). Erikson claims that the struggle to form wholeness, to create a link between childhood and anticipated adulthood, and to experience continuity between one’s self-conception and the self as perceived by others defines the normative identity crisis. Erikson says that identity is formed through exchanges with the social world.
Aspects of the social world are selected and integrated into one’s developing sense of self. Table 2 illustrates Erikson’s Eight-Stage model.

Table 2
Erikson’s Eight-Stage Psychosocial Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage:</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infancy to 18 months</td>
<td>Trust vs. Mistrust</td>
<td>Feeding</td>
<td>Develop trust when caregivers respond; mistrust when they don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>Autonomy vs. Shame &amp; Doubt</td>
<td>Toilet Training</td>
<td>Develop a sense of personal control. Success-autonomy, Failure-shame, doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school</td>
<td>Initiative vs. Guilt</td>
<td>Exploration</td>
<td>Asserting power and control over environment. Success-sense of purpose, Failure-disapproval, guilt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School age</td>
<td>Industry vs. Inferiority</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Cope with new academic and social demands. Success-competence, Failure-weak self-image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–11 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescence</td>
<td>Identity vs. Role</td>
<td>Social Relationships</td>
<td>Develop &quot;self.&quot; Success-true to yourself, Failure-confusion and weak self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12–18 years</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Adult</td>
<td>Intimacy vs. Isolation</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Loving relationships. Success-strong relationships. Failure-loneliness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19–40 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Age</td>
<td>Generativity vs. Stagnation</td>
<td>Work &amp; Parenthood</td>
<td>Need to create and nurture. Success-usefulness and accomplishment. Failure-withdrawal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41–64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>Ego Integrity vs. Despair</td>
<td>Reflection on Life</td>
<td>Success-feelings of wisdom Failure-regret, bitterness and despair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65–death</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Erikson, 1968)

Erikson’s model is one of the earliest in identity development and is the foundation from which other theorists base their models.
Models and theories of racial and ethnic identity development have multiplied in recent decades. Most identity development models and theories trace their beginning to either the psychosocial research of Erik Erikson (1959), the identity formation studies of Marcia (1966), or the cognitive structural work of Jean Piaget (1952). All identity models focus on the psychosocial process of defining the self. The traditional models in both categories (psychosocial and cognitive structural) are stage models in which growth occurs in a linear manner, whereas contemporary models portray racial and ethnic identity as a progression that occurs over time.

Racial Identity Development

These models were primarily developed for African Americans to understand the Black experience in this country. Cross (1971, 1995) developed one of the first models of psychological nigrescences, a “resocialization experience” (1995, p. 97), in which healthy Black individuals progress “from a world view in which African Americans are devalued and Whites are reified to a world view characterized by an inner confidence in and appreciation of self and others as racial beings” (Thompson & Carter, 1997, p. 18). During this process, the individual moves from an absolute unawareness of race through espousal of Black culture moving toward a commitment to many cultures and addressing the concerns of all oppressed peoples. Cross’s model is beneficial in outlining racial identity as a dynamic succession and in acknowledging ethnocentric and multicultural perspectives. Grounded in the area of the civil rights movement, Cross’s early work is
problematic because he states that before Blacks experience identity, they are initially unacquainted with the concept of their own race and the race of others (Jensen, 1998).

Cross’s Model (1971) included five stages of racial identity development which are: (1) pre-encounter, (2) encounter, (3) immersion/emersion, (4) internalization, and (5) internalization-commitment. Each stage describes the psychological and behavioral characteristics of African-Americans based on their interaction with societal oppression (Cross, 1971). Throughout this transformation, the individual theoretically moves from a complete unawareness of race to embracing black culture exclusively while developing a commitment to other cultures and addressing the concerns of all oppressed groups. In 1995, Cross expanded his model in more detail:

1. **Stage 1: Pre-Encounter.** Persons in this stage internalize low attitudes toward being black. They do not deny being Black but feel that their characteristics play an insignificant role in how people interact with them (Cross, 1995). Another type of pre-encounter individual is one who takes the position that race is a social stigma or an imposition. Thus, these individuals are trying superficially to join with others who are trying to dismantle the social stigma. Many of these people at this stage assume the assimilation-integration philosophy in which the pre-encounter Black may resist multicultural education because it is unnecessary information and not how the actual world is structured (Cross, 1995).

2. **Stage 2: Encounter.** A series of miniature assaults or event crises cause the individual to admit that the worldview that is valued now has errors. Blacks during this stage develop a value structure and value orientation on affiliation with groups and beliefs toward causes (Cross, 1995).
3. **Stage 3: Immersion/Emersion.** This stage is the most critical for persons attempting to clarify their Black identity. During a pro-Black and anti-White identity when one enters immersion and emersion, merger and resolution of the dichotomous thoughts occur (Cross, 1995). For example, feelings at the immersion phase are anger, guilt, and pride—anger and guilt for accepting and internalizing a White frame of reference that was psychologically and emotionally unhealthy and pride because they are learning about Black heritage. At this stage, individuals comprehend that growth is a continuous process. They are now able to shift toward internalization of the new identity (Cross, 1995).

4. **Stage 4: Internalization.** Persons who shift into the internalization stage have personal peace, because they are no longer defensive about their minority group in the social order of the world and their conception of Blackness has become approachable, unrestrained, and defined (Cross, 1995). The internalized identity perform three functions: “(a) to defend and protect a person from psychological insults that stem from having to live in a racist society, (b) to provide a sense of belonging and social anchorage, and (c) to provide a foundation or point of departure for carrying out transaction with people, cultures, and human situations beyond the world of Blackness” (Cross, 1995, p. 113).

5. **Stage 5: Internalization-Commitment.** Cross (1995) has stated that the fifth stage is actually a replication of activities, behaviors, and attributes of what the individual exhibits in the fourth stage.

Although racial identity models such as that of Cross were “developed with African Americans in mind, the basic tenets of such models can be applied to all people.
of color who have shared similar patterns of racial, ethnic, or cultural oppression” (Tatum, 1997, p. 132).

Parham (1989) describes cycles of Racial Identity development as a life-long continuous process for Blacks. Parham theorizes that individuals advance through angry feelings about Whites (the dominant race) and develop a positive Black “frame of reference.” Theoretically, this process leads to a practical perception of one’s racial identity and to biculturalism success. Parham relates Black identity directly to White people in a manner that moves individual’s Black identity from the subconscious to the conscious. This model clearly delineates that when Blacks encounter White culture and the negative differential treatment of others, feelings of difference are triggered raising a consciousness of racial identity is as well.

Parham’s (1989) model offers a sense of progression. The model outlines a movement from an unconscious to a conscious racial identity. Parham theorizes that individuals move through angry feelings about Whites and develop a positive Black frame of reference. Ideally this leads to a pragmatic perception of one’s racial identity and to bicultural success. This model delineates that when Blacks encounter White culture and negative treatment by others, feelings of difference are triggered and a consciousness of racial identity as well. In Parham’s model the unavoidable exposure to racial differences is identified as the trigger for the development of racial identity. However, “we believe the primary trigger of individual racial identity is immersion in one’s own racial group and transference of a racial self through that immersion” (Chavez & Guido-DiBriot, 1999, p. 42).
Helms (1990, 1993, 1994, and 1995) developed one of the first white racial identity models. Her model presupposes the existence of white superiority and individual, cultural, and institutional racism. The underlying general racial identity theory proposes to account for the adaptation of both Whites and people of color to an environment in which societal resources are differentially allocated. The former are assumed to be entitled to more resources and the latter less.

Helms' theory is concerned with the differential socialization that people experience because of their socio-racial classification. Helms' theory attempts to describe the development of what is measured as identity for persons living in an inequitable system. For people of color, the developmental task is considered to be surmounting the racist perception that may have been internalized based on their environment. The developmental issue for Whites focuses on the abandonment of entitlement striving for the formation of a non-racist system. The racial identity theory is based on the premise that Whites and people of color "develop racial identity by means of a sequential process in which increasingly more sophisticated differentiations of the ego evolve from earlier or less mature statuses" (Helms, 1996, p. 155). These ego statuses are said to be constructs referring to dynamic cognitive-affective information-processing venues that people use to deal with racist stimulus.

In Helms' theory, statuses are assumed to mature within the ego in an exacting succession, and "resolutions of the developmental issues of earlier or more primitive statuses leave their imprint on subsequent statuses" (Helms, 1995, p. 183). Those statuses that have evolved enough to be utilized are said to be of dominance within the
individual's personality. Dominance is determined in terms of "the status that most often governs the person's racial reactions" (Helms, 1995, p. 184).

According to this view, when an individual encounters stimuli that include a racial component, the ego selects the dominant racial identity status to interpret the situation and responds in a manner that is appropriate to the status. However, "secondary statuses are those that are present in the racial part of a person's personality...are potentially accessible under the 'right' circumstances" (Helms, 1995, p. 187). It is possible for individuals to have more than one status at any given time. Therefore, "most individuals develop more than one status, and if multiple statuses exist, then they can operate in concert...and presumably blends describe people's reactions more often than do pure statuses" (Helms, 1995, pp. 188–189).

Helms' theory refers to the status of white racial identity. Her first three statuses outline how a white individual progresses from a racist framework before progressing to the next three statuses where individuals ascertain a non-racist white identity. Helms' model (1990) stages of development are included.

1. **Contact.** At this stage, individuals lack awareness of cultural racism and their own White privilege. They have a naïve curiosity about or fear of people of color based on stereotypes. Those White people, whose lives are very structured or who are isolated, cause them to limit their interactions with people of color, as well as their awareness of racial issues, and may remain at this state permanently.

2. **Disintegration.** At this stage, individuals' ignorance or lack of awareness is replaced by guilt, shame, and sometime anger at the recognition of their personal advantages of being White and they acknowledge the role whites play in the maintenance
of a racist system. Attempts to reduce this discomfort may include denial (convincing themselves that racism doesn’t really exist, or if it does, it is the fault of its victims), avoidance of people of color or the topic of racism, and the attempts to change significant others’ attitudes towards people of color which usually meets with rejection by Whites as well as people of color.

3. Reintegration. Societal pressure to accept the status quo (racism) may lead individuals to the desire to be accepted by their own racial group, in which the overt and covert belief in White superiority is so prevalent, that it may lead to a reshaping of their belief system to be more congruent with an acceptance of racism. Fear and anger may again be redirected toward people of color. Many Whites become stuck at this stage, especially if avoidance of people of color is possible.

4. Pseudo-Independent. At this stage, a catalyst for self-examination occurs. White people seek information about people of color, racism, etc. and begin to question their previous definitions of Whiteness and the justifiability of racism. They begin to abandon beliefs in White superiority, but may still behave in ways that unintentionally perpetuate the system. White people may try to renounce their own Whiteness through active affiliation with people of color. These individuals experience a sense of alienation from other Whites who have not yet begun to examine their own racism, and may also experience rejection from persons of color who are suspicious of their motives.

5. Immersions/Emersion. Uncomfortable with their Whiteness, yet unable to do anything else, they may search for a new more comfortable manner to be White. White individuals seek to replace racially related myths and stereotypes with accurate information about what it means and what is meant to be White in our society. Learning
about Whites who have been anti-racist allies to people of color is a very important part of this process since it provides Whites with important models for change.

6. **Autonomy.** For Whites, the internalization of a newly defined sense of self as White is the primary task of this last stage. The positive daily redefinitions strengthen their efforts to face racism and oppression. Alliances with people of color can be more easily made because their anti-racist behaviors and attitudes will be more consistently expressed. While autonomy might be described as “racial self-actualization” it is best to think of it as an on-going process wherein an individual is continually open to new information about racial and cultural variables.

Helms’ model is helpful in outlining interracial exposure as a powerful trigger for the development of racial identity. Problematically in this model is Helms’ ambiguity of an individual’s development toward a non-racist framework with the development of a racial identity. Her assertion is that racial identity for whites is about their perceptions, feelings, and behaviors toward people of color rather than about the development and consciousness of an actual white racial identity.

Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson (1994) raise some questions about Helms’ model. First, they claim Helms’ model to be mistakenly based on racial/ethnic minority identity development models. Because minority identity development occurs in the face of stereotyping and oppression, they may be irrelevant to White identity which does not face similar conditions. Second, too much prominence is placed on the development of White attitudes toward minorities and not enough on the development of White attitudes towards themselves. Third, there exists a conceptual error in creating a model as being
developmental by means of stages and that the progression from less to more seems based on the designers’ ethnics.

The Cross, Parham, and Helms racial identity models all discuss what is considered as an intersection between racial perceptions of others (racism) and racial perception of self (racial development).

**Ethnic Identity Development**

These models focus on what people learn about their culture from family and community. A sense of ethnic identity is developed from common culture, religion, geography, and language of individuals who are often associated by allegiance and kinship (Torres, 1996). Aspects that comprise learned culture include rituals, behavior, symbols reflecting underlying values and beliefs (dispositions) of the specific group. Models of identity development typically outline commonalities that are shared within a particular group of people (Ott, 1989).

The study of ethnic identity development has furthered the understanding of how individuals make meaning out the general question, “Who am I?” Phinney (1990) relates that in disparity to approaches that aim at descriptions of particular ethnic groups, the study of ethnic identity involves a prominence on how group members comprehend and interpret their own ethnicity. Phinney developed a model describing an ethnic identity process that she considers significant to all ethnic groups. “Ethnic identity develops from the shared culture, religion, geography, and language of individuals who are often connected by strong loyalty and kinship” (pp. 79–80). Phinney, who conducted her research with minority adolescents, found that the development of an ethnic identity was
related to the process of resolving conflict. She found that (1) non-dominant group members must resolve the stereotyping and prejudicial treatment of the dominant White population toward non-dominant group individuals, and (2) most ethnic minorities must resolve the conflict of value systems between non-dominant and dominant groups and the manner in which minority members negotiate a bicultural value system. Phinney proposes that most ethnic groups must resolve two basic conflicts that occur as a result of their membership in a non-dominant group. The resulting three stage model was developed.

1. **Stage 1—unexamined ethnic identity.** This first stage is when individuals need to explore beliefs and attitudes about their own ethnicity. If the result of this exploration is to accept what the person has heard from others without question, then their self image shuts down. On the other hand, if the person does not see that their ethnicity is an important part of who they are in society, then the result is identity dispersal.

2. **Stage 2—ethnic identity search/moratorium:** In this stage, individuals become more interested in their ethnic heritage. They consider and internalize the values, behaviors, and beliefs held by their ethnic group. Often times, this stage will evoke anger and frustration towards the dominant culture. The importance of this stage is that the individual has personal feelings that become congruent with their behaviors.

3. **Stage 3—bicultural identity.** The third stage of Phinney’s model results from their examination of what is means to be a member of an ethnic group and make the pledge to group membership. A bicultural identity develops where individuals realize a comfort level with who they are in the larger society.
Phinney's model is helpful in identifying very real triggers of consciousness and in outlining threats to ethnic self-concept. However, it is still missing a discussion of the critical and positive aspect of immersion into one’s own culture (Phinney, 1992) besides the immerging into the dominant culture.

Phinney (1992) developed an instrument for use in measuring this construct. The multi-group ethnic identity measure (MEIM) assesses dimensions of ethnic identity development, information acquisition or exploration, and the level of commitment. The instrument has very strong reliability and validity indicators. However more research is needed. Ponterotto (2001) points out that several additional studies need to be done in order to strengthen the psychometric properties of the instrument.

White Theories and Models

Many White people have never really considered their own racial and ethnic group membership, because they represent the societal norm (Howard, 1999). People who are White can easily reach adulthood without having to think much about their racial identity. There is “a lot of silence about race in White communities, and as a consequence Whites tend to think of racial identity as something that other people have, not something that is salient for them” (Tatum, 1997, p. 94). In a race-conscious society, racial group membership has psychological implications. The messages Whites receive are about assumed superiority which shape perceptions of reality and influence our interactions with others (Tatum, 1997). Joel Kovel (1984) uses the term “thingification” to describe how members of the dominant society use language to generate distance between themselves and others. “It gives the dominant group the power to establish, define, and
differentiate outsiders as others (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999, p. 109). Thingification
is an extension of the institutionalized oppression never experienced by members of the
dominant group. It is part of a milieu of culturally derived meanings (Kovel, 1984) that
permits the larger and empowered sector of society to communicate that minority groups
are never quite as good as the dominant society (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999).

Helms (1995) states that the charge for Whites is to develop a positive White
identity based in reality, not on assumed superiority. In order to do that each individual
must become attentive of his/her Whiteness; accept it as personally and socially
significant in the context of a commitment to a just society.

The conceptualization of White privilege and the examination of Whiteness serve
as a predecessor to the large number of publications linking White identity development,
the disease of racism, and the study of multicultural education (Banks, 2006; Banks &
Banks, 2005; Gay, 2003; Helms, 1995; Howard, 1999; Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999;
Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Sleeter & Grant, 2007; Tatum, 1997). Seemingly, White studies
in multicultural education courses generally focus on helping White teachers understand
the process of White identity development, not the implications. The general assumption
is made that race consciousness is an essential predisposition to absolve racist policies
and practices in schools.

Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson (1994) expressed concerns about Helms' 1990
edition of the White racial identity model with specific regards to the focus being
exclusively on Blacks. The White identity statuses mainly describe different levels of
sensitivity to other racial/ethnic groups but little about a White identity. Furthermore,
except for the Immersion-Emersion phrase, little attention is given to how Whites feel
about themselves. The continuing concern about White racial identity (Rowe, et al., 1994) focuses on the difficulties presented by the intangible nature of the theory and implications to replicate.

White racial/ethnic identity development theories recognize that the theories are based on how Whites distinguish other racial ethnic groups and not their own (Hardiman, 2001; Helms, 1999). Hardiman (2001) states that White identity is concentrated within a complex set of interconnecting social characteristics (i.e., class, gender and race), and it is fashioned by social, economic, and historical processes. Previous models of White identity development (Hardiman, 2001) “required an understanding of the way oppression impacts individuals, rather than from a cultural difference analysis in which the focus is directed at White identification with White culture” (p. 111). Hardiman (2001) updated his 1982 model as follows:

1. **Naivété.** No social consciousness of race: Whites do not understand the construct of race or the social understanding of racial differences. This lack of social phenomena ends around childhood.

2. **Acceptance:** Living in this society, messages of White privileges are prevalent and Whites begin to accept their sense of superiority.

3. **Resistance:** There is a consciousness that the dominance of one over another is wrong and there is an effort to question and resist the group racist messages.

4. **Redefinition:** The White attempts to redefine and take responsibility for his/her “whiteness” and takes a personal concern in opposing racism.

5. **Internalization:** Awareness has been elevated and a new White identity is formed that is conscious of racial and social justice.
Hardiman (2001) remarks that the stages are a recommendation of what Whites should do rather than a description of personal shared experience by all white people.

Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson (1994) based their White Consciousness Model on Helms’ (1984) and utilized the description of White racial consciousness as the foundation for their model, conceptualized racial consciousness in terms of two forms of identity statuses (achieved and unachieved) which, encompass seven attitudes types. Generally, achieved statuses require an exploration of racial issues and a commitment to these beliefs. Unachieved statuses lack exploration, commitment, or both of these components.

Achieved statuses are characterized by four relatively stable internalized attitude prototypes: (1) Dominative attitudes refer to strong ethnocentric perspectives that justify the oppression of minority groups, (2) Confictive attitudes reflect opposition to discriminatory practices and opposition to programs designed to reduce or eliminate such discrimination, (3) Reactive attitudes require recognition that White society wrongly benefits from and promotes discriminatory practices, and (4) Integrative attitudes reflect comfort with one’s Whiteness and with minority groups.

The unachieved statuses, share three attitude types in a non-internalized set of racial attitudes: (1) Dependent attitudes reflect the dependence on others for one’s own racial attitudes, (2) Avoidant attitudes are characterized by a lack of interest in one’s own White identity and a lack of concern for racial issues, and (3) Dissonant attitudes involve uncertainty about one’s sense of racial consciousness and racial issues. A person experiences dissonance usually between previously held beliefs and recent personal experiences.
“Movement from one type to another type is dependent on the creation of dissonance, personal attributes, and the subsequent environmental conditions encountered by the person” (Ivy, 1998, p. 54). Consequently, the main entry for change involves the dissonant type. Persons can move between all types except the two unachieved ones—avoidant and dependent, characterized by the lack of internalized attitudes.

White Racial Consciousness Theory

White Racial Consciousness Theory (Hardiman, 1982; Ponterotto, 1988; Rowe, Bennett, & Atkinson, 1994; Sue & Sue, 1990) refers to the “awareness of one’s own racial group membership, underlying race-related cultural values, and an understanding of the socio-political implications resulting from membership in a particular racial group” (Sheets & Hollins, 1999, p. 49). By comparison, racial identity (Helms’ model) refers to a sense of collective identity based on one’s awareness that he/she shares a common racial legacy with a particular racial group. Erikson (1968) claims that a person’s individual identity is associated with a communal identity and emphasized the necessity of probing the concepts of racial identity and racial consciousness. This theory examines how White people think about individuals of color. The White Racial Consciousness Theory attempts to identify the commonly held attitudes and attempts to determine which are best to characterize the racial attitudes held by White individuals.

This theory claims that group attitudes can be described and labeled with the resulting types of attitudes constituting the components of White Racial Consciousness. The White Racial Consciousness approach specifically avoids larger personality
abstractions, such as identity and merely proposes that there are various types of racial attitudes held by White people.

In terms of foundational constructs, Block and Carter (1992) concluded that the organizational framework of phases and statuses is quite similar and that the specific ego statuses (White Identity) and attitude types (White Consciousness) are almost identical in meaning. Regarding theoretical basis, Block and Carter criticized the White Racial Consciousness model as actually being based on a developmental stage model, which suggests that this theory is a mere variant of Helms’ version of White Racial Identity Model.

White Orientation Model

Using Helms’ (1990) stages of White Racial Identity development, Howard formulated what he phrased as “different ways of being white” (1999, p. 99). In his White Orientations Model there are three autonomous stages that refer to how White educators/administrators’ may think, feel, and act toward implementing culturally proficient strategies (Table 3).

Kunjufu (2002) transposed Howard’s stages of the White Identity Orientations Model into a convenient table which is illustrated below in Table 4.

Maslow: White Racial Identity and Self-Actualization

A mixture of White Racial Identity development (Helms, 1990) and personality development, as defined by Maslow’s concepts of self-actualization, offer an enhanced
understanding of identity development. Maslow (Simons, Irwin, & Drinnien, 1987) proclaimed that the most

Table 3

Howard’s Key Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fundamentalist Whites</th>
<th>Integrationist Whites</th>
<th>Transformationist Whites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>These white people often see through only singular lens, are consciously or unconsciously ignorant of White supremacy, and avoid recognizing ethnic differences. To fundamentalist whites, everyone is the same. Therefore they see no need for multicultural/culturally proficient education and belief that students of color should want to blend into the dominant mainstream culture.</td>
<td>Their acceptance of differences, however, is often rather shallow, and they prefer to think that “we’re really all the same under the skin” (Howard, 1999, p. 103). Integrationists recognize the role that White power plays in impacting history, but their sight remains constrained to acknowledging the role that White dominance continues to play in the present. Howard adds that, “for the most part, integrationist Whites see injustice as the victims’ problem” (1999, p. 103). Integrationists might sympathize but not empathize with the minority experience. In the realm of education, integrationists take an additive approach to multiculturalism by celebrating holidays and focusing on any opportunity to teach separate multicultural pieces, but not as an integral curriculum component.</td>
<td>Transformationist whites are open to viewing things from an all-encompassing view and are willing to become active participants in understanding others’ viewpoints. According to Howard, they invite “cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions” (1999, p. 107) with others and view these interactions as a valued two-way form of communication. In addition, transformationists seek to educate their peers in a non-judgmental manner.</td>
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</table>

psychologically mature individuals as those who are “self-actualized.” Maslow defined self-actualized as:

Full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities, and the like. Such people seem to be fulfilling themselves and to be doing the best that they are capable of doing...they are people who have developed or are developing to the full stature of which they are capable.

(p. 126)

Maslow divided self-actualization into 19 individual traits. Table 5 illustrates Maslow’s traits.

This model suggests that the prospect of achieving self-actualization is considerably diminished in individuals who have not effectively addressed the issues of
Table 4

White Identity Orientations Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modalities of Growth</th>
<th>Fundamentalist</th>
<th>Integrationist</th>
<th>Transformationist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>THINKING</strong></td>
<td>Liberal &amp; fixed</td>
<td>Views diverse perspectives</td>
<td>Legitimacy of perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of Truth</td>
<td>Single-dimensional Western-centric</td>
<td>Interest in broader truths</td>
<td>Truth as dynamic/changing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White is right</td>
<td>Beginning awareness</td>
<td>Self-reflective critique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ignorance/avoidance Confusion</td>
<td>Some self-interrogation Dissonance</td>
<td>Deep interrogation of Whiteness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legitimize dominance Rationalize Deny/ignore</td>
<td>Victim’s perspective Personal rather than institutional</td>
<td>Affirming non-racist identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEELING</strong></td>
<td>My perspective is right</td>
<td>Many perspectives</td>
<td>My perspective is changing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of awareness</td>
<td>Self-esteem linked to supremacy Threatened by differences</td>
<td>&quot;Wannabe&quot; phenomenon</td>
<td>Self-esteem linked to growth and change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear/hostility/avoidance Judgment Colorblindness</td>
<td>Interest Beginning awareness Cultural curiosity</td>
<td>Appreciation/respect Honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Responses to Differences</td>
<td>Anger Denial Colorblindness</td>
<td>Shame/guilt/confusion Missionary zeal</td>
<td>Acknowledgment/empathy Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ancestral Descent</td>
<td>Defensive</td>
<td>Externalized as someone else’s problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACTING</strong></td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>Tentative</td>
<td>Active seeking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach to Cross-Cultural Interactions</td>
<td>Hostility Reinforcing White superiority</td>
<td>Patronizing Emphasizing commonalities</td>
<td>Deeply personal Transforming/healing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monoculture Treat all students the same Actively Eurocentric</td>
<td>Special program for special kids Learning about other cultures Tacitly Eurocentric</td>
<td>Social action Learning from other cultures Challenging White dominance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Autocratic/directive Assimilations Perpetuates White dominance</td>
<td>Compliance oriented Invite others into “our” house Tacit support of White dominance</td>
<td>Advocacy Collaboration Challenging/dismantling White dominance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Kunjufu, 2002)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Racial identity. The capability to perceive people correctly, especially those of another race, cannot fully occur if one is ignorant of their internalized biases as a result of their
Table 5
Maslow’s Individual Traits

1. Perception of Reality. An unusual ability to detect the spurious, the fake, and the dishonest in personality, and is able to judge people correctly and efficiently.
3. Spontaneity. A developed style which can interact appropriately with one’s surroundings while keeping intact one’s ethical and moral considerations.
4. Problem Centering. Crucial focus on external problems rather than being ego centered.
5. Solitude. Self-actualized individual retains the ability to detach from the environment and function autonomously.
6. Autonomy. Independence and the ability to be self-contained especially when faced with adversity.
7. Fresh Appreciation. The ability to appreciate the simplicities of life.
8. Peak Experiences. A subjective experience which usually significantly affects the individual’s daily life.
10. Humility and Respect. A self-humility along with a respect for others. Also the inclusion of a strong democratic ideology.
11. Interpersonal Relationships. Deeper and more profound contacts with a smaller group of friends.
13. Means and Ends. A higher focus on the ends rather than on the means.
14. Humor. Humor transcends that which is at the expense of another.
15. Creativity. Special creativity and originality which is less common among the general population.
16. Resistance to Enculturation. Detachment from mainstream culture with an emphasis on being grounded in one’s own philosophies.
17. Imperfection. Deal with imperfections in a healthy manner.
18. Values. Behaviors/thoughts guided by a well-developed value system.

(Huitt, 2004)

identification with the mainstream cultural, institutional, and individual racism that dominates racial identity statuses (Hardiman, 1982).
Sue and Sue (2003) expanded the minority identity development (MID) model to the racial/cultural identity development (R/CID) model. This model interprets the behavior and attitudes of persons from various cultural and ethnical groups.

The R/CID model is a five-stage progression of development from conformity (when one places the majority culture above their subculture) to integrative awareness (when one has a strong sense of self as a group and as an individual). This model parallels the progression originally developed by Marcia (1966), which was designed from Asian Americans but may apply to other ethnic groups as well. The R/CID model depicts individuals as progressing from a state of unexplored and unachieved racial identity to a state of explored and achieved racial identity. Each stage of the model involves four attitude processes: (1) attitude about self, (2) attitude toward other members of the same minority group, (3) attitude toward others of different minority groups, and (4) attitude toward dominant group members.

During the conformity stage, the majority culture (usually the White culture) represents the desired societal outcome(s). The ethnic group member seeks ways to fit in, takes on majority culture values, behaviors and beliefs, and regards everything in the majority culture as superior to their own culture. In reality, the person is ashamed of his/her own culture. The dissonance stage often produces conflict. An individual questions the complete rejection of their own culture and the acceptance of the dominant culture. During this stage, there are often racial incidents or encounters that cause the individual to begin questioning the inferiority of their racial groups. The resistance and immersion stage is an absolute reversal of the first stage. Individuals see those belonging to the dominant group as being racist and as reinforcing racism in society. Members of
the dominant group are generally mistrusted and disliked. A person in this stage is especially occupied in acquiring more information about his/her own culture. There is also a strong sense that the majority culture is oppressive and responsible of the disparities encountered by the minority groups (Torres, Howard-Hamilton & Cooper, 2003).

When in the introspection stage, there is a movement away from group identification and anger toward the majority cultures and movement towards personal reflection. Individuals begin to struggle with how to approve various aspects of the dominant culture without being unfaithful to their own heritage and culture. According to Sue (1999), “The individual begins to discover that this level of intense feeling is psychologically draining and does not permit one to really devote more crucial energies to understanding themselves or to their own racial/cultural group” (p. 135). This does not necessarily mean that a person no longer has frustration and anger, but only that these feelings are biased against greater personal outcomes.

The integrative awareness stage expresses a strong sense of self. In this stage, the person is able to incorporate aspects of his/her culture and the dominant culture into their identity. Attitudes and values become self appreciating as well as those from individual groups (Sue and Sue, 2003).

Summary of Theories and Models

Research on development of the White Racial and Ethnic Identity models helps to recognize how educational institutions can shape student self-concept and maintain social
control, and, at the same time, how education can become liberating (Cross, 1971; Helms, 1990; Tatum, 1997).

This research describes stages of development that greatly differ between Whites and groups of people of color while maintaining the dominant group members’ (i.e., Whites, males, middle-upper class income people) control collectively and how oppressed group members view their identity. “This message teaches students from socio-cultural groups that are in control that they have rightfully earned that control and have little need to understand oppression or the experiences of the oppressed” (Sleeter & Grant, 2007, p. 121).

In addition, it is crucial to comprehend the culturally constructed nature of educational environments and to develop an awareness of the consequences of individual/collective racial and ethnic sense of self, of learning, and of education. Difficulties arise for many minority students when they attempt to learn in environments that have been constructed in an ethnic base of values, behaviors, beliefs and “ways to doing things” that is different from their own. Unfortunately, these racial and ethnic implications in the learning process are usually unconsciously applied by educators/administrators, making them difficult to identify, examine, and modify. For this reason it is important for educators/administrators to make “the invisible visible” in their learning environments and in their roles as leaders.

Academic Achievement Gap

Early in the last century, Terman (1916) argued that individual differences in intelligence were due to the genetic-deficiency which affected people’s ability to benefit
from formal schooling. He projected that some children were genetically deficient: therefore they were unable to become high achievers. This conjecture sparked interest from many other researchers, such as Jensen (1969) and Herrnstein & Murray (1994). The genetic deficiency perspective asserts that there are numerous differences between Whites (genetically superior) and other races. Advocates of this perspective associate low educational achievement with inherent genetic restrictions. Therefore, proposing that differences in achievement are a direct result of genetic deficiency. According to this theory, the issues of racism and mainstream White supremacy are persistent in public education (Clark, 1965; Rist, 1970, 2000) and influence teachers to expect little from students who are not White and middle class. Clark (1965) stated that a vital difficulty in “ghetto schools” has been for teachers to question the inherent aptitude of Black students. “Ghetto schools” according to Clark meant inner city schools that are predisposed by poverty, crime and low levels of achievement. According to this perspective, teachers are often biased against Black students because they perform more poorly than their White peers. The inclination is for some teachers to validate teaching Black students less because of their supposition about Black students’ deficiencies (Delpit, 1996).

Extensive research has shown that educators have conflicting expectations of students depending on the students’ race, ethnicity, and gender. These studies have provided reliable data demonstrating disparities of class, caste, and entitlement in educators/administrators’ interactions with students (Banks & Banks, 2005; Kunjufu, 2002; Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999; Nieto, 2004; Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Sleeter & Grant, 2007). Interactions based on poor expectations lead to devastating consequences for students, in terms of academic performance and self-image.
Student performance is based on both overt and covert communication from teachers about students' worth, intelligence, and capability (Nieto, 2004). Educators/administrators' attitudes about the diversity of their students developed long before they became educational professionals. In a study of teacher education students who were mostly White and monolingual, view diversity of student backgrounds as a problem (Zeichner, 2003). Research does stress that educators/administrators most often come to professional education with “little very direct experiences with people from backgrounds different from their own...in addition, they tend to view diversity as a problem rather than a resource...” (Zeichner & Baker, 1995, p. 72).

Cushner, McClelland and Safford (1992) suggested that educators/administrators are often culture-bound and are unwilling or unable to look beyond their own perspectives. Most people—including teachers—exhibit a strong tendency to believe that their own cultural tradition symbolizes the “best way.” While educators do expect some differences among students in their classrooms; their predicament is what to make of these differences. As Sleeter & Grant (1994) states:

We are often threatened by or want to change those who differ from ourselves and whom we do not understand. Our classrooms often have students who do not look like us, talk like us, or think like us—who have not had some of the experiences we have had. Students may have grown up in neighborhoods unlike our own. Some may not show much interest in learning things we personally value. Some, because of hearing impairments, visual impairments, reading difficulties, and so forth, may not have acquired knowledge that we take for granted. However, as teachers we very often want to make our students more like us. (p. 41)

Learning to teach/administrate is not easy under any circumstance and it is especially difficult to merge new perspectives with prior ideas and knowledge. Grant (1991) found that both pre-service and practicing teachers ask for “tips” to help them
teach the diversity of students in their classroom. They usually "want a recipe for
teaching students whom they believe to be culturally deprived or culturally different; or
they want a list of 'do's and don'ts that will keep these students as they are referred to, on
task" (p. 237).

Racism as an institutionalized structure is a system fed by the socio-economic,
political, and cultural practices of two types of participants: the oppressed people and the
people who oppress them (Freire, 1970). The dominant ethnic group is White oppressing
other (consciously or unconsciously) while all other minorities represent the oppressed
people. This oppression is often illustrated in public schools by academic failure.

Julian Weissglass (2002), Director of the National Coalition for Equity in
Education (University of California, Santa Barbara) makes a convincing case for
communities to face how racism and class bias contribute to persistent “disparities” in
achievement between poor or racial/ethnic minority students and those from the dominant
culture. This inhibits the “learning of these students and racial bias is a major cause of
their academic failure” (Weissglass, 2000).

Weissglass defines racism as the subjugation of groups of people based on
physical characteristics, i.e., color of skin. This mistreatment can be carried out by
individuals (personal racism) or through society’s institutions (institutional racism).
Racism can be restrained or unashamed, unconscious or conscious. An example would be
an educator lowering academic expectations for Latino students because of the
stereotypical myth that Latinos are less intelligent (Weissglass, 2002).

Institutional racism is apparent in schools when the attitudes and values reflected
in school policies and practices are the disadvantage of students of color and poor
students; when White middle-class values go unquestioned; and when there is a lack of concern to reconsider policies and behaviors that are detrimental to the learning of culturally and ethnically diverse students. Specific examples of institutional racism include the tracking of students of color in low-level classes, allowing harassment to go unchecked; over loading special education classes with culturally and ethnically diverse students; and deficiency of equity in the allocation of resources (Weissglass, 2001).

The report analyzes critical flaws in current education policy trends that affect culturally and ethnically diverse students. The research reports that: (a) children of color and poor students do not receive fair treatment, full access to the curriculum, nor equal opportunities to be successful; (b) low test scores are attributed to student shortcomings rather than to systematic inequalities; and (c) high stakes testing and excessive school security measures are extremely expensive expenditures and compete with programs and policies that would improve academic achievement.

Madhere (1995) challenged this genetic statement arguing that student achievement is a socially constructed result that cannot be viewed as an inherent disposition. Gardner (1983, 1993) found that intelligence is multidimensional and cannot be measured accurately by one-dimensional ability tests. In addition, Fischer, Hout, Sanchez, Lucas, Weidler & Voss (1996) stated that social and economic success is linked to socio-structural factors as contradictory to inherited genetic factors.

Reviewing the early data, no association can be made stating that inherited genetic factors are the primary influence on student outcomes; rather stating that socialization plays an important role in school performance. Sorensen and Hallinam
(1984) found that intelligence or ability changes when students are given equal access to high-quality instruction.

During the 1960s and 1970s, social activism against racism and racial discrimination led to new social reform measures. Responding to issues of race relations and the desegregation of public schools, researchers sought new approaches to inspect the student achievement problem (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). Rather than focusing on inherited abilities, researchers attempted to associate school related factors to an infra-structured social class system. Achievement was viewed as being related to students’ social class and cultural differences. According to this perspective, variances in students’ school performance are attributed to differences in their home environment (Glick, 1994). Therefore, students from lower social classes are presumably predisposed to lower school performance because their cultural and linguistic background environment differs from that of the school system.

The class and culture theory presumes that the achievement gap is present even prior to students beginning formal schooling because of limitations in their home environment (West, Denton & Reaney, 2000). From the social-class perspective, concerns about the Black family structure are viewed as a culture of poverty, which is believed to be a source of low student achievement (Frazier, 1966; Moynihan, 1965; Valentine, 1968).

Kozol (1991, 2006) and Greenwald, Hedges and Laine (1996) found that there is an overall significant relationship between school resources and achievement. Condon and Roscigno (2003) concluded that spending aimed at improving the quality of instruction is related to improvements in student achievement. Schmoker (1996) insisted
that while greater emphasis has been given to accountability and high-stake testing; the means essential to create these improvements in student achievement continues to be abandoned. He emphasized the need for equal treatment of all students. Sizer (1992) confirmed that understanding the relationship between how means and ends are related has been one of the challenging endeavors to advance achievement. Likewise, LaCour (2002) stated that achievement is augmented appreciably when students obtain high-quality instruction and the disparity in student treatment is minimized (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

In the 2000s, attention to the “achievement gap” (the average difference in test scores between different racial groups, language groups, and socio-economic groups) has provoked a revival of deficiency talk. “The fact that schools do a better job with students who are White, middle class, and native English speaking than with students of color, students from poverty communities, and second-language learners is not new” (Sleeter & Grant, 2007, p. 41). Schools promote educational disparity through policies that allow large percentages of African American students and other minorities to be tracked into programs that deny them a challenging educational opportunity (Cotton, 1991).

James Bryant Conant, the father of the American educational system, believed the standardized test could be practical in creating an intellectual elite class (Conant, 1999). Standardized testing has its foundation in the eugenics movement (Stoskept, 1999). Accordingly, eugenics taught people they could be improved through selective breeding and proper living. The testing movement seemed to substantiate the attitude of the Founding Fathers in the racial pre-eminence of Anglo Americans (Spring, 2001).
Once the environmental biases of the standardized tests are revealed, the academic requirements must be addressed. These assessments are known for packing in disengaged facts from all points of the curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1994). This type of curriculum employs a narrow set of indicators to determine educational success thus creating a different type of discrimination that divides the minority students from the mainstream Caucasian students (McNeil, 2000). He reiterates that since minority students are unable to use their background of knowledge on the tests; therefore, they must have designated courses to prepare them for the test.

American school systems are designed to teach a traditional curriculum and help students find their place in society (Mondale & Patton, 2001). Negative images are inevitably taught throughout the curriculum and according to Mondale and Patton, the dominant group’s control of the educational system, and the disempowerment experienced by African American and other minority students is a reality.

“Educational institutions continue to produce a social order that is unequal according to class, gender, and race” (Apple, 1995, p. 5). The lack of achievement is labeled a student failure. This culture of schools is consistent with the needs of the dominant culture to maintain the status quo. This standard is taught in the initial philosophies in schools and helps insure that minority students will remain on the substandard side of the labor force. Those students, who managed to succeed academically, have additional concerns that societal racism will limit their success (Mahiri & Hamiri, 1998).

However, times are changing. The U.S. educational system was built on the idea that all students be educated regardless of sex, race, ability or other characteristics
(Ballantine, 2001). “Over the last 10 years there has been increased interest in looking at ways to improve the academic performance of students who are culturally, ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse” (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 15).

Research studies indicate that both socio-economic and school factors may contribute to the underachievement of deprived youth and youth of color (Lindsey, Robins and Terrell, 1999). While there is a strong association between low socio-economic status and underachievement, there is also a correlation between various school factors and underachievement (Banks & Banks, 2005; England, 2005; Freire, 1970; Howard, 1999; Kozol, 1991; Kunjufu, 2002; Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 1999; Nieto, 1999, 2004; Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Sleeter & Grant, 2007). These school factors encompass the structural, technical, administrative aspects as well as the staff perceptions and expectations of students, in addition to the already present educational inequities that may exist within a school. Research has shown that educators/administrators have conflicting expectations of students depending on the students’ race, ethnicity, and gender. These studies have provided dependable data representing stark disparities of class and entitlement in educators’ interactions with students. “Interactions based on poor expectations clearly lead to devastating consequences for students, in terms of both academic performance and self-image” (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 1999, p. 116).

In addition, teachers’ expectations may be influenced by the behavior and physical appearance of the students that they teach. Accordingly, “social class may influence teacher expectations directly or indirectly through tests scores, appearance, language style, speed of task performance, and behavior of the students” (Banks & Banks, 2005, p. 98).
The major "gap" or difference in standardized test scores between youth of color and the dominant middle class White youth is referred to as the "achievement gap."

There is also an association between poverty and underachievement (Table 6). This gap breaks down along both racial and ethnic lines. As Table 6 indicates, Black and Hispanic youth account for lower test scores at grade 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics than their White peers.

Table 6

White-Black and White-Hispanic Gaps in Average Reading and Mathematics Scores, by Grade: Various Years, 1990–2005

<table>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>White-Black gap</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>32</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>Grade 8</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics</strong></td>
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<td>White-Black gap</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>White-Hispanic gap</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: The score gap is determined by subtracting the average Black or Hispanic score, respectively, from the average White score.


In Michigan, the academic development seems to follow the national trend of not having the capacity to educate poor students and students of color equitably. The Michigan Educational Assessment Programs created by the Michigan Department of
Education which examines students' academic attainment annually reflect the undercurrents of underachievement. Table 6 indicates these academic achievement gaps.

The 2005 Elementary MEAP results for Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science by ethic groups are represented in Table 7.

Table 7

2005 MEAP (Michigan Educational Assessment Programs) Scores by Elementary Grade Level and Content Area for the State of Michigan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject, race/ethnicity, and grade</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GRADE 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRADE 4</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GRADE 5</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<td>Black, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRADE 6</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional information on these same students emphasizes the disparate scoring further. Table 8 shows the impact of socio-economic conditions on these students at grade and content levels.

Table 8

2005 MEAP (Michigan Educational Assessment Programs) Scores by Elementary Grade Level and Content Areas, by Socio-Economic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE 3</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged: Yes</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners? Yes</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant:</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless:</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE 4</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged: Yes</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners? Yes</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant:</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless:</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE 5</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged: Yes</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners? Yes</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant:</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless:</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE 6</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged: Yes</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners? Yes</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant:</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless:</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages are a combination of Levels 1 & 2: Met Expectations & Exceeded Expectations.
In terms of student outcomes NCES (National Center of Educational Statistics), 2003 reports, the reading performance of 8th graders assessed by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) improved between 1992 and 2003, but no measurable difference was found in the performance of 4th graders. Females outperformed males in both grades, and Whites and Asian/Pacific Islander students outperformed American Indian, Hispanic, and Black students. In mathematics, performance of 4th and 8th graders assessed by NAEP improved steadily from 1990–2003. For both grades, the average scores in 2003 were higher than in all previous assessments, and the percentages of students performing at or about the Basic and Proficient levels and at the Advanced level, defined as “superior performance,” were higher in 2003 than in 1990. In both grades, males outperformed females, and White and Asian/Pacific Islander students outperformed Black, Hispanic, and American Indian students. According to findings from NAEP in 2003, students in large central city public schools had lower average scores in reading and mathematics than students in rural, urban fringe, and all central city schools. In both subjects, the percentages of 4th and 8th graders in large central city public schools who performed at or about the Proficient level were lower than the national percentages.

By the mid-1990s, most states had developed content standards and were implementing statewide systems of testing. In this context, multiculturalism played a minor role, with the exception of the “achievement gap” between Whites and people of color’s scores as mandated by the No Child Left Behind enactment.

Many of the attitudes, characteristics, dispositions, and skills that are required of educators/administrators are imperative to understanding and sustaining diverse learners
in the classroom and for making the classroom environments safe and engaging. NCATE Standard 4 defines diversity as “differences among groups of people and individuals based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, language, exceptionalities, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic region in which they live” (NCATE, 2001, p. 31). NCATE Standard 1 states that teacher “candidates should have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn” (NCATE, 2001, p. 16). Therefore is it imperative (and required) that educators/administrators strive to engage all students in a meaningful education regardless of diversity.

Including multicultural/culturally proficient perspectives into an existing curriculum involves conceptualizing multicultural education as a reformative rather than an additive process (Hillis, 1993). Research states that we should not simply add a number of ethnic groups and perspectives to the curriculum. This additive approach does not lead to change in attitudes and beliefs (dispositions) (Banks & Banks, 2005; Gay, 2003; McDiarmid, 1992; Nieto, 2004; Sheets & Hollins, 1999; Sleeter & Grant, 2007). Instead, we should look at multicultural education as a method of “viewing” that should alter the manner in which we teach and interact (Banks, 2006). This perspective not only allows for a more all-inclusive representation, but it also multiples educators/administrators’ opportunities to examine such vital concepts as culture, conflict, and identity (Banks, 2006). Students involved with a multicultural curriculum will have to wrestle with the realities, conflicts, tensions, and power struggles within a pluralistic and democratic society.

The area of multicultural education and reform addresses not only equal opportunity to learn for all groups of students, but also teaches the interaction and
communication among individuals and groups from differing cultures. Theorists seek to create and describe entire learning environments, not just curricular modifications, which respond to students’ cultural, linguistic, and social class backgrounds (Banks, 1995; Banks & Banks, 2004; Garcia, 1999; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 2007).

The components of multiculturalism (Sue, 1998) are listed below:

1. Multiculturalism values cultural pluralism and acknowledges our nation as a cultural mosaic rather than a melting pot. It teaches the valuing of diversity rather than negation or even “toleration.” Multiculturalism is not a “national burden” but a “national resource and treasure.”

2. Multiculturalism is about social justice, cultural democracy, and equity. It is consistent with the democratic ideals of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

3. Multiculturalism is about helping all of us to acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and interact, negotiate, and communicate with people from diverse backgrounds.

4. Multiculturalism is reflected in more than just race, class, gender, and ethnicity. It also includes diversity in religion, national origin, etc.

5. Multiculturalism is about celebrating the realistic contribution and achievement of our culture and other cultures. It involves our willingness to explore both the positive and the negative aspects of our group’s and other groups’ behavior over time.

6. Multiculturalism is an essential component of analytical thinking. It is challenging us to study multiple cultures, to develop multiple perspectives, and to teach
students how to integrate broad and conflicting bodies of information to arrive at sound judgments.

7. Multiculturalism respects and values other perspectives, but is it not value neutral. It involves an activist orientation and a commitment to social change.

8. Multiculturalism means “change” at the individual, organizational, and societal levels.

9. Multiculturalism may mean owing up to painful realities about oneself, our group, and our society.

10. Multiculturalism is about achieving positive individual, community, and societal outcomes because it values inclusion, cooperation, and movement toward mutually shared goals.

Multicultural education approaches may be diversified. No matter the theory, these approaches fall into a “culturally different” premise reflecting an “anti-racism” approach. Anti-racism is at the very core of multicultural perspective (Nieto, 2002). It is crucial to “keep the antiracist nature of multicultural education in mind because in many schools, even some that espouse a multicultural philosophy, only superficial aspects of multicultural education are apparent”(p. 30). An example of this is the superficial aspect of ethnic festivals celebrated in isolation.

Nieto stresses multiculturalism as an antiracist régime because many people think that a multicultural program automatically takes care of racism. Unfortunately, this is not always true.

Most multicultural materials deal wholly with the cultural distinctiveness of various groups and little more. Almost never is there any sustained attention to the ugly realities of systematic discrimination against the same group that also happens to utilize quaint clothing, fascinating toys,
delightful fairy tales, and delicious food. Responding to racist attacks and
defamation is also part of the culture of the group under study.
(Meyer Weinberg in Neito, p. 30).

The “culturally different” approach generally assists students to “fit in” to the
existing level of society by teaching them skills to interact with others from diverse
backgrounds (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 2007). According to Ladson-
Billings, this approach tries “to address the concerns of all groups equally without
disturbing the existing power structure...the campus community rarely calls into question
the way White middle-class norms prevail” (p. 53).

Sleeter and Grant (2007) describe the teaching of exceptional and culturally
different approach as “...focuses on adapting classroom processes to help a variety of
students learn the standard curriculum, in order to be prepared for the work world and
other demands of the future” (p. 37). Educators meet the prescribed goals by instructing
students in the manner that respond to their individual strengths and learning styles. The
objective is to endorse social unity, tolerance, and acceptance of all people, no matter
how “different” they might be (Banks, 2006; Sleeter & Grant, 2007).

Delpit (1996) relates in her reflections on African American students, that these
students’ lack of academic success is related to school and community variables. These
variables include social forces related to socio-cultural and sociopolitical influences,
which are functioning in classrooms, no matter how subconsciously. These covert
influences take their formation in “linguistic forms, communicative strategies, and
presentations of self” (p. 25). These influences look dissimilar depending on the socio-
cultural community in which one is raised. Schools, says Delpit (1995), expect all
students to use the linguistic forms, communicative strategies, and presentation of self
consistent with White, middle class values, behavior, and expressions (the norm) in situations.

Delpit (1995) further says that much of the academic failure of diverse students is due to the socio-cultural "disconnect" between the community and school expectations. She argues that schools are mainly institutions that sponsor the acculturation of groups who do not hold sociopolitical influence in relation to those who do, namely the White race. As a result, schools institutionalize implicit socio-cultural and sociopolitical influences of reinforcement and reward the community experiences, beliefs, values, and knowledge of diverse students.

Nieto (1999) emphasizes the significance and influence of values, attitudes, and beliefs of the school climate and personnel on diverse student learning. She says, "How one views learning can lead to dramatically different curricular decisions, pedagogical approaches, relationships in classrooms and schools, and educational outcomes...School conditions and climate, in conjunction with the attitudes and beliefs or educators that undergird that climate, can foster or hinder learning" (pp. 2–3). To foster learning, Nieto (1999) argues, radical school reform is required and with the structural outcomes that mandates that the reform (a) is multicultural and social reconstructionist; (b) promotes the individual strengths and talents of all students; (c) is centered on the belief that those most intimately connected with students need to be meaningfully involved in their education; (d) is based on high expectations and challenging standards for student learning, to which educators and students are held accountable; and (e) the school climate is empowering and just.
Sleeter and Grant (2007) state the “teachers should cultivate behavior that affirms and includes a wide diversity of students, and should work to develop positive self-concepts in all students” (p. 205). Banks (2006) confirms that “an important goal of multicultural education is to improve race relations and to help all students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to participate in cross-cultural interactions and in personal, social, and civic action that will help make our nation and world more democratic and just” (p. 202).

Although proponents of multicultural education have known the significance of the principal in school environments, little is known about the specific impact or importance of principal ethnicity and culture, and/or the principal’s direct experiences and insights in regards to the various multicultural issues. Much of the research in this field has focused almost exclusively on teacher-student interactions within the classroom context (Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 1999; Sleeter & Grant, 2007) or on whole-school programs in which the principal’s role is to lead and manage the common vision rather than play an integral part in that vision. As a result, the role of the principal is rarely purposely discussed in depth or at length.

Culturally Proficient Leadership

The culturally proficient leadership is beginning to be examined more cautiously (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999). While the majority of research in the area of cultural identity development in education has centered on teacher preparation programs, demands for administrator preparation and professional development have been emerging (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999). Yet, limited amounts of educational administration
research have provided understanding how administrators who are different socio-

economically from their students succeed.

White school educators/administrators’ in particular appear to have an explicitly
demanding role in regard to cultural awareness and its implications on behavior, beliefs,
and attitudes (dispositions) towards diverse others (Howard, 1999; Nieto, 2007) due to
their “inert” racial privileges. It is unrealistic for educators/administrators to expect
“students to leave their gender, race, and ethnicity characteristics, as well as attitudes
about difference in another’s cultural background, at the school house door” (Shen,
Wengeke & Cooley, 2003, p. 112). For White educators/administrators it is precisely this
perceived racial privilege that has created inequities in power, wealth and opportunities
advantaging Whites and disadvantaging minorities (Banks, 2006; Banks & Banks, 2005;
Healy, 2003; Howard, 1999; Neito, 1999; Sleeter & Grant, 2007).

For some White educators/administrators, especially those who are coping with
their identity feel ensnared. As Gary Howard states,

White identity exists in the margins. We are like a people caught between
two lands. There is the old country of oppression and racism from which
we are attempting to emigrate, and the new country of hope,
transformation and healing that we are only beginning to explore and
inhabit. We have of necessity been border travelers, attempting to map a
new route toward positive White identity, while at the same time being
inextricably tied to the weight of former images.

(Howard, 1999, p. 115)

With regard to school administrators, Taylor (1999) states that Whites’ lack of
experience with and understanding of socio-cultural discrimination must be addressed in
order to effectively lead schools with diverse student populations. He writes,

In the absence of prior knowledge of or experience with discrimination,
bias, prejudice, and other forms of oppression, White school leaders may
misinterpret or fail to recognize problems...In view of current
demographics and future demographic changes, principals and administrators must have the capacity and commitment to reconcile and bridge racial, social, cultural, and linguistic gaps between themselves and their students.”

(Taylor, 1999, p. 234)

The ability of school leadership to create a positive, inclusive learning environment for diverse student populations may well be one of the most complex tasks facing elementary principals today (Banks, 2006; Sleeter & Grant, 2007).

The responsibilities of an effective leader in the development of a professional, culturally proficient learning environment and community are complex. School culture is extremely powerful and the role of the principal in shaping a positive school culture is multifaceted. A school’s culture is the moral fiber of the school, and it impacts both the behavior and achievement of its students (Banks, 2006). Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell (1999) have outlined the role and characteristics that identify a culturally competent principal.

The role of the culturally proficient principal is to value diversity through an articulated and common vision of inclusiveness and to encourage varied perspectives in the decision-making process. Principals provide leadership in the expansion of policy statements on diversity and make sure that they include the concept of diversity. Principals evaluate their individual assumptions and beliefs (dispositions) as well as the school’s culture and understand the impact of that assessment on students from diverse backgrounds. Principals learn effective strategies to resolve conflicts that might arise between individuals from different cultures. The role of the leader mandates that they incorporate information and skills of cultural knowledge into the practices and policies of the school as well as the professional development activities of the staff. “Culturally
proficient leaders help the school's faculty and staff assess its culture and determine how
the school affects the students and its community. In shaping the school's formal and
non-formal curriculum, they include information about the heritage, lifestyles, and values
of all people in society" (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 1999, p. 62).

Educators/administrators need to develop specific competencies relative to
working with diverse students, families, and communities, including "valuing diversity,
assessing culture, managing the dynamics of difference, institutionalizing cultural
knowledge, and adapting to diversity" (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 1999, pp. 130–131);
"understanding theories and frameworks relevant to serving underrepresented populations
and advancement of leadership that understands the cultural landscape of the schools and
students they serve" (Taylor, 1999, p. 234).

None of this can occur unless the educator/administrator has examined their own
cultural and ethnic background. By investigating the basis of their own personal beliefs
and values, leaders can then progress toward successfully understanding the beliefs and
values of others, with the "moral imperative" of eliminating oppression and establishing
equity and inclusiveness across educational arenas (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 1999, p.
188).

Dispositions: Their Role for Educators/Administrators

"Disposition" is a term that fosters different meanings within education, ranging
from "a tendency to exhibit frequently, consciously, and voluntarily a pattern of behavior
that is directed toward a broad goal to characteristics, attitudes, conceptions of self, and
intellectual and interpersonal dimensions" (Katz, 1997, p. 2). Further, the National
Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in its Professional Standards defines dispositions as:

The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. For example, they might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment.

(NCATE, 2000, p. 16)

From these definitions, dispositions have broad and specific meanings associated with the kinds of skills, behaviors, and attitudes that educators/administrators should possess. However, in the context of teacher education, a more specific definition is offered by Howes (2002), who defines dispositions as “outlooks, attitudes, and expectations concerning one’s own relationship with content, as well as toward students as learners” (p. 846). This dispositional definition was to assist pre-service teachers to teach content well to all students.

Wenzlaff states, “Teacher characteristics, attitudes, conceptions of self, and intellectual and interpersonal dispositions in a large measure determine both the explicit and the hidden curriculum of the classroom” (1998, p. 564). Educators/administrators must know themselves, what they believe, their values, and how those factors will channel them in their classrooms with diverse students. The formal curriculum is represented by materials, lesson plans, and objectives, but the informal curriculum is the climate in the classroom/school, as indicated by important educators/administrators’ dispositions.
In Garcia’s (1991) research, he focused on teachers who were consistently identified at the level of the school site and the district as “effective.” Students in the classrooms were approximately 50–70 percent non-English speakers, and the remaining English-speaking students represented several ethnic groups. Garcia divided the teacher attributes into the following “four domains: (1) knowledge, (2) skills, (3) disposition, and (4) affect” (p. 269).

According to Garcia, an educators’ disposition is his/her temperament and frame of mind. Individual characteristics of these teachers explain their success as professionals. For instance, they were highly dedicated. These educators reported working very hard and spending long hours in the classroom and at home. They willingly spent their own money for resources not supplied by the school. These teachers indicted that they saw themselves as “creative,” “resourceful,” “committed,” “energetic,” “persistent,” and “collaborative.” “They sought assistance from their colleagues and were ready to provide as much assistance as they received” (p. 274).

There are ways to develop or change existing dispositions. Garmon (2005a,b) states that there are six key factors associated with defining and “changing pre-service teachers’ attitudes toward and beliefs about diversity—their “dispositions,” which include openness, self-awareness’ self-reflective-ness, and commitment to social justices; and their experiences, which includes intercultural, educational, and support group experiences” (2005a, p. 276). Briefly clarifying Garmon’s six keys factors for dispositions are the following:

1. *Openness.* Openness is being receptive to new information, to others’ ideas or arguments, and to different types of diversity (i.e., racial, religious, and cultural).
Individuals who are open-minded tend to learn more than their closed-minded counterparts.

2. **Self-Awareness/Self-Reflectiveness.** Self-awareness is being aware of one’s beliefs and attitudes. Self-reflection is having the ability and willingness to think critically about you.

3. **Commitment to Social Justice.** Social justice is a deep concern for achieving equity and equality for all people. Due to the continuing inequities in educational opportunities and outcome for minority students as compared to those for the White majority, preparing teachers to become “change agents” within their environments is critical.

4. **The Importance of Experience.** There is little doubt about the fact that prior life experiences especially in multicultural settings (or the lack of) are vital. Garmon sites Deering and Stanutz (1995) which reports that “Review of the studies on attitude indicates that attitudes formed through experience tend to be more stable than those arrived at in other ways” (p. 392).

5. **Intercultural Experience.** Intercultural experiences are those with direct interactions with individuals from racial/cultural groups different than one’s own. These experiences might occur through exposure to individuals from different cultural (i.e., friendships, school); education (i.e., influences of teachers and colleges); travel (i.e., vacationing, military); and personal experiences with discrimination as a child or adult.

6. **Educational Experiences.** Enrolled in multicultural courses, field experiences, activities, instructional approaches, etc. Garmon’s research challenges White identity and
recognizes the need for specific dimensions of dispositions considered necessary to be successful with diverse student populations.

Accordingly, these attributes come from educators’ “dispositions” and are the driving force for successful teaching and learning in a diverse classroom. From many multiculturalists’ perceptions, dispositions extend to specific skills and characteristics that have been particularly valuable and effective to teaching students from diverse cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds (Banks, 1994; Gay, 2002; Haberman, 1995). For example, Villegas and Lucas (2002) have proposed a number of characteristics that define culturally dispositional educators/administrators. The educator/administrator: (a) is socio-culturally conscious; (b) has affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds; (c) sees himself or herself as both responsible for and capable of bringing about educational change; (d) understands how learners construct knowledge; (e) knows about the lives of his or her students; and (f) uses his or her knowledge about students’ lives to design instruction. Gay (2003) proposes a set of culturally dispositional skills and characteristics in which teachers use the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students in order to make learning appropriate and effective for them. The emergence of a cultural approach to pedagogy “has underscored the need to reach students in appropriate contexts. In conjunction with theoretical inquiry, empirical studies have illustrated that pedagogies described variously as culturally ‘appropriate,’ ‘congruent,’ ‘responsive,’ and ‘compatible’ are effective for minority students” (Shen, Wegenke, & Cooley, 2003, p. 113). Culturally dispositional educators are able to teach using the strengths that students have, to acknowledge cultural heritages of diverse learners, to build meaningful connections between home and school, to use a
variety of instructional methods that connect to the different learning styles of students and to multicultural materials.

Administrative Leadership: Responses to Diversity

Since the 1990s, several attempts have been made to improve academic standards in the public schools as revealed by the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (1983) and reflected in the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1982). As a result of the states' attempts, state governments implemented accountability programs designed to improve low-performing schools. The essential themes of many of these programs are (a) the use of high-stakes tests as a means to determine the performance levels of students school by school, (b) the expanded use of state and federal funds to help improve those schools at the bottom of the rankings, and (c) the implementation of mechanisms for sanctioning schools that failed to meet the required goals (Houle, 2006). These programs and their regulations are the precursor to the passage of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) 2001 (P.L. 107-110).

The NCLB Act focused attention on school leaders. This law made it "necessary for school leaders to critically examine student achievement gaps by collecting, analyzing and disaggregating data and looking at the results through the lens of race and culture" (Gooden & Nowlin, 2006). The achievement gap generally refers to the standardized achievement testing gaps between ethnic groups in the public schools/academies. In theory, the measures implemented by the NCLB Act will reduce these gaps by the year 2012.
Civil Rights advocates initially applauded the Bush Administration’s foremost Education Bill as a step ahead in the battle to improve education for those children traditionally left behind in American schools (i.e., students of color and those living in poverty, new English learners and students with disabilities). The expansive goals of NCLB are to raise the achievement levels of all students and to close the achievement gap that coincides with race and class distinctions. NCLB intends to accomplish this by focusing schools’ attention on improving test scores for all groups of students, providing parents more educational choices and ensuring better-qualified teachers. However, while admirable NCLB has some unintentional shortcomings. As NCLB is presently implemented it is more likely to harm most of the students who are the targets of its aspirations (Darling-Hammond, 2007). These results are due to the “underfunding of grossly unequal school systems and set of unattainable test score targets that disproportionately penalize schools serving the neediest students, while creating strong incentives for schools to keep out or push out those students who are low achieving in order to raise school average test scores” (Darling-Hammond, p. 246).

The National Staff Development Council (NSDC, 2000) published a report that suggested states take a vigorous role in the transfer to job-related professional development practices for principals including “training in ways to distribute leadership and efforts to strengthen principals’ understanding of how to implement standards, monitor school performance, and strengthen quality professional development for staff” (p. 12). States are expected in the NSDC report to provide networking opportunities for principals to exchange ideas and solve common problems using collaborative approaches among districts and institutions of higher education. Grogan and Andrews (2002) stated
that most higher education school leadership preparation programs are dedicated to the
management skills necessary in a public school system "such as planning, organizing,
financing, supervising, budgeting, scheduling, and so on, rather than on the development
of relationships and caring environments within schools that promote student learning"
(p. 23). These approaches to professional development are vital to increasing the
competency for leaders of schools under the pressure of the mandated NCLB regulations.

Because of a multitude of factors, specifically aimed at preparing educators to
work with diverse students, there exists a teacher retention problem which directly
impacts administrators. National Education Association in a summary report of teacher
retention states: (a) the teacher shortage is a symptom of the teacher retention problem.
One-third of new teachers leave the profession within three years and almost one-half
leave within five years; and (b) hardest hit are urban, rural and minority communities,
which frequently struggle with a revolving door of under-qualified and under-

Due to high levels of teacher absences and the extensive use and reliance on
substitute teachers to instruct the programs, there is a strong reduction of school resources
that are devoted to instruction. The two major consequences of teacher absenteeism,
decrease of school resources and the magnification of student risk factors, make teacher
absenteeism an issue of tremendous importance for urban schools (Bruno, 2002; Kozol,

Although these problems can be found to a degree in all schools, urban
administrators have the most urgent and serious challenges which result in high turnovers
in staff and administrators. One of the foremost challenges in education is the shortage of qualified urban educational leaders (Cooley & Shen, 2000).

Cooley and Shen (2000) state teachers are no longer seeking administrative positions for a variety of reasons which include inadequate economic compensation, stress, politics, minimal job security, increased teacher salaries, and excessive work hours. A survey conducted by the researchers discovered the importance of factors that influence job satisfaction for urban teachers and principals. “Both teachers and principals rank the following six—relationship between the board, administrators, and teachers; emotional aspects; impact of administrative position on my home life; salary must be commensurate with responsibilities; poor working conditions; and lack of support for administrators—among the ten most important factors” (Cooley & Shen, 2000, p. 449). In addition, principals added the following: stress of the position, disrespect from educators, reputation of the district, and school board micromanagement among the top ten factors.

Another factor that impacts educators/administrators is that educators currently joining the work force face the challenge of working with students who are more culturally diverse than in any other period of time in our country’s history. While this population of students can be described as heterogeneous, the teaching force remains homogeneous—mainly Euro-American, middle-class, monolingual and mostly female (Garcia, 1999; Howard, 1999; Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999). While the student population is becoming increasingly diverse, the teaching force remains predominantly White, middle-class, and female. The U.S. student population is growing more ethnically and linguistically diverse. But even as the student body has grown more heterogeneous,
White women continue to dictate the teaching profession. Nearly three out of every four public school teachers are female, and 90 percent are White, whereas only 7 percent are Black and 2 percent are Hispanic (NEA, 1998)

Urban School Leadership

The increasing challenges that face principals are immense. Notably, changing families and communities and the resulting stress placed on youth, issues outside of school competing for available learning time, and the use of instructional practices that do not respond to the increasing knowledge necessary for success in the context of society have been recognized as factors that affect the work of principals (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Kimball & Sirotnik, 2000; Waters & Kingston, 2005). In addition, accountability legislation at the federal and state levels has brought the demand for improved student achievement by meeting annual yearly progress goals for all students as described by NCLB (2001).

The significance of school leadership is dominant in the nation’s educational agendas. The effect of principal leadership on student achievement is well established (Cotton, 2003; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; Waters & Kingston, 2005; Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2003). Despite the advancements that have been made in the educational leadership research, concern exists about the current and future states of educational leadership; in particular, the "principalship" (Waters & Kingston, 2005).

The designation that principals serve as influential instructional leaders for their school is not new. “School principals are the keystones of good schools, and if student
achievement is dependent on their leadership, it is critical that departments of educational administration, who train and certify a high percentage of those who lead schools, ensure that their principalship students know how to facilitate the creation of schools in which all students, including students of color, are successful” (McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004, p. 603). A “principal’s effects on student learning center on the principals’ role in shaping the school’s instructional climate and instructional organization” (Shen, Rodrigues-Campos, & Rincones-Gomez, 2000, p. 483). However, in practice, few principals act as authentic instructional leaders (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Most principals spend comparatively little time in classrooms and even less time analyzing instruction with teachers (Cooley & Shen, 2003). “Their days are filled with the activities of management: scheduling, reporting, handling relations with parents and the community, and dealing with the multiple crises and special situations that are inevitable in schools. Most principals spend relatively little time in the classroom and even less time analyzing instruction with teachers. They may arrange time for teachers’ meetings and professional development, but they rarely provide intellectual leadership for growth in teaching skills” (Fink & Resnick, 2001, p. 598).

Educational reform and concerns about outcomes and accountability have been altering what happens in schools for several years. For example, principals have varied leadership and managerial responsibilities to perform. None of these responsibilities is more important than the role of chief educational accountability officer. “The emphasis in terms of the principal’s role has now shifted from being accountable for money and other resources to being accountable for student outcomes and achievement” (Lyons & Algozzine, 2006, p. 2).
Hanson (2003) says that instructional accountability has now been placed at the institutional level (school level) and the process of grading schools and providing rewards and punishment according to their performance has become routine.

A model that assists principals in monitoring student achievement has been developed by North Carolina and is entitled “ABCs for Public Education.” This model was established to foster, support and monitor student academic achievement in all local school districts. This plan moved accountability from the district to school level and was designed to move quickly in identifying students performing below grade level so that appropriate intervention strategies might be employed quickly.

This program is grounded in six components: (1) a clearly articulated curriculum with content standards, (2) agreement on the subject-matter content to be included, (3) a set of valid and reliable indicators of progress and mastery, (4) indicators reflective of how successful schools are at increasing student learning, (5) a system of incentives and rewards to encourage improvement, (6) and a system of sanctions for low-performing schools (Ladd and Zelli, 2002). The major purposes of the program were to provide local school accountability, stress mastery of basic skills, and promote as much site decision making as possible.

In addition, the ABCs program was designed to end social promotion of students who do not perform at grade level. When students do not initially pass the exams, they are provided two rounds of re-testing and a form review process; however, final decisions on promotions are made by building principals. Students who are not promoted to the next grade receive extra help in smaller classes and have additional education opportunities to remediate deficient context areas.
In an effort to evaluate the impact of the ABCs program from a principal’s perspective in North Carolina, a survey was sent to principals and the results were compiled. Respondents reported five favorable components of the program: the measures of school effectiveness that form the basis for the program—high student performance; safe, orderly and caring schools; quality teachers; safety standards/expectation for students; financial bonus for staff members in schools that meet student achievement expectations; students achievement standards: promotion standards at grades 3, 5, & 8; and intervention expectations for all students not meeting accountability standards. The unfavorable components were more representative of the dangers elevated accountability of the program and their implications for school leaders: the expectation for schools to meet adequate yearly progress (NCLB), the testing requirements for limited English proficiency students, the testing requirements for exceptional students, the sanctions for schools that do not meet expected growth, and the school status designation labels assigned to schools based upon student academic achievement as measured by tests (Lyons & Algozzine, 2006).

For administrators, the focus has altered from increasing student accountability for how money and other resources are used to accountability for achievement outcomes of all students (Cooley & Shen, 2003). Policymakers mandate accountability through processes involving student achievement, assessment standards, and dissemination of test results to the media. Failing to accomplish exceptional accountability results can impact students’ success, relations with staff, district funding, associations with families/communities, and retention of principals. In a study of secondary principals, Cooley and Shen (2003) reported that in the area of increased attention to instructional
accountability, principals felt “...that they paid substantial attention to instructional leadership...” (p. 20). Therefore more attention and time must be given to instructional leadership which directly impacts student outcomes.

Today’s educational systems are being challenged by the public and federal, state and local agents to improve student achievement. The federal government is putting pressure on the states (NCLB mandates) who are in turn pressing local governing bodies and superintendents to raise student achievement scores. Local leaders are demanding that principals “make a difference” in their schools by dictating that principals raise scores in addition to their regular duties. Consequently, the role of principal has become complex as stated below;

Imagine that you are the principal, this person who is being asked to produce great improvements in student achievement. You cannot select your staff. You cannot fire anyone who is already on your staff. You cannot award or withhold a bonus from anyone. Seniority rights for teachers means that overnight, you can lose people you have made an enormous investment in and have them replaced by people who couldn’t care less about your agenda. You may have little control over the instructional materials that are used. Someone else controls the training agenda. Someone else controls how all but a small amount of your regular budget is spent. Someone else controls how the federal program money will be spent. Some people who work in your school report directly to people in the central office rather than to you. In some systems, you do not even have the right to assign teachers to classes because teachers’ seniority rights govern assignment. Yet despite all this if your students do not make progress on the state accountability measures, your school is likely to be put on a public list of low performing schools. If a performance does not improve, your school could be closed, the faculty disbanded, and you fired. You will be held responsible for the whole mess.

(Tucker & Codding, 2002, p. 6–7)

Besides these imposing pressures, principals have to deal with more problems such as an increase in school violence, student alcohol and drug use, parental apathy, and inadequate funding. In a study conducted by Bradley S. Portin, comparing urban and
suburban principals, it was discovered that urban principals may be more challenged along characteristics of entrepreneurial requirements, managing social complexity, and political skill. Urban education is more expensive than other contexts (NCES, 2000). “These principals seem to be relying more and more on finding other sources of funds” (Portin, 2000, p. 503). Associated with the entrepreneurial skills, principals need to rely more on their political leadership skills. By political leadership, Portin is referring to being able to make a case for their schools’ needs in fierce competition with other institutions. Principals need to “develop expertise in communicating the unique characteristics of their school that suffer when schools are ranked and compared against criteria that fail to account for the unique challenges of their community” (Portin, 2000, p. 503).

Administrators in urban schools, have an additional problem—teacher absenteeism. It is “common knowledge that urban classroom teachers tend to work under more stressful working conditions therefore use their sick day more frequently” (Bruno, 2002, p. 2). Bruno states, that generally, urban classroom teachers instruct more students per day, teach marginally academically equipped students, teach in more precarious, high crime geographical urban locations, and are generally in need of teaching and instructional materials that provide a quality instructional program.

Principals’ economic compensation is an important factor in relation to administrative duties. Principals of public schools earned an average salary of $74,000 with a masters’ degree compared with $78,000 for those with an educational specialist degree and $83,000 for those with a doctoral degree in 2003–2004 school year; over half held master’s degrees (53.5%); and although more individuals with diverse backgrounds
were attaining principal positions, (Black 9.8%; Hispanic 4.7%; American Indian 0.7%;
and Asian/Pacific Islander 0.9%) in 2004, over 82% of the 183,932 public school
principals were White (racially Caucasian, of European American descent, college-
educated, and socio-economically “middle class”) (Shen, Rodriguez-Campos, &
Rincones-Gomez, 2000; NCES, 2004; National Association of Elementary School
Principals, 2006). The number of minority principals—Black and Hispanic—in public
schools increased between 1993–1994 and 2003–2004 from 9,000 to 12,000. However,
because the number of White principals increased as well, there was no substantial
change in the proportion of principals from minority groups, which was about 19 percent
in 2003–2004. Appropriately, 11 percent were Black and 6 percent were Hispanic, 2
percent American Indian, Alaska Native, or Asian/Pacific Islander (National Association
of Elementary School Principals, 2006). In suburban communities, the percentage of
White principals was much higher, at 84 percent, while in rural areas, over 93 percent of
principals were White (Howard, 1999; NCES, 2005).

In a study conducted by Shen, Rodriguez-Campos, and Rincones-Gomez (2000),
a disturbing factor was noticed. Principals’ leadership in school matters such as
establishing curriculum, hiring new full-time teachers, and setting discipline policies has
been declining: (p. 489). This occurrence of declining leadership might be connected to
the fact that (a) the working environment for principals has becoming more constraining
due to increased legislation, and (b) principals have been taking on additional
responsibilities and their leadership role has become diluted (Cooley & Shen, 2000;
Portin, 2000; Wegenke, 2000). In addition, “urban principals perceive teachers’
leadership in setting curriculum and discipline polices has been decreasing, and teachers’
leadership in school-wide matters such as hiring new full-time teachers has been slightly increasing but still remains at low levels” (Shen et al., 2000, p. 490).

One of the leading factors of organization theory is that tasks are mainly essentials around which organizational structures and cultures can be successfully designed (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Principals’ approaches to these tasks establish the degree to which their practice can be characterized as inclusive and transformative. These categories “are fostering new meanings about diversity, promoting inclusive practices within schools, and building connection between schools and communities” (Reihl, 2000, pp. 59–68).

There is a growing literature base on how schools can be more effectively used to serve diverse student populations. This literature focuses mainly on matters “regarding education policy, school finance, the social organization of schools and classrooms, relationships between schools and students’ families and communities, teacher education and professional development, curriculum, instructional methods, and assessment processes” (Riehl, 2000, p. 57). In each of these areas, the school principal is more or less indirectly involved. However, there is a growing concern that explores the role of the principal more thoroughly and how that impacts the inclusive environment serving diverse students.

Riehl decides on three broad tasks of a principal in diverse student populated schools. These tasks are: “fostering new meanings about diversity, promoting inclusive practices within schools and building connections between schools and communities” (Riehl, 2000, p. 59).
Riehl says that new (or renewed) instructional methods, such as project-based learning or constructivist learning, smaller schools, new norms of teacher practices, etc. are designed to improve educational experiences and outcomes for diverse groups of students and need to be implemented. In this role, the principal is crucial as the force behind the implementation as well as acting as the “chief educational leader” for the school.

These ideas can be applied to the case of reforming schools to respond to the needs of diverse student learning. The development of inclusive structures and practices must be accompanied by new understandings and values or they will not last long. Principals are key players in framing those new meanings (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999; Nieto, 2004).

Based on Riehl’s work, she found that the following practices to be advantageous for principals to incorporate as promoting inclusive practices:

- Adopting a personalizing strategy and treating children as individuals rather than representatives of a social group,
- Appreciating the cultural knowledge that students bring to school and using it to help teachers and principals learn students’ culture,
- Embracing interethnic conflict when it occurs and using it as an opportunity for making positive changes,
- Creating a caring environment and a high level of cooperation among students, teachers, and families;
- Holding high expectations for all students,
- Focusing on academic achievement and providing appropriate supports,
- Reconfiguring school structures through looping and de-tracking to guarantee equal and effective access to instruction,
• Encouraging teachers to examine their practices for possible race, class or gender biases,

• Taking strong steps to work with parents, meeting parents in their homes and work sites, establishing linguistic equity by providing translators when needed and developing parent competencies in leadership,

• Taking an advocacy approach regarding various forms of discrimination, and

• Maintaining an environment of critique and deconstructing the regularities of practice that serve to disempowered some group or person.
  
  (Riehl, 2000, p. 65)

Building connections between schools and communities is based on the “understanding of the embeddedness of schools, both within the neighborhoods and communities in which they are located and within the network of organizations and institutions through which students move” (Riehl, 2000, p. 66). Effective principals comprehend these inter-organizational and community dynamics and seek to position their school to benefit from the positive resources presented by these various institutions, to cushion students (and the school) from the negative impact of other institutions and sometimes the community itself, and to supply services that meet students’ needs while strengthening the communities in which they live (Riehl, 2000). To effectively serve these students and their families, the role of principals in urban schools has evolved to include such tasks as creating and sustaining relationships with private businesses and external funding sources to generate adequate funds for appropriates materials and space (Bogotch, Miron & Murray, 1998; Kimball & Sirotnik, 2000; Mitchell & Sackney, 2000; Portin, 2000).

Although these researchers provide a picture of the enormous tasks and challenges associated with urban school leadership, they do not mention cultural and linguistic aspects of student and family backgrounds and their influences on the urban
school populations. Furthermore, there is a limited amount of information regarding the principal demographic factors or an examination of leadership in urban schools in which diverse students were performing at acceptable levels according to state or national standards.

Summary of Literature Review

This chapter started with the various models of White identity/consciousness and how these models may impact White educators/administrators’ methods and decisions in the public schools.

Research identifies both socio-economic and school factors that may contribute to the underachievement of poor students and students of color, thus resulting in an achievement gap. Research lists issues that urban administrators are facing, educator/administrators’ lack of diversity awareness, educators’ expectations, the continuation of White cultural domination, and the multifarious “duties.” In spite of it all, there are students of color and students from poverty who are successful under the guidance of White principals. What role/s do these principals play in the cultivation of positive, inclusive school climate and community that benefits all students in face of over-whelming odds? The answer is yet to be determined and is the basis of the study.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter III describes the research methodology used in this study. This chapter discusses the research design, method of analysis, participants of the study, risk involvement, placement of the researcher, instrumentation, procedures for data collection, data analysis and verification methods. A summary of the pilot test is also presented.

This mixed-method study investigated the relationship of White and non-White urban, elementary principals' personal and professional experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge concerning culture, languages, with leadership practices in high-achieving, high-poverty schools with high numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students. The investigation (1) examined cultural differences between White and non-White administrators and their student constituency in terms of ethnicity, language use; (2) socioeconomic status; as well as the (3) present climate of academic accountability for all student groups; and the (4) importance of understanding the interaction of these dimensions of school leadership and the academic outcomes of all students.

The focus of this study addressed the following broad questions:

1. How do elementary schools principals working in urban areas describe the achievement gap?

2. How do high poverty and high achieving, elementary principals working in urban areas cultivate diversity-sensitive, inclusive school environments?
3. How do elementary principals working in urban areas promote partnerships within their community?

4. How do attributes, i.e., dispositions, beliefs, attitudes of selected elementary principals working in urban areas impact the socio-cultural and linguistic issues in their school context?

Method of Analysis

Given the multifaceted and exploratory nature of these research questions, this study used a socially constructivist research model to conduct a multiple case study of 20 elementary White and non-White elementary principals’ experiences, beliefs, knowledge, dispositions, and skills in regard to their schools’ issues of culture, language, and socio-economic status. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln state,

>a number of cases may be studied jointly...they may be similar or dissimilar, with redundancy and variety each are important. They are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, and perhaps better theorizing, about a still larger collection of cases.

(2005, p. 446)

For this exploratory study, mixed-methods were used to examine associations between principals’ composition and their leadership strategies linked to student achievement of all students in their respective schools.

According to research, “mixed-method designs are direct descendants of classical experimentalism. They presume a methodological hierarchy in which quantitative methods are at the top and qualitative methods are relegated to a largely auxiliary role in pursuit of ...accumulating knowledge of what works” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 9).
The majority of the data collection resulted from interviews, and observations using qualitative methodologies, whereas, analysis of the quantitative data resulted from the Quick Discrimination Index and relied on descriptive statistics. Robert K. Yin stated, "A survey could be designed as part of a case study and produce quantitative data as part of the case study evidence" (2003, p. 91). He further suggested, a "case study can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence" (2003, p. 15). As a consequence, the researcher conducted a qualitative segment and a quantitative segment within this study. In an earlier publication, Creswell (1994) referred to such designs as having dominant and less-dominant segments. The qualitative (dominant) segment occurred first followed by the quantitative (less dominant) segment. "When qualitative data are collected first, the intent is to explore the topic with participants at sites" (Creswell, 2003, p. 212). This study follows a sequential exploratory design, data analysis and interpretation occurs during the interpretation segment of the study (Creswell, 2003).

Within this study, qualitative inquiry is dominant. Qualitative implies an importance on the qualities of entities, processes, and meanings that are not experimentally examined or calculated in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative researchers "stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Researchers emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10).
According to Creswell (2003), social constructivism seeks understanding of the world in which people live and work. These meanings are often varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories. The “goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the subjects’ views of the situation being studied” (Creswell, p. 8). The situation being studied is how selected White and non-White urban elementary public school principals foster a diversity-sensitive, inclusive school environment that meet the needs of diverse students thus impacting learning outcomes. Previously, little research focused on the role of the chief instructional leader and the impact he/she has on culturally diverse student academic outcomes.

This qualitative methodology uses interviews and observations in a naturalistic setting to examine how principals conceptualize the student achievement gaps and through what practices they attempt to remedy the condition. The researcher should concentrate on describing the study in sufficient detail so that the reader can make good comparisons. Qualitative “studies need accurate description and subjective, yet disciplined interpretation; a respect for and curiosity about culturally different perceptions of phenomena; and empathic representation of local settings—all blending within a constructivist epistemology” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 459). The primary audience for this study includes PK-12 public school administrators, particularly those in urban high-diversity; high achieving schools. Information procured from this study will inform a larger audience of practicing administrators and higher education professionals about the unique needs of educators/administrators employed (or who will be employed)
with urban highly diversified populations especially when candidates are entering a
culture that may not be their home culture.

This study focuses on White and non-White principals who work in selected high-
poverty; high-performing urban elementary schools within south central and the Upper
Peninsula of the State of Michigan. Additionally, practical information regarding “best
practices” and advantageous personal qualifications for educators/administrators may be
available. As stated earlier, few studies focusing on the administrators’ role as chief
instructional leader in high poverty, high performing schools have been conducted. The
results from this study may add to the administrator knowledge base and may ultimately
impact student learning.

Participants of the Research

The sampling procedure will be purposeful. “The idea behind research is to
purposefully select participants or sites...that will best help the researcher understand the
problem and the research question” (Creswell, 2003, p. 185). All of the participating
elementary principals lead schools that have high-poverty, high-achieving status. A
convenience sample was employed. Invitations to participate in this study were sent to
elementary principals who worked in urban schools and matched the criterion and
responded positively.

Of this particular pool of urban elementary principals, ten were of White racial
background and ten were of non-White racial background. This non-White group of
participants was comprised of six African-American, two Latinas, and two Multi-racial
principals. This group comprised of three males and seven female principals. The White
principals were comprised of six males and four females. Two other principals were held in a reserve pool if needed by the researcher. Table 9 provides a description of the particular pool of principals and their respective number of years as principal.

Table 9

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<th>Years</th>
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The 20 elementary principal participants were employed from cities located in the lower central portion of the state of Michigan, with one exception from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Two interviews were collected from the eastern and western sections of the state. Principals participating in the study were from both the traditional public schools and public school academies. The focus of this study was to explore possible differences between principals in relation to student achievement, not differences in political structure of school organization. As indicated, the years acting as principal range from 1 year through 30 years of service in the position of principal within that school. Table 9 also reveals that from this pool of urban elementary principals, none fell into the category of 21 to 25 years as principal in that school. The majority of participating principals ranged from year 1 through year 15. The participating principals lead urban elementary schools with at least 50% free and reduced lunch count and are high performing academically.
Risk, Protection and Confidentiality

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Human Subject Review Board at Western Michigan University (see A); therefore the rights of the participants were protected. The research ethics was carefully observed, and participants were assured of their ability to voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time, informed of the purpose of the study and the data collection procedures, assured of confidentiality (principals have been given pseudonyms), and informed of any risks associated with participation in this study. Every attempt to maintain confidentiality was made. Interviews were held in a private location that the participant chose. Audiotapes of the interviews are carefully stored in a secure, locked location. These audio tapes were destroyed following completion of data analysis and final approval of the dissertation. Transcripts were stored in a confidential manner as will all electronic material, which will be saved on an external media storage device and stored with transcripts for the designated time in the primary researcher’s office at Western Michigan University. Electronic materials were password protected. Non-electronic materials, i.e., school/district documents were carefully stored at a locked private location. This material will be destroyed following the passage of the designated time.

Participants were provided a letter outlining these factors and were asked to sign written consent to participate in the study (Appendix B). Informed consent entails informing the research subjects about the overall purpose of the study and the main features of the design, as well as any possible risks and benefits from participation in the research study.
Placement and Role of the Researcher

The qualitative segment of this mixed-methods research presentation is credible research, with a fundamental belief in the value of qualitative inquiry. In short, interviewing is a craft; "It does not follow content-and context-free rule of method, but rests on the judgments of a qualified researcher" (Kvale, 1996, p. 105). Therefore, outcomes of the interview depend on the professionalism, knowledge, sensitivity, and empathy of the interviewer.

An intrinsic obstacle to the credibility of qualitative findings is the suspicion that the researcher has shaped the results according to their predispositions or biases (Locke et al., 2000). With "this concern in mind, inquirers explicitly identify their biases, values, and personal interests about their research topic and process" (Creswell, 2003, p. 184). Therefore, it is important to stress the professionalism of the interviewer, including years of practice, grade levels, and content areas. It is also important to highlight the researcher's semi-administrational positions throughout the various years within the educational system. Chief to this study is the researcher's passionate interest in prejudicial attitudes and their possible ramifications within the educational system.

Instrumentation

The Quick Discrimination Survey tool designed by Joseph G. Ponterotto, and his colleagues (Ponterotto et al., 1995) is a self-reporting appraisal that assesses prejudicial attitudes toward racial minority groups and women. Permission to use this tool was obtained and is attached to this dissertation (Appendix C). Generally high scores on the
Quick Discrimination Index (QDI) indicate non-racist and nonsexist attitudes, and low scores reflect negative attitudes toward racial minority individuals and women.

“Discrimination is chiefly characterized by negative behavior (e.g., restricting access and equal opportunity), toward select groups, the QDI is not a measure of discrimination in a strict sense but a measure of attitudes underlying possible discriminatory behavior” (Ponterotto et al., 2002, p. 192). Originally, targeted for late adolescents and adults, the QDI is composed of three subscales or factors. Factor I focuses on general (cognitive) attitudes toward racial diversity. Factor II assesses more affective and personal attitudes as they relate to racial contact in one’s personal life. Factor III examines general attitudes regarding women’s equity issues. Usually, measures of attitudes toward racial equality focused merely on the cognitive components of prejudice and discrimination. The QDI, however, not only assesses people’s attitudes toward racial diversity, but also provides a gauge of the affective components experienced by individuals in relation to these attitudes (Utsey & Ponterotto, 1999).

The Quick Discrimination Index is a 30-item, 5-point Likert-type self-report measure on which choice options are as follows: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree (see Appendix D). The three subscales of the QDI assess gender attitudes regarding racial diversity (nine items), specific attitudes regarding contact and personal comfort with racial diversity (seven items), and general attitudes regarding women’s equality (seven items). Of these items, 15 are reverse worded (and reversed scored) to control for order effects. A total instrument score may be tabulated using all 30 items; however, Ponterotto recommended using a three-factor scoring procedure given that both exploratory factor analyses and confirmatory factor analysis
supported the "tripartite conceptualization" (Utsey & Ponterrotto, 1999, p. 327) of the QDI items. Using the three-factor scoring method, 23 of the 30 items are used.

"Intercorrelations among the three factors were moderate, ranging from 0.35 to 0.47, supporting the oblique nature of the rotation and use of distinct but interrelated factors" (Utsey & Ponterrotto, 1999, p. 327).

There are three subscales (factors) in the Quick Discrimination Index. Factor 1 addresses general (cognitive) attitudes toward racial diversity and multiculturalism. This factor consists of nine items and asks such questions as number 2, "It is as easy for women to succeed in business as it is for men." Factor 2 identifies affective attitudes toward more personal contact (closeness) with racial diversity. This factor has seven items (i.e., Number 28, "I would enjoy living in a neighborhood consisting of a racially diverse population"). The third factor focuses on attitudes towards women’s equity and seven items reflect this area (i.e. Number 16, "I feel somewhat more secure that a man, rather than a woman, is currently president of the United States"). Seven of the 30 QDI items were not calculated as part of the factor scores but are used in total score calculations. These particular items did not reach the factor assignment criteria (unique high loadings of 0.40 or greater) ascertained in Ponterotto et al. (1995), yet they contribute to the internal consistency and content validity of the QDI only when the total score method of calculation is used (Ponterotto et al., 1995). In addition, the 1995 coefficient alphas for the Total Quick Discrimination Index and Subscales scores are reported in Table 10.

Following the coefficients, the study established correlations between the subscales as indicated by Table 11.
Table 10

Reported Coefficient Alphas, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Subscale 1</th>
<th>Subscale 2</th>
<th>Subscale 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study 2</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=220</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11

Subscale Correlations, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Subscale 1</th>
<th>Subscale 2</th>
<th>Subscale 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.83**</td>
<td>0.72**</td>
<td>0.74**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale 1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale 2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale 3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=220</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: **p<0.01.

Results from 1995 data revealed a positive correlation between the subscales and the total index with p less than 0.01. Utsey & Ponterrotto, (1999) in further assessment of the QDI indicated that the scores are internally consistent. The internal consistency magnitudes of the QDI range from “satisfactory” (Factors II and III) to “strong” (Factor I). Furthermore the underlying factor structure of the instrument was relatively stable.

Prior to the Burkard, James, & Johill, (2002) study of the QDI, the instrument was used to evaluate principal components of factor analysis in a racially heterogeneous sample. Burkard et al.’s study used homogenous (all White) samples and a hierarchical factor analysis. Whereas the earlier studies had developed a three-factor structure for which only 24 of 30 QDI items were salient, Burkard et al. developed a model with four primary factors and a second order factor (“G” factor) which together accounted for 44%
of the total variance. Each of the 30 QDI items was salient for one of the four factors identified.

Burkard et al.'s report clearly explains the procedures that were followed to randomly select a first survey group, collect and analyze the data, and then conduct a confirmatory factor analysis using data collected from a second survey population. The authors have studied and drawn upon earlier research and related theory.

The significance of Burkard et al.'s findings are clear: although the QDI was developed for us “with a variety of racial/ethnic groups to measure prejudice attitudes” (p. 65) and previous studies suggested it could serve this purpose, this study suggests that “the QDI may not be generalizable across racial ethnic groups” (p. 74).

According to Ponterotto and his colleagues, this instrument has a “limited” status. This occurs when studies have a limited base (in terms of geography, age, etc.), and “that have consistently satisfactory indexes of internal score reliability (that are defined as coefficient alpha=0.70) across diverse samples” (Ponterotto, Utsey, & Pederson, 2006, p. 244).

The Quick Discrimination Index has received adequate to strong ratings in the areas of reliability and validity. The rating of “adequate” is described by Ponterotto et al. (2006) as:

Instrument as generally having adequate score reliability and validity if the measurement has been used in multiple studies (usually 5–10), has evidenced consistently satisfactory internal consistency score reliability) mean or median coefficient alpha at 0.70 and higher across studies), and present some evidence of test-retest reliability (stability) as well.

(p. 247)

The rating of “strong” as applied to the Quick Discrimination Index is characterized by Ponterotto and his colleagues by the following:
...reserves this evaluation for those measures that have been used in many studies (10 or more) across diverse geographic regions and samples and that have evidenced consistently satisfactory levels of score reliability internal consistency [coefficient alpha] and test-retest stability across samples. Strong measures most often have construct (factor structure) evidence supported by both large-sample exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, and they have evidence of score-convergent and criterion-related validity.

(p. 247)

The Quick Discrimination Index is frequently used to measure more subtle racial and gender bias. It includes three subscales or factors: Cognitive Racial Attitudes (nine items), Affective Racial Attitudes (seven items), and Cognitive Gender Attitudes (seven items). According to previous research on this instrument, the median coefficient alpha for the Cognitive Racial Attitude factor is 0.85; for the Affective Racial Attitude factor, 0.77; and for the Cognitive Gender Attitude factor, 0.71 (Ponterotto et al., 2006, p. 248).

In terms of reliability, Ponterotto et al. (2002) provided updated normative and psychometric data supporting the validity and reliability of the QDI. Of the studies consulted, the Cronbach’s alphas ranged from 0.80 to 0.90 for the Cognitive Attitude Scale and from 0.70 to 0.87 for the Affective Attitude Scale.

A break down of number of the QDI items (questions) based on the subscales can be found in Table 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Factors &amp; Items</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtle Racial Gender, Prejudice</td>
<td>Racial Attitudes - 9</td>
<td>Adequate to Strong</td>
<td>Adequate to Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Racial Comfort – 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender Attitudes – 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Total Items = 30</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(p. 247)
In this study, the QDI was given to the 20 participating principals, of which 18 completed surveys that were returned by mail. The results of this study will also be sent to Dr. Ponterotto and will be added knowledge to his QDI database.

Following the selection process, letters of introduction were sent to participants and district superintendents. After the passage of two weeks, follow-up phone conversations were made. At which time, first interview dates were established, with subsequent interview dates if necessary. Collection and analyses on school issues such as student achievement and school/district demographic statistics were collected from the district, school, and community plus referencing the Michigan Department of Education and Great Schools websites, concerning the schools involved.

Individual interviews and observations were used as the primary methods of collecting data. Interviews were conducted at each participant’s convenience. The interviews were held at the principal’s school to ensure a neutral environment. Interviews were audio taped for transcription. Interviews excluding the Quick Discrimination Index were approximately one-half hour to one hour in duration. Following transcription, accuracy was obtained by giving the participants copies of their taped, transcribed interview/s and asking for “member checks” and after authenticated, returned to the researcher. In this way, the researcher insured that what was related and transcribed was accurate.

Validity is making sure that the study is answering the research questions (Kvale, 1996). In an effort to authenticate the study, triangulation, was used (Creswell, 2003). Triangulation will involve document analysis, field notes of observations, transcribed interviews, public school reports and the QDI survey.
Pilot Testing

In accordance with the research protocol, pilot testing of the interview questions and the Quick Discrimination Index was completed. The interview questions and QDI were given to a selected mixed sample of eight practicing educators and two acting principals (and two retired principals) from Upper Peninsula elementary schools.

All of the interview questions were given to White male Upper Peninsula elementary principals (a convenience sample). Although none would meet with the researcher, they were willing to respond by e-mail. Recommendations were limited, since the Upper Peninsula is neither multicultural nor urban.

Consequently, these principals have not had much experience with urban diversity issues. However they were chosen due to their administrative experience and training in high performing schools. As a group they felt that the questions were appropriate and the time it took to answer averaged 30 minutes.

The eight White and non-White educators who reviewed the QDI survey found that the questions were very “thought provoking.” These eight educators who participated in the pilot testing included principals from various states including Michigan, North Carolina, Florida, and Alaska. Multiple state locations were chosen because the researcher was looking for any variance of answers. A surprising result was the amount of curiosity that accompanied the QDI. Many of the educators participating in this pilot study expressed interest in receiving a copy of the final results. Another astonishing result was that some of the pilot educators from Alaska and North Carolina attached messages explaining or rationalizing their responses. Some of these messages
had racial undertones, which is what the QDI measures. However, no relationship was made between how the educators answered the questions and their teaching style or strategies. The purpose was to obtain feedback concerning the QDI questions only. The average time allotment for the QDI was 20–40 minutes depending on how much “thought” was placed on the questions.

Data Analysis and Verification

This is a mixed-methods study with the quantitative segment presented first, followed by the qualitative data provided by this pool of elementary principals that worked in urban areas.

Due to the HSIRB requirements the QDI survey was unanimous without any variable markings, i.e. race of principal. The quantitative data analysis on this survey was restricted to descriptive statistics limited by the lack of variables. The quantitative data were collected from the QDI survey designed by Joseph G. Ponterotto, et al. and uses a Likert (1–5) scale. The QDI is divided into factors. Factor 1: Cognitive Attitudes toward Racial Diversity/Multiculturalism. Questions (items) 3, 9, 13, 18, 19, 22, 23, 26, and 27 address that factor. Factor 2: Affective Attitudes toward More Personal Contact (Closeness with Racial Diversity). Questions (items) concerning this factor are; 4, 8, 11, 15, 17, 24, and 29. Factor 3: Attitudes Toward Women’s Equity includes questions (items); 1, 6, 7,14,16,20, and 30.

The quantitative data was analyzed using The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 12.0 (2003). SPSS thus provided the descriptive analyses for this study.
The qualitative segment of this study employed an open-ended semi-structured interview protocol ensuring the coverage of the research questions and to have flexibility to probe emerging data. Analyzing the data follows an inductive procedure (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative research produces enormous amounts of data. A significant focus of qualitative analysis is to reduce and re-organize the data into workable codes or categories in order to discover the common meanings and significant patterns (Creswell, 2003). It “involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data” (Creswell, p. 190).

Data analysis and verification is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data. This involves transcribing the interviews verbatim and reading through the transcriptions to become absorbed in the data.

Having transcribed and read through the data, Creswell would have us ask ourselves the following questions: “What general ideas are participants saying? What is the tone of the ideas? What is the general impression of the overall depth, credibility, and use of the information?” (p. 191). Notes will be written in the margins during this phase of analyses.

To develop meaning from the collected data, it is necessary to establish a procedure for coding the collected data. Coding is the method of organizing the data into “chunks” before bringing meaning to those “chunks.” Creswell states that coding involves “taking text data or pictures, segmenting sentences (or paragraphs) or images into categories, and labeling those categories with a term, often a term based into the actual language of the participant” (p. 192).
The use of a coding system is critical. The coding process is used to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis. Description involves a systematic rendering of information about people, places, or events. A code is then used to generate a small number of themes or categories, “perhaps five to seven categories for a research study” (Creswell, 2003, p. 194). These themes are the ones that re-appear as the major findings in a qualitative study and are stated under separate headings in the findings section. Themes should be displayed by multiple perspectives from individuals and need to be supported by diverse quotations. In this study, the establishment of themes is determined by at least a 70% response repetition rate to the interview questions. QSR NVIVO 7 qualitative software assisted with the reduction, coding and theme determination of the data.

In a qualitative study the researcher attempts to facilitate reader understanding. The researcher “tries to establish an empathetic understanding for the reader, through description, sometimes thick description, conveying to the reader what experience itself would convey” (Stake, 1995, p. 39). The descriptions and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative. The most popular approach is the narrative passage to convey the research findings of analysis. This section also includes the prominent themes and corresponding tables.

Summary

This chapter discusses the method of analysis, participants of the study, risk involvement, placement of the researcher, instrumentation, procedures of data collection, and data analysis and verification methods.
Mixed-method research adds rich description, interpretation, verification and evaluation (Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative research provides the reader with a depth, openness, and understanding of data which is missing in quantitative studies. This study focuses on the skills, knowledge, attitudes, experiences, strategies, and dispositions of 20 urban White and non-White elementary administrators in high poverty; high performing schools. Chapter IV will present the findings from the analysis of these data.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF STUDY

This study was conducted to analyze the socio-cultural dimensions of ten White and ten non-White elementary principals leading diverse schools. The exploration of leadership is important because increases in the numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students affect the academic success for all student groups and impact student achievement which has become the centerpiece for district accountability. This study provided an opportunity to explore ways principals perceived their roles and actions taken by White and non-White principals, to create and sustain educational environments that are responsive to student diversity with specific emphasis on culture and socio-economic status.

The 20 cases captured each participant’s distinctive experiences, beliefs, and knowledge as they relate to the education of diverse students in their particular schools. Specifically, this study examined whether differences existed between White and non-White principals regarding the research questions. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. How do elementary White and non-White elementary school principals working in urban areas describe the achievement gap?

2. How do high poverty and high achieving elementary White and non-White principals working in urban areas cultivate diversity-sensitive, inclusive school environments?
3. How do White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas promote partnerships within their community?

4. How do attributes, i.e., dispositions, beliefs, and attitudes of selected White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas impact the socio-cultural and linguistic issues in their school context?

This chapter contains an analysis of the quantitative and qualitative interview results from 20 elementary principals working in urban areas. In responding to the four research questions, a mixed-methods approach was used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. Emerging patterns from within the individual quantitative survey and qualitative interviews are explored. Data provided information between the two clusters of principals. This data may provide information (based on 70% repetition response conformity) whereby emergent themes are identified and described. These themes were established by inductive data analysis and data reduction. Quantitatively, the Quick Discrimination Index (Ponterrotto et al., 1995), a self-assessment survey that measures racial and gender attitudes was used in this study. It needs to be recalled that due to the HSIRB requirements, no specific variables (i.e., state location) were identified, therefore only descriptive statistics were employed. The qualitative analysis segment of the study used QSR NVIVO7 qualitative software. This software program allowed the researcher to analyze the qualitative data and provided the reduction and detection of themes at a minimum repetitive response rate of 70%. The correlation between research questions and interview questions are shown in Appendix E.
Biographical Profile of Participants

The following table illustrates 20 (ten White and ten non-White) urban elementary principals who participated in this study. It needs to be restated that the researcher assigned a pseudonym to protect the confidentiality of the participants. Table 13 illustrates the participating principals’ pseudonym and clusters according to their racial identity. Cluster 1 principals are Caucasian and Cluster 2 principals are African-American, Latina, and of Multi-racial identity.

Table 13
Principal Clusters by Pseudonym

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Minority (African American, Latino and Multi-Racial Identities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Tony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>Megan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patty</td>
<td>Sue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>Mary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>Elaine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>Lynn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward</td>
<td>Mike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Ann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Maryanne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>Mark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Providing a more descriptive identity of each participating principal, their observable dispositional attributes (as noticed during their interviews) have been added at this juncture. Dispositional attributes are significant in understanding the principal’s influence on student achievement, research question number 4. Table 14 provides each principal with their dispositional attributes as ascribed by their individual interviews. These attributes provide a more perceptible account of their leadership in relation to
diverse student achievement. Later in this study, a detailed account of these principals’ dispositions will be addressed.

Table 14

Principals’ Dispositional Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Outstanding Dispositional Attribute(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cluster 1 Principals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Determined, Faith-based, Genuine Concern, Open, Reflective, Inexperienced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>Confident, Academic, Hard-working, Controlling, Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patty</td>
<td>Classroom Attitude, Open, Confident, Hard-working, Loves Students, Fair, Supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>Conservative, Calm, Calculating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>Open, Staff Motivator, Responsive, Sense of Humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>Controlling, Calculating, Determined, Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward</td>
<td>Young, Inexperienced, Hard-working, Concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Open, Sociable, Sense of Humor, Experienced, Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Athletic, Traditionalist, Loves Students, Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>Loves Students, Classroom Attitude, Open, Confident, Hard-working, Fair, Supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cluster 2 Principals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony</td>
<td>Disadvantaged background, Motivator of Staff and Students, Relationship Builder, Communicator, Firm, Hard-working, Secure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan</td>
<td>Disadvantaged, Relationship Builder, Hard-working, Fair, Confident, Communicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Confident, Experienced, Conservative, Academic, Calculating, Privileged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Experienced, Open, Astute, Knowledgeable, Organized, Communicator, Relationship Builder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaine</td>
<td>Sophisticated, Concerned, Open, Communicator, Relationship Builder, Hard-working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>Disadvantaged, Relationship Builder, Communicator, Caring, Hard-working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>Academic, Concerned, Hard-working, Conservative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>Worldly, Multi-faceted, Open, Reflective, Concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryanne</td>
<td>Vivacious, Knowledgeable, Hard-working, Relationship Builder, Motivator, Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Faith-based, Reflective, Relationship Builder, Communicator, Open, Welcoming, Confident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dispositional attributes by clusters revealed some interesting distinctiveness.

During the interview process, Cluster 1 principals appeared to be more structurally motivated and politically correct. Whereas, Cluster 2 principals seemed more intuitive and affective in their responses.
Quantitative Findings

Each participating principal was asked to complete a self reporting survey. The Quick Discrimination Index designed by Dr. Joseph Ponterotto et al., (1995) was chosen because it is a measure of attitudes underlying potential discriminatory behavior towards minorities and females.

Prior to the analysis of the Quick Discrimination Index according to Dr. Ponterotto’s prescribed method, it may be helpful to investigate the variances, if any between the 18 (two QDIs were not returned) participating principals’ responses. QDI questions and responses are located as Appendix F.

For this unofficial analysis, only the questions and corresponding responses that related to the participant’s perspective and position as an urban elementary principal as related to the research questions were examined.

Following this brief analysis, the Quick Discrimination Index will be reintroduced and the sanctioned analysis method will be conducted. Table 15 refers to those explicit questions and responses.

Based on these particular questions, the responses from this specific pool of elementary principals working in urban schools revealed some interesting insights. Question 5 indicated that this group of principals is in favor of learning multiple languages. The consensus was positive (10) with 3 abstaining (not sure). Only 5 principals were opposed to learning multiple languages.

A question was asked referring to men having the ability or concern to build relationships. Of the participants, five agreed that men are not good at building
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number: 5</th>
<th>All Americans should learn to speak two languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert Scale:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses:</td>
<td>0 5 3 6 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number: 10</th>
<th>Generally, men seem less concerned with building relationships than women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert Scale:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses:</td>
<td>2 8 3 3 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number: 17</th>
<th>I think that it is (or would be) important for my children to attend schools that are racially mixed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert Scale:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses:</td>
<td>0 0 4 7 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number: 18</th>
<th>In the past few years there has been too much attention directed toward multicultural issues in business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert Scale:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses:</td>
<td>4 7 5 2 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number: 19</th>
<th>Overall, I think racial minorities in America complain too much about racial discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert Scale:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses:</td>
<td>2 9 3 4 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number: 22</th>
<th>I think White people's racism toward racial minority groups still constitutes a major problem in America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert Scale:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses:</td>
<td>0 0 5 8 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number: 23</th>
<th>I think the school system, from elementary school through college, should encourage minority and immigrant children to learn and fully adopt traditional American values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert Scale:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses:</td>
<td>2 4 6 5 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number: 26</th>
<th>I think the school system, from elementary school through college, should promote values representative of diverse cultures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likert Scale:</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses:</td>
<td>0 0 1 11 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

relationships whereas 10 participants felt that men are certainly willing and capable of building relationships. Of the remaining participants, three were not sure.

Allowing one's child to attend a racially mixed school can be a difficult decision. Clearly this group of principals felt it was important for students (including their child) to attend schools that have a high degree of student diversity.
Multicultural issues and diversity have been a focal point in many institutions including businesses. Question 18 asks if there has been too much attention paid to this topic in businesses. In this case, the institution of education is included in the general term business. The datum on this question indicates that 11 principals disagree with the statement, with 5 abstaining. Only 2 principals stated that too much attention has been given to multicultural issues.

A question was asked if racial minorities complain too much about racial discriminatory issues. Of this group of principals, 11 felt that racial minorities have not complained too much inferring an existing undercurrent of justice. Whereas 4 principals stated that racial minorities have complained too much, leaving 3 principals abstaining.

A follow-up question’s data suggests that this group of principals’ consensus is that Caucasians’ racism towards others is still a major problem in this country. Thirteen principals agreed that Caucasian racism is still a major dilemma, with 5 principals stating that they are not sure. No principals disagreed with the statement.

Respondents were asked if minority and immigrant children should learn and fully adopt American values. According to the data, this question produced a balanced distribution among this group of principals. Six principals disagreed that students should fully adopt American values, whereas 6 principals agree that they should. Six principals were unsure on this issue.

Principals were asked if the school system should promote values representative of diverse cultures. The data indicates that none of the principals disagreed with this concept and 17 principals agree that diverse cultures should be represented in the schools, with only 1 principal not sure.
From the above data, this particular pool of urban elementary principals is open, receptive and culturally aware of racial and ethnic issues. Yet the data indicates that Caucasian racism towards other racial/ethnic groups is still a problem and the question that minority/immigrant children should fully adopt American values produced an even distribution. Through this brief informal analysis, information pertaining to this specific pool of elementary principals who work in urban areas may provide the reader with insight in the overall interpretation of the data.

The QDI Instrument

The Quick Discrimination Index measures degrees of racism, prejudice, and gender disparity. Maximum scores on the QDI reflect non-racist and non-sexist attitudes and minimal scores reflect negative attitudes. Of the 30 items on the QDI, 15 are stated and scored in a positive direction (high scores reflect high sensitivity to multicultural/gender awareness) and 15 are unconstructively worded, scored in a negative direction and are reversed-scored (low scores are indicative of elevated insensitivity). Table 16 indicates the total scores of the 18 returned DQI surveys.

The QDI data indicated that 13 participating principals received a total score above 80 with 5 principals obtaining a total score of 90 or above. Another 5 principals received a total score of less than 80 on the QDI. The higher the total score, the higher the overall sensitivity, awareness, and receptivity to cultural diversity and gender equality of the principal.

The second method of scoring the QDI is a procedure involving the scoring of three separate subscales (factors) of the QDI. This "particular method of scoring is
Table 16

QDI Surveys, by Total Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Total Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>89</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>54</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>78</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>96</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>84</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>77</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

preferred given the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis that supports the construct validity of the three-factor model” (Ponterrotto et al., 2006, p. 279). When scoring the separate subscales (factors), only 23 of the total 30 items are scored with some items being reversed-scored. Utilizing this method of scoring analysis, each subscale can be scrutinized for subtle variances. A discussion of this analysis follows.

Analysis of QDI Data

A descriptive analysis was performed based on the Likert scale responses. There were no “blank” responses on the returned indexes.

The Quick Discrimination Index is divided into factors. Factor 1: Cognitive Attitudes toward Racial Diversity/Multiculturalism. Questions (items) 3, 9, 13, 18, 19, 22, 23, 26, and 27 address that factor. Factor 2: Affective Attitudes toward More Personal
Contact (Closeness with Racial Diversity). Questions (items) concerning this factor are; 4, 8, 11, 15, 17, 24, and 29. Factor 3: Attitudes Toward Women’s Equity includes questions (items); 1, 6, 7, 14, 16, 20, and 30.

The Quick Discrimination Index is provided with a grading system which was implemented based on the factorial measurement. The higher the scores on the QDI, the more just, equitable, and non-discriminatory the responses. The scoring range is 30 to 150. Scores per factor and a total score were determined. The results according to the factorial and total method are presented in Table 17.

Table 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
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<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>1,440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the data presented in Table 17, the principals reflected high Cognitive Racial Attitudes (588) and seemingly consistent total scores for both Affective Racial Attitudes (473) and Cognitive Gender Attitudes (475). While based on the
established range for the QDI participants' total scores were above the minimum score of 30, there was also some distance from the maximum score of 150. At a closer examination of the scores, subtle variances between the factors resulting in total scores appeared when individual principal scores were examined (i.e., participant number 9).

The total score data indicates that 13 of the participating principals scores are closer to the minimum range indicator of 30 than to the maximum range indicator of 150 (Table 18). Of the remaining participating principals, 4 principals scored closer to the maximum range score with 1 principal equally located in the middle of the range score as determined by the QDI.

Table 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Total (min. 30; max. 150)</th>
<th>From Minimum</th>
<th>From Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
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<td>89</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factorial analysis provided from the QDI, revealed subtle variances within each factorial range. Factor 1 reflects Cognitive Racial Attitudes and is comprised of nine
items. Factor 2 attends to Affective Racial Attitudes and has seven items, while Factor 3 addresses Cognitive Gender Attitudes with seven items. The ranges involved in these factor analyses are: Factor 1, range 9 to 45; Factors 2 and 3, range 7 to 35.

Factorial 1: Cognitive Racial Attitudes range analysis of the participating principals appears as illustrated in Table 19.

Table 19

Range Factorial 1 Analysis: Cognitive Racial Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>(Minimum 9; Maximum 45)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>From Minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>34</td>
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<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data presented in the Range Factorial 1: Cognitive Racial Attitudes analysis indicates these elementary principals are cognitively aware of racial attitudes/behaviors. Eight of the participating principals’ responses fell within 10 points of the maximum range score of 45 while 4 other principals’ responses fell within 15 points of the maximum range score and 6 principals scored within 20 points (22.5 as median) of the
maximum range score of 45. Cognitively, this pool of urban elementary principals is indeed aware of racial attitudes.

Factor 2, Affective Racial Attitudes (Closeness with Racial Diversity) is comprised of seven questions on the QDI. The score range for this factor is 7 to 35. The range data for this factor is represented in Table 20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>(Minimum 7; Maximum 35)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From Minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Affective Racial Attitudes data from this pool of elementary principals indicates that 10 principals’ responses fell above the median score of 17.5 and 8 principals responses fell below the mid-point score. Ten principal’s scores were located within 10 points of the maximum score of 35 with another 7 principal scores within 15 points of the maximum. Only one principal’s score is closer to the minimum. Overall, the data from
the Affective Racial Attitudes section supports the supposition that these principals are non-biased and support close racial diversity.

The third and final factorial analysis in the QDI is Cognitive Gender Attitudes (i.e., attitudes towards females). The score range is 7 as minimum and 35 as maximum with 17.5 as a median score. Table 21 shows the distribution of the data for this factor.

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>From Minimum</th>
<th>From Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the data from Factor 3, 13 participants scored within the 10-point range maximum for this factor. Additionally, another 4 principals scored within 15 points from the maximum score of 35. One principal scored (19) closer to the minimum range (with a median range of 17.5). This data revealed overall that cognitively, this pool of principals is conscious of gender attitudes.
In summation, the factorial range scores as prescribed by the QDI by factors revealed that principals attained high cognitive racial attitudes, affective racial attitudes and cognitive gender attitudes with few exceptions.

**Descriptive Statistics**

No identifiable markings were permitted on the returned Quick Discrimination Indexes. Due to the lack of identifiable valuables, only descriptive statistics are provided. The mean, median, mode and standard deviation are calculated for each QDI item (question). Table 22 presents this data.

A correlation between the QDI response skewness statistic and the item questions can construct information about this pool of elementary principals. From this data, it appeared that the majority of item responses are negatively skewed bunched up around the high end of the scoring scale, which may reduce the reliability of these responses from this particular pool of principals. Table 23 illustrates that data.

The Cronbach’s alpha, the reliability coefficient, although not a statistical test, was applied to the QDI data. The Alpha measures the extent to which item responses obtained at the same time correlate highly with each other. “The more consistent within-subject responses are the greater the variability between subjects in the sample, the higher the Cronbach’s alpha will be. The alpha will be higher when there is homogeneity of variances among items than when there is not” (Field, 2005, p. 667). The widely established limit for the alpha should be 0.70 or higher for a set of given items. In this particular usage, the number of cases (18) is low and may be altering Cronbach’s alpha scoring.
Table 22

QDI Descriptive Spread Data

<table>
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<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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</thead>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1.231</td>
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<td>4.00</td>
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<td>0.916</td>
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<td>4.11</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.231</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
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</table>

Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate Cognitive Attitudes, Affective Attitudes toward More Personal Contact, and Attitudes towards Women’s Equity factors involved in the Quick Discrimination Index are revealed below:

*Factor 1: Cognitive Attitudes toward Racial Diversity/Multiculturalism:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.768</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Factor 2: Affective Attitudes toward More Personal Contact (Closeness with Racial Diversity):

Cronbach’s Alpha  
0.563  
Number of Items  
7

Factor 3: Attitudes towards Women’s Equity:

Cronbach’s Alpha  
0.681  
Number of Items  
7

Total Reliability according to Cronbach’s Alpha is:

Cronbach’s Alpha  
0.685  
Number of Items  
30

Based on the data interpretations, it seems that the Quick Discrimination Index does generally meet the criteria of “adequate” standards using Cronbach’s Alpha determination of 0.70 in Factor 1 (0.768) and approximately in Factor 3 (0.681). Cronbach’s overall score of 0.685 is nearing the “adequate” score of 0.70. Therefore, this pool of urban elementary principals substantiates the QDI reliability research for Factor 1 and the approximate score for Total Reliability but does not substantiate the research of Factor 2. If Cronbach’s Alpha is taken as reliable and the data from the QDI is accurate then Factor 2: Affective Attitudes toward More Personal Contact (Closeness with Racial Diversity) is muddled.

Searching for a possible inferential correlation between the factors of the QDI, Pearson’s correlation coefficient was applied. Again, the number of cases (18) was too small to run an accurate correlation tests, but Pearson’s r was used to attempt to locate a possible association between two of the factors. Pearson’s r measures the magnitude and direction of any association between the factors. A two-detailed test was chosen to
determine the direction of a possible association. It is not a causal association but reflects an influential possibility. Generally, correlations above 0.80 are considered high. Table 24 illustrates.

Table 24

Pearson’s Correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total QDI</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total QDI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.686***</td>
<td>0.575*</td>
<td>0.417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson’s r</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.085</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson’s r</td>
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<td>0.839</td>
<td>0.638</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>0.575*</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-0.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson’s r</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.839</td>
<td>0.487</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3</td>
<td>0.417</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>-0.175</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearson’s r</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>0.636</td>
<td>0.487</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Datum from Table 24 provides a positive correlation of significance at the 0.01 level for Factor 1 at $r = 0.686$ and $p = 0.002$ with the Total QDI survey. A positive correlation between Factor 2 and the Total QDI survey exists at the 0.05 level with $r = 0.575$ and $p = 0.013$. Statistician N. J. Salkind (2004) suggests that both of these correlations are at the weak positive association level when $r$ is between $+0.3$ to $+0.7$. No other significant correlations exist.
Of specific concern, each factor should be correlated with the Total DQI test and that was not the case. Factor 3 was not correlated with the Total DQI. There is no correlation between any of the factors.

Quantitative Summary

The analysis revealed that these elementary principals are knowledgeable about discriminatory and racial issues. These principals are cognitively aware of racial attitudes/behaviors, are non-biased and support close relationships with “others” and are aware of gender attitudes and biases. Yet questions about the reliability of the data are troublesome. This unreliability could stem from participant’s responses, restricted variables, limited number of returned QDI surveys, or by the statistical tests selected.

Qualitative Findings

Individual interviews and observations are the primary methods of collecting data. The semi-structure, open-ended interview questions are provided in Appendix G.

QSR NVIVO7 Software

Themes were based on at least a 70% response repetition to individual questions related to the research questions (listed below). After the interview, transcripts were entered into the software program, the researcher coded words and phrases of potential significance. Once this was complete, the software program was able to identify the incidence of words and phrases located in the respective cluster interview transcripts. In
verifying the QSR NVIVO 7 results, the researcher did a manual check of the interview transcripts.

The Research Questions

It is imperative to comprehend and gain knowledge of how urban elementary principals perceive the achievement gap. From this vantage point, principals make decisions that influence academic equality and fairness for all their students.

Research Question 1: How do elementary White and non-White elementary school principals working in urban areas describe the achievement gap?

Interview Question 4 provided the largest assortment of responses from the participating principals. As a means of clarification, Table 25 indicates this range of responses as obtained from the participant interviews. The descriptive responses are located in the first column, whereas the occurrences are recorded in the other columns by race and gender. In many cases, the participating principals cited more than one response to this question.

The qualitative data illustrates a wide variety of individual responses to this particular question, making a clear distinction of majority difficult. Using the theme distinction, none of the data for this interview question indicates a theme. While setting high expectations, knowing best practices, and understanding the role of data do not meet the 70% criteria.

Participating principals agreed that student expectations must be held in high regard no matter the race or social class of their students. Consistent with their beliefs
Table 25

Achievement Gap Descriptors, by Race and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Race=White</th>
<th>Afri-Am.</th>
<th>Latina</th>
<th>Multi.</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<td>Able to teach reading</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Curriculum alignment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Being successful</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being visible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Bilingual focus</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Boosting staff morale</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Delegates staff comm.</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of Data</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

that all students can and will learn, the participating principals held high expectations for their students and made comments like “Doing whatever it takes” to realize these beliefs. Throughout the interviews, principals talked about maintaining challenging instruction with the focus on student achievement.

Cluster 1 principal Carol shared her concern for student achievement during her interview. She indicated: “We do whatever it takes. We function in teams, where we have focused conversation about instruction, about lesson plans, about student
achievement, about results and working together in a collaborative nature to make students higher achieving” (Carol’s interview, p. 3).

An experienced Cluster 1 principal spends a great deal of time scrutinizing her school’s achievement data. Patty has trained her staff in data analysis. She reported that her staff: “Is really trying to look at the gender gap and then looking at the most significant gaps, which were our African-American boys and our Hispanic boys and girls. We are addressing that by using differentiated learning. That’s the only way you can teach here.” (Patty’s interview, p. 3)

Cluster 2 principals are similarly anxious about setting high expectations. When elaborating about expectations for all of his students, Mark states: “We go back to our rigorous curriculum that stimulates achievement for all students...Being in the lower socio-economic part of the city we seem to have a lot of challenges. So we had to do a lot more creative type activities.” (Mark’s interview, p. 3)

The role of principal is ever changing declares Megan. At the time “when student expectations become attached to the principals’ role that is when principals were entitled the instructional leader of their building. As the instructional leader, The bottom line is that you have to be aware of the instruction that is going on in the classrooms and also how effective it is in regards to achievement.”(Megan’s interview, p. 2)

“Expectations are important,” Tony declares during his interview, especially when he has lofty prospects for his school. Tony would like to see his school become one of the premier elementary schools in the state. One key to fulfilling his dream is to focus on achievement. Tony says, “The students at my school need instructional leaders in the classroom who set high expectations.” (Tony’s interview, p. 3)
Mary speaks about high expectations and what that means for her students in a bilingual urban elementary school. During her interview, Mary declares: “Rigor in the curriculum. Our students come to us with a limited background and a very narrow focus on vocabulary and so they lack prior knowledge. It is very difficult to build on something that isn’t there.” (Mary’s interview, p. 3)

Due to the No Child Left Behind legislation and the emphasis on the state’s benchmarks, principals in both clusters state their apprehension about setting high academic expectations for all students. The accountability ultimately placed on principals is immense.

It is imperative for principals to be knowledgeable and implement proven “best practices” within their schools especially as it relates to student achievement. In this study, both clusters of principals responded positively about this topic.

During the interview process, Cluster 1 principal David states: “I like to be on the forefront of change and to be open and receptive to new trends...So if I keep people motivated, to keep them learning that’s a goal. If they’re motivated then that translates how the kids are being motivated.” (David’s interview, p. 4)

Another Cluster 1 principal Jim addresses the need to be current with best practices. He stated that a principal needs to be “in tune with current effective teaching practices and...has to be able to support those practices” (Jim’s interview, p. 1). He uses an example to sustain this statement. Jim declared: “Its okay to say that you want differentiated teaching in your classrooms and it is another thing to know the resources and support that go into it. The principal has to know what effective teaching looks like,
they have to be able to monitor it and they have to know all of the resources that go into it in order to support the teaching.” (Jim’s interview, p. 1)

Not only are Cluster 1 principals knowledgeable about best practices, but so are their counterparts. Cluster 2 principals also reported their knowledge and implementation of best practices.

Megan who likes being on the “cutting edge” in terms of best practices refers to her school and district implementing the John Hopkins’ model and using the Reading First program. Megan also speaks about how her district “broke out” the freshman class from the traditional high school setting and put them in a separate building. This move was implemented to provide better academic achievement and social control for the freshmen class.

The knowledge and implementation of proven best practices by urban elementary principals is significant especially in relation to advancement and sustainability of student achievement

With the current No Child Left Behind legislation, principals find themselves regularly collecting and analyzing student achievement data as an integral part of their position. This commitment of data analysis dictates what and how content is taught in their school’s classrooms.

Cluster 1 principal Steve discussed his computer recording system used to track individual student achievement. He stated: “I can get on the computer and track a student’s progress on a weekly basis. Or I can track a class on a weekly basis. Or I can track the school on a weekly basis. The parents receive each Monday…a ‘preview,’ which tells the parent what the child will be taught this week. Every Friday they received
a ‘progress report.’ This tells them how the child did during the week.” (Steve’s interview, p. 3)

Another principal stressed that her job is to take data from the building and help the staff understand how it can drive instruction. Barbara, in her interview tells how this role evolved: “We have disaggregated information into ethnic groups and gender. We have 97% free and reduced lunch here. So our aggregate is our disadvantaged groups. We’ve been looking for trends in math and reading to see where we need to concentrate so our scores will go up. For our new teachers hiring into the district, we have professional development that works with them to understand the data.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 2)

David observed that with the No Child Left Behind legislation, there is no choice but to do data analysis by all the subgroups and have a written plan as to how you’re going to narrow the gap. “So every school is doing that. There’s no excuse, that has to be done and then they (district administration) check to see if were doing that. It’s intentional and there’s nobody escaping that.” (David’s interview, p. 3)

Diane shared her role in relation to data driven analysis. In her case she has several agencies that are anxious about her data results. Not only is she responsible to the state but she also says: “What’s kind of different here is that as a charter school...We have the dual status, we are our charter, public school academy. We receive state funding. And we are also a Bureau of Indian Affairs School, so we have a relationship with the Sioux tribe of Chippewa Indians. So there is a lot of monitoring involved and a lot of oversight from these agencies.” (Diane’s interview, p. 4)
Cluster 1 principal Carol stressed that things have definitely changed from the
time when she was a special education teacher. Instead of “watering down” the
curriculum for special groups of students, now we must provide adequate achievement
instruction for all groups of students according to the state’s mandates for testing and data
collection. She says: “The reading teacher and I meet with these teams weekly to go over
lessons and a special education staff will accommodate where they absolutely had to. So
that is one huge way that we are reducing the achievement gap.” (Carol’s interview, p. 3)

The emphasis of data in relation to student achievement did not escape either
cluster. Cluster 2 principals spoke about data driven analysis and how it affects them in
their respective schools.

Mark states, “As the instructional leader, you need to know what it is that you
have to achieve and by that I mean, you need to know about the data, curriculum, what is
driving instruction, and how do I get everyone on the same page as an instructional
leader.” (Mark’s interview, p. 1)

The role of data analysis is very challenging for some principals. Sue says in her
interview that she finds it very challenging to really understand the data, and make those
data driven decisions. “To be able to analyze the data in such a way to be really able to
understand our kids; to be able to put the proper interventions in place. Implementation of
programs has been a huge challenge. Any initiative is a challenge.” (Sue’s interview, p. 2)

Maryanne talks about curriculum from an outcome perspective. During her
interview she says: “I can’t give you every benchmark by heart but I know what’s
appropriate for grade levels. I usually look at the end result, what is a first grader
supposed to know, what is a second-grader supposed to know and so on. And then being able to walk in a classroom and determine if that is happening effectively.” (Maryann’s interview, p. 1)

Mike expresses the urgent need to stay on top of student achievement. This means that he must be able to read and understand the data for his school’s students. In Mike’s interview he says: “For me it is the unrelenting need to stay focused on raising student achievement. Data is so important. I have individual data records that indicate how each student is doing. I check these reports all the time. I can’t afford not to notice when a student is struggling. I also check teachers’ lesson plans to make sure that the objective includes the standards prescribed by the state. This is a time consuming aspect to the job.” (Mike’s interview, p. 2)

Both clusters of principals acknowledge the importance of data collection, analysis and data-driven instruction. This apparent and “sustained focus on the improvement of teaching, placing teaching and good instruction at the center of school life regardless of what else might be going on in the school, is part of a productive leadership response to accountability (Sleeter, 2007, p. 33).

Identifying the most challenging aspects (personally and professionally) of the position of a principal working in an urban area can be revealing in terms of their perspective on achievement.

Respondents were asked about the most challenging things they encountered leading a highly diverse student population (multiple responses were included). Table 26 indicates the response of principals’ concerns about the challenging aspects of their job.
Table 26
Participants' Most Challenging Aspects about Job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolving Issues before Penalty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising Student Achievement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Involvement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look to principal to solve problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the data and making decisions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making AYP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long hours on the job</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student mobility</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue of poverty</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to intervention</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making staff decisions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-cultures and languages</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coming in as “outsider”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the data, none of the responses met the established criterion of a theme. Cluster 1 principals were most concerned or challenged by protecting their family time and spending long hours on the job whereas, Cluster 2 principals were concerned with getting parents involved in their children’s school and the awareness of multiple cultures and languages.

Principals spend an enormous amount of time working in their schools daily. Frequently, this escalates into a concern for the principal’s family. Cluster 1 principals spoke about this concern.

Carol shared during her interview, “Well, personally, there just is no time. I have a five-year-old at home, and a lot of times I work on weekends, I work at night.” (Carol’s interview, p. 1)

Frequently, a principal’s personal life is limited due to the long hours on the job. Edward reported that “personally, there is no personal life in this case; my family has
always known what I wanted to do. And they have been very supportive, so I am blessed in that way.” (Edward’s interview, p. 2)

Parents of students play a significant part in any elementary school. Cluster 2 principals were more concerned about parent involvement and building parental relationships than their Cluster 1 counterparts.

Cluster 2 principal Mark stated, “If I see them (parents) outside, I will go out and visit with them. I will go to their homes. I will talk with them, I will pick them up, and I will bring them here. I have to have that relationship building and I have to be visible.” (Mark’s interview, p. 4)

Tony indicated that the best way for him to encourage parents to become part of the school is to have personal conversations with them. He says: “I’m outside every morning as the parents are walking up to the school to drop their kids off; I go outside at lunchtime and after school. I make a point of going up and speaking to each parent. Teachers are very intentional on doing this too. Beyond visiting each family at the beginning of the school year in their home, if there is a disciplinary problem parents never received a phone call, I go to their home. More and more of our family members are coming up and spending time in the classroom. That outreach has really been important.” (Tony’s interview, p. 4)

Additionally, Tony claimed that his school parents have taught him to be sensitive. Tony continues by saying: “I had a lot of the misconceptions about parents. At one point in time I saw parents as being irresponsible, lazy. How could they not come to conferences? But that’s not the case. And I believe that every parent wants what’s best for their child. A lot of times our parents don’t have the skills to communicate that. But
I know that every child who walks through that door, their parents want what’s best. And many of our parents are limited in what they can provide. So pay attention to that and make sure that you don’t jump to any quick decisions or that you fall into the stereotypical concepts that are out there.” (Tony’s interview, p. 4)

Mary, who is a principal of a multicultural Hispanic elementary school, encourages her parents to become more involved, but realizes that it is difficult. Mary indicated: “It’s always important to remember when speaking to parents...put yourself in their place. Say to yourself, ‘what if that were my kid, would I have acted in that way?’ When I explained to parents that I am a parent and then I go on and talk about policy or behavior, whatever it might be. They seem much better at understanding it.” (Mary’s interview, p. 4)

Speaking about communicating, building relationships, and encouraging parents to become part of the school Lynn stated: “That is easy because I can relate on so many different levels. So I think that makes it easy for me to contact them. Nobody has a phone or they change their phone number, often. So I have to go to the house. If I want to really get a hold of somebody I go to their house or I send a note home with your child and I usually do the drastic thing like saying, your child cannot return...that gets their attention. I will also contact the parents at their jobs.” (Lynn’s interview, p. 3)

Megan states that when building relationships with parents and encouraging them to come to school: “It doesn’t matter whether the parent is right or wrong. The parent is right. Because that is her most precious commodity, and she is entrusting you to love that baby on the days you don’t want to. And give them a break on the days you don’t want
to, and to understand that she doesn’t know everything about parenting and you need to fill in the gaps.” (Megan’s interview, p. 4)

Both clusters of principals articulated perspectives on topics that are important for administrations to become familiar with. As mentioned, Cluster 1 principals were concerned with hard work and lengthy hours, whereas Cluster 2 principals expressed concerned with parental involvement.

Questions (Questions 11, 12, & 13) are grouped together providing significant insight to the principals’ concerns for their professional goals, student achievement and the achievement gaps.

The next three tables will provide verification of the data supplied by these questions. The questions are recognized by their assigned numbers and the data by clusters. Multiple answers were acknowledged.

Due to the variety of the responses to question 11, it is difficult to meet the theme criterion. However by cluster, specific responses become significant. Table 27 illustrates. Cluster 1 principals were concerned with installing rigorous academic curricula and making sure that the state benchmarks are met. In contrast Cluster 2 principals focused on parent involvement, student achievement and the collaboration of the staff were vital.

Aligning the curriculum is an important assignment for today’s principals. No longer do districts and schools have a haphazard manipulation of what is being taught in the classrooms or districts. Aligning the curriculum with the state’s benchmarks and grade level expectations are critical for student achievement and school assessment. The principal is expected to make sure that his/her curriculums are aligned and reflecting positive student achievement.
### Table 27

**Identifying Professional Goals as Principal**

**Question 11: Professional Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I want equity and equality for every single child to the best of our ability. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academically rigorous. (3)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading at benchmark, doing math at benchmark, and will be writing at benchmark. No matter what their particular background is. (3)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meet the needs of the students, academically and social emotionally to help the whole child. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100% of our kids come out of here successfully. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ultimate goal is to have all the kids go to college. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Every student reaching mastery in every subject or grade level. (2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To come in every day and make a difference. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One goal is the safety and the success of the kids. (2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To be on the forefront of change. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>My goal is to develop and become a great instructional leader. (2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Make my teachers stand a little taller as far as their vision goes. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To raise student achievement and train teachers to be more effective educators. (2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruit more Hispanic leaders. (2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have the staff in this building prepared for when I step away from this role. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To meet the socially emotional needs of every child. (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focusing on parent involvement, student achievement, and collaboration of staff. (4)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>That all students are achieving at least one year’s growth. (2)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Important to me to continue to be effective at my job as principal. I also have to be effective at my job to the parent. (2)</strong></td>
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</table>

Cluster 1 principals were anxious about making sure that their curriculums were aligned properly with the state’s benchmarks. During Carol’s interview she indicated, “Chief instructional learning is that you need to know curriculum. You need to know what is good, what it looks like, how to support the teachers with materials and other things and always focusing on results. We focus a lot on data and results around here.” (Carol’s interview, p. 1)

Steve related the strain of making sure that instruction is aligned with curriculum when he spoke about the benchmarks and the pressure to pass the state’s tests. Steve who is a principal of a charter school noted: “Another challenge is to make sure that we have the curriculum aligned with the benchmarks...we use a standardized test, and for which
we prepare the kids for in September which tells us what they know and they don’t know. And that provides us with individual goals for each of the kids.” (Steve’s interview, p. 3)

Jack takes this aspect seriously and has done research on the effects and implications of not making grade level benchmarks. During his interview Jack stated: “My number one goal: the children in this school will be reading at benchmark, doing math at benchmark and will be writing at benchmark. No matter what their particular background is. The interesting thing is that as I looked at statistics of urban children they are below grade level in the third grade. If we aren’t doing absolutely our best job and instructing them, if we can’t say that we have done everything that we can, then we as educators have doomed that child. That child is 90% more likely to be imprisoned, 90% more likely to drop out of school, and 90% more likely to be on drugs...88% of all males in jail are functionally illiterate.” (Jack’s interview, p. 4)

A principal’s job and curriculum aligning is a never ending story according to David. Once you think that you have it figured out, they change it! David’s frustration shows during his interview when he says, “By knowing the district’s curriculum and the ever changing state grade level expectations, going to in-services, and being in attendance, not just sending teachers. Having grade level meetings to discuss the curriculum, we have those about every six weeks. We talk about curriculum, standards, and what ever.” (David’s interview, p. 1)

Building team leadership is often viewed as a positive attribute of the principal. There are many and varied reasons for a principal to encourage and develop their teachers in sharing the leadership of the building. None of the Cluster 1 principals spoke of this
type of leadership development. Several Cluster 2 principals readily admitted to teacher leadership development.

Cluster 2 principal Tony stresses the value of teacher input and discusses teacher leadership preparation by saying: “My leadership style is at times a bit transactional and at other times a bit transformational. I think it takes trust to really empower teachers to take on leadership roles. And that is something that I am becoming better at. And there are certain things that I just passed the ball off to the teachers and in other ways. I just take and say that I will handle this. All the time I solicit advice and input from the staff.” (Tony’s interview, p. 1)

Cluster 2 principals reflect interest in building teacher capacity. Maryanne, Mary, and Sue concur with the importance of this attribute. Maryanne believes in “Building capacity among my teachers for leadership. I’m one of those kinds of people; let me show you how to do it and then you can help me do it. So I like to bounce ideas off of people, and I want them to be the best at what they can be and do because that makes my job easier” (Maryanne’s interview, p. 1). Mary elaborates by saying, “It is important to be able to have the right staff and to have shared leadership. The way I function as an instructional leader is in facilitating the leadership in the building. So we have the people who are capable. Their expertise actually empowers the rest of the staff so they themselves become leaders through that venue. For me, it is really looking at the strengths of my staff. I have a very large staff and picking out the people who can lead the grade levels. So we create an instructional leadership team, and they really drive the decisions that are made.” (Mary’s interview, p. 1)
As an experienced administrator, Sue says that she doesn’t have to do everything herself, because she can’t physically or professionally do it all. “I have a very strong staff so I look to them and they will let me know if there is something they would like professional development in. They are comfortable enough with me.” (Sue’s interview, p. 1)

Mark speaks about an important factor that dictates building failure if absent in leadership development. Mark talks about the “trust factor” during his interview. He says: “I had to build relationships with people and we had to develop into a team. No one here has a lot of sour grapes towards this person or that person. This is my third year, and so now I can breathe a little bit because I know the people I have, the families and the students. Learning who you can trust and who you can’t trust.” (Mark’s interview, p. 2)

Cluster 1 principals are concerned with curriculum alignment with benchmarks. Whereas Cluster 2 principals are anxious about building leadership development. Other areas of concern topics have been previously mentioned.

The participants were asked a question about what steps the district has taken to close any academic achievement gap(s). This particular interview question asked the participating principals to verbalize these steps. Table 28 illustrates.

The diversity of responses indicates no category met the thematic level. However, Cluster 1 principals felt that using differentiated learning strategies, literacy in all content areas, and the intentional district educational plans designed to address the achievement gap(s) are critical. Likewise, Cluster 2 principals responded that they felt that focusing on literacy in the content areas was imperative as were their districts’ plans.
### Table 28

**Steps District Has Taken Reducing Achievement Gap(s)**

**Question 12:** What steps has the school district taken to reduce the achievement gap?

#### Cluster 1

- The gender gaps and then looking at our most significant gaps, which were our African-American boys and our Hispanic boys and girls. (1)
- Using differentiated learning. (4)
- Need to test children in a meaningful manner. (2)
- Literacy in all content areas. (5)
- Educational plan and it addresses just that we will close the achievement gap. (4)
- We continue to give them quality instruction. (2)
- Achievement gap is usually addressed by individual schools. (2)
- Elaborate computer recording system used to track every student weekly. (2)
- Intense reading instruction. (2)
- Continuous Improvement Model monitoring process. (1)
- No choice but to do a data analysis. (2)

#### Cluster 2

- Running reports on trends on how kids perform on a monthly basis in their classrooms. (2)
- Broke down the freshman class out of the high school and put them in a separate school. (1)
- Varied student assessment. (1)
- Focusing in on language arts, reading and writing. (4)
- Overreaching umbrella of various components, which includes community engagement, collaboration, relationship building, and the instructional framework. (2)
- Strategic plan, which is a four to five year plan. (3)
- Small group or one-on-one instruction. (3)

Cluster 1 principals cited differential instruction as key to academic success of all students. The knowledge and implementation of differential instruction is located under the guise of “best practices” which was indicated earlier.

Several Cluster 1 principals stated that teachers need to be able to instruct reading literacy. Jack bluntly states in his interview: “You better know how to teach those kids to read! To me if I were running universities right now, they would all be reading majors. If you’re going to teach in the elementary schools, you better know how to teach kids to read. I don’t care about artsy crafty stuff but kids need to know how to read; of course, right after that, writing and math.” (Jack’s interview, p. 7)
Bill agrees with the need for elementary teachers to be able to instruct reading, writing, and mathematic literacy. In Bill’s interview he states that teacher education students must “first, really have to know how to teach reading.” (Bill’s interview, p. 5)

Barbara and David share a common interest in literacy. Barbara talks about her background as a classroom teacher and how it might serve as a model for others. Barbara says, “they need to have intense training of what it means to acquire a language reading and writing. I have a K-12 reading certificate. And then I went back to Western Michigan University to get training in Reading Recovery. I’m a reading literacy expert.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 1)

David speaks about reading literacy and how he would like to see his school utilize reading programs. However, David also talks about the expense involved in implementing such programs, difficult with current budget cuts. During his interview, David says: “It would be helpful to have more on-site before and after school classes. Remedial things for children to participate in. Reading Recovery would be the answer, but that is so expensive. If I could have one thing it would be Reading Recovery for first graders, because I see them make a difference, change lives. That’s so expensive, but that alone is worth it, it’s preventative.” (David’s interview, p. 3)

One Cluster 2 principal stated that reading literacy is important and he focuses on literacy instruction. Tony says, “That literacy is critical for my students and I expect that my teachers are competent in these areas.” (Tony’s interview, p. 2)

Both Mary and Elaine are Cluster 2 principals leading bilingual schools. In her interview, Elaine says, “They have to read fluently, of course coming from a second language, so that continues to be a struggle for us; writing, too. That continues to be a
struggle for us. We need to make sure our kids can read and write in English and that they speak it well.” (Elaine’s interview, p. 2)

Like Elaine, Mary shares her concerns with English proficiency. Mary states, “We need to develop oral language proficiency and vocabulary knowledge. Our students come to us with a limited background with a very narrow focus on vocabulary. And so they lacked prior knowledge. It is very difficult to build on something that isn’t there.” (Elaine’s interview, p. 3)

From the data collected, both principal clusters felt that reading literacy is important. Both clusters voiced their opinions that their students need to read well in order to be successful and achieve.

The role of the district in closing existing achievement gaps is crucial. Both cluster principals believed that the districts’ impact on the achievement gaps imperative.

Cluster 1 principal Carol reported her district’s history. She said: “Five years ago we had a new superintendent who really did massive changes in our district and in my opinion he gets all the credit for ensuring that principals are instructional leaders, and not just managers. We clarified expectations regarding good teaching, regarding instructional leadership. We focus conversations about instruction, about lessons, about student achievement, about results and working together in a collaborative nature to make students higher achieving. We focus a lot on data and results around here.” (Carol’s interview, p. 1)

For some Cluster 1 principals, district steps are viewed slightly differently. Edward states that his district has taken a huge step towards closing the achievement gap, by being part of the Reading First program. “We are also a magnet school; we focus on a
specific content area to draw in more diverse populations. We are a segregated school. So we voluntarily desegregate by attracting outside families. We work every day as to how we allocate our resources to close that gap.” (Edward’s interview, p. 2)

Bill, who is a new principal states, “We are part of the Reading First grant; we are in our fourth year. So intense is our reading instruction, we are lowering class sizes in K–3, the Promise, is a huge part of trying to draw people back into the district and also raising the stakes on preparing kids for college. That’s our job. As principals our ongoing work has always focused on achievement.” (Bill’s interview, p. 3)

Cluster 2 principals were also vocal about their district’s plans for closing the achievement gaps.

Mark revealed that his district has an education plan which is three years in duration. He reported that “one of our goals and objectives has always been to reduce the achievement gap between ethnic groups and gender within our system. We have made great strides in the last two years, closing the achievement gaps between African-Americans and Hispanics and Caucasian groups. This plan has ignited the efforts towards reducing the achievement gaps, but it also has brought us together as a community.” (Mark’s interview, p. 3)

“We have a strategic plan, it’s a three-year plan, and that our main goal is to reduce the achievement gap. So they actually have given buildings autonomy to do that based on their building culture and what their needs are. But everybody knows that’s their goal.” (Maryanne’s interview, p. 2)

Student mobility and the corresponding achievement gaps can be taxing for principals. Lynn speaks of her former superintendent who implemented pacing charts
among the district’s schools to accommodate student mobility. Lynn says that “these charts really assist a child that’s moving around us and misses out on multiplication or division or something like that.” (Lynn’s interview, p. 3)

Some districts have undergone major reforms in deals of student achievement. Tony reveals: “About five years ago, we incorporated an instructional model so that there is consistency across the district focusing on literacy...We have gone from shooting at the hip, and walking blind to a very a data-driven culture. So everything centers on data...But we are also focusing a lot on literacy. And what support and interventions are in place to help students who are not learning. Documenting, assessing, diagnosing and prescribing.” (Tony’s interview, p. 3)

Both clusters of principals agreed that districts are intentionally implementing practices and policies that positively affect student achievement and reduce the achievement gap(s).

Principals were asked what students need to succeed at your school. Table 29 describes their responses.

A thematic response rate was not established by this question indicating a wide variety of responses. However, Cluster 1 principals concluded that excellent materials and highly trained teachers make the difference in student achievement. Cluster 2 principals stated that a rigorous curriculum, literacy, excellent teachers, and high expectations are mandatory. Rigorous curriculum, literacy and high expectations have been described earlier in this chapter.

In today’s educational system, it is important for teachers to have the required resources in order to instruct their students resulting in high student achievement (Sleeter,
Table 29

Student Needs

Question 13: What do the students at your school need to learn?

Cluster 1

Strong literacy base conversational and rich in English-language. (2)
Stay at this elementary school their entire elementary career. (2)
Small classroom environment with a master teacher in charge. (3)
Excellent materials, highly trained teachers. (4)
Background knowledge and new experiences. (1)
They need to pay attention; they need to do basically what the teacher asked them to do. (1)
Environment that is explicit, structured not only the learning expectations, but the behavioral expectations are enforced. (1)
A very secure loving home environment that would meet their basic needs. (1)
Remedial activities for children to participate in. (1)

Cluster 2

Our rigorous curriculum that stimulates achievement for students. (4)
Parents willing to work as partners with skilled teachers. (2)
They have to read fluently. (3)
We need to develop oral language proficiency and vocabulary knowledge. (2)
A social emotional need. (1)
Instructional leaders in the classroom that sets high expectations. (3)
Excellent teachers
Need to feel that the teachers are caring about them. (2)

2007). Principals need to make sure that teachers had the materials they needed to teach effectively, including not only the everyday materials but also materials needed for hands-on learning and enrichment activities. Principals make the connection between necessary resources and student achievement. Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 principals acknowledge this need.

Patty and Barbara understand this connection better because of their years as being a successful classroom teacher. Cluster 1 principal Patty, a long time teacher shared her “role of the principal is to make the teacher’s job easier. My role is to grease the skids so that my teachers are unfettered by all of the other stuff, so they can do their job of instruction, much better.” (Patty’s interview, p. 1)
Barbara adds, “I’m still very much a teacher. I believe that the principal is the chief teacher and instructor. So I can go out into a classroom and pick up the instruction. I do that on a frequent basis, I like to help teachers whenever they need that help.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 2)

Aside from providing resources, principals are concerned with placing the “right” person who is highly qualified in their classrooms. In this study, principals were asked to comment about their hiring practices. In many cases, the Human Resource Department and the local Union solely handles the hiring of highly qualified instructors. In other cases, the principal played an important role.

A Cluster 1 charter school principal Steve explained his role in the hiring process and reports: “I hold 51% of the vote and don’t often exercise that. It’s a participatory thing. I include the interview team made up of our classroom teachers, I want their input. I am looking for someone who can come in and embrace our system; it’s a lot of work. We are objective base. So, a teacher needs to be responsible for teaching between seven and eight hundred objectives. So you need to be able to prepare a roadmap of what objectives are going to be covered during each quarter...Not a clock watcher, because this is not a 7 to 4 job.” (Steve’s interview, p. 4)

David reported his role when hiring highly qualified teachers for his building and what he looks for. David shared: “I get to go through applications as part of an interview team, sort out the ones I want to interview based on their credentials and references. Look at the letters of recommendation and make some phone calls. I’m always looking for a good minority candidate and actively recruit them, but it’s always a shortage finding people.” (David’s interview, p. 4)
Barbara is an example of a pro-active Cluster 1 principal who is a veteran administrator. She stated, “I’ve been with the district so long I’m often on hiring teams. For this school, I would say that I tell the candidates what the students need here. I talked about our socio-economic, cultural diversity and explained to them some of the expectations that we have here. So the candidates know going in that it’s going to take a lot to work here.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 4)

Following a prescribed protocol during an interview does not always account for the information that principals are looking for. In some case, principals are looking for a different perspective. “What I look for and try to get is a sense for whether or not a person has a heart. In an environment like this, they really have to have a heart for it because you won’t stay otherwise. You really have to have the heart for it because you can teach a lesson plan, you can teach a lot of the other things, but you can’t teach someone to have a heart for this type of job.” (Bill’s interview, p. 4)

Overall, the data for this research question indicated that there are similarities and differences between this pool of Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 urban elementary principals. Both clusters of principals agreed that setting high expectations for student achievement is imperative. Both clusters also acknowledged that the role of data and knowing best practices is important. Both clusters realized the magnitude of literacy in the content areas. Additionally there are differences according to the data presented. Table 30 reviews these differences.

While these principals share commonalities, they also reported marked differences. As Table 30 suggests, Cluster 1 principals are concerned with cognitive constructs, except for protecting family time, which is relational. Student achievement is
Table 30

Research Question 1: Cluster Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Installing rigorous curriculum</td>
<td>Parent involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting the Benchmarks</td>
<td>Student achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differential learning</td>
<td>Staff Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Education Plan</td>
<td>Stimulating curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting family time</td>
<td>Relationship building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working long hours</td>
<td>Multicultural issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

important for Cluster 2 principals but the venue for this goal is through relationship building agendas.

Elementary principals in urban areas face many challenges including students from diverse backgrounds. As a result, it becomes essential for principals to develop an all inclusive school environment that fosters student achievement.

Research Question 2: How high poverty; high achieving elementary White and non-White principals working in urban areas cultivate diversity-sensitive, inclusive school environments?

Prior to establishing an all inclusive learning environment, it is imperative for urban elementary principals to recognize their own cultural and racial awareness.

Principals were asked to describe their own cultural background. None of the repeated responses categories can be designated as themes. Table 31 summarizes the responses to this question.

Today Patty leads an extremely diversely populated elementary school but previously things were different. Patty recalls that she comes from a small town of about 3,000 people. In Patty’s interview, she indicated, “I never met anyone Jewish until I graduated and came to Michigan State University, let alone other backgrounds...I am
Table 31
Cultural Awareness by Race and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Afri-Am</th>
<th>Latina</th>
<th>Multi</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*States Race</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Doesn't know how to answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Don't have racial issues</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Socio-economic focus</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Assimilation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Awareness of others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

pretty white bred and I’m also Catholic. Being Catholic made me a minority when growing up.” (Patty’s interview, p.2)

Jack, another Cluster 1 principal, recalls his “racial” cultural background by saying, “I’m blue-collar, my dad worked construction; my mother was a secretary, part-time. I went to school with other blue-collar kids and I know we didn’t have a lot of money but I’ve never felt any of that...I had an extended family, lots of family.” (Jack’s interview, p. 4)

Another Cluster 1 principal from a middle-class background speaks about his experiences. “I’m from an urban area’s suburb and I went to high school with one Black kid,” says Jim (Jim’s interview, p. 3). He continues, “I grew up in the 70s. The whole, you know Martin Luther King thing, the riots in (City). So that impacted me in a lot of ways. I came from a mostly homogenous background.” (Jim’s interview, p. 3)

Carol, Cluster 1 principal, was baffled by the question concerning her racial cultural background. Carol says, “My ethnicity! I’m not sure what you’re getting at. I’m Irish and German. I grew up in a small farming town on this side of the state. It’s hard to answer because I know that it’s not a good answer.” (Carol’s interview, p. 2)
An additional befuddled principal had even greater difficulty answering the question regarding her racial cultural background. “I am not exactly sure what you mean by this question. “I am living so close to the reservation and meeting people who have spent their entire life on the reservation and generations of poverty, and different issues.” (Diane’s interview, p. 3)

For some principals racial cultural identity also includes religious doctrine as it did for Barbara. “I’m Caucasian European. I went to an inner city school in Muskegon. I had a lot of friends that were African-American and Hispanic. My parents raised us to be accepting to everybody. You treat people the way they treat you and it doesn’t have a whole lot to do with the way they look. I treat people the way I expect to be treated. You know, the Golden Rule, Christian background.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 3)

Steve, a Cluster 1, responded differently. His responses reflected a socio-political base. “I grew up in Saginaw, Michigan. My father was born in Canada. My mother was born in the United States. My mother’s mother was born in Germany. My father’s parents are both Canadian. I’m a melting pot, with all the forces coming together. Saginaw at that time was an industrial town, primarily General Motors. I was a year old when World War II started, and I remember going through that. I had an uncle who was outside of Pearl Harbor. When the Japanese struck in December of 1941, I was almost 2 years old, but somehow I remember that.” (Steve’s interview, p. 2)

Bill leads a diverse urban elementary school. Although he has struggled in his position, Bill feels that he was “led” to take the job of principal. Bill speaks of his cultural background by saying, “I’m Caucasian. My mother is an immigrant from Iceland. So I’m half Icelandic. My mother does not have a high school degree, and she
stayed home and raised the children. My father is well educated. I'm of some Italian German descent, too. Not much diversity growing up, I went to private religious schools, most of my career.” (Bill’s interview, p. 2)

Cluster 1 principal David, who grew up by the shores of Lake Superior states, “That the only things that are black were bears and roads” (David’s interview, p. 2). When David was asked if there were any other cultures (Native Americans) in evidence, he said “No, because that culture is so invisible.” (David’s interview, p. 2)

Edward, who is a young principal and admits that he is still learning the position, relates that he came from a “poor, white, trailer park family” (Edward’s interview, p. 2). Edward continues by saying, “I came from a very small town, graduated with a class of about 35 kids and we were on welfare, when I grew up. Both of my parents were alcoholics.” (Edward’s interview, p. 2)

Cluster 2 principals seem to have a divergent manner in answering this question. Mark who has a social work background intertwines his faith when answering. He relates: “I am an African-American. I think I’ve been able to balance my life; I get along with people because I’m a people person. I’ve always said to myself that everyone has a story to tell. So it doesn’t matter what social economic or racial background you come from everyone has a story. These are my bicultural beliefs based on my faith and that is one big cultural aspect for me.” (Mark’s interview, p. 2)

Early life circumstances leave a lasting impression. A Cluster 2 principal shares, “I was a disadvantaged youth, dirt poor, ghetto, teen mom, abusive father, totally dysfunctional family. But my mom loved us; she never gave any of us away and there were six of us.” (Megan’s interview, p. 1)
For Tony, what seemed to be a curse was actually a blessing. During his interview, he recounted: “I come from the same background as many of my kids and parents at the school. I have had the same challenges and barriers that many of my students have. I come from a single-family home, a mother with five children, who worked really hard. The finances were limited. The at-risk of failure factors, I qualified for many of them. High crime, drug area, but I made it through just like many of my kids.” (Tony’s interview, p. 2)

Some Cluster 2 participating principals were born in other countries and offer differing perspectives. “I am a product of language immersion. Born in Mexico City, I was raised at least, the majority in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In both countries, my parents sent me to German/Spanish immersion schools. I was really around a diverse group of people, and then when I came to the States, I learned English in high school. It was a cultural shock for me when I came from Buenos Aires, Argentina to Muskegon, Michigan. I would say that my cultural background is pretty rich and we live the situation that we have here.” (Mary’s interview, p. 2)

For some principals the connection between race and economics is undeniable, especially in terms of poverty. During the interview, Lynn expressed her race in terms of poverty. “I’m from poverty; I’m from times when parents always back the school not like it is today where it’s always the child who is right and the school’s wrong. I’m from a traditional poverty home where my mom would say, if you have only one blouse it is no reason to be dirty. You wash it every night before going to bed and put it on clean in the morning.” (Lynn’s interview, p. 2)
Cluster 2 principal Maryanne, talks about her racial cultural background as being middle-class. “How would I describe my cultural background? Well I’m African-American raised in the South. Always big cities. I’m from Los Angeles and Atlanta so (this city) is different for me. I’m third generation college educated. I grew up middle-class. I got my poverty training for Ruby Payne, like most folks did.” (Maryanne’s interview, p. 2)

Sue, a Cluster 2 principal, responded unfalteringly stating “I’m rich, how is that for a good answer! I’m a person of color. I’m an African-American.” (Sue’s interview, p. 2)

The data revealed that much of the conversation evolved around socio-economics and ethnicity rather than race and culture alone. Cluster 1 principals frequently were not able to verbalize themselves racially but were more comfortable speaking about their ethnicity and family background, descriptive qualities. Some principals even avoided the topic of race. Yet none of the Cluster 1 principals spoke about what it means to be a member of the “majority” race. As the data indicates, Cluster 2 principals were more open to the question and provided responses with different undertones.

Cultural diversity training has been beneficial for educators and principals alike, especially if they are employed in a school that is outside their own home culture. Today, issues of race and racial awareness of others enters into the professional conversations particularly as it relates to student achievement.

Consequently, the participating principals were asked about their cultural diversity training. It is significant to note how the principals chose to respond to this
question. Additionally, questions were included relating to racial cultural awareness of others.

Cultural diversity training can take different shapes. The principals may have had some (or one) undergraduate or graduate course relating to cultural diversity training. Or they may have partaken in sponsored workshops on the subject of racism and diversity. Frequently at the district level, many opportunities are presented for diversity learning. Other principals simply stated that they have learned about diversity from “living it.”

Participating principals were asked to recall any cultural/diversity training that they may have had in their educational backgrounds. Table 32 represents the response data and indicates that only the District-offered workshops on diversity training qualifies as a 70% theme destination for this pool of participating urban elementary principals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Afri-Am</th>
<th>Latina</th>
<th>Multi.</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College classes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>District workshops</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No training/classes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cluster 1 participants shared some insight in regards to their racial cultural diversity training or the lack of such training. Patty, who has numerous years of experience and who leads a highly diversified student population stated: “I’ve had on-the-job cultural diversity training and I did seek some of that out in some of the courses that I took. I think we are always learning things about other cultures. It’s important to know the customs of each culture.” (Patty’s interview, p. 2)
Other Cluster 1 principals recalled courses taken early in their undergraduate programs. These courses were related to English classes or to specific courses of study, such a social studies curriculum. Barbara and Jim recalled these earlier classes. Barbara claimed that during her freshman year in college she got a lot of multicultural readings. She read books about Malcolm X and others. After that she had some sociology courses, in which they discussed diversity. Barbara had these courses in her undergraduate program, but since then, she has not had anything else.

Jim has a particular reason to remember taking a course in his social studies program. Jim says, “The course had something to do with poverty and I received a “B” as a grade. I remember that because that’s the only class I ever got a “B” in! That was a required class and it was part of the elementary program, I think, or it could have been part of my social studies major.” (Jim’s interview, p. 2)

David recalls Lyndon Johnson’s “War on Poverty” movement of the 1970s. At the time, Michigan State University was on the forefront with innovating programs for working with inner-city schools. David says in his interview: “I was an intern in Flint and did an extra term of student teaching with inner-city schools; I had a lot of multicultural training through that. It was a good use of that money; I spent two years in the Peace Corps with more multicultural training, learning to be a minority which is very insightful, because when you are the minority you could see what it’s like. At that time it was black history, it was the beginning of the movement in the 70s and everyone went through it and now it just petered out, that’s a travesty.” (David’s interview, p. 2)

Some Cluster 1 principals stated that they did not have or did not recall having any cultural diversity training in their undergraduate or graduate programs.
During the interview process, Carol seemed confused and hesitant about the question of cultural diversity training. She admitted and said, “My superintendent wants his staff to be more sensitive to cultural difference and sensitivity training. I have had none of that; I have only read two books on my own.” (Carol’s interview, p. 3)

When Steve, an experienced principal, was asked this question, he had to pause and reflect. It was clear that nothing came to mind about diversity training. Eventually Steve stated, “I have to think about that one. I’m sure that there have been. I can’t say that I did this or that at this university or that university. I just grew up in a diverse population. Even all my experiences, even in high school are culturally diverse.” (Steve’s interview, p. 2)

Diane said that she had racial cultural diversity training but it was not in her education program. During her interview, Diane said she has had “several graduate courses on cultural differences and working with minorities. It was through her social work program. But as far as teacher or administrator programs you didn’t have a whole lot of that.” (Diane’s interview, p. 3)

Mary, a Cluster 2 principal, has had extensive racial training from outside the district. In her interview, she talks about becoming a cultural trainer. Mary has been able to use her advanced training and has helped many individuals and districts. “That the only cultural training that I’ve had was training in the Institute of Healing of Racism and I am a facilitator for that. This particular Institute deals deeply into racism. That of course and all the training that comes out from Ruby Payne...But I have really immersed myself into various cultures, and I have tried to understand that. In college courses we studied

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Banks, and we did the usual sensitivity training, but I really got a lot deeper into it.”
(Mary’s interview, p. 2)

Some of the Cluster 2 principals reflected on their life experiences as diversity training. For these principals, life experience was a better teacher concerning cultural diversity than any college program. Lynn openly recalled her background by saying: “I’ve had a lot of cultural diversity training, even way back in my high school that was called Congo High so obviously there were a lot of African-Americans there; actually, about 30% minorities. In the 1960s, I was part of the team, we traveled to Detroit and talked about diversity with other students.” (Lynn’s interview, p. 2)

Other Cluster 2 principals don’t feel that they need any diversity courses because they have “been there.” During her interview, Megan decisively stated: “I don’t need any training, because first of all, I was born Black, but I worked in totally affluent, all white districts, and I worked in the inner city. I helped white kids realize their dream; I worked with Hispanic and with Black kids too.” (Megan’s interview, p. 2)

Sue also refers that her cultural diversity training comes from practical experience. Discussing her diversity training Sue self-assuredly states that she didn’t have any at the university but, she says, “Since I’ve been an administrator there have been a couple of courses that I had. For me personally, my best training comes from trial by fire. Being from the east side of the state, growing up, now that I look back on it was certainly a training ground for me.” (Sue’s interview, p. 2)

Maryanne, a young energetic principal, spoke of her diversity training or the lack of it in relation to her job performance. Maryanne has worked extensively in large urban cities all of her career and reports, “most of my diversity training has been on Ruby
Payne. You know, poverty training. I taught school in Los Angeles for two years and most of my training was how to teach and deal with Hispanics. So that was the extent of my cultural training.” (Maryanne’s interview, p. 2)

The presented data revealed there are gaps in the racial cultural diversity training between the races. Cluster 1 principals seem to be generally lacking in training that may assist them in their position of principal in a school that is outside their home culture. Cluster 2 principals were more open regarding racial cultural diversity training but perhaps more importantly, they offered real life experiences that were beneficial to their positions.

Principals were asked to reflect on their racial awareness of others from differing racial and cultural backgrounds. Interview questions 15 and 16 directly assessed their responses and are reflected in the next two tables. As the data indicates, there is a subtle overlapping that occurs between these two interview questions.

When responding to the racial and cultural awareness of others, Cluster 1 principal Diane indicated, “I think awareness is a good thing that we all should have. I think that this is something I’ve had a solid background in, but most teachers or school administrators may not have. I think our students and our families are very accepting, the Native students have really been assimilated into the community. To be honest with you, it’s hard at times to know which students are Native and which are not, so I don’t think there’s a real clear distinction.” (Diane’s interview, p. 3)

Cluster 1 principal Carol seemed confused by the question. She said, “I know you want me to say something about racial differences at the school but here we really don’t have an issue with that, we haven’t had any trouble with any kind of racial issue and we
have a lot of African-American students. So I really don’t think much about that.”
(Carol’s interview, p. 4)

Cluster 1 principal David is concerned with socio-economics and refers to a popular author. David says, “Knowing that 75% (of students) are from free or reduced lunch families, cultural differences, you have to be aware of Ruby Payne’s literature and anything by Ruby Payne would be helpful.” (David’s interview, p. 3)

Barbara agreed with David and explained in detail the role of relationship building. Barbara says: “You have to understand the actions of people and why they react the way they do. Our Latino families react differently than our African-American families and our Caucasian families. It just depends on culture. Our Latino families are extremely respectful of educators, and a lot of times they wouldn’t bring the problems to you, you have to find them out. Whereas African-American families and Caucasian families have a tendency to get here. You can’t come into a school like this and be the person that has all the answers. You’re better off taking an assessment of the culture.”
(Barbara’s interview, p. 5)

Patty, when speaking about understanding other cultures as it relates to the position of principal, noted that it is important to learn as much as you can about geography. Patty advises, “to take the time to learn about different cultures, to know your geography. When you see someone who looks like they might come from Korea don’t automatically assume that they are Korean. When a parent comes in I asked them, ‘what is your home country?’ I never make assumptions.” (Patty’s interview, p. 3)

Bill advised that you need to know what the students need and where their needs aren’t being met. “Part of the problem is that schools have taken on too much and we
can’t be in the business of social services. If we need to be focusing on achievement, we
can’t be focusing on health services... We can have hostile parents here. Unresponsive
parents that you can’t contact, the (phone) numbers keep on changing. Staff wants to feel
valued, because it is such an intense place to work. It’s thankless, there’s not a lot of
parents support.” (Bill’s interview, p. 3)

Bill offered other advice to would-be principal candidates in this type of school.
Bill says, “I say to myself if I knew then what I know now, would I have taken this job or
would I have waited for something else... I guess in some ways, you have to see it as
missionary work... You have to make an effort to love these kids and families even when
they’re acting not very lovable.” (Bill’s interview, p. 4)

When asked what counsel he would provide a new principal candidate in relation
to hard work and lengthy days, Jack said: “I would tell them to be prepared to work as
hard as you have ever worked in your life... Be prepared that you will work, work, work,
work, work for those kids. And then you find out that whatever you have done will not
work for that child. What I found out here, that people work so hard that they get
drained, and that’s when friction really becomes a factor. We are all tired. So be
prepared for that.” (Jack’s interview, p. 3)

The principal responses from Cluster 2 are direct and honest. Mark declares,
“before you can accept someone else from a different culture, you need to know yourself
first. If there is any ‘isms’ in yourself, you need to deal with them first. What is your area
of weakness or areas of weakness you need to recognize them and deal with them before
you can accept someone from a different race or background.” (Mark’s interview, p. 4)
Megan's stated, “You better go and learn something about the culture you are entering before you ask someone why their legs are “ashy.” You better find out how much of your community is free and reduced lunch and on poverty, because when a student comes in and says that they’re hungry you better be able to understand and do something about that. You need to open up your mind, because not everybody’s life has been a nice little package.” (Megan’s interview, p. 3)

When reflecting on what advice Tony would give someone who was hired as a principal in his type of urban elementary school, he replied: “Sometimes people come in to work in these situations and believe that mediocrity is acceptable but it’s not. Do for these kids what you want somebody else to do for your own child. As I repeat to my staff over and over again, these kids have the right to dream big dreams. It’s our job to make those dreams a reality. If we don’t reach them they won’t be reached. It goes beyond being a teacher; it is a multi-faceted role of being an advocate, social worker, counselor, a friend and a teacher. When you meet the needs of the student, I believe, that’s where student achievement happens. So having very high expectations and a compassionate heart are a must.” (Tony’s interview, p. 4)

Cluster 2 principal Lynn stated that prior to taking the principal job in a school like hers, “make sure that you are passionate about what it is you are doing because it’s going to take a huge amount of time.” (Lynn’s interview, p. 4)

From the data, it would seem that participating principals had various comments about the racial cultural awareness of others. The comments from Cluster 1 principals ranged from denial of racial differences from assimilations and color blindness (Kendall, 2006, Nieto, 1999) to realizing the importance of racial cultural differences. Whereas the
responses of Cluster 2 principals, were more open and realistic, using authentic examples to back up their responses. A great distinction is placed on “lived experiences” by the Cluster 2 principals.

Interview question 16 refers to the advise participating principals would provide someone who accepts the position of principal in a diverse urban elementary school. Multiple answers were provided. Table 33 provides the data from this question.

Table 33
Principal’s Advice by Cluster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know oneself</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know your weakness(es)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the culture</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Become part of the community</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand poverty</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep an open mind</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on achievement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have standards</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love the children</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard work</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support staff</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop thick skin</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High expectations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to the variety of responses, none of the categories met the theme destination. However there are commonalities and differences between the two clusters of participating principals. The data suggested that both clusters of principals are concerned about understanding the culture of their building and reflected community. Cluster 2 principals felt that it is central to become an active member of the community (discussed later in this chapter); none of the Cluster 1 principals affirmed this statement. Cluster 2 principals felt that it is imperative to “know yourself” in terms of dispositions. Cluster 1
principals did not generally feel that way. Cluster 1 principals would advise new principal candidates to be prepared for the hard work (long hours) as required by the position. Whereas only one Cluster 2 principal agreed with the statement. Cluster 1 principals were concerned about the knowledge and affects of poverty on their student populations and keeping an open mind against stereotypes. Cluster 1 principals felt that developing a “thick skin” was necessary. An essential prerequisite for the principal position is the love of children. It needs to be recalled that the focus on achievement, having high expectations (standards), and supporting staff have been mentioned previously in this chapter.

Overall, the data for Research Question 2 indicated that cultural and racial background orientation needs further exploration. The study provided essential data at the thematic level for supporting districts’ continuation of diversity training for principals.

Involvement in the surrounding community can be very rewarding for the school and school districts. Often times cultivating such relationships will lead to assistance in the classroom, donation of money or materials and the initiation of programs. Developing good public relations may result in fostering a positive reputation and image.

**Research Question 3: How do White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas promote partnerships within their community?**

An interview question asked principals to identify how they promote relationships with community members and organizations. Table 34 provides the data from this question.
Table 34

Community Involvement by Race and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Afri-Am</th>
<th>Latina</th>
<th>Multi.</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Favorable</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Don’t have the time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data established a collective and a Cluster 2 theme for the support of principals’ involvement within their communities. The composition of the data is nearly similar between the clusters.

In view of this traditionally held notion that positive community involvement is critical to the school and district both Cluster 1 principals Carol and Barbara stated in their respective interviews, that they simply don’t have time in their day to address these issues. Both concluded that their day is already so busy. Carol says the following in her interview: “Personally, there just is not time. I’ll tell you that this is one of my weak spots that I’m not good at. Mainly because I don’t have the time.” (Carol’s interview, p. 4)

Barbara, who has been an administrator for many years agreed that there isn’t extra time in her day to do community involvement. Nor does she see the need to get involved with her community’s businesses. She stated, “I don’t have much time to do that kind of thing. Because I believe the principal’s job is at the school. I think that the idea of going out and joining organizations is pretty antiquated.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 5)

Sometimes there are overwhelming reasons for schools not to be involved with their local community. “This building has been closed off from the community. It’s been an enigma to this community, the community stays out there and they do their own thing,
we do our thing and nobody really knows what the other is doing. For me, it’s something that we need to improve.” (Bill’s interview, p. 4)

Charter schools have a different opinion on the necessity of working with the local community. In reference to the competition between the public schools and charter schools, Steve observed that much is to be gained by involving the local business and community associations. He is very proud of his efforts over time to cultivate the public in terms of support for his charter school: “I have developed many community relationships over the years. When I first came here, charter schools were looked at as if they were a leper colony, which they are not. As people understand more about charter schools, the image changes. It helps to work with the intermediate school of district, the local McDonald’s, and such businesses. We’ve had a good relationship with the state police post; here they come into our school with their programs for our students.” (Steve’s interview, p. 4)

Diane, another principal of a charter school on an urban reservation, also reflects the same competition between the public and charter schools. According to Diane you have to be willing to go the extra mile in recruiting public support. “We make a conscious effort to be a good neighbor, because I think sometimes there is resentment towards charter schools...So one year we had a coffee clutch, there are many people who haven’t been in our building. So we had local business people come into our building, students greeted them; they went on to our library for refreshments and visited a little bit. We’ve developed a school brochure and have data available at several businesses.” (Diane’s interview, p. 5)
Patty and David both understood the need to involve their communities in school activities and how it may pay off for them in terms of volunteers and other initiatives which is critical to their schools. Patty reported during her interview: “We had a great working relationship with Kiwanis. And they have been great about supporting us... We have partnerships with different businesses here in the neighborhood. Our parent group, although earnest and hard working with 60% mobility it’s hard to keep a core of people. And volunteerism is something that you don’t automatically find in every culture.” (Patty’s interview, p. 4)

David believes in being proactive. He is very involved in the community and knows how to involve them in the school. He stated: “Have a good relationship with the newspaper is important. It helps to have a good relationship with the local news people and keep them informed. I spend more time doing social work, collaborating with businesses and industries, nonprofits and bringing in resources to this building.” (David’s interview, p. 4)

Getting the community involved can pay off in a number of different ways that directly benefit the students of the school. Edward noted, “One of the things we use is what we have called Friday food bags. Every Friday, about 150 students take home a bag of food so over the weekend they have healthy food to eat and several of our local churches donate the food. And they also donate their time to put the food bags together. We work very closely with many of our organizations.” (Edward’s interview, p. 4)

Cluster 2 participating principals are vocal about their role in community involvement in their respective schools. Of the Cluster 2 principals who responded to
this question, all agreed that the role of community involvement in their schools is essential.

During Mark’s interview he expounded on how community involvement works in his school. Mark is very much aware of his students and their families’ needs. Mark says: “What you have to do is connect with community organizations...We have a program that is character education and parent learning all-in-one with community agencies. We have our mental health organization, which is called Summit Point we had them come into the building to provide services for our students.” (Mark’s interview, p. 4)

In addition to involving the local communities in their school for specific events or purposes, Megan and Maryanne took the initiative to send written invitations to various community members and organization and invite them into their schools. Megan says, I “find ways for them to get into my building. As an example when I have an open house, I send VIPs to them and they don’t even know me. If I send a hundred, and I get 20 to actually show up, I’ve done my job.” (Megan’s interview, p. 4)

Principal Maryanne concurred and added by stating in her interview, “Another thing I do is to send letters out to people. If I see a particular name in the paper I’ll send him or her letter and see how they might get involved with our school. I serve on various committees in town and I always invite people to come into our school.” (Maryanne’s interview, p. 4)

Community involvement principals have several behaviors in approaching the public. Some principals feel that they must first establish the initial stage of the relationship with the community organization. Sue, stated, “As far as community relationships go, I have to build them first with myself. I can’t go to a specific agency
and ask them to come in and tutor if they don’t even know me. So, it involves me getting
known in the community, getting my face known in the community and developing
relationships first, then I can pull them into the school.” (Sue’s interview, p. 4)

In some communities, the faith connection is imperative. In these communities
and depending on the disposition of the principal, associations between schools and faith-
based organizations occur. This connection frequently provides tutors to the school.
Tony acknowledged this in his interview. Tony says: “I feel that having relationships
with the faith-based organizations is important. In this district, we have some strong
partnerships with faith-based organizations. Many members of the faith-based
organizations act as classroom tutors. There are a lot of people who want to help, but
don’t know how. So getting the word out and saying whatever you can give will make a
world of difference in the lives of our kids.” (Tony’s interview, p. 4)

The time and effort that it takes to establish community associations with the
school is enormous. With all the other duties placed on principals this responsibility may
seem to be overpowering. Lynn recognizes how much extra time and effort it takes to
build relationships. Lynn states, “It’s a lot of work and a lot of principals don’t want to do
that. You take people on tours, you have to make yourself available when a command
comes, you have to listen to their stories when they are in the building and I do a lot of
that. But I know a lot of principals who don’t do this.” (Lynn’s interview, p. 4)

In some districts, parent organizations take the duty of involving community
organizations. Ann spoke about a Parent Council concept that works with the community.
Ann says, “They raised a lot of money, which they have turned back into the school…this
group did a lot with technology, they started a TV show for the kids and the kids are
running it, they have all kinds of high technology so it’s really been great.” (Ann’s interview, p. 4)

Based on this data, some Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 principals place a high significance on establishing relationships with the community. Both clusters realize the value of involving community members and organizations in their school. Yet, some Cluster 1 principals were openly uninvolved in this endeavor. Cluster 2 principals are enthusiastic about involving the community and take opportunities to do so.

Dispositions are perhaps the most influential factor of one’s character. From these deeply held attitudes and beliefs principals make decisions that affect students and staff alike. For clarification, dispositions are values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. During the interview process, observations were made that indicated the principals’ dispositions.

Research Question 4: How do attributes, i.e. dispositions, beliefs, attitudes of selected, White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas impact the socio-cultural and linguistic issues in their school context?

This study explored the innate dispositions of the participating elementary principals. Their dispositions were identified throughout the individual’s interviews. Table 35 illustrates principal disposition as reflected by their interviews.
Table 35

Principal Dispositions by Cluster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t take “everything seriously” (3)</td>
<td>Find balance (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be a good listener (2)</td>
<td>Protect family time (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop thick skin (4)</td>
<td>Don’t make quick decisions (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set high expectations (5)</td>
<td>Love everyone’s kids (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t take things for granted (2)</td>
<td>Develop a faith connection (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid stereotypes (2)</td>
<td>Avoid stereotypes (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a compassionate heart (2)</td>
<td>Be passionate about your job (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a desire to work hard (5)</td>
<td>Set high expectations (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be fair (2)</td>
<td>Treat people fairly (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love children (2)</td>
<td>Have a compassionate heart (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a strong self concept (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect family time (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicates the belief for setting high achievement expectations and having a desire to work hard are critical for both clusters of participants. Yet neither is at the thematic rate. The data also indicates that Cluster 1 principals seem to be more cognitively intentional while Cluster 2 principals appear to be more affective or relational in their dispositions.

Interview question 4 expresses dispositions in terms of “chief instructional leader” qualities. Table 36 indicates the data presented by topic and cluster awareness.

Table 36

“Chief Instructional” Leadership Qualities at 70% Thematic Response Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Alignment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Data</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Academic Standards</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knows Best Practices</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Building</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There was a wide variety of responses to this question. Table 36 indicates the responses that met thematic repetition rate. The collective themes are alignment of curriculum, setting high expectations and the significance of team building. Separated by clusters, Cluster 1 indicates a theme of curriculum alignment, role of data, setting high academic expectations and team building. In contrast, Cluster 2 principals reported themes with the importance of literacy, curriculum alignment, setting high academic standards and team building. Many of these categories have been discussed earlier. What is dissimilar is the category of team building, which is more prominent for Cluster 2 principals inferring a relational disposition.

Within urban elementary schools, teachers and staff frequently work together in teams for the benefit of student achievement. Carol elaborated on the function of teams from her perspective. During her interview Carol observed, “a function of teams is where they focus conversations about instruction, about lessons, about student achievement, and results and working together in a collaborative nature to make students higher achieving.” (Carol’s interview, p. 2)

Principals Patty and Barbara stated that teams are collaborative groups, developing into a real learning community of professionals that exist for the betterment of students. Another example of the importance of teams is stated by Diane. During her interview she stated: “We have a team approach here, we have our administration meetings on Mondays, the superintendent and the principals attend, and we pull in our curriculum director and the individual in charge of federal programs. And that has been our core administration group. This year we have also added a lead teacher. Our
teachers meet by grades. So we have a lead teacher from each of those groups that joins us and it really has helped with communication.” (Diane’s interview, p. 2)

Lynn, a Cluster 2 principal noted that she listens well and has great people skills and “I can build a team of people together who really want to work hard with others that they really don’t like.” (Lynn’s interview, p. 1)

Similar to team building is the concept of building intentional student relationships. During the interviews, several principals from both clusters felt that this was an important connection with students that affects achievement.

Barbara felt that every principal needs to take the time to build student relationships. Not only is this important for learning but there is a more practical side to these connections. Barbara stated, “Establish relationships with everybody, your staff, your students, and your families. It’s about relationships and communications.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 4)

Another Cluster 1 principal asked if there is a university class on forming relationships that candidates could take. Jack claimed that relationship building is necessary but missing from the educational process at the higher educational level.

“Urban kids, perhaps more than middle-class kids, need relationships. When I talk to our internships that come, I talk to them about relationships. When the teacher is teaching and you’re just sitting there, that’s the time to form relationships with kids. The other thing is, the kid that is most disruptive. That’s the one you really want to form a relationship with. Because it’s all based on relationships.” (Jack’s interview, p. 7)

Diane is an example of a principal who remains as visible as possible during the work day and after school events. She stated, “Relationships are very rewarding with
students and families. I’m very visible. I eat my lunch in the cafeteria with the kids. I’m in the hallways in the mornings. I attend all school related functions or events. So the kids can see me there cheering them on.” (Diane’s interview, p. 2)

Cluster 2 principal Mark also observed the importance of the connection between forming relationships and academic achievement. He mentions that the relationships must be authentic and students need to feel that they are part of a team. He says, “You have to build relationships and the only way they’re going to be genuine is if you meet the kids where they are at. We had to build relationships with people and we had to become a team. Now we are a team, on goal and one family. My students have the ability to become anything and everything they want. We work on life skills here for our students because of the manifestations that they come to school with. Everyone comes with baggage; they come in packages they don't know how to deal with.” (Mark’s interview, p. 3)

Principals have several ways to form relationships with their students and families. This is not always an easy task to accomplish especially when the local neighborhood may not be pro-school. Tony has an exceptional, and time consuming approach that he uses to start the school year off on a positive note. Tony noted, “I start off the school visiting every family. That means that the first contact is a positive one. That gives the parents a chance for a one-to-one contact with me and to ask any questions that they might have. But more importantly, it shows the kids and their families how much we really care.” (Tony’s interview, p. 2)

Another principal confirms the power of forming relationships with students. In Maryanne’s interview she reaffirms how critical the role of relationships is with academic
achievement. "They need to feel like the teachers are caring about them. That’s number one. I have a high African-American population in my building, and just the African-American culture itself is built on relationships. And if the student feels like they don’t have the relationship they are not going to perform. I don’t care how smart they are.” (Maryanne’s interview, p. 3)

Concerned with intentional relationship building, another Cluster 2 principal Megan added: “The first week of school, I don’t allow any teachers to teach a thing. What I want them to do is to build relationships with their students and parents. Not one lesson will you teach. I want you to show them that you are a real person. You bring in parents that are good role models. My school is 99.9% African American. So relationships are important.” (Megan’s interview, p. 3)

While the data composition of team building responses were nearly equal between the clusters, it is important to note that the concept of intentional relationship building with students emerged.

Principals were asked to describe their leadership style thus reflecting personal dispositional traits. Table 37 depicts the data responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>African-American</th>
<th>Latina</th>
<th>Multi.</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest, Fair</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Leader</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think as a Parent</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 37
Principals’ Leadership Style by Race
According to the data in Table 37, the majority (nearing the thematic rate) of the participating principals perceived themselves as collaborative administrators.

Cluster 1 principals concluded that their leadership style was collaborative or that they believed to be perceived as a collaborative leader.

During Carol’s interview she unwaveringly said: “I feel I am very collaborative in nature...I would like to think it’s that way, but of course being principal you hear things. Either it’s a principal’s way or no way.” (Carol’s interview, p. 2)

Another Cluster 1 principal observed, “My preferred leadership style is always collaborative. I always love working with teams and people. I’m energized by working with teams of educators working in the same direction having the same vision and goals...In other words well, this is the way we’re going to do it and you can criticize it if you want, but this is the way it will be done. A lot of the complaining kind of going on, and then I say well this is what we’re going to do and have to make a decision. So I’m becoming well, you want collaboration but you know what, sometimes it just doesn’t work. I’m the boss; this is where it stops.” (Jack’s interview, p. 3)

Even in difficult work situations, some principals imagine and maintain the ideal of collaboration with staff. Bill has found himself in such a work situation. “I envision myself as being someone who is much more collaborative, who really seeks to work on things as a team. I enjoy getting input and talking things out. I happen to be in a building that’s not really accustomed to that. Prior to that they had a principal for one year, who retired and that was a wretched year. And before that they had a person here for 13 years, who is very much an authoritative figure. So my style is very foreign to them.” (Bill’s interview, p. 2)
Another Cluster 1 principal reflected on her style of leadership and concludes that she uses a collaborative approach. Diane says: “Having worked here a number of years, where before I was more of a colleague before first assuming an administrative position. The staff knows me as an individual, as a person…. I think that tends to work best rather than being heavy handed. Sometimes I listen to staff’s concerns or if they have really good ideas, which I wouldn’t have thought of. So a collaborative approach works.” (Diane’s interview, p. 2)

Jim believed that he uses a collaborative style even though he seems hesitant. He says, “I defer to the experts in the classroom as much as possible. So I talk softly and sometimes I carry a big stick.” (Jim’s interview, p. 1)

In reference to his leadership style Edward says, “It’s a mixture between transactional and transformational leadership, it’s a little of both.” “There are times when you have to get input from your staff to get a deeper understanding of an issue or concern. But then when it comes down to decision-making time the buck stops at the principal. The principal makes the decision and you have to feel comfortable with that decision. And then there are sometimes when the debate needs to stop, and we need to make a decision so that is where the transactional comes in sometimes. Where you just have to do what you believe is right.” (Edward’s interview, p. 1)

Yet another principal focuses on being open, honest, and fair. Barbara explains what she means by this description: “My doors are open all the time; people walk through here constantly. I invite my teachers in to close the door and to vent and then I try to help them see their way out of it… I want the staff to feel like a family, and the students know that this is their home away from home. I want parents to feel that they
can come in and talk to us about anything. They don't have to yell at us, you don't have to threaten me. You can come in and say what you need to say respectfully, we will have a dialogue and we will solve the problem.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 2)

Cluster 2 principals take an equally verbose stand on their leadership style. Mark reported that prior to making decisions about his school or students, he gets people to come into his office and talk about the issue. He does this because, he says, “we are a team. Here at (school’s name), we have a motto; we are one team, one goal, and one family. That’s how we want to make things happen around here. Even though I know that I’m the leader and I have the last say. There are some things that people on the team can’t make and then I have to make those decisions. I will make them and I have made them and that doesn’t bother me whatsoever, because that’s part of the responsibilities of being a leader in the building.” (Mark’s interview, p. 2)

Another Cluster 2 principal stated “my leadership style is definitely collaborative. I don’t try to do everything myself because I can’t. I physically can’t and professionally can’t. I have a very strong staff so I look to them and they will let me know if there is something they would like professional development in. They are comfortable enough with me.” (Sue’s interview, p. 1)

Megan has held every conceivable position in the school and her leadership style reflects that. During her interview, Megan stated: “I started out as a Para-professional in the schools and I worked my way up to be a teacher. You name the job, from sweeping out the lunchroom, picking up trash on the playground, and I’ve done it. I tell my teachers, anything that I’m asking you to do; chances are I’ve already done it. So I am a role model of doing whatever I asked the teachers to do...My leadership style is one of
collaboration, but I am very leading edge, I like thinking outside the box.” (Megan’s interview, p. 2)

Mary stated the leadership style for her is “really looking at the strengths of my staff. I have a very large staff and picking out the people who can lead the grade levels (is important). So we create an instructional leadership team and they really drive the decisions that are made.” (Mary’s interview, p. 1)

Ann referred to leadership in reflection of a recent training that she attended. During her interview she stated: “I’m pretty much focused on service leadership, which means I’m here to serve you. It means, what can I do to help you to do your job better.” (Ann’s interview, p. 2)

From this data, it is clear that principals from both clusters realized the significance of being a collaborative principal. The diverse examples included in their interviews visibly show that the principals make a sincere attempt to be collaborative and the benefits to their staff are immeasurable.

Interview question 8 speaks to the principal’s dispositions in identifying the most challenging aspects (personally or professionally) about their position. Table 38 represents the data.

Due to the nature of the interview question, multiple responses were provided. As the data reveals, none of the responses qualify for the 70% repetition rate to indicate a theme.

In reference to the interview question, Cluster 1 urban principal Patty stated: “Our diversity is an example of extreme mobility. We service children from 50 countries, 13 states and 25 languages. You have to challenge as English, being the
Table 38

Most Challenging Elements for Principals
by Race and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Afri-Amer.</th>
<th>Latina</th>
<th>Multi.</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Student Achievement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Personal Time</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Data</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Politics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Disadvantaged Students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Social/Emotional needs of kids</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Bilingual needs</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Lack of Parental Involvement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Balancing staff</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Student Mobility</td>
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second language, but you add the tremendous mobility. This year, our numbers are about 225 we have matriculated 280 children through the school since September. There is this constant ebb and flow and the sense of loss.” (Patty’s interview, p. 2)

Barbara speaks about the long hours and parental implications as challenging factors. She finishes by speaking about the upcoming budget cuts that impact her school. Barbara spoke, “The challenging things personally are the amount of hours that it requires to do this job successfully. I work in a 60 hour week. Basically, and then I work on the weekends sometimes it just depends on what I had to get done. I try really hard to keep things moving and to keep ahead of things. Professionally, its parents not supporting the school or her parents delivering the kids to the door and thinking that’s all I have to do. We would like a whole lot more parent involvement, but our folks are the working poor. Some of them are working two or three jobs. So it’s understandable that they can’t get involved. The other side of the coin is the budget cuts. It’s huge.” (Barbara’s interview, p. 3)
For Jim, it is the response to student interventions that is challenging. He stated, “There are some kids that are so difficult to get them to achieve. There are so many barriers, and we work our butts off to get kids at 100 percent at grade level is really a challenge.” (Jim’s interview, p. 2)

Cluster 1 principal Bill felt that for him, the “Real challenge is understanding the culture. Not only the parents, the students but also the teachers.” (Bill’s interview, p. 3)

David recalled his earlier years as a principal and says, “being an outsider coming into the community, that was a real challenge. It hurt a little bit when I was fired as I had to go to court with arbitration and won with back pay, with an apology, it took a couple years to do that. Politics don’t you know.” (David’s interview, p. 2)

Cluster 2 principals also face challenges. Sue observed: “The haves and the have-nots in reference to the children. We have to be really careful not to punish children for things that are out their control. An example, I have a fourth-grade child who goes home after school and baby-sits younger siblings, while mother goes to work, and he doesn’t get his homework done and we look at consequences for not doing the homework, this is challenging. Ten or fifteen years ago, we didn’t have to deal with the socio-emotional factors of today.” (Sue’s interview, p. 2)

Another Cluster 2 principal stated that “one of my biggest challenges has been to get parents more involved in their child’s educational process.” (Tony’s interview, p. 2) Tony explains by saying, “I know that all parents want what is best for their children…parents that are in this particular school have many obstacles and barriers which really limit them and being accessible to the school…many single mothers who work and taking a day off is not an option for them. Many other parents have had poor
experiences in school themselves so they don’t see the school as a welcoming place.”

(Tony’s interview, p. 2)

Another Cluster 2 urban principal, Lynn reported that there is “not a lot of
diversity here, it’s all African-American…The poverty is very challenging because of the
way it affects the heart and soul of the child. So I feel you have to meet the emotional
social needs of the child before you can teach them. So it’s very challenging to make
sure that the kids have combs for their hair, clothing to put them into, that we have food
to give them when they’re hungry…we have someone who will listen to them when
they’re crying about something that’s going on at home.”(Lynn’s interview, p. 2)

As the data indicates, there is a wide variety of responses representing the very
nature of challenging, personal and professional, issues that principals may face in their
position. From the responses, principals’ dispositions are revealed.

Principal’s dispositional attributes were examined when they were asked to
identify of the most important things to know about their students and families. Table 39
indicates their responses by clusters.

While none of the responses reached the 70% repetition level, due to the variety
of responses, it is clear that some comments are significant. From the data, the attitude of
cooperative collaboration between staff is important to maintain. Similarly important is
the fact that students need love and fulfillment of their basic needs in order to learn.
Participating principals felt that knowing the culture of the school is vital to the teaching
and learning process. Providing a safe school culture is critical as well as spending the
time to build relationships with students. If the composition were divided into clusters,
building relationships and utilizing a team approach are critical for Cluster 2 principals,
but not at the thematic level. Other data indicated by categories have been referenced earlier in this chapter.

Themes

The data gathered from this qualitative segment of the study was vast and varied sustaining multiple responses; therefore, reducing the number of emerging themes.

However, the emergence of a limited number of themes did occur and are referenced in Table 40.

This study provided an opportunity to explore ways in which principals perceived their roles and actions taken to create and sustain educational environments that were responsive to student diversity with specific emphasis on culture and socio-economic status. While additional research needs to be assigned prior to making generalizations, this data offers variations of differences among this particular pool of urban elementary principals.
Table 40

Emerging Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collectively Thematic</th>
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<tr>
<td>District's continuation of diversity training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principals' involvement in their community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on Literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Alignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of Data</td>
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<td>High Expectations (standards)</td>
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By Clusters:

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<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Role of Data</td>
<td>Relationship Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Best Practices</td>
<td>Community Involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Alignment</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, PERSONAL REFLECTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

Conclusions

This mixed-methods study explored the relationship of ten White and ten non-White elementary principals' working in urban areas; their personal and professional experiences, dispositions, and knowledge concerning culture and languages; with leadership practices in high-achieving, high-poverty schools with high numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students. This investigation: (1) explored cultural differences between White and non-White administrators and their student constituency in terms of race, ethnicity, and language use; (2) socioeconomic status; (3) present climate of academic accountability for all student groups; and (4) importance of understanding the interaction of these dimensions of school leadership and the academic outcomes of all students.

All the elementary schools matriculated students who were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and had at least 50% of their students receiving free and reduced lunches.

What emerged through the analysis of the data is the sense that the leadership of these principals—in response to diversity and student achievement—is characterized by an intricate association of influences between the principal’s experiences and their respective dispositions. Although these associations are varied, some were more all-
encompassing and resulted in the establishment of themes. These themes are summarized in this chapter. A synopsis of the research is presented that is related to the current literature and research questions. And finally, the researcher included personal reflections on this process. Recommendations for practice and further research are also included.

Review of the Research Questions

Research Question 1. How do elementary White and non-White school principals working in urban areas describe the achievement gap?

This research question is comprised of several interview questions. The questions included specifics of how does the principal describe the achievement gap; what steps has the district taken to reduce the achievement gap; what goals does the principal have, and what do your students need to achieve?

The complexity of interview questions regarding the description of the achievement gap provided a wide variety of responses making a thematic distinction difficult. While setting high expectations, knowing best practices, and understanding the role of data were significant, they do not meet the thematic criterion.

Both clusters of principals reinforced the significance of the district’s direction in deliberately reducing the achievement gap, producing a theme. In contrast, Cluster 1 principals felt the differentiated learning strategies were essential. Cluster 2 principals focused on literacy.

Specific goals set by principals produced a variety of responses, none at the thematic level. However, Cluster 1 principals focused on rigorous curriculum and
achieving the State’s Benchmarks. Cluster 2 principals felt that parent involvement, student achievement and collaboration of staff were vital.

In order to be successful, Cluster 1 principals stated that students need excellent materials and highly trained teachers. Cluster 2 principals reinforced rigorous curriculum, literacy, excellent teachers and high expectations. However none of the response met the theme criterion.

**Research Question 2.** *How do high poverty and high achieving elementary White and non-White principals working in urban areas cultivate diversity-sensitive, inclusive school environments?*

Principals were asked to describe their own cultural background, previous diversity training, and what advise would they give a new principal urban candidate? None of the response categories can be designated as themes. However, one unanticipated theme did emerge from the data, the importance of district diversity trainings.

When the principals were asked to describe their own cultural background, half of the principals were able to openly state their background. Two other principals did not know how to answer the question and two principals stated that they didn’t have any racial/ethnic issues. Some principals focused on socio-economics rather than cultural background. One principal referred to the assimilation of culture while other principals chose not to answer the question. However, over half of the principals stated that they are aware of “others” from different cultural groups.

When discussing cultural diversity training, it is significant to note how the principals chose to respond to this question. Half of the principals referred to previous
undergraduate college courses. Two principals paid for special training in diversity from an outside source. Six principals stated that they received no undergraduate diversity training. However, all of the principals stated that they had received district trainings on diversity topics which assisted them in their position. This data indicates that only the district-offered workshops on diversity training emerged as a theme destination.

When asked what advice they would provide new principal candidates about their position in an urban area, the responses were varied. Cluster 1 principals focused on working hard, long hours, having knowledge about poverty and its affects, guard against stereotypes, and developing a “thick skin.” Cluster 2 principals mentioned becoming an active member of the community, know yourself, and establish high expectations.

Research Question 3. How do White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas promote partnerships within their community?

Principals were asked to identify how they promote relationships with community members and organizations. There are commonalities and differences between the two clusters of participating principals. The data suggests that both clusters of principals are concerned about understanding the culture of their building and reflected community. All but two principals affirmed the need to become involved with the local community. The two other principals simply felt that they didn’t have the time to commit to becoming part of the community. This data suggests that principals becoming involved in their respective communities is necessary and is established as a theme.

Research Question 4. How do attributes, i.e., dispositions, beliefs, and attitudes of selected, White and non-White elementary principals working in urban areas, impact the socio-cultural and linguistic issues in their school context?
This study explores the innate dispositions of the participating elementary principals. Their dispositions were identified throughout the individual interviews, include observations, and individual responses. Interview questions asked principals to describe their role as the “chief instructional leader,” to describe their leadership style, to describe the most challenging aspects of their position, and to describe the most important things to know about their school’s students and families.

The response of principals to a query regarding the dispositions of principals as “chief instructional leader” yielded a wide variety of responses. The collective themes were identified as: alignment of curriculum, setting high expectations, and the significance of team building. Separated by clusters, Cluster 1 indicated a theme of curriculum alignment, role of data, setting high academic expectations, and team building. In contrast, Cluster 2 principals set themes with the importance of literacy, curriculum alignment, setting high academic standards, and team building. What is dissimilar is the categorical theme of team building.

As part of this study, participating principals were asked to identify their leadership style which is correlated to their dispositions. The significance being that frequently a principal’s leadership style can decrease or increase relationships between and among staff and students which leads directly to student achievement.

The principals were asked to describe their leadership style thus reflecting personal dispositional traits. The majority of responses (nearing thematic level) of the participating principals perceive themselves as collaborative administrators. While one principal responded as being “honest and fair,” another principal stated that she “thinks as
a parent.” Two principals affirmed that they are participatory leaders, four principals are situational leaders, and one principal is a servant leader.

When asked about their most challenging aspects, these principals included a wide range of responses. Narrowing the responses, Cluster 1 principals stated that protecting their family time and working long hours are critical. Cluster 2 principals felt that getting parents involved and having an awareness of multiple cultures and languages are fundamental.

While none of the responses reached a thematic level, it is clear that some of the comments are of dispositional significance. The data indicates that the attitude of cooperative collaboration between staff is important to maintain. Similarly important is the fact that students need love and fulfillment of their basic needs in order to learn. Participating principals felt that knowing the culture of the school is vital to the teaching and learning process. Providing a safe school culture is critical as well as spending the time to build relationships with students. If the composition were divided into clusters, building relationships and utilizing a team approach are fundamental for Cluster 2 principals.

In conclusion, this study produced some overall collect themes. They are: the districts’ continuation of diversity training and maintenance of Educational Plans; principals’ involvement with their communities; focus on literacy; curriculum alignment; team building, the importance of the role of data; and setting high expectations.

Examination by clusters indicates the following themes. Cluster 1’s themes are: the importance of the role of data, knowing best practices, and curriculum alignment.
Cluster 2’s themes are: relationship building; community involvement, and content literacy.

Personal Reflections

My dissertation research journey has been a long and winding road. Collecting my data put me on the road, during a peak time of the gas price period, and while traveling a distance of over 3,315 miles! Not to mention the hours and days that it took to travel the distance, motel rooms, and kennel costs for my two dogs.

However, upon reflection I would not have changed a mile of this journey. I was blessed by meeting some very extraordinary and inspiring principals who, in my opinion, are truly making a difference in the lives of children; some located in the most challenging school districts in the State of Michigan. These principals are at the top of their game. On a number of different levels, I felt instantly connected with them. Who said that there is no such thing as visceral associations? Could it be some undeclared relationship with at-risk of failure youth? Those principals who champion student diversity and are willing to stand their ground with strong personal dispositions and convictions are “special” principals and are deemed worthy in my estimation. Not to mention that their students are perhaps unwittingly blessed to have them.

I was amazed at the personal stories these principals shared with a “stranger off the street.” If the situation were reversed, I am not so sure that I would have been as open and candid. The years of experience have jaded me a bit. Yet I am grateful for their directness and frankness which made the interview process pass quickly and captured my attention.
Over the last decade, I have been on a different type of journey, which is related to the topic of this dissertation, discrimination. I have been examining my racial disposition. As a Caucasian, I am reflecting on what it means to be White and how my "White privilege" plays into my actions and decisions. Case in point, I would like to think that any middle-aged female who had the desire, and worked hard, could receive an earned doctoral degree. After all, all things being equal, right? However, I have come to believe that this may not be the case. I ask myself the question, what role did my "White privilege" enter into this one accomplishment, if it did? Not to mention the gender or the age criterion! (That's another story) I know that many Caucasian adults think that I am "foolish" to be pursuing this degree "at my age." This makes me sound as if I am antiquated. What is irritating is that many of the Caucasians who verbalize these sentiments are females! So far, non-White adults may be thinking the same sentiment, but have had the grace not to verbalize this statement. But I ask myself, "Are non-White adults not verbalizing the statement because I am White?" I find myself thinking back through the years to all the situations that may have been influenced because of my "White privilege." I think back to my birth family and realize how bigoted they were in regards to race, religion, and politics. Children trust their parents and then they find out slowly, and over time that things aren't exactly what they seem. It is demoralizing when you finally realize that your own parents have lied to perpetuate their falsehoods!

This evolutionary journey I am on is extremely complicated but necessary. In my opinion, it is necessary that all of us face our racial identities and the consequences of that identity, whether we were part of it or not. As an example, I frequently hear others
speak about injustices towards a group of people and follow it up with, “but I was not part of the injustice so don’t blame me!”

Honest conversations are needed to depict a person’s underlying belief system that may not be accurate. Of course, there is real trepidation and weakness of heart which prevents some of us from venturing down this path. It is also far too comfortable to remain in the status quo.

For me, making this journey is critical and I value (although not always appreciate) the probing of my non-White associates because it usually makes me question my belief system. So with a brave heart, let the journey continue.

Suggestions for Further Research

The findings from this study suggest the need for research in the area of culturally proficient education that specifically focuses on the role of the chief instructional leader of the school, the principal. The vast majority of research in these areas is on the necessity to increase school-wide programs towards diversity, and to prepare classroom teachers to work with diverse populations of students; the specific role of the principal that links these dimensions has not yet been explored in depth. Additionally, further research in dispositional attributes of administrators (i.e., attitudes, beliefs, age, and gender) coupled with race and ethnicity would provide a foundation for understanding the challenges that principals may face who work in environments that are outside their own culture.

As an exploratory study, the results serve to establish an empirical knowledge base for understanding the roles of race and cultural dimensions as they are related to
school leadership. This study adds to the growing research in the area of how the role of
the principal correlates with high-level academic success for all students.

This investigation represents only preliminary steps taken to understand these
issues. Given the influence of these principals’ racial and cultural backgrounds, further
research probing principal belief systems and dispositions, particularly as it relates to
their racial and cultural background, would provide beneficial information that would add
to this body of research.

Suggestions for Practice

The findings from this study suggest that professional administrative experience
in schools with diverse student populations in terms of culture, language and
socioeconomic status had influence on the awareness, knowledge, and skills these
principals developed. Similarly, their personal experiences in their families of origin may
also be highly significant in determining their dispositions. With this in mind, districts
may want to review cautiously how these factors can be addressed in recruiting,
selecting, and determining school assignments for principals. Additionally, districts
should sustain the development of cultural proficiency in their school leaders, and in
those who supervise them, by focusing on these factors through professional development
programs, purposeful administrative assignments, and recruitment and selection
processes for principals assigned not only to schools with high diversity, but to all
schools in an effort to endorse intercultural competences and academic achievement for
all students.
Given the current realities of diversity in schools, cultural understanding and competence can’t be ignored. Although some of these principals displayed elements of intercultural competence, while others showed their deficit orientations with possible resulting implications, they can not be faulted. As Garcia and Guerra (2004) state, “It is important to avoid centering on (educators/administrators) as the problem, which detracts from the critical examination of systemic factors that perpetuate deficit thinking and reproduce educational inequities...personal and individual prejudices...should be viewed in the context of similar patterns of prejudice in larger society and therefore addressed in that context” (p. 154). When administrator programs do not address these issues, this responsibility must then be assumed by district personnel through a variety of programs. For the administrators in this study, the district did provide diversity training, but seemed to be deficient in the understanding and implications of racial/ethnic self awareness.

Principal preparation programs need to assure that current and prospective principals are conversant about the research indicating the changing role of the chief instructional leader, as well as what effect racial and cultural diversity plays in that function. This study also suggests the need for prescribed supervision for school leadership personnel to assist them in examining their own racial identities, levels of awareness and knowledge of racial and cultural influences that may impact their administration. This is more essential when school leaders are employed by districts that are outside their own home culture base. As one of the participating principals states, “One thing we need to do, is know ourselves. If there is any ‘isms’ in yourself you need to deal with them first. We are talking about respecting people for who they are, not by the color of their skin or the way they act. You may have to change some things about
yourself, some ways that you do things because you’re dealing with a different culture…”
(Mark’s interview, p. 4)

From a sincere exploration of self, evolves development of leadership skills that cultivates awareness of others, understanding, and skill-building for school personnel in regard to classroom and educational systems that are receptive to group diversity as well as individual needs of students (Garcia, 1999; Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 1999; Neito, 1999).

Requiring such preparation, educational leaders will be provided with opportunities to pensively evaluate how cultural proficiency may influence their leadership style, particularly in the ways they are preparing all students to not only succeed academically, but also to be a functioning member of a diverse society (Sleeter & Grant, 2007). These areas of awareness, knowledge, and skills are also critical for school leaders in building cultural reciprocity with families and communities (Garcia, 1999; Kendall, 2006; Sleeter & Grant, 2007).

With today’s increased student academic accountability emphasis, districts should maintain the development of cultural proficiency within their schools. Through university courses, professional development programs, intentional administrative assignments, and recruitment and selection processes schools can make an effort to promote cultural competence and understanding for all their students. As the research states there is a direct consequence of cultural proficiency to increased student academic achievement (Conchas, 2006; Donaldson, 2006; Garcia, 1999; Landsman & Lewis, 2006).
Conclusion

The critical role of the principal in the education achievement of students has been constantly documented in leadership literature. This individual, through his/her personal and professional beliefs, knowledge, and leadership procedures, creates a school environment that indirectly yet decisively, either facilitates students’ achievement or restricts the processes of teaching and learning (Donaldson, 2006). This investigation explored the fundamental racial and cultural dimensions of the principals’ leadership in an effort to understand the relationship between the principals’ perspectives based on beliefs, experiences, and dispositions and student achievement. The results from this investigation illuminate the influences of this racial and cultural dimension of leadership on the practices designed to respond to the student achievement gaps. This study may also serve as a basis for potential research in the area of examining the racial and cultural influences surrounding the leadership of schools.
Appendix A

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) Approval
Date: March 22, 2007

To: Van Cooley Principal Investigator
   Penny Larsen, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number: 07-03-02

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Making a Difference in High-Poverty, High-Achieving Urban Elementary Schools: Selected Principals' Perspectives" has been approved under the expedited category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may only conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: March 22, 2008
Consent Document

Western Michigan University
Department of Teaching, Learning & Leadership
Dr. Van E. Cooley, Principal Investigator
Penny J. Larsen, Student Investigator

Making the Difference in High-Poverty; High-Achieving Urban Elementary Schools: Selected Principal’s Perspectives

You are invited to participate in a study about “Making the Difference in High-Poverty, High-Achieving Urban Elementary Schools: Selected Principal’s Perspectives.” This study is being conducted by Penny J. Larsen, a doctoral student in the K-12 division of the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership program at Western Michigan University, under the direction of Dr. Van E. Cooley, her dissertation chair.

The following information is being provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in this study as well as to inform you that you are free to decide not to participate in it, or withdraw at any time without penalty and without affecting your relationship with Western Michigan University.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be interviewed and audio taped for approximately 30 minutes and you may request that the audio recorder (which is to ensure accuracy) be turned off at any time during the interview. Multiple interviews will only be necessary if there is a need for additional clarification or if the interview was not completed. A written transcript of the interview will be sent to you for your review.

Following the verbal interview, the researcher will leave the Quick Discrimination Index survey for you to fill out and returned to the researcher in the provided envelope.

The purpose of this study seeks to identify White and non-White urban elementary leadership structures used by principals to promote an inclusive school climate for diverse students and how to influence teachers’ awareness of culturally responsive teaching strategies. The findings from this study may present principals with strategies that can be implemented to develop a more culturally, linguistically, inclusive climate at their school sites. The study may also offer principals with “best practice” actions regarding the preservation of effective instructional and informational strategies for teaching diverse students which impacts student learning outcomes. Participating principals may benefit from this study with the affirmation of investigated common structures as deemed as compulsory within these urban settings for increased student achievement. This study asks the question, is there a difference of perceptions between White and non-White urban elementary principals?

The primary audience for this study includes P-12 public school administrators, particularly those in urban high-diversity, high achieving schools. Information procured from this study will inform a larger audience of practicing administrators and higher
education professionals about the unique needs of educators/administrators employed (or who will be employed) with urban highly diversified populations especially when candidates are entering a culture that may not be their home culture.

In addition to the interview and *Quick Discrimination Index*, this researcher would like to collect public records about your school. Examples might include annual reports, parent organization reports, newspaper clippings, web pages, etc.

Measures of confidentiality will be employed. The names of principals and school/districts will be given factions names and a code number will appear on written documents. The researcher will be the only person that has access to the master code list, audiotapes, inventories, and written analysis. These materials will be locked in a file cabinet in the researcher's home. Computer generated materials will be password protected. Once the audiotape recordings are verified by the participant to be an accurate written translation, the tapes will be destroyed within 30 days. A final written copy of this study with associated data will be stored at the Principal Investigator's office at Western Michigan University for a period of at least three years. Other school/district documents (i.e. annual reports, newsletter, etc.) will be destroyed following a period of one year.

Since sincerity and candidness are necessary for this study, it is imperative that the location and time of the interview session be secure from interruptions. Of course the designation of this location and time is based upon the principal's discretion.

Additionally, despite precautions employed in this study, there exist some possible risks. Primarily is the risk that honest conversations may be overheard by staff or others. The significance of this happening may present the principal with unforeseen consequences. Also, the nature of the study may remind the principal of difficult situations encountering race and education. This remembrance might be coupled with unpleasant emotions/experiences that will be exposed in conversation.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions that you have about the study and I would be happy to share the findings with you after the study is completed. If you have any questions concerning this study, you may contact the student investigator, Penny J. Larsen, at (906) 892-8447 or by e-mail at pplarsen@tds.net. You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (269-387-8293) or the Vice President of Research (269-387-8298) if any questions or problems arise during the course of this study.

This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) as indicated by the stamped date and signature of the board chair in the upper right corner. Do not participate in this study if the stamped date is older than one year.

A copy of this consent form will be given to you for your own records.

Participant  Date

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Appendix B

Invitation to Participants/Consent Document
Initial Email Letter to Potential Participants

Hello ________.

My name is Penny Larsen and I am a 28 year public school teacher who recently retired to complete my doctoral degree at Western Michigan University. In this role, I am conducting research for my dissertation about urban elementary principals. The purpose of this study seeks to identify White and non-White urban elementary leadership structures used by principals to promote an inclusive school climate for diverse students and how to influence teachers’ awareness of culturally responsive teaching strategies. The findings from this study will present principals with strategies that can be implemented to develop a more culturally, linguistically, inclusive climate at their school sites. The study will offer principals with “best practice” actions regarding the preservation of effective instructional and informational strategies for teaching diverse students which impacts student learning outcomes. This study asks the question, is there a difference of perceptions between White and non-White urban elementary principals? Your name has been given to me because you have been identified as a successful high poverty; high achievement principal.

If you agree to participate I will interview you for approximately 30 minutes. Following the interview, I will leave a 30 item Quick Discrimination Index for you to fill out and return to me by mail. I will also need to collect public record documents concerning your school, i.e. annual reports, parent organization reports, news clippings, web pages, etc. The general interview protocol questions and consent form will be sent to you in advance. This will provide you with time to consider your responses. Please know that you are under no obligation to participate in this research and you can change your mind at any time in the process without penalty.

If you are interested in learning more about being part of this research, simply reply to this email to that affect. After I have heard from you, I will be contacting you to establish a time to go over the information about the study and to set an interview time.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 906-892-8447 or email me at pplassen@tds.net.

Thank you for your consideration.

Penny J. Larsen
Western Michigan University
Department of Teaching, Learning & Leadership
Dr. Van E. Cooley, Principal Investigator
Hello, my name is Penny Larsen. I contacted you by email over a week ago regarding possible participation in a study on urban elementary principals. As I indicated in the email I am working on my dissertation research project at Western Michigan University and your name was given to me as a possible participant.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and would be greatly appreciated. The results of this study may be of interest to you as an urban elementary principal involved in high poverty; high achieving schools and certainly would be beneficial to others in the field.

The purpose for this phone call is to see if you have had time to read the email and have considered being part of this study. You may also have some questions about the study that I can clarify.

Should you be interested in learning more about participating, I would like to schedule a time to meet with you to go over the details of the study and conduct an interview. The exact meeting place in your school is flexible. I also would like to collect documents about your school, such as annual reports, parent organization reports, newsletter, etc.

Upon acceptance, I will forward a consent form for you to review as well as the interview questions allowing time for you to consider your responses. As always, you may contact me with any questions prior to the meeting. When we meet, I will review the information contained in the consent form to ensure that your understanding and questions are clarified. Once the consent form is signed, the interview will begin.

Once again, I am delighted that you have chosen to be a part of this study. I know that your input will be a welcomed addition to others. May we schedule an interview session?

Thank you and I look forward to meeting you. Again if you have questions or concerns, you can reach me at 906-892-8447 or by email pplarsen@tds.net.

-Alternatively-

Thank you for considering participating in the research study. I realize how busy you are and appreciate the time and effort you took to speak with me. I wish you the best in concluding the school year. Thank you again.
Consent Document

Western Michigan University
Department of Teaching, Learning & Leadership
Dr. Van E. Cooley, Principal Investigator
Penny J. Larsen, Student Investigator
Making the Difference in High-Poverty; High-Achieving Urban Elementary Schools: Selected Principal’s Perspectives

You are invited to participate in a study about “Making the Difference in High-Poverty; High-Achieving Urban Elementary Schools: Selected Principal’s Perspectives.” This study is being conducted by Penny J. Larsen, a doctoral student in the K-12 division of the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership program at Western Michigan University, under the direction of Dr. Van E. Cooley, her dissertation chair.

The following information is being provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in this study as well as to inform you that you are free to decide not to participate in it, or withdraw at any time without penalty and without affecting your relationship with Western Michigan University.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be interviewed and audio taped for approximately 30 minutes and you may request that the audio recorder (which is to ensure accuracy) be turned off at any time during the interview. Multiple interviews will only be necessary if there is a need for additional clarification or if the interview was not completed. A written transcript of the interview will be sent to you for your review. Following the verbal interview, the researcher will leave the Quick Discrimination Index survey for you to fill out and returned to the researcher in the provided envelope.

The purpose of this study seeks to identify White and non-White urban elementary leadership structures used by principals to promote an inclusive school climate for diverse students and how to influence teachers’ awareness of culturally responsive teaching strategies. The findings from this study may present principals with strategies that can be implemented to develop a more culturally, linguistically, inclusive climate at their school sites. The study may also offer principals with “best practice” actions regarding the preservation of effective instructional and informational strategies for teaching diverse students which impacts student learning outcomes. Participating principals may benefit from this study with the affirmation of investigated common structures as deemed as compulsory within these urban settings for increased student achievement. This study asks the question, is there a difference of perceptions between White and non-White urban elementary principals?

The primary audience for this study includes P-12 public school administrators, particularly those in urban high-diversity; high achieving schools. Information procured from this study will inform a larger audience of practicing administrators and higher education professionals about the unique needs of educators/administrators employed (or
who will be employed) with urban highly diversified populations especially when 
candidates are entering a culture that may not be their home culture.

In addition to the interview and *Quick Discrimination Index*, this researcher would like to 
collect public records about your school. Examples might include annual reports, parent 
organization reports, newspaper clippings, web pages, etc.

Measures of confidentiality will be employed. The names of principals and 
school/districts will be given factious names and a code number will appear on written 
documents. The researcher will be the only person that has access to the master code list, 
audiotapes, inventories, and written analysis. These materials will be locked in a file 
cabinet in the researcher's home. Computer generated materials will be password 
protected. Once the audiotape recordings are verified by the participant to be an accurate 
written translation, the tapes will be destroyed within 30 days. A final written copy of this 
study with associated data will be stored at the Principal Investigator's office at Western 
Michigan University for a period of at least three years. Other school/district documents 
(i.e. annual reports, newsletter, etc.) will be destroyed following a period of one year.

Since sincerity and candidness are necessary for this study, it is imperative that the 
location and time of the interview session be secure from interruptions. Of course the 
designation of this location and time is based upon the principal's discretion.

Additionally, despite precautions employed in this study, there exist some possible risks. 
Primarily is the risk that honest conversations may be overheard by staff or others. The 
significance of this happening may present the principal with unforeseen consequences. 
Also, the nature of the study may remind the principal of difficult situations encountering 
race and education. This remembrance might be coupled with unpleasant 
emotions/experiences that will be exposed in conversation.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions that you have about the study and I would be happy 
to share the findings with you after the study is completed. If you have any questions 
concerning this study, you may contact the student investigator, Penny J. Larsen, at (906) 
892-8447 or by e-mail at pplarsen@tds.net. You may also contact the Chair, Human 
Subjects Institutional Review Board (269-387-8293) or the Vice President of Research 
(269-387-8298) if any questions or problems arise during the course of this study.

This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects 
Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) as indicated by the stamped date and signature of 
the board chair in the upper right corner. Do not participate in this study if the stamped 
date is older than one year.
A copy of this consent form will be given to you for your own records.

__________________________  __________________
Participant                           Date

Consent obtained by: ____________________________
__________________________  __________________
Interviewer/Student Investigator       Date

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Appendix C

Permission to Use the Quick Discrimination Survey Tool
Appendix I

Utilization Request Form

In using the Quick Discrimination Index (QDI), I agree to the following terms/conditions:

1. I understand that the QDI is copyrighted by Joseph G. Ponterotto (Ph.D.) at the Division of Psychological and Educational Services, Fordham University at Lincoln Center, 113 West 60th Street, New York, New York 10023-7478 (212-636-6480); Jponterott@aol.com.

2. I am a trained professional in counseling, psychology, or a related field, having completed coursework (or training) in multicultural issues, psychometrics, and research ethics, or I am working under the supervision of such an individual.

3. In using the QDI, all ethical standards of the American Psychological Association, the American Counseling Association, and/or related professional organizations will be adhered to. Furthermore, I will follow the "Research with Human Subjects" guidelines put forth by my university, institution, or professional setting. Ethical considerations include but are not limited to subject informed consent, confidentiality of records, adequate pre- and post-briefing of subjects, and subject opportunity to review a concise written summary of the study's purpose, method, results, and implications.

4. Consistent with accepted professional practice, I will save and protect my raw data for a minimum of five years; and if requested I will make the raw data available to scholars researching the prejudice construct.

5. I will send a copy of my research results (for any study incorporating the QDI) in manuscript form to Dr. Ponterotto, regardless of whether the study is published, presented, or fully completed.

Signature: Penny J. Hansen  Date: 2/22/07
Name: Penny J. Hansen  Phone: 906-892-8447
Address: E2914 E. Deer Lake Rd
         Au Train, Mich.  49806

If a student, supervisor/mentor's name and phone number, affiliation, and signature:
Name: Dr. C Van  Phone: 269-387-3891
Affiliation: Professor  University of Western Michigan
Signature:  Date: 2-22-07

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Appendix D

Quick Discrimination Index (QDI)
Quick Discrimination Index (QDI)

The QDI is a 30-item Likert-type self-report measure of racial and gender attitudes. The instrument itself is titled “Social Attitude Survey” to control for some forms of response bias.

Social Attitudes Survey

Please respond to all items in the survey. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I do think it is more appropriate for the mother of a newborn baby, rather than the father, to stay home with the baby during the first year.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>It is as easy for women to succeed in business as it is for men.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>I really think affirmative action programs on college campuses constitute reverse discrimination.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>I feel I could develop an intimate relationship with someone from a different race.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>All Americans should learn to speak two languages.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>I look forward to the day when a woman is president of the United States.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Generally speaking, men work harder than women.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>My friendship network is very racially mixed.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
9. I am against affirmative action programs in business.
10. Generally, men seem less concerned with building relationships than do women.
11. I would feel okay about my son/daughter dating someone from a different race.
12. I look forward to the day when a racial minority person is president of the United States.
13. In the past few years there has been too much attention directed toward multicultural issues in education.
14. I think feminist perspectives should be an integral part of the higher education curriculum.
15. Most of my close friends are from my own racial group.
16. I feel somewhat more secure that a man, rather than a woman is currently president of the United States.
17. I think that it is (or would be) important for my children to attend schools that are racially mixed.
18. In the past few years there has been too much attention directed toward multicultural issues in business.
19. Overall, I think racial minorities in America complain too much about racial discrimination.
20. I feel (or would feel) very comfortable having a woman as my primary physician.
21. I think the president of the United States should make a concerted effort to appoint more women and racial
minorities to the country’s Supreme Court.

22. I think White people’s racism toward racial minority groups still constitutes a major problem in America.

23. I think the school system, from elementary school through college, should encourage minority and immigrant children to learn and fully adopt traditional American values.

24. If I were to adopt a child, I would be happy to adopt a child of any race.

25. I think there is as much female physical violence toward men as there is male physical violence towards women.

26. I think the school system, from elementary school through college, should promote values representative of diverse cultures.

27. I believe that reading the autobiography of Malcolm X would be of value.

28. I would enjoy living in a neighborhood consisting of a racially diverse population (e.g., Asian, Blacks, Hispanics, Whites, etc.)

29. I think it is better if people marry within their own race.

30. Women make too big a deal out of sexual harassment issues in the workplace.
Appendix E

Correlation between Research Questions and Interview Questions
Correlation between Research Questions and Interview Questions

Particular interview questions pertain directly or indirectly to the research questions. Below is displayed the correlation between the research question and the interview question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>9, 10, 15, 16</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>4, 5, 8, 14</td>
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</table>
Appendix F

Quick Discrimination Index (QDI) with Responses
Please fill out this survey and return it to the researcher in the self-stamped, self-addressed envelope provided. Please do not include your name on this survey.

Quick Discrimination Index (QDI)

The QDI is a 30-item Likert-type self-report measure of racial and gender attitudes. The instrument itself is titled “Social Attitude Survey” to control for some forms of response bias.

Social Attitudes Survey

Please respond to all items in the survey. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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30. Women make too big a deal out of sexual harassment issues in the workplace.
### Individual Participants' Responses on the QDI

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Appendix G

Interview Questions
Interview Questions

Semi-Structured Interview Guide used with Elementary Principals

Date:

Time of Interview:

Place:

Interviewee:

Principal experience (years):

Purpose of study:

We know that administrators in public schools are now facing student populations more diverse than at any other period in our public school history. Due to this increase in student diversity, administrators must examine their skills, knowledge, attitudes, experiences, and dispositions in order to meet the challenge of fostering a diversity-sensitive, inclusive school environment and to assist teachers’ awareness of instructional strategies that meet the needs of diverse students impacting learning outcomes.

Warm up questions:

1. How did you get started in a career as an educator?

2. What led you to become an administrator?

3. What led you to choose (university name) principal preparation program over others?

Professional Experiences

4. How would you describe the ways in which principals function as “chief instructional leader”?

5. Tell me about your own leadership style?

6. What are the most rewarding aspects of this job?

7. How would you compare your first year as a principal with the one you just completed?
8. What has/have been the most challenging things(s) (personally and professionally) about leading a high diversity school?

*Cultural Beliefs/Awareness*

9. How would you describe your “cultural background”?  
10. What cultural/diversity training have you had?

*Vision, learning, and diverse students*

11. Tell me about your professional goals as a principal.  
12. To date, what steps has the school district taken to address achievement and reduce the achievement gap?  
13. What do the students at ________ School need to order to learn?

*Knowledge*

14. What do you think are the most important things to know about the students and families at ________ School?  
15. What do you consider to be the most important thing(s) to know about the role of the principal in this type of school?  
16. What advise would you give someone who accepts the job of principal of a culturally diversified school?  
17. What are the most important things you’ve learned about/through working with parents from differing cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds?

*Building School Partnerships in community*

18. What have you found to be the most successful way to communicate with parents?  
19. How do you promote productive working relationships with community members and organizations to help support the many diverse groups represented in this school?
Other

20. What part have you played in hiring the teachers and what criteria do you use in selecting teachers for this school?

21. In your opinion, how can teacher/administrator education programs at universities help prepare would-be teachers/administrators for successful work in schools with high diversity student populations?

22. What other thoughts do you have regarding your role in this school?
Appendix H

Conceptual Framework
Principals' Personal Values, Beliefs, Dispositions, Experiences, and Attitudes

Principal's Educational Philosophy

Principals' Educational, Professional Training, and Experiences

White & non-White Principal's Perceptions of Student Achievement and the Achievement Gap

Personal Descriptors
- Problematic issues and general trends
- Strategies for improving achievement

Leadership Practices Behaviors
- Instructional Strategies
- Professional Development
- Allocation of Resources
- Change

Traditional Descriptors of Student Achievement
- Performance on standardized tests
- Grades, courses
- Attendance patterns

Alternative Descriptors of Student Achievement
- Multicultural Curriculum
- Multicultural teaching strategies
- Inclusive participation in school activities
- Sense of cultural competency
- Commitment to community
REFERENCES


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