

CRITICAL RACE THEORY IN ELEMENTARY SOCIAL
STUDIES: EXPLORING RACIAL IDENTITY AND
STEREOTYPE THREAT FOR BLACK MALES

by

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ABSTRACT

Despite the vast research by various education specialists regarding the state of emergency as it relates to the Black male student and his success, little is known about the effects the social studies can have on their lives. Much of what is published about Black male students' academic and personal lives, portrays these young men as defiant, unengaged, undereducated, and socially bankrupt. This study attempted to provide a voice for these young men through a transformative mixed method approach. The students and their social studies teachers completed a survey that examined their attitudes and beliefs of the social studies and how it could be used to instill a positive self-identity within this group of students. The students also took the Multidimensional Inventory Survey, developed upon a phenomenological view of the correlations between a person's self-identity and his or membership within a particular race (Rowley, Sellers, Chavous, & Smith, 1998), to gain sight into how they believed they identified as males within the Black race. The students and teachers were then interviewed to triangulate the quantitative findings. The analysis of the data yielded the following: 1) Black boys enjoyed the social studies particularly when presented in a culturally relevant format, 2) Black boys possessed high levels of Black identity and closely aligned with teachers who viewed them as individuals and identified with the issues they encountered, 3) Teachers of these Black boys held them to high standards and did not compromise these expectations, 4) Teachers insinuated a culturally relevant social studies curriculum yielded increases in their Black male students' self-identities,

5) Black boys wanted a space to feel valued, and the social studies classes in which they were enrolled, provided this positive valuation of them, which improved their own self-identities.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated, first, to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Without Him and his leading, I am nothing. With Him, all things, including this dissertation, have been possible.

The loves of my life, Aliza, Alyssa, and Katherine, have inspired me to do what so many others only dare to dream. Every time I thought I wanted to quit, I thought of your future lives and all the even greater things you will accomplish because of my example. There is a saying that goes something along these lines, “Children will do as you do, not as you say!” I hope the memories you have of my days at The University of Alabama will stay with as you grow, and as you begin to experience your own challenges, you remain steadfastly unwavering, forging ahead to exceed your goals.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

<i>a</i>	Cronbach's index of internal consistency
<i>df</i>	Degrees of freedom: number of values free to vary after certain restrictions have been placed on the data
<i>F</i>	Fisher's <i>F</i> ratio: A ration of two variances
<i>M</i>	Mean: the sum of a set of measurements divided by the number of measurements in the set
<i>t</i>	Computed value of <i>t</i> test
<	Less than
=	Equal to

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose.....	7
Significance of the Study.....	7
Research Questions.....	7
Overview of Methodology.....	8
Assumptions and Limitations.....	8
Definitions.....	9
Overview of the Study.....	10
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	12
Introduction.....	12
The History of the Social Studies.....	13
Current States of the Social Studies and the Black Student.....	17

Black Student Identity: The Research Perspective	22
Stereotype Threat	28
Stereotype Threat and the Curricular Disidentification	29
The Hidden Curriculum	32
Chapter Summary	35
CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD	37
Purpose.....	37
Research Positionality.....	39
Research Questions.....	40
Research Design.....	40
Transformative Framework	41
Setting & Time Frame	43
The Schools.....	43
Participants.....	44
Meet the Teachers	45
Meet the Students.....	46
The Curricula	46
Procedures.....	47
The Instruments	47
Chapter Summary	54
CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS	55
Introduction.....	55
Research Questions and Agenda.....	56

Social Studies and the Black Male Student: The Qualitative Aspect	57
Results and Findings of the Student Social Studies Survey	58
Conclusions for the Social Studies Student Survey	62
Results of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity—Teen (MIBI-T)	63
Conclusions for the MIBI—Teen Survey	65
Results and Findings of the Teacher Social Studies Survey	67
Teachers’ Academic Beliefs of their Students	67
Teachers’ Perceptions of Their Students’ Self-Images	68
Social Studies and the Black Male Student: The Qualitative Aspect	69
The Private School Curricula	69
Black Historical Moments or Black People Studied	70
Promoting a Positive Self-Identity Through the Social Studies	71
Dispelling Myths and Historical Relevancy	73
High Accountability	74
General Consensus	75
Social Studies and the Black Male: The Students’ Views	75
Their Thoughts of the Social Studies in General	76
Their Thoughts of the Subject as Black Males	76
Their Thoughts on the Amount of Time Spent on Black History	77
Their Curricular Knowledge	78
Individualized Curriculum	80
Social Studies and Their Self-Identities	81
Love for Their Social Studies Teachers	83

The World Needs to Know	84
Combining the Two Schools of Thought.....	86
Two Schools of Thought, or No?.....	87
Chapter Summary	89
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	90
Summary.....	90
Sixth Grade, Private School, Social Studies Classrooms and the Black Male	90
Why Are They So Resilient?	92
Teacher vs. Teacher	94
Teachers vs. Students.....	95
Recommendations and Conclusions	96
REFERENCES	101
APPENDICES	109
Appendix A: Social Studies Curriculum and the Black Male Student – Teacher	110
Appendix B: Social Studies the Black Male – Student.....	113
Appendix C: MIBI – Teen	117
Appendix D: Student Interview Protocol.....	120
Appendix E: Teacher Interview Protocol	121
Appendix F: Student Social Studies Survey (Final Version)	124
Appendix G: Independent Samples Test Social Studies Survey	127
Appendix H: Component Transformation Matrix (Student SS Survey)	131
Appendix I: Total Variance Explained – Student Social Studies Survey.....	132
Appendix J: Total Variance Explained – MIBI Teen	133

Appendix K: Component Transformation Matrix for MIBI.....	134
Appendix L: IRB Approval Form.....	135

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 – Frequency of Age.....58

Table 2 – Factor Loadings Rotated Component Matrix Student Social Studies Survey61

Table 3 – Factor Loadings Rotated Component Matrix MIBI—Teen Survey65

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Transformative Framework as Illustrated in Creswell and Plano Clark	41
Figure 2 – Proposed Mixed Method Design with Stages of Data Collection.....	49
Figure 3 – Modes of Triangulation of Data Per Research Question.....	53
Figure 4 – Reliability Statistics (15 item Student Social Studies Survey).....	59
Figure 5 – Reliability Statistics (21 item Reverse Coded Student Social Studies Survey)	59
Figure 6 – Scree Plot for Student Social Studies Survey.....	60
Figure 7 – Reliability Statistics (MIBI—Teen)	63
Figure 8 – Scree Plot for MIBI—Teen Survey.....	64
Figure 9 – Venn Diagram of Teachers’ and Students’ Thoughts and Beliefs	83

CHAPTER I:
INTRODUCTION

Background

Former U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, offered a challenge at the 2010 National Press Club Meeting:

The truth is—there are indefensible inequities in our school system—in terms of funding, teacher quality, access to rigorous curriculum and student outcomes.

Half a century after Brown versus Board of Education, this is an epic injustice for our society. We will target these schools for enforcement under civil rights laws, but it falls to elected officials, school administrators and other stakeholders across the spectrum to confront educational inequity. The achievement gap is unacceptable. Education is the civil rights issue of our generation. It is the only way to make good on the American promise of equality (Duncan, 2010).

Although the overarching goal of his speech was to address the driving force behind the current course of American education, Duncan’s comments could be linked to the growing concerns of advocates for marginalized groups of students in this country’s educational system.

From its inception as a nation, African American students have been disenfranchised by the public education system in the United States (Tomlinson, 2012). Though this country was “conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal” (Jefferson,

1776), there is strong research, particularly in the areas of Black student achievement, that suggests otherwise (Delpit, 2012; Kozol, 1991/2005; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Tatum, 2005). As the initial White settlers arrived in this continent, their first goal was to educate the savage, peoples of color within the land and indoctrinate them into Christianity for the purposes of salvation (Urban & Wagoner, Jr., 2004).

Though most early educational philosophers viewed all people of color as brutes inherently unable to learn and to comprehend (Galton, 1869, 1892; Tomlinson, 2012), it was through the writings of early U. S. forefathers such as Thomas Jefferson, where the ideology of American education—and who was excluded from the educated elite—was birthed. Jefferson and others openly voiced opposition for the education of Blacks (Tomlinson). Believing the false, early research of phrenology, which purported the Black mind as feeble and incapable of learning, most citizens fought strongly against the notion of educating anyone possessing black skin (Tomlinson).

During the colonial era, where slavery and servitude abounded, there was a group, although minute in number, devoted to the education of the Black people: the Quakers. According to Harry Morgan (1995), the Quaker's (or Society of Friends) philosophical goals for educating Blacks resonated on the basic principles:

1. teach them Bible reading
2. support Christian efforts to abolish slavery
3. allow them to take their rightful place among the others (p. 36).

Closely aligned with the goals of educating Native Americans, the goals for enabling a literate Black population still met the needs of the oppressive hierarchy, not the needs of the population themselves. As history evolved, however, Blacks were gradually denied these opportunities.

Although the rate of literacy increased over time in some clusters of Black groups, progress was stifled largely due to both northern and southern opposition. In the north, the Common School movement was making strong gains, as was the majority of the nation; however, this movement was not designed to include Blacks. As a result, groups of Blacks built their own schools, only to soon discover they could not afford to adequately educate their students (Tomlinson, 2012). Due to the lack of resources, these groups of parents fought the local governments for integrated schooling or a larger share of the one-cent per child subsidy they received from the state (Tomlinson).

In the southeast, Black literacy was met with strong and hostile resistance. Following the U.S. Civil War, also known as the War Between the States, literacy was linked to voting and other rights reserved only for White Americans. The prevailing paradigm of that period suggested literacy among Blacks would renounce any disenfranchisement, thereby allowing them to become an active part of southeastern politics. In an effort to save the traditional southeastern societal norms from the infiltration of a literate Black race, most southeastern cities and towns openly created laws and ordinances against the education of Blacks (Loewen, 2006; Tomlinson, 2012). These ordinances, created with the purpose of marginalizing, instilled fear into the hearts of most Blacks in the area. These Blacks knew all too well the consequences of becoming openly literate; therefore, many early accounts of missionaries contained dismal notes concerning the diminished efficacies of the Black students (Public Broadcasting Service, 2000).

Though Blacks have struggled over the years to obtain quality and equal education (Brimner, 2010), for the first time since the 1970s, public school enrollment among Black students, particularly in the western and southeastern parts of the United States, is decreasing (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2012). While this statistic provides no

evidence of where these students are going once they leave public schools, some indicate they are becoming part of the education to prison pipeline (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [NAACP], 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2007). Others suggest they are becoming part of the educational wastage resulting from premature withdrawal of children from public schools (Brimer & Pauli, 1971; Donahoe & Tienda, 2005). One study suggests they are transferring into private schools (Stevenson & Arrington, 2011). Though no definitive answers are provided within the literature to explain the phenomenon, there are some who believe the decline and the departure of the Black students in public schools lie in the manner, methods, and materials used to teach children of color in the USA (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Delpit, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Statement of Problem

Black male students are becoming increasingly disengaged from mainstream curriculum (Delpit, 2012; Tatum, 2005); and it is noted they especially loathe the social studies (Loewen, 2012). U. S. schools serve to provide a compulsory, free education to students Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. It is within this compulsory, free education, some researchers believe schools serve to perpetuate a system of racism of and within Black students, particularly Black male students (Wright, 2011).

Black students are disproportionately suspended and expelled from schools (Darling-Hammond, 2007) for the same infractions for which their White peers receive minimal or no consequences (Lewin, 2012). Such situations are influenced by the typical view of Black students as likely discipline problems in public schools (Florida Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2011). In a 2010 study of a group of Black students in Duval County, Florida, it was noted 73% of Black students received out-of-school suspensions

compared to 19.5% of White students (Florida Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights). The study further indicated Blacks “make up 76 percent of the alternative school population compared with 18 percent of white students enrolled in alternative schools” (Florida Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, p. 11).

There is a growing number of non-minority, middle class teacher education graduates matriculating through colleges of education around the country (Morrell, 2010). Most of these teachers will not have any experience in working with students of color (Morrell, 2010). This limited experience serves not only to allow the entrance of negative stereotypes of children of color (Sleeter, 2001), but also serves to foster a dominant Anglo-Saxon narrative within the classroom. In one study focusing on White educators’ views of multiculturalism, the educators’ curriculums, though believed to be multicultural, only focused on teaching to the majority White students (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Though this study was a singular investigation, it presents an opportunity to examine other instances of race-based discipline across the school systems within a similar context, particularly as it relates to the disproportionate means of administering consequences to Black students, which in turn may contribute to some of the negative self-identity Black students possess.

With the social and political unrest in the cities of Ferguson, Missouri, Cleveland, Ohio, and New York City, New York due to the alleged police brutality against Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, and Eric Garner in recent years, the social studies could be a valuable platform for teaching social justice topics. These individual events of alleged police misconduct collectively portray the U. S. A. as intolerant of its minority citizens. Not only do these alleged infractions illuminate negative attitudes toward Black men, these actions work to uphold feelings documented in The Opportunity Agenda. In 2011, The Opportunity Agenda released a report on the state of the

Black male. Within this report, the Topos Partnership states “[W]hites tend to more easily associate negative words such as terrible, failure, horrible, evil, agony, nasty, and awful with unknown black faces, as opposed to white faces” (pp. 2-3). In order to combat these negative stereotypes, the social studies curriculum might serve to invalidate the negative beliefs. If, however, little to no teaching of positive Black history occurs, the country may continue to uphold negative stereotypes of Blacks if those stereotypes continue to go unchallenged in the curriculum.

When thinking of possible solutions to problems from the perspective of a social studies educator, exposing students to the stories of various heroes from the texts used, often assumes students may be able to connect to the accounts (Bickford & Rich, 2014). Some, however, disagree with this assumption. In his book, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, author James Loewen (2007) discusses how the social studies not only repels non-White students, but also is one of the least favorite subjects of Black students. Though no statistical evidence is provided within Loewen’s (2007) text to substantiate this particular claim, it would be possible to hypothesize non-White students are repelled more often by the social studies because it excludes multi-cultural points of view. There is a body of literature indicating how a culturally relevant pedagogy could be beneficial to Black students (Gay, 1995, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2009). The problem of this study is that it appears, within the literature, that the social studies curriculum is not relevant to young Black boys, giving credence to the idea that social studies contributes very little towards cultivating and influencing self-identity among those in this demographic. There is little research documenting investigations addressing this problem.

Purpose

This mixed methods study addressed the lived experiences of sixth grade Black students within the context of the social studies classroom to examine to what extent culturally relevant teaching through the social studies curriculum positively affected their self-identities. While a considerable amount of research focuses on the identity of Black, male students within the context of malevolence towards, and discontent with academia, there is a glaring lack of information relative to how the use of academic tools and curricula—specifically those rooted in the social studies—can be used to increase a positive self-image among these students.

Significance of the Study

The proposed study was significant because of its potential implications for assisting elementary teachers in determining if social studies instruction could be used to enhance Black students' perceptions of themselves as students, citizens, and future leaders. Understanding how the positive teaching of Black history through a multi-cultural lens, even when juxtaposed with negative, stereotypical views, worked to improve the interest level for the subject area by Black male students while also increasing positive self-perceptions among those within this specific demographic. In conducting this study, it was hoped that the results “raise[d] new possibilities, open[ed] up new questions, and stimulate[d] new dialogue” (Creswell, 2013, p. 248).

Research Questions

To investigate the problem of the study, the following overarching research question was posed: What are the lived experiences of Black male students in private school, elementary social studies classes that develop students' self-identity? To consider this question, three questions were investigated:

1. What situations in sixth grade, private school, elementary social studies classes are influencing Black males' self-identity?
2. How, and to what, extent do these influences occur?
3. What are the experiences of teachers that are related to Black male students' development of self-identity?

Overview of the Methodology

The goal of this 6-week, mixed method study of Black male students within historically two, Black, private schools was to gather information with which to investigate the questions of the study. For this study, historically Black private schools referred to schools primarily established, without governmental or public funds, to serve Black students. As some Black families feel public schools fail their Black children, they are moving them to schools that focus exclusively on meeting their children's needs (Edwards, Thompson McMillon & Turner, 2010).

Data was collected using: (1) a student survey adapted by the researcher to assess their attitudes and beliefs of social studies, (2) a Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity—Teen (Schottham, Sellers, & Nguyễn, 2008), (3) a teacher survey, (4) student interviews, and (5) teacher interviews. The data was analyzed for insights into the present perspectives of Black male students concepts of identity as students and as citizens as fostered through the social studies curriculum. The study allowed for an in-depth analysis of various social studies curricula of the sampled private Black schools.

Assumptions and Limitations

Within the context of most studies, researchers bring a “set of interlocking philosophical assumptions and stances” to the investigation (Greene & Caracelli, 1997, p. 6). For this study, it was assumed the methods used to collect data enabled the researcher to draw relevant

conclusions to the research questions. It was assumed most the students in the Black private schools received a culturally relevant, Afrocentric education. The limitations of this study related to the low return rate associated with voluntary surveys and the uniqueness of the sample included in the study.

Another limitation of this study was the limited time within the classroom. It was hoped the study would be conducted over a 12-week span. Due to certain time restraints, the research was shortened several weeks.

Definitions

Alienation—The term refers to the exclusion of the Black narrative from the social studies curriculum. This term may also be used to refer to the isolation of Blacks from most school and social activities.

Black—The term Black will be used to refer to persons of African or African American descent. This is based upon the U.S. Census' definition of Black, which identifies any "person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa [as Black]. It includes people who indicate their races as 'Black, African American, or Negro'; or reports entries such as African American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian" (U. S. Bureau of the Census, Population Estimates Program, 2014).

Black History—This term refers to the teaching of social studies standards from a Black perspective.

Black Student Identity—This term refers to how Black students navigate through the classroom settings. For this study, Black Student Identity will attempt to juxtapose the students' lived experiences through a predominantly Black classroom setting with those lived experiences within any other environments.

Historically Black—The term historically Black refers to schools that were started primarily to meet the needs of Black students. For this study, these historically Black schools are offshoots of long-established Black churches and universities and serve predominantly to educate Black students.

Private Schools—Private schools are entities that operate without governmental or public funds.

Stereotype threat—This is defined by Claude Steele (1997) as a “situational” often “incidental” threat that “in general form, can affect the members of any group about whom a negative stereotype threat exists (e.g., skateboarders, older adults, White men, gang members [women should also be included]). Where bad stereotypes about these groups apply, members of these groups can fear being reduced to that stereotype” (p. 614).

Disidentification—This is “the lack of a relationship between academic self-esteem and global self-esteem, with the implication that there has been a relationship in the past” (Steele, 1992, p. 69).

Afrocentric—This term refers to thinking from a Black point of view.

Self-identity—This term refers to how each Black male views his *self* as Black within the contexts of school, home, and the world.

Overview of the Study

This study investigated how the self-perceptions of Black males as students may be influenced by the possible implementation of culturally relevant social studies content—presumably Afrocentric concepts, theories, and activities currently being used by the schools participating in this study. Chapter I provided background information, a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, overarching and key research questions, an overview of the

methodology, assumptions and limitations, and definitions of keywords used within this study.

Chapter II consists of a literature review that focused on: research in the field of the history of Black education; the decline of the Black as a student and citizen; and how the social studies curriculum contributed to the current status of the Black student. This chapter also includes literature on the attempts schools are making to reach these students through the social studies and other curricula as well as how those methods may or may not work to dispel stereotype threat.

Chapter III explains the methodology chosen to obtain information about, and clarification of, the questions guiding this study. Mixed-methods research was used, which consisted of a transformative research design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) to include quantitative and qualitative data. Chapter IV analyzes and discusses the data found. Chapter V includes a discussion of the conclusions drawn from the data, implications of the data, and implications for future research.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The predominant goal of the social studies, according to the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), is to “help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world” (NCSS, 2010, para. 1). The teachers of the social studies are charged with the task of not only providing subject matter content, but are also expected to instill certain intellectual and civic values into the lives of the children they educate. There is a growing body of literature, however, indicating a possible gap within the social studies curriculum as it relates to Black children (Moses Stewart & Marshall, 2009), and how certain skills and values are not readily translated into the Black community.

The purpose of this study, therefore, investigated if, and how well culturally relevant teaching translated authentically within the social studies classrooms to improve Black male students’ self-identities. This study was designed to investigate how well the overarching goals of the National Council of the Social Studies are implemented in Historically Black private schools and whether these skills lead to positive responses in their identities.

The review of literature is presented in three main parts. The first encompasses an overview of the history of the social studies. The second section chronicles the current state of the social studies and the Black Male Student. The final section discusses Black Student Identity as a framework for the study.

The History of the Social Studies

The social studies, as a field of progressive teaching and learning, has an interestingly rich history that finds its roots in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While “most educational historians and social education theorists have determined that social studies originated out of the 1916 National Education Association (NEA) Committee on Social Studies”, other researchers and theorists believe “Arthur William Dunn was the originator of social studies because [he] developed ‘Community Civics,’ thereby making him the first person to utilize a social approach to civic education” (Mraz, 2004, p. 1).

While both arguments surrounding the origin of social studies education may have some validity, there were several who advocated for the abolishment of the traditional teaching of history in the United States (Bisland, 2009; Evans, 2007-2008; McAninch, 1990) as it promoted and perpetrated the nation as a great and perfect body with virtually no flaws. Few give credit to Mary Sheldon Barnes and her early commitment to designing a social studies curriculum. Birthed in rebellion to the Memoriter System, Barnes’ circumscribed inquiry-based social studies education was designed with the purpose of challenging students to become critically informed citizenry who could question the flaws of democracy and find, through research, solutions to the proposed issues.

As a staunch advocate for “scientific inquiry and direct experiences with primary sources” and as one who dared challenge the status quo, Mary Sheldon Barnes decided to teach in direct opposition to the American Historical Association’s (AHA) Committee of Seven’s (1898) recommendation to primarily teach from the textbook by incorporating a heavy emphasis on primary sources (McNeil, 2003). She further displayed, in some sense, total disregard for the

AHA's "disclaim [of] any confidence in 'investigation' by pupils" (American Historical Association, 2006, para. 3).

Though a natural scientist by trade, Barnes developed a passion for history and the social sciences (McAninch, 1990). As such, she decided to merge the two in order to form one of the first inquiry based social studies curriculum. She operated within the premise that "students were not to be passive vessels to be filled with knowledge by teacher and textbook; rather, they were to be *active agents* who, with the encouragement and guidance of teacher and textbook, drew their conclusions from rigorous inquiry [Emphasis Added]" (McAninch, 1990, p. 47). Believing that simply relying on textbooks and rote memorization would "develop certain mechanical intellectual skills" that could not produce "historical truth", Barnes created her own curriculum that she considered forward thinking for the time. This revolutionary curriculum, however, was met with some criticism (p. 47).

One particular opponent was Stuart McAninch (1990). In his article, *The Educational Theory of Mary Sheldon Barnes: Inquiry Learning as Indoctrination in History Education*, McAninch provides a vivid portrait of Barnes' private and professional lives. Though he does have a major critique of Barnes' work, there is space within the article that credits her for the work in reshaping the social studies curriculum. The major point of the article, however, is to highlight one major flaw of her curriculum: its lack of inclusive narratives.

The author states while Barnes strived to differ from her contemporaries, she too presented a curriculum that possessed a "blatant failure" (p. 50). He contends, "Such a historical paradigm failed realistically to take into account the predicaments faced by black Americans, the developing working class, or other groups which often did not share in national progress or experience considerable personal freedom of action" (p. 50). By implying most of

her work was inherently a mechanism to preserve and protect middle class thinkers of the time, McAninch stated Barnes' curriculum deprived students of the ability to "realistically address such issues of central historical and current importance as racism and sexism in the United States or the impact of American power on the rest of the world" (p. 51).

While Mary Sheldon Barnes' curriculum may have been received with mixed reviews, her curriculum would not be the only to undergo intense scrutiny. A fellow colleague, Harold Rugg, would assume a similar fate. Credited as the founder of the National Council of the Social Studies (Pahl, 2001), Mark Mraz (2004) declares, "If anyone can be credited with taking the quantum leap from a historically, single-discipline approach to a pluralistic, social science approach, that person would be Harold Ordway Rugg" (p. 1).

Having a similar professional commencement in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields, Rugg too sought to develop a curriculum that promoted critical thinking rather than rote memorization of facts. In response to a school curriculum that had been designed "by a type of committee procedure that [was] unscientific and arm-chair made" (Rugg, 1921, p. 249), Rugg wanted to build a curriculum that "demand[ed] a quantitative inventory of [...] activities, institutions and issues of society (p. 250).

In order for this new type of curriculum to be successful, teachers had a role to play in ensuring dynamic teaching and learning occurred. According to Rugg, as cited in Mraz, good teaching is based on the following:

1. The pupil learns only by active assimilation
2. The situations of the school must be real and dramatic
3. Learning proceeds through the gradual accumulation of experience
4. Every avenue of learning should be employed

5. Maximum growth in understanding
6. Systematic and economical practice on skills
7. Learning develops simultaneously
8. The intensive study of a few things
9. Attention centered on one thing at a time
10. Courses should be organized upon 'Understandable Units' (p. 4).

In essence, Rugg wanted a curriculum where students, using the social studies, tackled and searched for solutions to contemporary issues. Though Rugg's curriculum was fully developed and constructed, there were those who found fault with his progressive thinking.

In 1934, just as Rugg shifted his ideological thinking to that of a social reconstructionist, Elizabeth Dilling, founder of The Red Network, accused the professor of being a member of the Communist party (Evans, 2007). From there, Rugg and his textbooks became a controversial center of what was to be deemed (un)American. The bulk of his opponents believed his form of social studies was unpatriotic and designed to essentially corrupt the minds of the youth exposed to it. By 1941, there was virtually no existence of Rugg's textbooks in any school within the nation (Evans, 2007).

Both Mary Sheldon Barnes and Harold Ordway Rugg were prolific in their efforts towards developing a course that challenged the students to think beyond the text. Both believed a true democracy flourished only when its citizenry could produce change by its ability to think critically about the life in which they lived. Although their work was instrumental in paving the way for current social studies reform, it constituted only part of the genesis of the evolution of the social studies.

Current States of the Social Studies and the Black Student

There is a push from stakeholders to minimize the time spent on the teaching of social studies content in order to concentrate on math, reading, and science (Sunal & Sunal, 2007/2008; Van Fossen, 2005). One instance of this includes Lynne Cheney's, former Vice-President Dick Cheney's wife, attack on the National Standards for United States History, which in turn led to a newly fueled passion against the social studies (McNeil, 2004).

The United States is considered the land of opportunity; however, its schools reflect less optimistic and even harrowing facts. More students are experiencing the effects of poverty. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), there is an increasing amount of students qualifying for free lunch (2012). The purpose of the social studies, according to the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) is to promote "civil competence" or "the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life" (NCSS, 2010, para. 1). Though this sentiment is supposed to be translated to the classroom, the social studies continues to be heralded as unpatriotic by some for its exclusion of narratives of the marginalized.

In the 2010 school year, the National Center for Education Statistics reports Blacks comprise the largest group of repeating kindergarteners and the majority of those come from impoverished homes (NCES, 2013). According to the 2011 NAEP Assessment on Alabama, both the Hispanic and White students outperformed their Black peers in Reading and Mathematics (NCES, 2012). There are some who suggest the achievement gap is closing based upon performances from 1970 to date (NCES, 2013); however, the results still show a gap between students of color and their white peers, particularly when "42% of Black students attend schools that are under-resourced and performing poorly" (NEA, 2011).

As classroom teachers continue to undergo scrutiny for their students' test performances, are there measures that can be taken to counter the achievement gap? One possible approach is to learn to become a reflective practitioner. In his book, *Lies My Teacher Tells Me*, James (2007), asserts, Black and Hispanic students perform "most worst" in social studies than they do in trigonometry (pp. 5-6). He further explains this may be largely attributable to their exclusion from the social studies curriculum. As the United States becomes increasingly more diverse, public education classrooms will begin to reflect this evolving national landscape. Teachers, consequently, will need to give careful and deliberate consideration not only to what they teach, but how they teach.

In a 2001 study on the reflectivity practice of social studies teachers, Lois M. Christensen, Elizabeth K. Wilson, Stephanie K. Anders, et. al, engaged in a longitudinal study of TRELIS (Teacher Researchers Expanding Learning, Linking Institutions Schools). This group met regularly to explore social studies topics and issues; to collaborate on various topics; and to serve one another as mentors (p. 205). Through this study, they found teacher reflectivity not only enhanced their pedagogical skills, it increased their ability to stand "against the odds and the ramifications of power structures" (p. 208). This type of thinking can empower teachers to implement critical inquiry lessons to deepen students' awareness of the world around them, thus enabling them to meet the goals of the NCSS.

Another means of becoming a reflective practitioner of any subject is by considering what is culturally relevant to each student (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Gay, 2000). Culturally responsive or culturally relevant teaching is the practice of using one's cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles to make learning more meaningful to them. Gloria Ladson-Billings expands on this definition, stating culturally relevant teaching occurs when teachers

implement a curriculum that embodies students' culture(s) in an attempt to "maintain" each student's individual culture and to "transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 20).

A third vehicle for enacting reform is by advocating against the use of tracking. The art of tracking as defined by Robert Slavin (2009) is a process by which "students are assigned to a specific curriculum sequence within which they take all their academic courses" (p. 266). More specifically, Linda Darling-Hammond (1997) defines tracking as "the separation of students into separate instructional strands with differentiated curricula based on presumed or tested ability levels" (p. 127). This is particularly important to critical race theorists who assert most schools disproportionately place Black students—especially males—in lower track or even special education courses (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Slavin, 2009). Studies cited in Slavin (2009) and Edwards, Thompson McMillon and Turner (2010) indicate tracking has a negative impact on student achievement, particularly Black and Hispanics. As Linda Darling-Hammond (1997) states, tracking has "created a [modern-day] form of educational apartheid" (p. 267) as it continues to marginalize minorities' educational achievements.

While there are other research-based approaches any teacher can take to address the needs of Black students, there are some tangible, immediate responses. One approach, for example, is to provide meaningful texts. In his book, *Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males: Closing the Achievement Gap*, Alfred Tatum (2005) Tatum delves deeper into the heart of the teaching and learning of Black males, by suggesting that educators incorporate such texts that create the following opportunities for Black males to:

1. Engage with texts and discussions about the real issues they, their families, and their communities face, where the students can analyze their lives in the

context of the curriculum and discuss strategies for overcoming academic and societal barriers.

2. Use meaningful literacy activities that address students' cognitive and affective domains that take into account the students' culture.
3. Connect the social, the economic, and the political to the educational.
4. Acknowledge that developing skills, increasing test scores, and nurturing students' identity are fundamentally compatible.
5. Resolve the either-or dilemma of focusing on skill development or developing intelligence (p. 54).

While this approach was specifically designed for reading, teachers of the social studies can employ similar devices. When teaching history, for example, teachers can provide an account that encompasses more than the dominant narrative. In a 1998 study by Barbara Hynd and Cynthia Guzzetti, students were provided three different narratives on Christopher Columbus. Two of them were obviously biased; while the third one provided a more balanced approach (Good & Brophy, 2008). Of the three accounts, the children preferred the more balanced narrative.

Providing Black students with a more balanced account of historical events may serve to motivate them to challenge their own set of biases towards themselves and the social studies. By providing them with a different set of lenses through which to view historical accounts and current events, Black students may become more vested in the learning process, enabling them to take ownership of what is being taught.

Another tangible method a social studies teacher can employ is to allow student autonomy within the teaching and learning environment. In a 2011 study, Sandra Hughes-

Hassell discusses how she engages her Black students. Although her study exclusively was for librarians, she offers teachers valuable insight on to how reach Black students through what she terms the transformative approach. This technique allows Black students to have the choice of what text(s) are within their libraries. This can be translated into the social studies classroom by perhaps allowing students to choose a particular focal point or person to study and researching why that event or person is relevant to not only history but to their present life.

A final action, taken by a social studies teacher, is to provide students the opportunity to learn more about their culture. This, of course, may mean additional research for the teacher; however, in doing so, the first two recommendations may be easier to follow. Part of becoming a culturally relevant educator is transcending “the negative effects of the dominant culture” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 20). As continually implied by Loewen, the social studies is filled with negative effects. Social studies educators, therefore, are encouraged to challenge students to critically examine what is placed before them. Knowing more about the students one teaches enables this to fluidly occur.

Students may not always come to us as tabulas rasas, or blank slates. In actuality, they most likely enter the classroom with various preconceived notions of the world, of life, of their teachers and most importantly, of themselves. As the early founding authorities of the social studies have challenged, social studies education should be filled with inquiry. Students should be allowed to see, hear, touch, taste, and feel as much of the entire historical events as possible, not just the dominant narratives. From there, students should be encouraged to probe and dissect what they are taught in order for it to not only make sense to them, but so they can in turn make an impact on society. As we live in a country “conceived in liberty and dedicated to proposition [that] all men are created equal” (Lincoln, 1863), teaching students how to become critically,

independent thinkers, social studies educators may help to ensure the vision of our forefathers' lives.

Black Student Identity: The Research Perspective

Blacks have been and continue to be visionaries in several facets of the world's industries. Oscar Micheaux was the United States' first Black filmmaker; Elijah McCoy was an extraordinary inventor; Dr. Benjamin Carson was a talented neurosurgeon; and Madame C. J. Walker was the first self-made female millionaire. From hip-hop moguls to the leader of the largest free nation-state, Blacks continue to make gains in their respective careers. While most Blacks live outside of the predominant, often derogatory stereotypical roles of rappers, athletes, criminals, welfare recipients, etc., the public still tends to have negative perceptions of Blacks (Dixon, 2008). It is further reported most non-Blacks—even those who view “themselves as largely prejudice-free”—are more susceptible to view Blacks as “intimidating, violent, and poor” (Dixon, 2008, para. 4). While this study may only report the disposition of one particular segment of the population, there is an area of extreme concern as it relates to fate of the Black youth. This area is the public education sector.

With numerous statistics conveying how Black students underachieve in every subject within the curriculum (NCES, 2003; NCES, 2012), coupled with staggering statistics reporting that more than 50% percent of Black males do not receive their diplomas with their cohorts, it is implausible any educational stakeholder would deny there is a problem (Holzman, 2006). While there are numerous colloquiums hosted around the nation explicitly designed to research and to remedy the pandemic of educational and social decline Black youth are facing, several treatments are prescribed; there are none, however, that suggest the use of the social studies to foster a positive Black identity.

Black identity is a relatively new area of research that may stem from Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model (later termed as the bioecological model) of development. According to Bronfenbrenner (1994), two propositions define the overarching ecological model. The first states,

“especially in its early phases, and to a great extent throughout the life course, human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate environment” (p. 38).

The second proposition suggests,

“the form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes effecting development vary systematically as a joint function of the environment—both immediate and more remote—in which the processes are taking place; and the nature of the developmental outcomes under consideration” (p. 38).

As further explained in Bronfenbrenner, the two propositions are interdependent, though more consideration is given to one's proximal processes; however, this view is continuously open to empirical research. As such, the process-person-context-time (PPCT) model was developed as a research design to allow simultaneous investigations of propositions 1 and 2 (Bronfenbrenner, 1995).

This Bioecological Model of Development (later known in 1995 as the bioecological paradigm), in essence, is built upon the presupposition that human development operates as deep-seated systems of interpersonal relationships occurring within various physical settings. Designed, based upon the work of Lewin's theory of psychological fields, Bronfenbrenner asserts these systems can be analogously depicted as Russian dolls, as each system moves from

the innermost to the outermost level (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). He lists five systems in his original work (micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chrono-), though, this paradigm underwent several modifications over the course his career. Within the systems, the individual's development hinged on his or her experiences as he or she interacted within the network.

While Bronfenbrenner's work has received accolades, it has also been the subject of scrutiny. One particular critique of this work is that it does not consider the individual as a system who is aware of the indirect relationships with the systems (Lee, 1993; Neisser, 1993). As such, Bronfenbrenner (1995) again revised his model to include the "human organism as *an active agent in, and on, its environment*" (p. 634).

Though a few studies on Black identity cite Bronfenbrenner, a considerable amount of literature (Bennett, 2006; Nasir, McLaughlin, & Jones, 2009; Wright, 2011) within this area of research references Jean Phinney (1992) and her Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. To delve more deeply in the concept of individual identity and its development, Phinney wanted to understand how one's ethnic group affiliation might contribute to his or her identity. In an effort to study this phenomenon, she realized she would not be able to use one particular module across ethnic groups as the results varied greatly. Accordingly, she sought to develop her own instrument that could be used to measure ethnic identity across groups.

During the emergent stages of its development, Phinney decided this survey instrument should contain items "common to the ethnic identity of all group members" which included: self-identification, sense of belonging, and attitudes toward the group (p. 158). Believing "ethnic identity as a general phenomenon that is relevant across groups", and each group "has its own unique history, traditions, and values" but the need to identify or belong to one's "own group" is an inherent need of all within the human race, Phinney strove to create a model that supported

her own core conceptual thinking (p. 158). The result was a 14-item survey that could be used with “diverse samples of adolescents and young adults and that would permit assessment and comparison of ethnic identity and its correlates both within and across groups” (Phinney, 1992, p. 163).

Since its inception, Phinney asserts this instrument has been effectively used in studies across various groups. She notes the model has been used in studies involving Black, Asian, Native American, and Hispanic subjects, both male and female. Though the original contained Cronbach’s alphas ranging from .69 to .90, the most recently developed model (1999) is noted to include Cronbach’s alphas above .80 and has been translated for use in Spanish and French (Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, et.al, 1999).

An additional characteristic of the former version of Phinney’s model was that it measured three aspects of ethnic identity and other-group orientation (Phinney, 1992). This newer version measures only two factors: ethnic identity search and affirmation, belonging, and commitment (Roberts, et.al, 1999). The Other-group orientation has been removed; however, it can be used—as a separate construct—in tandem with the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure.

As Bronfenbrenner’s work was focused more on the influences that shaped one’s identity, his studies did not focus specifically on ethnic identity development. Because of this, Phinney’s model was paramount in emerging studies on Black student identity. Though Phinney’s work was inclusive of the Black perspective, her work was not the first to do so. Another model, The Thomas and Cross Models of Psychological Nigrescence was developed specifically to “depict the various stages Black Americans have traversed in seeking a more authentic identity” (Cross, 1978).

The cornerstone of the first model, The Thomas Model rests on W. E. B. DuBois' (1897) concept of Double Consciousness. This Double Consciousness is a symbolic and often debilitating plague affecting Blacks as they navigate through their "twoness" or their psychological desire to feel a part of society, particularly White society, while simultaneously understanding they have no place (or only a subservient place) within it (DuBois, 1903).

Five stages form this model. These stages range from obsessing on the oppressor to becoming one with humanity, though this oneness with humanity comes through a wilderness-like experience. As a result of this period of isolation and refinement, Blacks learn to perform under the adverse and stressful tensions of racism (Cross, 1978). As cited in Cross, it is through the "internalization of the Black identity" one "marks the end of the need for self-imposed socialization" as he or she is "now ready to renegotiate contacts with people from other reference groups" (p. 16).

The second model, The Cross Model, also consists of five stages: Pre-encounter, Encounter, Immersion-Emersion, Internalization, and Internalization-Commitment (Thomas, 1978). The Cross Model is similar to the Thomas Model in that they both state there is a phase where one has to realize he has been indoctrinated into believing falsely about who he is as a negro, thus, early in the process, it is essential for the subject to be isolated from those influences.

The Cross Model also emulates the Thomas Model as it discusses the various stages of coming to accept one's new identity as a Black person. They both discuss the various feelings associated with the transformative process as being those of anger, denial, "tension", and "defensiveness" (Cross, 1978, p. 18). The last stage in the Cross Model, however, differs from the Thomas Model.

In the final stage of the Cross Model, the subject is expected to become a “social activist” (p. 18). According to the literature, “implicit in the distinction between ‘internalization’ and ‘internalization-commitment’ is the proposition that in order for Black identity change” to last, the ‘self’ “must become or continue to be involved in the resolution of the problems shared by the ‘group’ (p. 18). In other words, a part of positive Black identity no longer calls for pulling oneself up by the bootstraps (Washington, 1901). Rather, this new identity encourages those who have attained this new sense of identity to help someone else along the way.

Both the Thomas and Cross Models are interesting in that they both discuss one’s trajectory through Blackness and how one comes to identify with society as a Black person; however, they both speak from a completely Afrocentric points of view. These models test one’s identity as it relates to being Black as a whole; there were no reports on how one’s individual identity, apart from race, was impacted.

Another area the two original models overlooked was how class and gender could possibly affect outcomes of the study. In an effort to refute some of the growing literature that demonstrated some inconsistencies, Cross stated, “it should be emphasized that the possible distinction to be made between ‘personal identity’ and ‘worldview’ has been noted by other scholars” (p. 29). He further stated,

Most of the studies utilized college students as subjects, and in the one study, which incorporated a diversified sample, persons in the Internalization Stage had a higher level of education than subjects positioned in the Pre-encounter Stage. Yet, Malcolm X, who did not even complete high school, went through a conversion experience (Goldman, 1973), and many Black Panthers and nationalists ‘came from the streets.’ If anything, Malcolm X was a model for college students and not the other way around. Obviously,

more research is needed to determine the relationship between Black identity change and education (p. 30).

Though the statement, “Obviously, more research is needed to determine the relationship between Black identity change and education” was made over 35 years ago, the sentiment remains relevant today in many ways. In modern society, but particularly in schools, Blacks are still viewed as inferior (Delpit, 2012). Black students fare worse today than they have since the years of segregation. Some research suggests the Black student received a better education during that era than they do today.

Speaking on the state of Black education since *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, researchers, H. Richard Milner and Tyrone Howard (2004) assert for the first time in centuries, Black children were being schooled by teachers who: (1) did not look like them; (2) could not relate to their heritage and culture; and (3) most often, did not want to teach them. The researchers found with integration came a system in which Blacks began to be less educated; thus, the achievement gap between White and Blacks became a prevalent issue.

Stereotype Threat

Perhaps the aforementioned characteristics explain some of the causes of current educational issues plaguing Black youth, but psychologist Claude Steele believes these students’ psyche are suffering from what he termed as stereotype threat. Stereotype threat, according to Steele (1997), is a “situational”, often, “incidental”

threat in the air—that in general form, can affect the members of any group about whom a negative stereotype threat exists (e.g., skateboarders, older adults, White men, gang members). Where bad stereotypes about these groups apply, members of these groups can fear being reduced to that stereotype (p. 614).

In an effort to explain how this is translated to teaching and learning, Steele states, “We think of intellectual performance as kind of irrepressible...that is, if you’ve got it, then you’ve got it” (StanfordSCOPE, 2011). This type of thinking though does not take into consideration the dueling perspectives of oneself often brought into the classroom by students, which may be heightened by various stimuli in that environment, as depicted in the way by which Black males respond to the stereotype they possess lower intellectual abilities than any other groups, particularly Whites (Major, Spencer, Schmader, Wolfe, & Crocker, 1998).

If these types of negative stereotypical beliefs are upheld and fostered, students, particularly Blacks—and females of other races—may begin to internally and externally disidentify with school. Disidentification, according to Steele (1992), is “the lack of a relationship between academic self-esteem and global self-esteem, with the implication that there has been a relationship in the past”.

Stereotype and the Curricular Disidentification

In her book, *“Multiplication is for White People” Raising Expectations for Other People’s Children*, Lisa Delpit (2012) provides an excellent scenario to illustrate stereotype threat (see page 6). Nelson, a precocious five-year-old Black boy, was constantly being sent to the principal’s office. Not being able to fully understand why such a bright, young man—at least in her opinion—was constantly being referred to her, she decided to have a talk with him. In doing so, the principal discovered the young man had simply become frustrated with the minimal and extremely tedious assignment he was given on a daily basis.

The teacher, whether intentionally or not, had fallen into a false belief system of what this child was capable of accomplishing academically. As such, she stymied his ability to grow and learn, which resulted in this young man’s early disidentification with school.

With all the stereotypical voices being spoken to the Black youth, schools—especially social studies classrooms—should be the places that provide a counter-narrative for Black males. This counter-narrative, however, is often not found. Schools, according to Na’ilah Suad Nasir, Milbrey W. McLaughlin, and Amina Jones (2009), are “place[s] for social interaction rather than for intellectual development” (p. 87). This disidentification may form, as Black male students believe they do not have a space within the constructs of schooling. Analogous situations can be found sprinkled across studies on Black identity (Delpit, 2012; Wright, 2011).

Speaking on the Black male—in particular—and his identity as it relates to school, Brian Wright (2011) asserts:

“Ritualized expressions of masculinity among young Black males can intersect negatively with the boundaries of race in the context of school. That is, racialized manifestations of Black masculinity are often viewed as oppositional to [or in direct defiance of] the culture of the school” (p. 615).

He continues,

“School personnel who are unaware that these expressions [beltless, sagging pants; speech; and colloquial behaviors] of Black masculinity may be coping mechanisms to mask self-doubt, insecurity, and/or inner turmoil often greet them with suspicion, fear, and negativity” (p. 615).

Again, this disidentification with school can be based upon how the individual perceives his or her role. In a 2005 study on Black males and reading, Tatum writes, “[B]lack males respond to schooling based on both their perception of the treatment they receive in school and their perception of what schooling will do for them in their future” (p. 73).

It is further believed when schools impose measures in opposition to one's celebrated identity, it sends a message of rejection. An example of this is a school placing a rule against female students wearing hair weaves. To a Black female student struggling to navigate through what it means to be Black and fit in her school's culture, this type of rule may send a message of inferiority. With all the intricacies necessary for centering the formation of a positive self-identity in young people, what is the best approach teachers and educational institutions can use to foster a constructive relationship with Black males?

We know that the formation of one's identity starts at birth. Sociologist and psychologists differ in how various interactions might influence one's perspective on "self". Some believe there is an ecological factor (Bronfenbrenner, 1979); others believe this perception of "self" is symbolic, such as George Herbert Meade (1934) and others.

Even still, there are a growing body of researchers that are more closely examining the construct of self-identity through the lenses of race, gender, age, etc. They, particularly those interested in the role race plays in the development of one's identity, believe a person of a certain race has to constantly negotiate or renegotiate his or her race-based upon his or her environment.

As this concept relates to school, most children of color are finding—through this dueling negotiation—they have no place within the constructs of schooling. As such, they disidentify with most aspects of the dominant school culture, except those where socialization is the main component. This attitude has led to a markedly sharp decrease in the test performance of Black students. Though the National Education Center for Statistics indicates the achievement gap has decreased over the years; others believe any gap, is unacceptable and schools must do more to combat the issue (Delpit, 2012).

Knowing these things, Steele (2007) recommends the following treatments to teachers and educational institutions:

1. Build positive teacher-student relationships (See Cokely, McClain, Jones, & Johnson, 2011 as well.)
2. Challenge students rather than remediate students
3. Stress the expandability of intelligence
4. Affirm a sense of belonging
5. Value multiple perspectives
6. Provide examples of positive role models
7. Accentuate nonjudgmental responsiveness
8. Promote self-efficacy (p. 624-625).

By incorporating these steps, Steele believes schools can cultivate a climate of success for all students. An additional treatment, as noted within Steele's research, is to remove any stereotypical threat elements from tests and other assignments. Steele and his associates found once stereotypical or incidental cues were removed, students who would have performed worse than their White or male peers, actually performed as well or better.

The Hidden Curriculum

Believing there is no achievement gap at birth, Lisa Delpit posits, schools may be the culprit in some of the continuous decline of Black scholarship. Most students, according to Delpit, find school boring and counterproductive to their real world needs. One place teachers and curriculum developers can make a profound impact is through the social studies and history courses. It has been noted that most students have a passionate hatred for the social studies and history courses; however, Blacks appear to loathe it more than any other group (Loewen, 2007).

Students, according to Gloria Ladson-Billings (2003) have access to a daily curriculum—when they turn on their televisions—that depicts “people of color as menacing, dangerous social outcasts” (p. 4). This “hidden curriculum” also portrays them as unskilled, low-functioning people who can only function in schools as “janitors, cafeteria workers, [and] and instructional aides” (p. 4). The social studies, however, can serve as a counter-narrative to the hidden curriculum. By providing students with “the historical, social, economic, and political records” necessary to “provide compelling blueprints for the way the nation has recruited the concept of race to justify hierarchy, inequity, and oppression”, teachers can use the social studies as a “curricular home for unlearning the racism that has confounded us as a nation” ” (Ladson-Billing, 2003, p. 8). As school engagement is an integral component in the educational experiences for all children and adolescents (Bennett, 2006), schools can benefit from empowering every group regardless of race, ethnicity, ability or disability, gender, etc.

The following words, taken from Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*, could be taken and used to address the state of the identity crisis facing Black youth today:

Perhaps the sentiments contained in the [aforementioned] pages, are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason. As a long and violent abuse of power is generally the means of calling the right of it in question, (and in matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the sufferers been aggravated into the inquiry,) and as the king of England hath undertaken in his own right, to support the parliament in what he calls theirs, and as the good people of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination, they have an undoubted

privilege to inquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpations of either.

In changing the meaning of this document to fit the Black identity crisis—as it relates to education—the following translation comes to mind. Since its inception as a public institution, U. S. schooling fostered a belief that education was only for the elite White male. While some people today see this as grievous injustice, for a while, many perceived this as a right. There does, however, come a time when those who are oppressed grow weary and fight against the repressive forces by shedding light onto a situation. Initially, those who have shed light on the injustices faced by the educationally oppressed appeared almost unpatriotic; however, time has come to show the widening orifice in the public education system. The call has been made; researchers, teachers, and students are starting to reject the narrative given to them. Perhaps this will lead to a complete restructuring of the U.S. public education system, where the needs and identities of all learners can be positively met and molded so they may in turn become the outliers of the stereotypical world in which they live who positively influence the world around them.

Throughout the review of the literature, one common consensus appears: there is a disparity between what certain stakeholders view as education and what Black students, particularly Black male students, actually perceive. Though Black identity was once determined by the master of the slave plantation, and later by certain governing authorities, the future necessitates Black student identity is part of a collaborative effort among the child, teacher, and curriculum.

While most of the aforementioned studies were noteworthy, they are not without certain limitations. Claude Steele's identity threat, for example, was predominantly geared toward

secondary, or college-leveled students. Would students within the elementary levels experience this type of threat at the same rate and frequency as their adult contemporaries?

In Delpit's (2012) account, it is unclear whether these types of situations occurred with enough frequency to be statistically relevant. The incident with Nelson could be considered an ethnographic account within a certain lived experience; however, does this translate to other lived experiences of Black male students?

Chapter Summary

While research has documented that Black males tend to disidentify with the school curriculum (Delpit, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2003; Loewen, 2007), little has been documented regarding possible remedies to the problem, particularly as it relates to using the social studies as a catalyst to evoke positive internal change within the Black male student. Based on the literature review, there is an extensive amount of literature on creating a culturally relevant curriculum in order to meet the diverse population of learners within the U. S. schools. The research base that specifically investigates the social studies curriculum as model for changing the disidentification of Black male students—through the exposure of a rich, Black male dominated social justice curriculum—is limited. A further investigation is needed.

This chapter presented an overview of the history of the Social Studies as a curriculum and its continued marginalization of certain groups of people. For this particular study, the literature review focused on the alienation of Blacks from the dominant narrative. Building on a research study (Loewen, 2007) indicating Blacks particularly dislike subjects such as history, this literature review chronicles other works supporting how Black male students face stereotype threat. These bodies of literature enabled the researcher to identify how this potential stereotype, may be unintentionally disseminated through the various school curricula and how the social

studies may be used to counter the stereotype threat and build a positive identity within the Black male self and the social studies curriculum.

Chapter III presents the methodology of the proposed study. This chapter will identify the research design, participants, instrumentation, and procedures for data collection and analysis. Chapter IV describes the results of the data collection and analysis. Chapter V highlights a discussion of the conclusions and implications for further research.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

Chapter III is a description of the procedures used to conduct this study. The purpose and major goals of the study are outlined. The specific research questions are stated. The study design is described. Procedures are discussed and summarized in Figure 2. A description of the sample population and the procedures for collecting data will be presented. The qualitative and quantitative research instruments used will be discussed, and the data analysis will be described. A chapter summary will be provided.

Purpose

The review of the literature produced themes indicating the need to further analyze the Black male student and his self-identity through the lens of the social studies curriculum (Delpit, 2012; Moses Stewart & Marshall, 2009). This curriculum is heralded as one that seeks to reify social injustices by providing a closer examination of people and events (Levstik & Tyson, 2008). Research findings, within the literature, indicated Black male students and their families are less engaged with the educational processes than their non-Black contemporaries; thus, they are increasingly considered an educationally marginalized group (Delpit, Ogbu, 2008; Tatum, 2005). While these studies described a disconnection between Black male students and the curriculum, there is limited research investigating possible causes or solutions to issues. This study, therefore, sought to investigate whether an ethnocentric social studies curriculum increases Black male students' identities.

Along with this analysis of the Black male student and his identity through the lens of a social studies curriculum, this study attempted to gain insight relative to how teachers of Black male students facilitate their growth and development through curricular and pedagogical means. In the article, *The Miseducation of Black Boys*, a White superintendent in a rural Mississippian school district, Therese Palmertree, recorded having great success in “improving the academic performances of the youngsters in her overwhelmingly Black and extremely poor school district” as it was stated she “transform[ed] the self-worth of her students by using the rich civil rights history of the town where they lived” (Chiles, 2013, p. 125).

In an international examination of the plight of the Black male student, several schools in the London area were followed in a documentary to demonstrate various protocols teachers were implementing from years one to 13, to ensure the successes of these students (Woolfe & Galloway, 2006). In the Forest Hill School, Black males from years seven through 11 participated in an exclusive pull out program where they were exposed to the historical narratives of positive Black males from around the world (Woolfe & Galloway, 2006).

Within the United States, Geoffrey Canada has been recognized for his ability to close the Black-White achievement gap within the student population of the Harlem Children’s Zone. This program is widely known to implement an anti-poverty strategy (Dobbie & Fryer, Jr., 2010; Robelen, 2009). None of the literature indicates his success is due to increasing a positive self-identity through the lens of the social studies.

As no successful program exists that utilizes the social studies to provide the Black male student with a more holistic, Afrocentric, program of study, this research served to forge a place of discussion of the probabilities of this type of curriculum and how it may benefit teachers and students.

Research Positionality

"Researchers analyze accounts not only for the particulars of what is said, but also as pointing toward 'a mass of unstated assumptions' (Heritage, 1984, p. 181)" (Pascale, 2011, p. 117). It is through this type of reflexivity, that researcher's ability to make sense of the way his or her thinking is shaped by various experiences and how this thinking influences research (Pascale, 2011). As the primary investigator of this study and the designer of two of the instruments implemented within this study, it was my responsibility to consider my position relative to the research study.

As a parent of a former private school child and as a current advocate for marginalized youth, I have to recognize these experiences may have influenced my decision in selecting these schools for this study. It may be noteworthy to include the selection of the schools for these particular reasons may have implications on both: the study and me.

I am multi-racial woman who has always identified myself as Black and aligned myself with Black culture and teachings. I was born into a low socioeconomic background to a drug addicted father (who died when I was a child). I lived through the violent deaths of many Black male relatives and friends and the multiple incarcerations of my own brother and cousins.

It was these early experiences that resulted in me becoming an advocate for marginalized youth. Throughout my teaching profession, I endeavored to create meaningful learning environments. My classroom housed resources for not only Black males, but also for Black females, Appalachian and Hispanic students as well.

Though my own life mirrored some of the stereotypical elements of Blackness (drug addicted parent, low-income environment, domestic violence issues, etc.), it is unknown if my experiences parallel those of any of the research participants. These commonalities and

differences may be beneficial or disadvantageous in establishing and maintaining an appropriate researcher-participant relationship throughout this study.

Research Questions

This study examined the extent to which elementary school-aged Black male students exhibit characteristics, as defined in the literature, of positive self-identification when placed in social studies classes using a multicultural or critical race-based approach to deliver the subject matter. The following overarching question was addressed: What are the lived experiences of Black male students in private elementary social studies classes? Three research questions were investigated to address the overarching question:

1. What situations in sixth grade, private school, elementary social studies classes are influencing Black males' self-identity?
2. How, and to what, extent do these influences occur?
3. What are the experiences of teachers that are related to Black male students' development of self-identity?

Research Design

A transformative mixed method design was chosen to investigate the questions guiding this study. The plan of action for transformative research designs is as follows: (1) quantitative data collection and analysis followed up with (2) qualitative data collection and analysis, which is concluded with (3) interpretation of the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p.70).

Transformative Framework

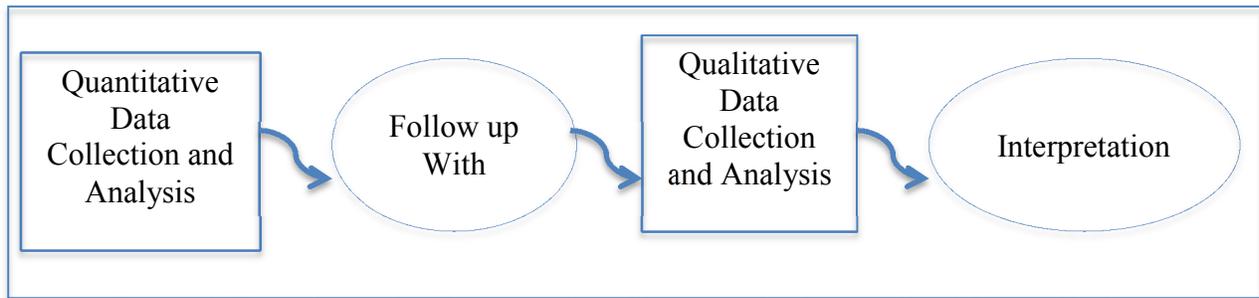


Figure 1. Transformative Framework as Illustrated in Creswell and Plano Clark.

The purpose of a transformative design, as stated by John Creswell and Vicki Plano Clarke (2011) is to allow for research that “is change oriented and seeks to advance social justice causes by identifying power imbalances and empowering individuals and/or communities” (p. 96). This transformative design falls under the umbrella of mixed methods research designs.

Mixed method, according to Creswell and Plano Clark is:

a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases of the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies.

Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone (p. 5).

Various researchers have presented rationales for using mixed methodologies. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), mixed method studies may be ideal for research problems “in which one data source may be insufficient, results need to be explained, exploratory findings need to be generalized” as such “a second method [may be] needed to enhance primary method,

a theoretical stance needs to be employed, and an overall objective can be best addressed with multiple phases, or projects” (p. 8).

Studies using mixed-method designs have shown the integration of quantitative and qualitative traditions within the same study can be seen as complementary to each other (Caracelli & Green, 1997; Greene & Caracelli, 1979). Researchers have posited various rationales for implementing mixed methodologies. In their framework for mixed method research evaluations, Jennifer Greene, Valerie Caracelli, and Wendy Graham (1989), developed five purposes for incorporating mixed methodologies: triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion (Crump & Logan, 2008). Triangulation, or the intentional use of multiple sources of evidence, is implemented to corroborate or test the consistencies of findings obtained through the various instruments.

Complementarity of a study is completed to provide the opportunity for the researcher to elaborate, illustrate, and clarify the results from method to method (Crump & Logan, 2008). This process is “best undertaken when each method is implemented interactively and simultaneously” (p. 24).

Development occurs when one method is used to inform another. Initiation is similar to development in that it serves to stimulate new research designs or challenge the results obtained by another method. Expansion, within a mixed method research design, extends the breadth and inquiry by using various methods for the different inquiry components.

In a justification for the use of mixed methods research within the social sciences, Alan Bryman (2006), advocated and expounded upon the aforementioned processes. In an examination of 232 multi-method articles, Bryman suggested the implementation of more categories in order to ascertain “finer detail” within research findings (p. 107).

In this particular study, it was the researcher's contention that the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches in tandem would provide a deeper, yet complementary examination of the research problem, thus increasing the dependability of the study.

Survey methodology was employed in this study to gather data and information with an accompanying qualitative component. The qualitative component consisted of observations and interviews. These were also used to validate the survey instrument.

Setting & Time Frame

For this study, two historically Black private schools located in Southeast United States were selected for a research to be conducted over a 12-week span. The first school, Imperial Academy (pseudonym), provides education to grades K-12. The school does not follow the state's department of education's course of study; rather, they follow the curriculum as developed by their denominational affiliation. This school has two, sixth grade classes of at least 30 students per class.

The second site, Cambridge Academy (pseudonym), also provides instruction for students in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. They are an accredited institution; thus they follow their state's course of study for instruction.

These sites were chosen as they possessed the desired demographic to conduct the study. These sites were selected also as it was hoped they would provide easier entry into the lived experiences of these Black male students and their teachers.

The Schools

The schools were chosen as they are historically Black private schools. They are both logistically located in the Southeastern United States. Both are nationally accredited schools, and both admit students grades Kindergarten to 12th. Though each school has a principal, they

are both largely controlled by a governing board. The board, from each school, was comprised of church members, and each board had to approve each principal's decisions concerning the school.

Imperial Academy (pseudonym) is the smaller of the two schools with a population less than 500 students. The faculty is diverse. Its faculty includes teachers of varying races and ethnicities. Though its student body is predominantly Black, there is a population of other ethnicities of students (approximately 10%).

Cambridge Academy (pseudonym) is slightly larger in number. The faculty may be slightly more ethnically diverse. The school's population ranges from 400 to 700 students. There are teachers there from various countries. Its student body is also predominantly Black, but there is a small population of other races or ethnicities (approximately 10%).

Participants

The sample consisted of only Black, male students within the sixth grade social studies classes of two historically Black private schools within the southeastern United States. The initial sample was surveyed. In order to determine the participants for this study, purposeful sampling (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007), or the selection of cases as a means of "develop[ing] a deeper understanding of the phenomena" (p. 165) will be implemented.

As "the phenomenon dictates the method, including even the kind of participants" (Hycner, 1999, p. 156), purposeful sampling was employed to select cases or participants that were likely to provide the greatest phenomenological understanding of the Black males lived experiences in a social studies class; thus a homogenous sampling scheme was used for the student participants. Homogenous sampling (Patton, 1990) was implemented for teachers, as they were the social studies teachers of Black male students.

Participation in the study was voluntary and the participants were provided the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. As this study examined the lived experiences of Black male students and their teachers, the following measures were taken—prior to conducting any type of research—to minimize the risk of harm to the participants: obtained informed consent; protected anonymity and confidentiality; and avoided deceptive practices.

Meet the Teachers. The 20 something-year-old respondent, Ms. Pope, (pseudonym used) hails from a major city in the Southeastern United States. As a recent college graduate (2015), she found herself taking the 6th-8th grade social studies position within this historically Black private school (Imperial Academy) to gain experience teaching the subject she loves.

She was drawn into the field of education by the influence of her own 6th grade social studies teacher. She fondly recalled, “She really motivated me to want to study history, but she also helped to grow a love for the subject...She just cared about her students [...] She is one of my main inspirations for wanting to do what I’m doing today.”

Her classroom typified that of a novice teacher. There was not much on the walls in terms of class décor, and most of the decorations (11/16) posters promoted the concept of having of positive self-image. These posters contained phrases such as: “Believe with all your heart,” “Imagine with all your mind,” “Achieve with all your might,” etc., while the remaining (5/16) were social studies oriented.

As Black History Month had just ended, there was a bulletin board still devoted to the cause. It contained six photos of various Black people and a QR Code. These images included: Frederick Douglass, Shirley Chisholm, Stokely Carmichael, Bessie Smith, etc.

The 40-year-old respondent, Mr. Absolute, is a native Southerner though he is a transplant to the area. He is not new to the educational arena. As a middle-aged man, he recalled working in public in several capacities (paraprofessional, coach, etc.) before becoming a full-time social studies teacher (Cambridge). He became employed in his current position when a teacher retired.

When asked why he chose the profession, he stated, “I’ve heard people say that it chose me, but that could get to sounding [...] deep...I don’t think I stumbled upon it.” He goes on to say that though he lives by “absolutes,” the social studies curriculum allows his students and him to engage in “conversations that don’t necessarily have an absolute answer.” He prides himself in creating a classroom that highlights debate.

Meet the Students. There was a potential pool of 20 Black male students for this study; though the parents of all were given parental consent forms, a small number of these were returned. Only eight completed the surveys and 6 were interviewed for the study. All young men interviewed were 11 and 12 years of age at the time of the study and were enrolled in 6th grade social studies class.

The Curricula

Imperial Academy’s social studies curriculum centered on teaching from 1787 to the present. As they were a private, Christian-based school, they were not mandated to follow the state curricula, though they strived to parallel their teachings to their public counterparts.

Imperial Academy, though private, holds various accreditations. Some of these include: SACS, AdvancEd, and their church’s private accreditation.

Cambridge Academy’s Board chose not to follow the public schools’ curricular guidelines. They, instead, opted to teach civics to their 6th grade students. The teacher did not

hold much autonomy to deviate from the prescribed curriculum. This school was accredited through its churches accrediting system.

Procedures

Stage 1: Survey Research and Quantitative Inquiry

Survey research methodology (Appendices A-C) was employed to gather data and information with an accompanying qualitative component. By using a survey as a form of data collection, the researcher was able to describe; explore; and, to some extent, explain aspects of identification or disidentification with the social studies curriculum.

The Instruments

The first instrument, the Social Studies Curriculum and The Black Male Student—Teacher survey, was created by the author. This inventory was developed upon the viewpoints of research that correlate Black students' successes to them having positive, Black teachers (Delpit, 2012; Stevenson & Arrington, 2011). The survey was created to measure the teachers' thoughts and beliefs on the following: the social studies curriculum's relevancy, their Black male students' level of investment, and their teaching practices for this population.

The second instrument, the Social Studies and The Black Male—Student survey, was created also by the researcher. The instrument was designed to measure: Black male students' thoughts and attitudes toward the social studies curriculum and its relevancy to Black males, the amount of time spent on Black history and related topics, and the effectiveness of their teachers in meeting their curricula needs.

The third, that was administered, was the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity—Teen (MIBI-T) (Scottham, Sellers, & Nguyễn, 2008). This inventory is as a revision of an earlier version of the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) developed upon a

phenomenological view of the correlations between a person's self-concept and his or her membership within a particular race (Rowley, Sellers, Chavous, & Smith, 1998). According to the researchers, the MIBI-T measures "seven, cross-situationally, stable dimensions" of racial identity (p. 301).

This scale was first administered among students ages 12-17. The sample size (n = 489) of original study of the MIBI produced an internal consistency of .70 or higher. An estimated Cronbach's alpha was calculated using the Spearman-Brown formula (Scottham, Sellers, & Nguyễn, 2008). Each subscale of Black identity possessed a Cronbach's alpha of .70 or higher.

Stage 2: Qualitative Data Inquiry

The second stage of the study I collected data to build an understanding of the sampled Black males' perspectives relative to how they viewed themselves as individuals and students. The data collected investigated if the social studies curriculum could be used to promote a positive self-identification and to dispel any stereotype threat within this population. In this data collection process, the researcher attempted to develop an understanding of how the social studies may have positively or negatively contributed to Black males self-identification as students and citizens.

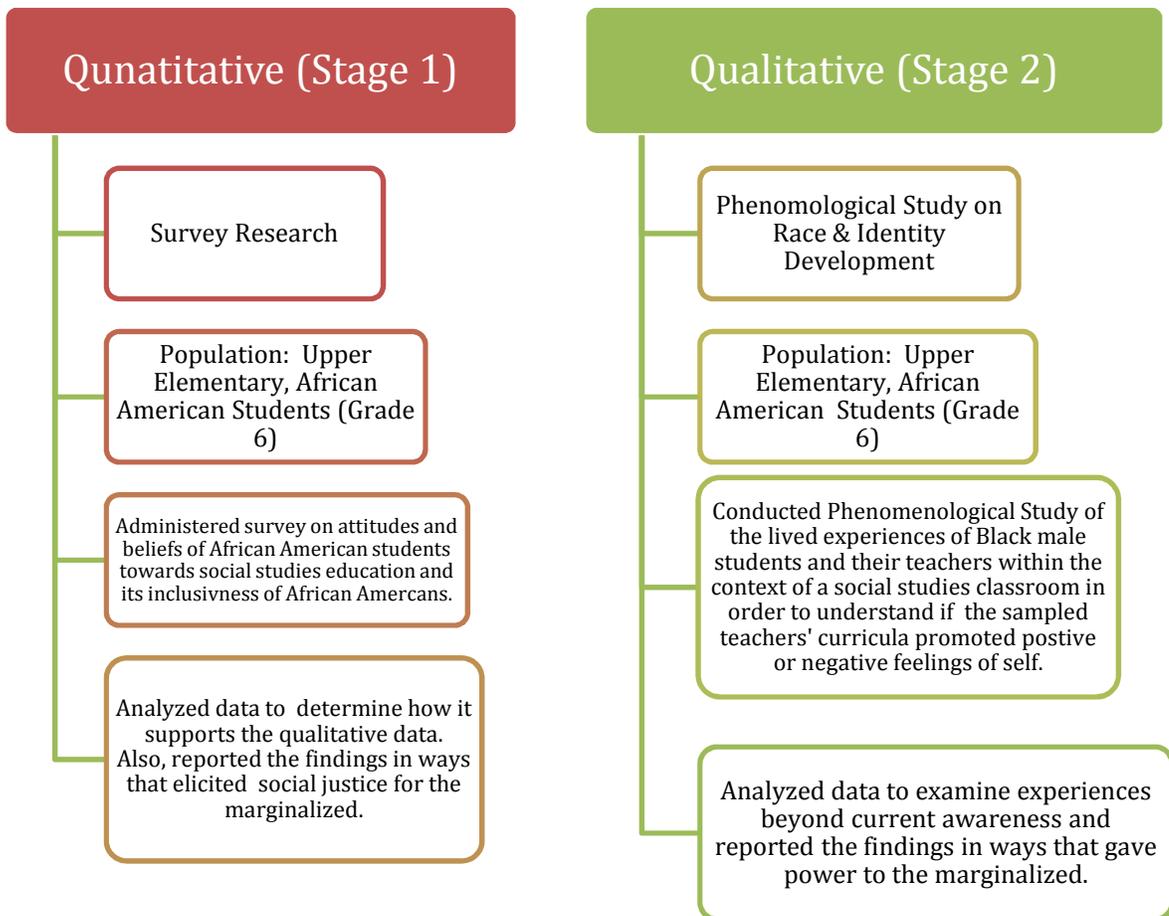


Figure 2. Proposed mixed method design with stages of data collection

After obtaining permission through the university's Office of Research Compliance Institutional Review Board, in-depth, focus group and one-on-one, semi-structured, world interviews were conducted with approximately six students and two teachers. According to Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkman (2009), "An interview is literally an *inter view*, an interchange of views between two persons" (p. 2). Interviews, per Michael Patton (2002), are categorized into three types: (1) the informal, conversational interview; (2) the interview guide or topical approach; and (3) the standardized, open-ended interview (pp. 341-347). Semi-structured world interviews are conducted "with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life

world of the interviewee[s] in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena” (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009, p. 3).

These interviews consisted of questions concerning participants’ beliefs and attitudes about themselves—as Black males and as students—and the social studies curriculum. Throughout the focus group sessions, it was hoped the students provided the researcher with a collective viewpoint of what it meant to be a Black male constantly inundated with a predominantly White and chiefly male curriculum and what they believed an ideal social studies curriculum should include.

The teacher interviews included questions that examined the educator’s beliefs and attitudes toward Black male learners. It was hoped the interview lent itself to an open dialogue of the teacher’s own potential biases or perceived stereotyping of Black male learners. It was further desired that the interviews uncovered whether the teachers believe the social studies curriculum could be a viable catalyst of positive change concerning the negative internal and external viewpoints of Black male students.

Participants were interviewed on two occasions. The initial interviews, of student participants, took place in a group setting (Appendix D) and were followed with individual student interviews for further clarification or expounding of data. Each participant was interviewed during the social studies class or outside school hours within a classroom at each participating school. Each interview was recorded with the permission of the adult participant, the assent of the child, and the consent of the parent or guardian. The interview protocol consisted of open-ended questions that explored Black male identity through social studies.

Each teacher participant was interviewed before or after school hours, unless the teacher was available to meet during school hours. The teachers' interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes (Appendix E).

The data was transcribed and coded line-by-line and analyzed for emerging themes (Stake, 1995). The researcher's intent was to analyze the data in successive stages, looking for interpretations, cultural norms, and how the lived experiences of these Black males and their teachers may have been compared and contrasted. This process required careful reading of the transcripts at each stage of the analysis.

In order to enhance internal validity, the following strategies were used: (a) triangulation, (b) member checks, (c) participatory or collaborative modes of research, and (d) examination of researcher's biases. Two of the four types of triangulation of methods (Denzin 1978; Patton, 1999) were used within this study. Methods triangulation was generated as qualitative and quantitative research methods were employed throughout the study; interviews and questionnaires were implemented to triangulate the data for this particular study. Triangulation of varying sources of data—comparing people with different viewpoints—were also incorporated. This substantiation of the various data sets allowed a more trustworthy set of interpretations and conclusions.

Member checking provided the teachers and the students an opportunity to check or approve particular aspects of the provided data (Merriam, 1998). The participants were provided “polished” (Creswell, 2009, p. 191) interpreted pieces that will have emerged from the data and were asked to check it.

A collaborative, or participatory, mode of research enabled all participants to act as co-researchers. The idea of collaborative research:

presupposes that each person’s ideas are equally significant as potential resources for creating interpretive categories of analysis, negotiated among the participants. It strives to avoid the skewing of credibility stemming from the prior status of an idea-holder (O’Brien, 1998, para. 12).

Throughout this research project, the participants were involved from start to finish.

In conducting any type of research, bias can occur. In order to attempt to offset any type of bias, trustworthiness was evaluated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to establish trustworthiness, the following was assessed: credibility, transferability, and confirmability. In establishing credibility, triangulation and member-checking was implemented. In discovering transferability, thick, rich description (Geertz, 1973) was used. In order to ascertain confirmability (Miles & Huberman, 1994), or the “degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest” (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006 para. 1) were examined through the discussion of underpinning decisions and adopted methods.

Modes of Triangulation of Data Per Research Question				
Research Questions	Quantitative Collection Stage 1	Data Analysis	Qualitative Collection Stage 2	Data Analysis
To what extent does the current social studies curriculum influence the	Survey Research	Descriptive or Parametric Analysis of Data	Focus Group Interview Individual Interviews	Transcription and Coding of Data for Themes and Patterns

self-identity of Black male students?				
How do Black male students think Black history content contained in the current social studies curriculum aligns with the perceptions of themselves as individuals, students, and citizens?	Survey Research and Racial Identity Inventory	Descriptive and Parametric Analysis of Data	Focus Group Interview Individual Interviews (for follow-up, if needed)	Transcription of Coding of Data for Themes and Patterns
To what extent do teachers of Black male students think their current social studies curriculum and teaching methods shape their students' identities as individuals, students, and citizens?	Survey Research	Descriptive or Parametric Analysis of Data	Individual Interviews	Transcription of Coding of Data for Themes and Patterns

Figure 3. Modes of Triangulation of Data per Research Question

Chapter Summary

Chapter III provides a detailed description of the purpose of this study and a thorough overview of the participants, the instruments used, the types of data collected, and the methods of data analyses.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

Chapter IV provides an analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data collected during this study. The data presented in Chapter IV answers the three research questions presented in Chapter I. Chapter IV also includes data collected using the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity—Teen (MIBI-T) (Scottham, Sellers, & Nguyễn, 2008).

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent the social studies curriculum positively influenced Black male identity. This was determined by: investigating the Black male students' attitudes and beliefs about their respective social studies classes, curriculum, and teachers and by having the male students identify their levels of Blackness and discuss how or if the social studies curriculum meets their needs as Black males. The relationship between the social studies curriculum and the Black male was further examined by gaining teachers' perspectives into the social studies curricula as it relates to Black male students.

Data were collected first through a survey administered to Black male student participants, enrolled in private schools in the Southeastern United States, and then followed up with two focus group interviews to further explore the three research questions. A second set of data was collected through a survey administered to the Black male participants' teachers. The teachers also participated in follow-up individual interviews.

Research Questions and Agenda

The chapter reports the results of all data obtained based on the problem of the study and is guided by the overarching research question: What are the lived experiences of Black male students in private school, elementary social studies classes that develop students' self-identity? To consider this question, three research questions were investigated:

1. What situations in sixth grade, private school, elementary social studies classes are influencing Black males' self-identity?
2. How, and to what, extent do these influences occur?
3. What are the experiences of teachers that are related to Black male students' development of self-identity?

As the term self-identity seeks to answer the question, "Who Am I?", this study sought to understand how Black male students viewed themselves within the contexts of self as a person, student, and citizen. As most of a person's identity is shaped by others, "prejudice and institutional racism are common factors influencing the identities of both those who have benefited from White privilege as well as those who have been historically underserved in the United States" (Brown, 2012, p. 12).

Findings were based on five sources of data, discussed below, according to the study's research questions. For the student participants, data from two different surveys were used to develop an understanding of their attitudes and dispositions towards the social studies, Blackness, and their individual self-identities. Focus group interviews, then, were conducted with the males who completed the surveys to ascertain more in-depth insight into how these young men think about the social studies curriculum, about being Black, and how the social studies classes could serve to better meet their needs. Teachers were surveyed relative to

opinions on their perspective curricula, their Black male students, and how the social studies, as a subject, serves as a positive catalyst for increased self-identity. They, too, were interviewed for further understanding how their social studies classes meet the needs of their Black male students.

The surveys were distributed using a purposeful, convenience sample (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007) of the population enabling the researcher to construct a profile of the students' attitudes and beliefs towards Blackness, the social studies, and their own individual identities. The interviews were used with a more purposeful sampling in order to gain "thick[er], rich[er] descriptions" from the research (Geertz, 1973, Ryle, 1949). A 40% response rate was collected from the surveys.

Social Studies and the Black Male Student: The Quantitative Aspect

The original survey on African American males' beliefs and attitudes toward the social studies curriculum as it relates to their self-identities contained 30 items (Appendix B). These survey items were designed using a 4-point Likert scale (with categories listed as: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree) along with three demographic items. The three demographic items measured: type of school (public or private), gender, and age. There were a total of 8 anonymous survey responses in the initial data set, which consisted of all Black male students from a private school setting.

The data collected indicated that 62.5% of the students were 11 years of age at the time the survey was administered and 37.5% of the boys were 12 years of age. As this initial study only focused on Black boys in private schools, 100% of the students attended school in a private setting during the time of study.

Table 1 illustrates the number and percentages of respondents based on age. Reliability and validity of the data analysis were determined by Cronbach's alpha, item-to-total correlation, factor analysis, and standard error of measurement. Statistical significance was determined by *t*-test and chi-square.

Table 1. Frequency of Age

		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
<i>Valid</i>	<i>Age 11</i>	5	62.5	62.5	62.5
	<i>Age 12</i>	3	37.5	37.5	100.0
	<i>Total</i>	8	100	100	

Results and Findings of the Student Social Studies Survey

This instrument had a reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha of .39. After dropping items (1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30) with item-to-total correlation below .300, a revised instrument was determined, consisting of 15 items with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .86 (Figure 4). After reverse coding some of the items (6, 8, 9, 21, 22, 24), the Cronbach's alpha coefficient increased to .90 (Figure 5), leaving a 21-item survey (Appendix F). With the remaining 21 items, the lowest item-to-total correlation was .344 with the highest being .931. This implies that most of the items gave a significant contribution to the total instrument. High item-to-total correlations support the internal consistency reliability of the instrument as well as document the validity of the items measuring the same theoretical constructs (Cronk, 1999). The standard error of measurement was calculated to be .183.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.864	15

Figure 4. Reliability Statistics (15-Item Student Social Studies Survey)

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.895	21

Figure 5. Reliability Statistics (21-Item, Reverse Coded, Student Social Studies Survey)

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the survey responses using principle component analysis with a varimax rotation. This factor analysis method was used to extract the maximum variance from the data set while reducing the component complexity. This method is useful in establishing construct validity of the underlying dimensions of variables defined by some of the factor analysis tools. There were six factors with initial eigenvalues of 1.00 or greater (Appendix H). The first factor explained 41% of the variance with all six extracted factors explaining 98% variance (Appendix G).

The scree plot, in Figure 6, verifies the extraction of the six factors. Scree plots use eigenvalues to group factors according to a point where the eigenvalues level off and begin to form a straight line (Kim & Miller, 1978).

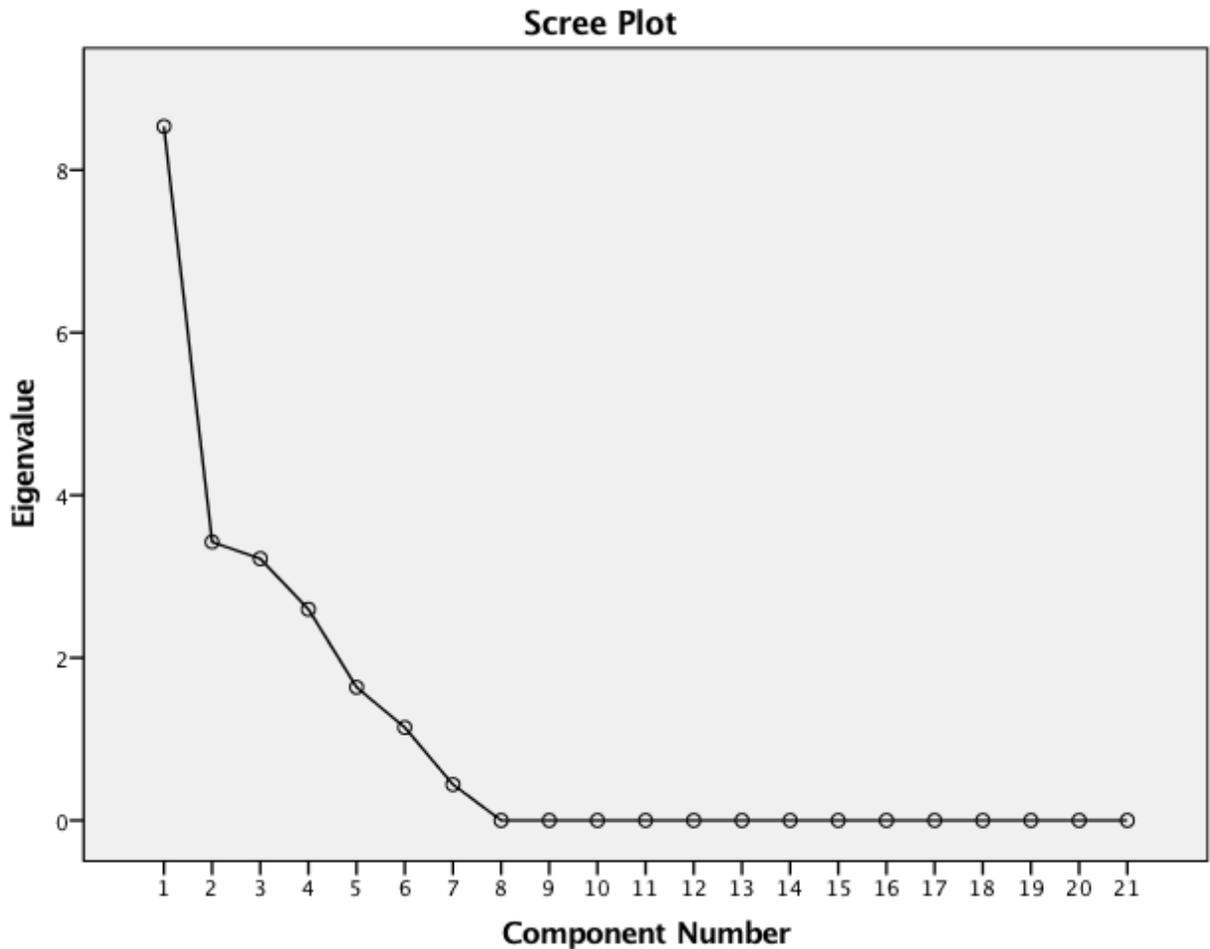


Figure 6: Scree Plot for Student Social Studies Survey

The six-factor solution was the best simple structure retained by evaluating the principal component analysis. Table 2 contains the item loading per factor component. All loadings were .614 or greater. The underlying dimensions identified by each factor are as follows: I) Relevancy, II) Engagingness, III) Self-Reflectivity, IV) Time Spent on Black Events, V) Black History Month, and VI) Student Participation. These concepts were derived based upon grouping questions and determining the fundamental core question each group of questions sought to address. Analysis was done using a *t*-test (Appendix G). An alpha level (α) of .05 was used for statistical for this instrument.

Table 2. Factor Loading Rotated Component Matrix Student Social Studies Survey

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Q21_Rev	.957	.116	-.024	.031	-.160	.180
Q22_Rev	.901	.044	.162	.009	.140	.150
Q20	.891	.171	.179	-.097	.195	-.021
Q19	.822	.436	-.055	.078	-.269	.173
Q6_Rev	.694	.319	-.159	.092	.421	-.449
Q28	.108	.952	.214	-.022	-.084	.154
Q11	.539	.771	.250	-.013	.004	.197
Q27	.483	.757	.328	.100	.259	.093
Q18	.483	.757	.328	.100	.259	.093
Q25	-.120	.692	-.508	-.187	.451	-.077
Q14	.208	.618	-.555	.221	-.008	.421
Q2	.216	.178	.929	-.050	-.171	.146
Q5	-.055	.247	.924	.279	.052	.044
Q10	.255	.097	.710	.183	.301	.541
Q12	-.128	.073	.249	.930	.196	-.021
Q4	.385	-.139	.134	.839	-.225	.019
Q24_Rev	-.462	.540	-.124	.688	.002	.041
Q13	.167	.611	.081	.631	.343	.266
Q3	.047	.089	-.018	.059	.973	.196
Q8_Rev	.249	.399	.191	.067	.364	.758
Q9_Rev	.123	.369	.307	-.611	.044	.614

An independent *t*-test was conducted to compare how often each group felt Black History should be covered. There was a significant difference found between the ages when the *t*-test was performed, $t(6) = -2.400, p = .05$ (Appendix G). This result suggests Black History is of importance to the younger Black male students, as they believe it should be taught more frequently.

Conclusions for the Social Studies Student Survey

The psychometric benchmarks used for reliability indicate high internal consistency for the survey. The Cronbach's alpha of the survey is .90. This suggests instrument "robustness" (Gregory, 1995, p. 95). The coefficient alpha of .90 is considered reliable for this instrument. This indicates the respondents adequately answered each item, therefore the instrument was less likely to contain random responses. By applying Brian Cronk's (1999) .300 item-to-total rule, the range of item-to-total correlation was .344 to .931, which indicates internal consistent reliability between the items. The standard error of measurement was .183, which reflects the standard deviation of each respondent based on the total mean.

A principal component factor analysis with a varimax rotation showed that the principal component accounted for 40% of the variance (Appendix H). Six factors were extracted, explaining a combined 97% of the variance. This provides the best possible explanation of the theoretical construct of a culturally relevant social studies curriculum's positive influences on Black male students.

In investigating the students' attitudes toward how often Black history should be taught, a significant difference of opinion was found $t(6) = -2.400, p = .05$. A contributing factor could be that the younger males surveyed believed a social studies class rich in Black history could be relevant for their lives while the older males have adapted to the exclusionary curriculum. In thinking about Research Question 1, "What situations in 6th grade, private school, elementary social studies classes are influencing Black males' self-identity?", this finding greatly suggests elementary social studies teachers should try to incorporate a more culturally relevant curriculum (Gay, 1999) in order to keep the Black male students invested in the classes as they matriculate through school.

Results of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity—Teen (MIBI-T)

The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity—Teen (MIBI-T) Survey was administered to the same population of students who took the social studies survey. As the literature from the survey's authors indicates, the original Cronbach's alpha was .79. After dropping items (13, 19) with an item-to-total correlation less than .300, a new Cronbach's alpha of .82 was revealed (Figure 7).

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.822	19

Figure 7. Reliability Statistics (MIBI—Teen)

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted, also, on these survey responses using principle component analysis with a varimax rotation. This factor analysis method was used to extract the maximum variance from the data set while reducing the component complexity. This method is useful in establishing construct validity of the underlying dimensions of variables defined by some of the factor analysis tools. There were six factors with initial eigenvalues of 1.00 or greater (Appendix K). The first factor explained 38% of the variance with the remaining four extracted factors explaining 57% variance (Appendix J).

The scree plot, in Figure 8, verifies the extraction of the five factors within the MIBI—Teen Survey.

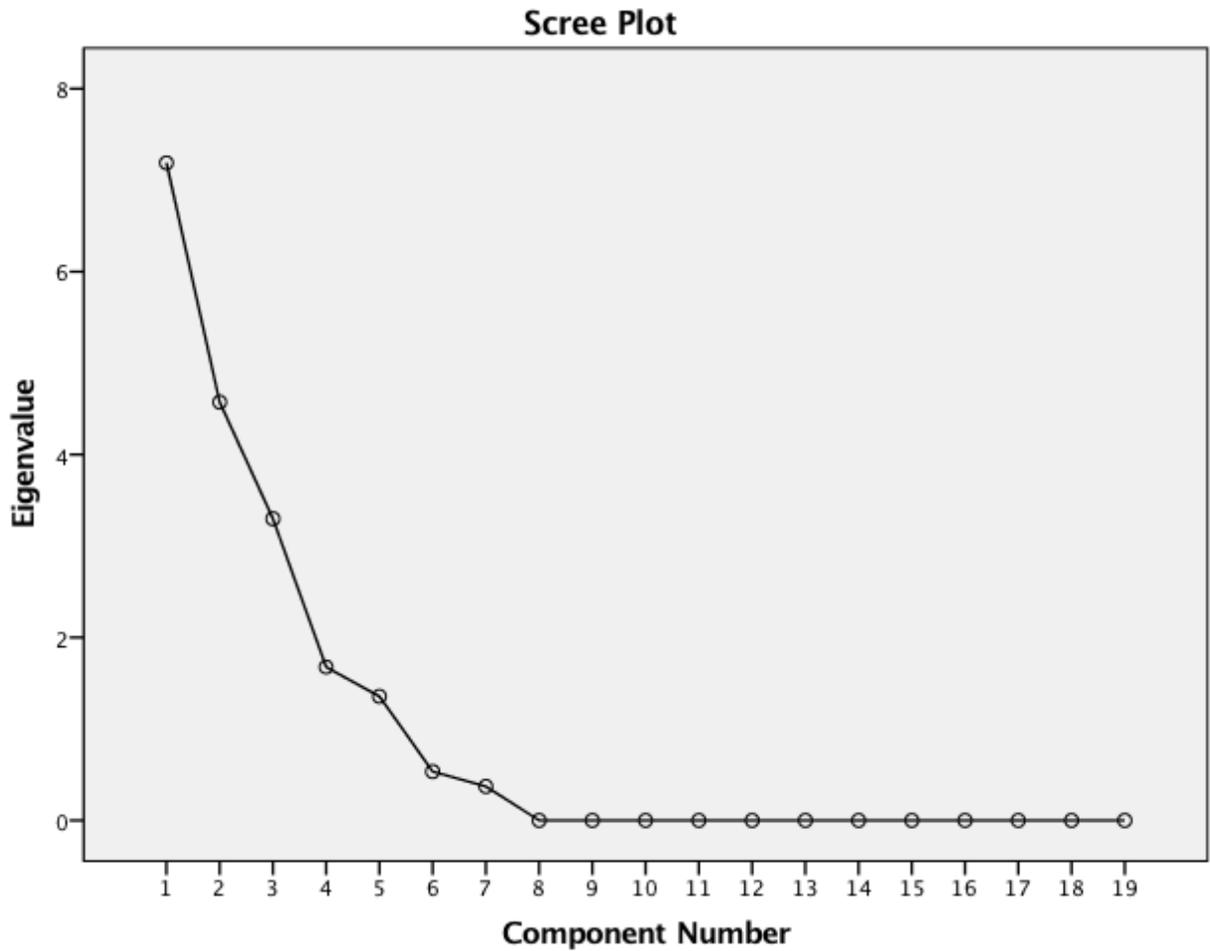


Figure 8. Scree Plot for MIBI—Teen Survey

The five-factor solution was the best simple structure retained by evaluating the principal component analysis. Table 2 contains the item loading per factor component. All loadings were .596 or greater. The underlying dimensions identified by each factor were identified by the survey’s creators as: I) Assimilation, and II) Humanist. The other loadings were renamed for this study: III) Ethnocentrism, IV) Belonging, and V) Black History Month. An alpha level (α) of .05 was used for statistical for this instrument.

Table 3. Factor Loading Rotated Component Matrix MIBI—Teen Survey

	Component Matrix—MIBI Teen				
	1	2	3	4	5
Q15	-.940	.064	-.256	-.138	.148
Q17	.900	-.021	.132	.143	.386
Q16	.900	.127	.283	-.052	-.168
Q7	.791	.524	.102	.093	-.086
Q8	-.601	.484	.362	.356	-.213
Q20	.202	-.912	.136	-.098	-.295
Q14	.230	.910	.152	-.028	-.147
Q18	.407	.794	-.236	.177	-.019
Q9	-.385	.785	-.085	.428	.105
Q3	.032	.009	.953	-.234	.136
Q10	.325	-.246	.878	.547	-.067
Q4	.089	.173	.861	.127	.109
Q11	.411	-.387	.669	.455	-.060
Q6	.242	.482	.596	.331	.163
Q2	-.034	.010	.058	.947	.115
Q1	.146	.343	.116	.915	.030
Q5	.136	.081	.681	.689	.076
Q12	.070	.188	.268	.345	.838
Q21	.381	.578	.168	.331	-.603

An independent *t*-test was conducted to compare how often each group felt Black History should be covered. No significant difference was found.

Additional analysis was performed using chi-square to determine if a difference of opinion was significant between each item and age. No significant differences were found.

Conclusions for the MIBI—Teen Survey

The psychometric benchmarks used for reliability indicate internal consistency for the survey. Though not initially as strong, Cronbach’s alphas “.70 or above, [indicate] adequate internal consistency” (Pryczak, 1999, p. 66). By removing two of the items (13, 19), for this dissertation, the Cronbach’s alpha increased to .822. By applying Brian Cronk’s (1999) .300

item-to-total rule, the range of item-to-total correlation was .344 to .931, which indicates internal consistent reliability between the items. The standard error of measurement was .183, which reflects the standard deviation of each respondent based on the total mean.

A principal component factor analysis with a varimax rotation showed that the principal component accounted for 38% of the variance (Appendix J). Five factors were extracted, explaining a combined 95% of the variance. This provides the best simple structure of the construct set by the authors, levels of Black identity are less assimilating when students are in predominantly Black environments (Scottham, Sellers, & Nguyễn, 2008).

In investigating the students' levels of Black identity, no statistical difference was found. In closely examining the descriptive statistics, however, it was found that 62.5% of the students believe they have a "strong sense of belonging to other Black people." Of the respondents, 87% "feel good about Black people". Within this same group of students, 75% of them disagree with the statement, "Most people think that Black people are as smart as people of other races."

The questions loaded under the categories of *Assimilation*, *Ethnocentrism*, and *Belonging*. The MIBI's initial authors predicted that students with "high Assimilationist scores would be associated with greater contact with Whites and less contact with African Americans" (Sellers, et.al, 1997, p. 805). These 6th grade, male students strongly disagreed with most assimilationist questions, which may be a result of them being placed in a historically Black private school setting (Stevenson & Arrington, 2011).

Being placed in a school where the majority of the teachers and students are Black may also influence the high levels of ethnocentrism expressed by the participants. Majority Black environments may be responsible for "promoting [B]lack students' connection[s] to the school community and their emotional health" in order to ensure "their academic success[es]"

(Arrington, Hall, & Stevenson, 2003, para. 2). In a study on ethnocentrism and positive social identity, Tobias Greitemeyer (2012), found that the more individuals were socially excluded, the lower their positive self-regard. Being a part of a school and class community, where common cultural values are shared, may be positively influencing these students' identities as Black males as they provide a space of belonging.

Belonging is another category where several of the factors loaded. In their article, *Foster a Sense of Belonging at School—Five Orientations to Practice that Assist Vulnerable Youth to Create a Positive Student Identity*, authors Jack Sanders and Robyn Munford (2016), “identify the centrality of [...] belonging at school” (p. 155). They found when schools orient themselves to “perseverance, adaptability, relationships, time, and honesty” (p. 166) they can have a profound impact on students' self-identities. As most of these historically Black private schools are small in number, they may have the ability to prescribe to some of those orientations, thus further enhancing their students' positive self-identity.

Results and Findings of the Teacher Social Studies Survey

As the sample of teachers was small ($N=2$) and the demographics so varied (1 male, 1 female and 1 early 20s, 1 early 40s), there was not enough data to conduct an internal consistency reliability check. For this reason, descriptive statistics were implemented to gain insight into the teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward the social studies and how it influences their Black male students' self-identities.

Teachers' Academic Beliefs of Their Students. For every question that centered on the teacher's academic beliefs of their students, teachers unanimously agreed with the construct. The teachers (100%) *Strongly Agreed* that the “academic success of [their] students is important” and *Strongly Agreed* that “Black history is relevant to positive student success”. They (100%)

also *Strongly Agreed* “the social studies can be used to instill a positive self-worth within the Black male student” as they (100%) believe the “social studies can counter the negative stereotypes often seen of Black males in media”.

Though Loewen (2007) asserts Blacks dislike history, the respondents for this study (100%) *Disagree*. As these teachers (100%) *Strongly Disagree* “the social studies curriculum, currently implemented in [their] classroom[s], exposes students to the narratives of [...] at least 10 other positive Black males.” They (100%) *Strongly Agree* “it is [their] responsibility to implement a social studies curriculum that fosters a positive self-image within [their] Black male students.”

Teachers’ Perceptions of Their Students’ Self-Images. While the teachers unanimously agreed concerning their academic beliefs of their students, they provided polar responses concerning their perceptions of their students’ self-images. When asked if “Black male students tend to enter [the] classroom with a negative self-perception of themselves,” the 40-year-old respondent *Strongly Agreed*, while the 20-something year old respondent *Strongly Disagreed*.

The trend continued as the senior teacher *Strongly Agreed* that his “Black male students tend to enter the classroom with a negative self-perception of themselves,” while the younger participant *Strongly Disagreed*. Though the teachers strongly agreed that the social studies can be used as a catalyst to instill a positive self-image within Black male students, they differed on their beliefs of their students’ prior knowledge of Black people and events. When asked if “Black male students possess limited prior knowledge of lesser known Black people and events,” the 20 something-year-old respondent *Strongly Disagreed* while the 40-year-old respondent *Strongly Agreed*. The veteran teacher also *Strongly Agreed* that his “Black male students often

emulate the negative images of Black men they see in pop culture,” while the novice teacher *Strongly Disagreed*.

Social Studies and the Black Male Student: The Qualitative Aspect

Though quantitative research provided a numerical glimpse into the problem, “numbers are meaningless without [the] narratives” of the studied (Pascale, 2011, p. 21). These narratives provide insight into the attitudes and beliefs of a marginalized group of students.

Allowing “Blackness [to serve] both as an epistemological standpoint and as a methodological” (Dillard & Dixon, 2006, p. 244) underpinning for this study, the semi-structured interviews were coded in a way by which the data were broken “apart in analytically relevant ways in order to lead toward further questions about the data” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 31). Coding was used to “organize and group similarly coded data into categories” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 9). As this study involved young children and their teachers, two types of coding were used. The first type was direct language coding. The second type was versus coding, where “phrases that capture[d] the actual and conceptual conflicts within, among, and between participants” were examined (Saldaña, 2013, p. 61).

The Private School Curricula

Though both teachers mention the state’s course of study as being the guiding force to the curricula they implement in their classrooms, Ms. Pope states:

We use McGraw Hill and that is what I am using here as that was already put in place before I got here, but I kind of use what’s in the book along with the [state course of study] just to make sure we are staying along the same lines. Because we are a private school, we don’t necessarily have to use [state course of study] but if any point in time

my students actually leave me and go to a public school, I want to make sure they are going to be prepared for whatever they are going to receive there (Interview 3/29/16).

Mr. Absolute also admits he “absolutely go[es] against or rebel[s] against” the prescribed curricula. This is a result of this particular school implementing civics in their 6th grade classes. As such, this curriculum limits the Black history narrative to the Civil Rights movement (1954) to the present, and it is only in the prescribed curriculum to be covered during Black History Month.

Ms. Pope’s curriculum allows for the teaching from 1787 to the present. On one of my visits to the classroom, I was able to catch her in action. She was teaching on implied powers versus enumerated powers. She referred to the school’s code of conduct to provide students with examples of each. All students appeared to be actively engaged as they debated these concepts amongst themselves.

Black Historical Moments or Black People Studied

Both teachers stated the curriculum used in their respective schools do not really allow for in-depth teaching of Black Historical Moments or Important Black People. They both believe, however, all history classes should have an emphasis on Black historical moments or events. Ms. Pope accounts:

I think social studies, especially when you are looking at American history, is very important to the development of [Black] students. Essentially Black history is American history. I always want my students to know [though] they might not look in history books and see themselves throughout every chapter, but as a people, African Americans played a role in building this country and sustaining this country.

Mr. Absolute states, “I think [for them] to know that there was a legitimate struggle that has not ended, but has taken major steps backwards... To know that and see it in a way that makes you feel like the school is concerned about it” is the reason he chooses to incorporate certain Black historical teaching into his civics class. He continues, “When you tell them they [come from] kings and queens,” it does something to them. Which is why, “I spend a lot of time on imperialism and colonialism. They see and hear the same people every time. They never heard of Nat Turner... They never heard of Denmark Veasey.”

Ms. Pope, too, covers lessor known Black individuals in her class, though she admits this was done during Black History Month:

Just last month, we talked about several Black history figures. Each grade had a Black history project, where they had to do a PowerPoint or a poster on them, and then we talked about [them]... Stokely Carmichael, Matthew Henson, Mary McCloud Bethune, Nat Turner. We covered [Black history] from Africa even through the present day today.

Promoting a Positive Self-Identity Through the Social Studies

In seeking answers to research questions two and three (How and to what extent do these influences occur? What are the experiences of teachers that are related to Black male students' development of self-identity?), teachers were asked to discuss in what ways they use the social studies to promote a positive self-identity within their students. The teachers' responses were similar:

Students need to see people who resemble themselves. They need to see there are positive images out there for them to follow. When [the media, educational outlets, etc.] are always placing a negative image in front of our kids, that is what they tend to mimic... When [society is] always putting something negative in front of them, that's

what they are going to mimic...especially if they don't have support at home. I think putting positive images in front of them and allowing them to learn about people of their culture will definitely help them to succeed and would definitely have a positive impact on their lives (Ms. Pope, Personal Interview, March 29, 2016).

Mr. Absolute began the discussion with:

...right now, schools are not rebuilding the culture. They are [...] saying this is how we've always done it. [Black boys] don't come here acting a fool or we'll send you back...what you have to do is scrap the [current school] culture and rebuild it.

They both strongly felt the social studies is vital during a "heightened political year" as both expressed their students' concerns for their futures as citizens. "I had a kid say to me, 'If Trump wins, we going to get sent back to Africa.'" To which, Mr. Absolute replied, "Dear, have you ever been to Africa? You can't go back to where you've never been."

Ms. Pope's students expressed similar concerns:

For example, a lot of them are nervous about the election right now, especially with Donald Trump and some of the rude comments he has made about minorities. [The kids] are really terrified of what could happen and a lot of them see [...] and hear different things. One comment, if I can, make about some of the things they have said [are],
"We'll have to go back to Africa...*I have to remind them that the Constitution is for all of us. The justice system protects us all. Those laws protect all of us. That is something we have been over [...] the Constitution and their rights they have as American citizens. Yes, you are African American, but you are also an American citizen and you have these rights just like everyone else.* (Emphasis Added To Demonstrate Teacher's Passion in Response).

Mr. Absolute stated:

Before you learn how to count, before you learn to do anything else, you learn the social studies...government runs the country, so without people running the country, there is no place for people to do math and science. Social studies creates [government and societies].

He further explained:

People are now saying you need to talk to your [Black] sons and nephews about how he needs to handle himself being stopped by a police officer. That's not what he needs to know first. He first needs to know what the Bill of Rights are and he needs to know [his] rights as a human being...as a citizen of this country. [...] They just need to know they do have a stake in local, state, and federal government.

Dispelling Myths and Historical Relevancy

Making history relevant while dispelling myths were core beliefs of both teachers. Ms. Pope explained, “[Though] I have to be careful with how I word things and the graphics I am showing them...[I] just [want] to educate them on discrepancies that they may see in a text book to what is real.” Mr. Absolute affirmed this practice, “It was a fight to dispel my own dispositions.” Which is why he stated, he continually attempts to implement a curriculum that dispels most textbook myths students have adopted over the years.

Subject matter relevancy was discussed most by Mr. Absolute:

I approach [the social studies] like I'm just having fun...but with the Black kids, you have to go in and make it relevant. [...] Sometimes people try to make it relevant and they are using hip-hop vernacular to reach them. They don't know that the child feels disrespected by [them] coming to class saying, ‘Yo, yo, yo’ when we don't even say that

anymore. I know that and I'm older...I take the time to find other ways to talk to them, but if [Black] boys think [the social studies] is only important for Whites, they would possibly reject it because it's important to [Whites]. They say, 'Hey, we don't care. What do we need to know about that? They don't like us and they shooting at us anyhow' Taking the media's perspective...and if [I] don't dispel it, then they keep it.

High Accountability

Though both teachers strongly believed exposing Black males to other positive Black male figures through primary sources and by dispelling myths and stereotypical views, while incorporating a culturally relevant curriculum, authentically leads to increased levels of self-identity within their Black male students, they believed it is the high levels of accountability they placed on the students. Ms. Pope began:

I think it is, for our young males, especially at this age, critical to make sure they have somebody who is staying on them. No matter how intelligent a person is, if they don't have that support they need behind them to make sure they are [creating] their goals and sticking to them, unfortunately, they many not [succeed].

Mr. Absolute dogmatically prescribed to this belief. He started, "They (Black boys) need to know somebody has been there. They need to know I'll go back there." He continued.

"Sometimes, you've got to get grimy. Sometimes you've got to go and say, 'Let me tell you something...been there, done that...Grew up in a dope community...seen that...lived next door to that.'" He concluded, "You get in their heads...it's the accountability factor from somebody who is not scared of them. You've got to stay on them." He believed no level of teaching and learning of the social studies can take place "until they get that".

General Consensuses

Mr. Absolute categorized his Black male students as academically lower than all other groups of students, because they've invented their own vernacular, thus they have disidentified with the standard. "You can't even have a conversation with them with words that are 3-4 syllables or they don't get it." He believes he works harder to close the academic and mental gaps this group endures:

You see, in math, there is no room for a story. I'm sure some math teachers figure out how to do that...Science, I'm sure some science teachers learn how to do that, but there is nowhere in their curriculum that gives them the place for character ed...They just have to put it in. There's character ed in mine (curriculum). It is relevant in me building a citizen who is an active knowledgeable citizen. That is my role. When everyone else fails at it...if they attempt and fail, I (as a social studies teacher) cannot leave them like that.

Ms. Pope corroborated this view, "Wow, I think social studies, especially when looking at American history, is very important to the development of our students' [self-identities] because Black history is American history." She continued, "I think it is very important through their development as they are going through school to know this history is not just for others but for [them] as well."

Social Studies and the Black Male: The Students' Views

Three young men, who completed the surveys, were chosen from each school. This purposeful, convenience sample was taken from a pool of eight possible participants. As this study only sought to examine how the social studies curriculum influences Black male students' self-identity, a homogenous sampling was also incorporated for this study (Cohen, 2006). To

uphold confidentiality and anonymity of the students, they have been identified only as Student 1, Student 2, etc.

Their Thoughts of the Social Studies in General

Each of the students was asked how he felt about the social studies. All but two (4/6), stated they liked the subject matter. One student who did not (Student 1, Imperial) stated, “I really don’t like school in general.” The other student (Student 1, Cambridge), simply felt the social studies is a “horrible” subject.

When asked to expound on why they like the social studies, the students eagerly expressed their sentiments, “Umm...I like history. I don’t think there’s anything I don’t like about it. It’s an easy subject, and we can learn about our past and get ready...be prepared for our future” (Student 2, Imperial). Though Student 1 (Imperial) initially stated he did not like school in general, when asked if he could name one thing he enjoyed about social studies he reflected a few moments, and replied, “I never thought about this, but...I like that someone...at least someone stood up for rights.”

Another student substantiated these thoughts, “It’s a way of life” (Student 2, Cambridge). While the final student stated he enjoys the subject because, “It tells about being Black and the Civil Rights movement” (Student 3, Cambridge).

They were then asked to tell what they liked least about the subject. All of Cambridge’s students stated, “All the people dying,” and “The workload.” Student 3 offered clarification as he stated, “It’s not that I dislike the work, because I love history, but sometimes, we have too much work to do.”

Their Thoughts of the Subject as Black Males

The students were asked, “How do the things you learn in your Social Studies class make

you feel as a Black person?” None of the students at Cambridge could answer the question. They each said, “I don’t know.”

The students from Imperial, however, had strong thoughts:

Okay...it depends on what I’m looking at. If we’re talking about slave trades and everything, sometimes it makes me angry because we could’ve done something back then...we waited all that time until Martin Luther King came, and it makes me upset at Whites because there’s basically no difference (Student 1).

He went on to say, “The things that Martin Luther King went thru, and different people, makes me feel safer.” Student 3 added, “I think it makes me kind of mad [at] how really nothing’s changed and some Whites [...] still say that Black and other colors are still bad today.” Student 2, optimistically stated, “It makes me upset, [I] hope for a better future with us, so we won’t get angry and become thugs, and like some our young Black men [...] get killed like Trayvon Martin.”

Their Thoughts on the Amount of Time Spent on Black History

In trying to understand how each young man thought about the amount of time spent on Black history and events, the following questions were asked, “How do you feel about the amount of time you all spend learning about Black people in Social Studies? Why do you think this is?” Two of the students from Cambridge initially had no response, but Student 3 eagerly addressed the question, “We should have more time so can learn like our heritage...like who did what first and all the things they did.” He disclosed that they rarely study Black people outside of Black history month, “It’s the only time we did (studied) it every day.”

Students from Imperial, again, had much to say. Student 1 recounted the time spent and retorted, “[We] at least have a month of dedication because Blacks aren’t really...you

know...wanted by the Whites most of the time...so you know...glad that [we] have a month, but mad that it's only a month." Student 3 had a different perspective, "I'm mad that we only have a month after we...they went through so much..." Student 2 shared Student 3's perspective, "I'm glad [we] get a month of Black history, but we should get, [...] more respect because we did a lot of things, made a lot of inventions and contributions." Student 1 expounded on his statement:

It's like when...people most of the time when I think about when people hate, it's—most of the time—because they're jealous. So, I think for all the inventions we made...peanut butter to light bulbs...I think they are just jealous of...about all the things that we've done.

As I was curious about what this young man was trying to say, I probed a little deeper and asked, "Do you think it's an intentional omission, or that they leave us out on purpose?" He emphatically replied, "Yes!" So, I asked another follow-up question, "Why do you feel that we are not in the curriculum as a whole?" Student 2 insightfully replied:

I mean, it's up to the state, the board of education, and the government and stuff. So, most of the time, you don't see a lot of Black people up there, in general. You see a lot of Whites running the place...That's probably why, but I could be wrong...

Their Curricular Knowledge

I wanted to know if the boys could tell me some of the Black people and events they have studied. The students from Cambridge quickly listed the following: Martin Luther King, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, Jessie Owens, Bloody Sunday, and the Bus Boycott. The students from Imperial, named Authur Ashe Robert Jr., Archibald Alfonso Alexander, Malcolm X, Booker T., and Madame C. J. Walker.

In order to gain insight into these young Black males' curricular knowledge of certain

Black historical event and people, we then played a type of call and response game where I named the person, organization, or event, and they told me what they knew. I broke down the game into two segments: well-known versus lesser known. In the first segment, I named the following: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, Malcolm X, Dr. Ben Carson, Mr. Barack Obama (just for fun).

The students, from both schools, enthusiastically anticipated me calling a name so they could answer. Though I thought the students would know all of these, they did not. The students from Cambridge knew essential information for every person (6/6), but they could not give details. When referencing Malcolm X, for example, the students could only state, “he stood for rights.” Upon the mentioning of Harriet Tubman, this group’s only reference was “She helped people get out of slavery.” They were very knowledgeable about Dr. Ben Carson, however, as they knew him as the one who “separated two babies’ heads...twin’s heads.”

Though the Imperial students had to be given a hint on one of the persons (Harriet Tubman), they were able to provide extensive detail of each individual. When discussing Malcolm X, for example, Student 2 fondly recalled:

He was a Civil Rights activist. At his youth...at a young age, he fell underground and he started going into drugs, like some of our men now...and then, he went to Africa to seek inner peace with himself and so he came back the US after that. Then, he came and started learning about the Muslim faith, then became a Muslim. Then, he became a pastor...then he started speaking the gospel about how Blacks and White people are equal. And other colored people, not just Blacks. Mexicans, Asians, and stuff like that. Student 1 added, “I don’t know if this is correct or just from the movie *Selma*, Martin Luther King was hesitant to go to Malcolm X, cause he was a protester, but as soon as he changed his

ways, [Dr. King] died.” With each person mentioned, this group was able to provide a deeper level of knowledge of the individuals.

Round two of the game, asked the students to tell about the lessor known. They were asked about: the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Angela Davis, Assata Shakur, Stokely Carmichael, and the Civil Rights Movement. With an exception of the Civil Rights Movement and SNCC, the students could not tell me anything about any of the aforementioned.

Only one student (from the Imperial school) possessed some prior knowledge of SNCC. He recounted his memories from the movie *Selma*, “It’s an organization...it was these two young men from college or something like that. They were running like a kind of violent [form of protest] and they didn’t really agree with Martin Luther King.”

Individualized Curriculum

After playing the game, I asked the boys, “If [they] could create [their] own social studies class, who or what would [they] study and why? The responses varied, however, Student 1 (Imperial) quickly reminded me that he did not like school, “I would not even try to create a whole class...I don’t like school at all.” Student 3 (Imperial) discussed a curriculum filled with lesser known individuals, “I would put not known Black people instead of people like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King. I would put people like [Archibald Alfonso Alexander]...and those people we didn’t know on the list.” Student 2 (Imperial) took a more diplomatic approach:

I would include White [...] people too. Because it just wouldn’t seem fair to just leave them out just because of their skin color. Cause we don’t want them doing the same thing to us. Why would I do the same thing to them?

The one student (Student 3) from Cambridge who responded simply stated, “I would study Black

men...to show my Black students how their heritage was.”

Social Studies and Their Self-Identities

Each moment spent with the boys, I felt as if they were allowing me glimpses into their souls. It was during this portion of the interviewing that I believed we all experienced what the Greek refer to as *dianoigō*, or the thorough “opening of what was once closed; To open one’s soul, to rouse in one the faculty of understanding or the desire of learning” (Thayer & Smith, 1999). I was no longer an outsider. They had invited me into the personal spaces of their beings. They were not viewing me as the researcher, but as someone who was genuinely concerned about their well-beings. As we delved into the next questions, I could see the hurt and disappointment in their eyes, and though their stories were sometimes dismal, I could still hear a certain level of expectancy, for a hopeful future, in their voices.

To begin this aspect of interviewing, I asked the young men the following questions, “How does the social studies curriculum make you feel about yourself and other Black people, and how do you feel society views you?” All the boys agreed that the curriculum they studied had a positive influence on their self-identities. Student 1 (Imperial) began, “It makes me feel better...[to know] I can talk to someone about how I feel...[and to be able to] express myself.” Though content with the way his current social studies class is taught, Student 2 (Imperial) believes it can do more to empower, “I feel like I should know [more] about our curriculum, so I can be prepared for the future, so we can be young, African American leaders.”

Two students from Cambridge initially struggled with answering this question as they responded, “I don’t know,” but when asked if they could give one word to describe what the subject makes them think about themselves, they stated “good”. Student 3, however, believed his curriculum left him “strong, happy, hopeful.”

When discussing how they believed society perceives them, their responses were not so lighthearted. Student 2 (Imperial) believed society views Black boys as, “a thief...or a thug...scum of the Earth.” Expressing himself as though he was the spokesperson for all Black boys, Student 3 stated:

Last year was terrible for Black people ‘cause the police went crazy with whatever they were doing. They attacked Black people for no reason. [The media showed] this video of this Black person getting killed. They said the [cop] shot him on accident because he didn’t know he had the gun. But he was gonna taze him anyway [...]. So, I think that just because of the fact that [the cop was] gon’ taze him or shoot him [whether] on purpose or on accident...because he didn’t do anything and he’s Black, like, [it is as if] you’re judging somebody for their color.

Student 1 (Imperial) added, “...something to add about judging...it’s like, I think people judge too much [...] It’s like if you’re wearing glasses, you’re a nerd. And if you wear a bandana, you’re a thug.”

I wanted to know more about why Student 2 (Imperial) used “scum of the Earth” to describe how he thought society views Black boys. He exclaimed:

because they’re shooting us like...when there was a young man saying, ‘Don’t shoot!’...on his knees (his voice began to shake)...They shot him, like right in the head. Like...I just think they don’t appreciate some of the things we’ve been doing ...helping other people and stuff like that.

The students from Cambridge shared Imperial’s sentiments, “We didn’t do anything...[but] they say we’re dirty and they call us names...like the ‘n’ word” (Student 3, Cambridge).

The boys were then asked if they agreed with society’s views. Student 1 (Imperial)

started:

“It’s like...sometimes [...] we do get a little out of hand ‘cause we do things and shoot people for no valid reason...and people that are just mean to just be mean...and...it’s like a never ending fight for no reason...Because both sides are losing at the same time.”

Student 3 (Imperial) followed:

It’s because...like...(Student 1) said, there are two sides and I can’t agree with the people that are messing up the Black people reputation...and not just Blacks in general, ‘cause there’s been...Isis...there’s been terrorists before, like on September 11th, there have been other cultures that have been doing good stuff and bad stuff. Most people say it’s just Black people who have been in the struggle and that’s not true because the fine print of the text books, it says things like ‘other colored people’ not just Black people. So I don’t think we should be viewed...[by] what [we] did in the past and what we will do in the future.

Student 2 (Imperial), too, had mixed views:

I think we should be a little more respected in everything that we do because we paved...some of us paved the way...and I think that...the way we are living...some views I agree with and some I don’t...like, Black men get shot for no reason by the police. Some Black men, they do provoke the police for them to get shot, but some don’t...stuff like that.

Cambridge’s young men again shared the sentiments of their peers, but struggled to fully articulate how they felt. When asked if they agreed, they all simply replied, “no”.

Love for Their Social Studies Teachers

Despite the negative perceptions these young, Black boys perceived society has for them,

there was one constant. Each felt his social studies teacher was different than most people. They viewed their teachers as creatures of compassion, as reckoning forces, who used their super powers to do good and to instill good within all they encounter.

Student 3 (Imperial) began:

...[My teachers] view us differently... 'cause they don't treat us like other Black people get treated...(thinking)...Let me rephrase that...they don't treat us like people would normally treat us. They treat us like a individual, and they treat us bad, if we do bad...and they treat us good if we do good things.

Student 2 (Imperial) added:

...like [our teacher]...I think she treats us good because she'll pull us over and have a long conversation about how we should stand up for ourselves and not be afraid. [...] A police officer will just tell you not to do that again, and our history teacher, will tell you about everything...

The Cambridge boys asserted that their teacher viewed them as, "good," and "powerful."

When asked if they would change anything about their social studies teachers, each child assuredly said they "wouldn't change a thing." They supported their answers virtually the same. The common responses were, "they don't disrespect us...not even our Caucasian teachers" and "all the teachers [...] treat us like family."

The World Needs to Know

These young, Black boys strongly implied the Social Studies could provide a space of advocacy for them. They all, however, indicated the curriculum needed to be strong and unapologetically truthful. Student 3 (Imperial) emphatically stated, "for [others] to decide that Blacks are alright and we're leaders and stuff, it needs to be good material and fact!...Real facts

of what we did [...] and not theories or made up ideas of what happened!” Student 2 (Imperial) declared, “if we get good material and stuff like that for the world to know...for it to be straight facts...[...]We do a lot of good things for society, and I think they should know about it. So, they can gain more respect for us and we can kinda know about them, so we can have a better world.” Student 3, from Cambridge Academy, also voiced his opinion as he said, “They [need] to know the real story.”

In closing the interviews with the boys, I wanted them to think about if they could make a wish or wave a magic wand and change “one thing society thought about” them, what would it be? Imperial’s students had much to say. Student 2 stated:

I would change the rumor that...all Black people—men and women—are thugs. If you see a woman tryna fix her hair up and walk outside with a bandana or something on her head, [society] think[s] she’s a thug! Or, if a man wears a doo rag and wear sunglasses and walk into a store he’s about to steal something...[...] I would like to not have rumors like that.

Student 1 (Imperial) wishes the society would be more harmonious, “...society should be joined together and we can accomplish more things together ‘cause without being together...if you don’t have a group, you only have yourself...and if you have yourself, you can’t accomplish a lot of things.”

Cambridge’s Student 3 proclaimed he wanted the world to know “that we (Black boys) are not animals. We are people like them. We are not different!” Student 2 (Cambridge) wished he could change society’s character as a whole, “I would change the character...racism...They way people think about us, and the way people expect us to be bad.” Student 1 (Cambridge), who had little to say throughout the entire interview, suddenly wanted his voice heard. He stated

that he wanted society to know, “That just because a Black boy that I am not a animal...trash...low life...That I...we are intelligent...that we know are talking about.”

Combining the Two Schools of Thought

Since I interviewed the teachers first, I was eager to meet the young men who would influence this study through their insights. Unbeknownst to me, these two groups (the teachers and the students), shared many overlapping thoughts. To adequately depict these common beliefs, I created the following diagram. These thoughts or concepts were derived through versus coding (Saldaña, 2013) of the semi-structured interviews conducted with the students and teachers.

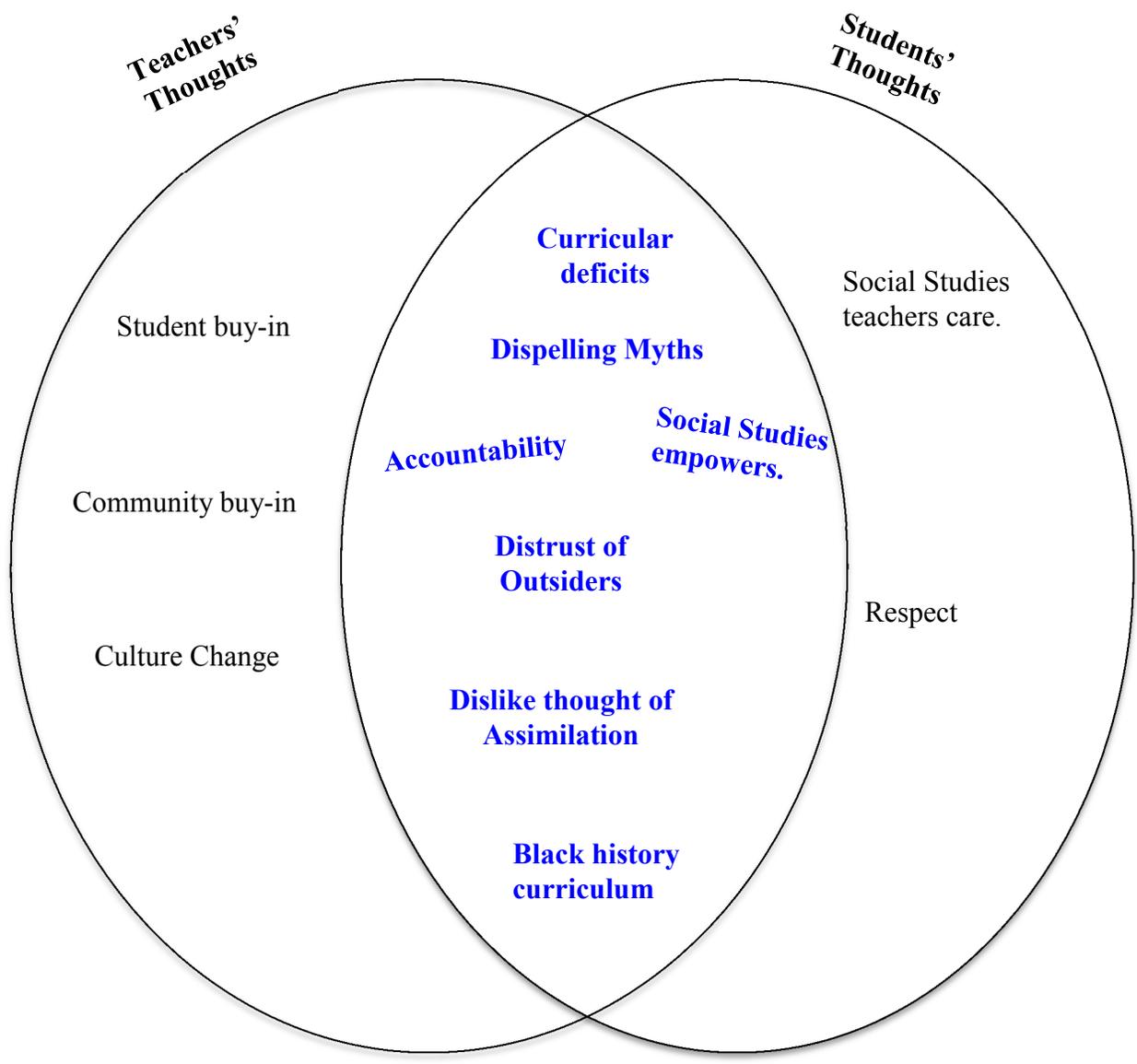


Figure 9. Venn Diagram of Teachers' and Students' Thoughts and Beliefs

Two Schools of Thought, or No?

Earlier, I mentioned “majority Black environments may be responsible for ‘promoting [B]lack students’ connection[s] to the school community and their emotional health’ in order to ensure “their academic success[es]” (Arrington, Hall, Stevenson, 2003, para. 2). It seemed as if the teachers in these locations have been successful in doing this. Whether it is the accountability factor or the level of empowerment (through the curriculum) placed on these students, these young, Black males emulated the expectations of their teachers.

The students, just as their teachers, implied the current social studies curricula left wide gap for Blacks through their omission of lesser known men and women, thus they sought answers from outside sources to dispel myths (Bickford & Rich, 2014). Students desired curricular changes for a more inclusive study of Black men in order to gain momentum for their future successes. Teachers wanted a curriculum that allows more authentic coverage of Black historical events and people in order to maintain fidelity (consistency and accuracy) within their social studies classes.

Despite the many obstacles faced: lack of materials, lack of stakeholder support, negative societal views, etc., it appeared these social studies teachers positively influenced their students’ self-identities. During the interview, no student provided concrete examples of his teacher’s pedagogy, though most implied their teachers used a form of Socratic teaching to deposit positive thoughts into each child’s psyche.

Though the Cambridge students struggled to fully articulate themselves, each student spoke passionately and positively about himself and his future aspirations. When there were no or few words, the students’ body languages remained confident. There was little nervous

gesturing, and there were plenty of smiles, open gestures, and positive eye contact: all signs of someone anchored in positive esteem.

Chapter Summary

Chapter IV provided a comprehensive analysis of the data collected for this study. As noted during the presentation of this data, the findings for this study regarding how the social studies positively influences Black males' identities yielded favorable results. The students, in this study, appeared to have high associations of Blackness, yet, they have positive thoughts of themselves and other Black males.

An analysis of the data of the data collected through the Social Studies Survey (teacher and student), the MIBI Survey, and the semi-structured interviews (teacher and student) revealed numerous implications. These implications are reviewed and discussed further in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This chapter presents conclusions and recommendations derived from the data collected to investigate the problem of this study and the overarching research question: What are the lived experiences of Black male students in private school, elementary social studies classes that develop students' self-identity? To consider this overarching question, three research questions were investigated:

1. What situations in sixth grade, private school, elementary social studies classes are influencing Black males' self-identity?
2. How, and to what, extent do these influences occur?
3. What are the experiences of teachers that are related to Black male students' development of self-identity?

This chapter serves as a guide through the collected data and provides possible implications from the data.

Sixth Grade, Private School, Social Studies Classrooms and the Black Male

Throughout this examination of the social studies' influence on the Black male student's self-identity, my mind constantly referenced the somewhat controversial rap lyrics:

[...]Worthless, worthless, 400 years we done heard that
My family came here on slave ships
Some herd cattle, some heard [B]lacks

Know some of y'all done heard that
My kin was treated less than men
That's why we raised to hate each other, cause we hate our skin
Lies you told about yourself that you don't realize
I must be a thief, she locked the doors when I was walking by
They must be whores cause the master rapes them
And leaves the child
So dead beat daddy was taught to me way before my time
Now we extreme, buying fancy things like gold chains
Just pretty shackles, we still enslaved
Put 'em round your neck, 'cause we still hangin'
Hood preacher told 'em they should live as kings
You call him devil, he fightin' for self esteem
It's hard to dream when your water ain't clean [...] (Moore, 2014, Track 8)

The data gathered during this investigation illuminated Loewen's (2009) research dilemma when he realized his Tougaloo students not only believed the lies told to them, but they were regurgitating those misconceptions as though they were factual. The time I was afforded with these students grieved me as I realized these brilliantly beautiful, Black male students were in a precarious state in their lives; some were starting to believe the seeds of misconception that were developing in their minds.

In speaking with these young men, I sometimes forgot how young they were. Wisdom exuded from their lips. Life's expectations of them to fail sometimes shrouded their thoughts. Though no matter how much society has "writ[ten] [them] down in history with [its] bitter

twisted lies”, they believed—to a certain extent—from the dust and ashes they still will rise (Angelou, 1978, para. 1). Though their “water ain’t clean”, they still dared to dream.

Why Are They So Resilient?

When framing the research questions for this study, I was intentionally clueless relative to my expectations for the students, their teachers, and their curricula. I wanted to enter as a blank slate to be filled with their experiences and not my own. In framing research question 1, “What situations in 6th grade, private school, elementary social studies classes are influencing Black males’ self-identity?” there was no predetermined definition of the term *situations*.

As a social studies teacher, I understood situations influencing one’s self-identity, or sense of knowing the self, are wide ranging. In applying situation analyses (Vann, 2002) to my frame of thinking, I hoped to gain insight into the teachers’ thoughts and attitudes toward the social studies and how it served to have a positive effect on their Black male students. I also desired to examine the successes and failures of these classrooms, concerning how they cultivated a positive self-identity within their Black male students, in an effort to determine how the teachers could influence future research.

Though no research has been completed to date focusing on the social studies’ ability to instill a positive self-identity within the Black male student, there is a body of literature that discussing the migration of Black students to private school because of the nurturing and ethnocentric education they receive (Arrington, Hall, & Stevenson, 2003). In this study of two, historically Black private schools, the sampled studies teachers were positively influencing their Black male students’ identities through various means or situations. They were partly responsible for their students’ resiliency.

According to the students, the teachers first appealed to their humanity. Their social studies teachers, to these young men, did not view them as Black, “thug[gish]”, “scum of the Earth.” They implied their social studies teachers, rather, viewed them as intellectual beings capable of positively contributing to society. Throughout the interviews, particularly with Imperial’s students, it was evident their scholarship was appreciated by their social studies teacher. This group of students had no qualms when discussing social studies related topics; discussing Blackness in the social studies classroom; and challenging perceived societal norms placed on their lives.

When asked to describe what they admired most about their social studies teachers, the students almost exclusively commented on the time their teachers took, on a daily basis, to impart historical and current truths into their lives. Essentially, these teachers were perceived as believing their students’ lives mattered. This finding supports the premise of the highly successful, low-income school in Brooklyn, New York. At the Academy, 100% of their Black male students have graduated from high school and 100% of the Black males from the 2015 graduating class were accepted into four-year colleges and universities (Kolodner, 2015). When interviewing these males in an effort to understand how they reached this goal, each of them mentioned how the school was like a family to them; their lives mattered to the staff (Kolodner, 2015). The teachers in this Brooklyn school simply stated they were holding these young men to higher levels of accountability. On the opposite side of the country, in a similar case, Black male students at Logan High School in Union City, California are exposed to a life skills class. The purpose of this course is to expose these young men to a culturally relevant education while building trust and increasing efficacy. This curriculum exposes students to: “Basic rights and

liberties”, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*”, “Reading and discussing the writings of Willie Lynch”, etc. (Lindsey, Jr., & Mabie, 2012).

This is parallel to the happenings or situations found within these two social studies classrooms. Mr. Absolute and Ms. Pope both believed that exposing these young men to narratives similar to their own, while increasing the levels of accountability, produces exponential results. The students in this study demonstrated they are meeting the expectations set before them.

After appealing to their humanity, these social studies teachers then provided relevant content to the students. The students were exposed to positive Black leaders, even if the teachers had to go against the curriculum to ensure they receive it. Mr. Absolute admitted he has exposed his students to events and people not covered typically within the curriculum. Though Ms. Pope had more autonomy within her social studies classes, she believed it was her responsibility to ensure her Black male students were exposed to the positive narratives of others.

Teacher vs. Teacher

Mr. Absolute and Mr. Pope were definitely unique in both their personalities; how they approached their subject matter content; and how they believed their Black male students viewed themselves. Mr. Absolute possessed a somewhat dismal view of his students, while Ms. Pope was optimistic always in her thoughts toward her students. While these fundamental differences in thinking may be relative to age or years of experience in the classroom, the fundamental cause is unknown. Whatever the case(s) may be, these teachers, however, possessed more commonalities than differences.

In Figure 10, the commonalities are presented in a Venn diagram. Some of the characteristics shared by these teachers were profound. They both believed there should be

student, teacher, and community investment into their Black male students' successes. One way these teachers believed they could capitalize on their students' successes was by offering them a Black history class. Though both schools are historically and predominantly Black, at the time of this study, neither school had any type of African or Black history class included in their social studies curriculum.

Other levels of agreement between these teachers, centered on accountability, curricular deficits, and dispelling myths. Both teachers assumed their students enter their social studies classes with a negative self-perception of themselves. They insinuated this negative self-image was directly correlated to the negative images of Black men displayed a norm within society. They indicated increased accountability of these students, coupled with high levels of praise, worked to dispel the myths challenging these young men.

These teachers both indicated the social studies to be a powerful agent of change. As Mr. Absolute stated the social studies should be the first subject taught to young Black men, Ms. Pope also implied the social studies should be heralded as the most important subject to young learners. They indicated by investing earlier in young Black males' lives through social studies curricula, barriers to success could be broken. As these young men are exposed to more culturally relevant content at earlier ages, both surmised the social studies could serve to powerfully mediate the academic and social dilemmas these young men endure.

Teachers vs. Students

These teachers were strongly influencing their students on multiple levels. It was evident these young men were not only active participants in their social studies curricula, they appeared invested in their personal and academic growth. These young men spoke the same language as their social studies teachers in that they used similar vernacular to describe their social studies

classes. Imperial's students spoke of the power of the social studies and how it worked to dispel myths about Black people. They acknowledged also their current curricula was lacking as it pertained to providing narratives of positive Black males. While these deficits existed, these students believed their teachers were providing them a powerfully relevant, myth dispelling, social studies curriculum. All the young men appreciated the levels of accountability placed on them by their social studies teachers, and they seemed eager to live to those expectations.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The plight of the Black male extends beyond the bounds of the classroom. It extends to some communities. Just recently, a Black mega church pastor was discussing the state of Black men:

It's cause that brings about effect [...] The reason we are losing our young boys is that in the absence of a cause, circumstances will always prevail. If you don't give a man something that's more important than how he feels, he will always digress back to his feelings. Is there is not a cause? In fact, it whipped our daughters too...until they got tired of being oppressed. The reason that women are excelling more rapidly than men is because they have been afflicted more so than men...and it is always the cause that brings about the effect. So right now, women are excelling us because whoever was repressed the most...would always excel the most. As soon as men get tired of dropping out of school, flunking exams, sitting on the streets, hold [their] crotch[es] as soon as [Black boys] get tired of having the devil walk over [their] destiny, [they] will decide to fight back (Jakes, 2016).

In making Jakes' speech relevant to the education of Black male students, I posit: With the current educational and social conditions of the Black male in turmoil, is there not a cause for

social studies teachers to have a profound influence on the lives of these students? Considering we, in the USA, are living in a post-racial, post-*Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* decision, why are so many Black male students failing in life and academics at unprecedented rates? Is it that the plight of Blacks is no longer of importance to anyone? Derrick Bell (2005) seemed to have foreshadowed the educational crises of today when he penned many decades ago:

Surely, the unconscionably bad conditions that prevailed in segregated schools prior to 1954 are mostly gone. But just as surely, the goal of equal educational opportunities remains beyond the reach of a whole generation of colored children who need it now more than ever (p. 221).

Although many public school teachers try to leverage the inequities in social studies classrooms during Black History month, is it enough to sprinkle positive Blackness during only one of nine months during the school year? As “public schools have become the chief disseminators of Black History Month” should the standard be lifted from the essential covering of “Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King, Jr. and George Washington Carver” (Bell, 2005, p. 220).

In interviewing the students, Claude Steele’s (1997) identity threat came to mind. Each of the young men discussed their trepidations of being viewed negatively by society. One of Imperial’s students stated, “It’s like...sometimes [...] we do get a little out of hand ‘cause we do things and shoot people for no valid reason [...]” Statements such as these supported Steele’s statement that this “incidental” threat that:

“in general form, can affect the members of any group about whom a negative stereotype threat exists (e.g., skateboarders, older adults, White men, gang members [women should

also be included]). Where bad stereotypes about these groups apply, members of these groups can fear being reduced to that stereotype” (p. 614).

Though they appeared to have a positive self-identity and high levels of association with Blackness, these young men appeared to be teetering in terms of their thinking of themselves as stereotypes. The teachers in this phenomenological study, however, worked to eradicate stereotypical thinking, while using the social studies to supplant any negative self-perceptions these young men possessed.

Just as the classroom teachers in this study discovered and accepted the call to propel Black male students toward greatness, so should other social studies teachers. According to Bell (2005), “In-depth studies of how [B]lack inner city schools achieve success with children who were almost guaranteed scholastic failure have been few” (p. 229). He continues this essay by stating, “The common element among successful [B]lack schools was a principal willing to give priority to his or her vision of education even over policy directions coming from central administration” (p. 229). Years later, I concur with his sentiments. Though I did not interview any principals, Mr. Absolute lived by this principle. He believed the cause of the Black male students’ successes to be greater than the effects he may personally face in not following curricular guidelines. There is much to be learned from teachers like these.

Teachers have to be advocates for marginalized groups of students and should see themselves as such. Though this study does not provide a model for investigating the social studies’ ability to foster a positive self-identity within marginalized groups, it could be used as a framework or beginning for other phenomena. In order to continue to provide a transformative voice (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) for certain groups, more work should be done. The findings from this study could be extrapolated to see how they translate to other groups. Sample

groups could include: Latino and Hispanic males, Appalachian males, Muslim and Middle Eastern males.

Another recommendation for future studies is to consider the environment and attempt to forge relationships with potential school systems early in the process. As previously stated, each site was governed by a board. Though each principal readily granted approval, the final determination came from these governing bodies.

In one instance, the principal granted approval two months before the study was to commence; however, the board did not give its final consent until two months after I was scheduled to be in the school. Aside from the late start, I lost entirely a potential third site due to circumstances surrounding board approval. These types of obstacles, within the selected sites, were counter narrative to the visions of the schools' principals as each administrator showed interest in learning how relevant their schools' social studies curricula and teachers were to the lives of the young Black men they served.

Another recommendation for future study includes extending this study to public school settings to determine if students in public schools have lower views of themselves than their private school counterparts. Another recommendation would be to have a public school pilot a culturally relevant social studies curriculum—focusing on the successes and positive contributions of Black people, particularly Black males—in certain classes and see if students exposed to the curriculum experience increased levels of self-identity.

As neither teacher in this study could identify Assata Shakur and other radical Blacks in history, an additional recommendation includes extending this study to the collegiate level to see what measures colleges and universities are taking to expose their students to diverse histories. Historically Black Colleges and Universities' history curricula could be juxtaposed with

traditional colleges and universities to examine whether differences exist, and if so, what those differences are.

The final recommendation calls for educational stakeholders to join the cause of helping these young Black men find purpose in education and life. The University of Tennessee Chattanooga has a program called “Each One Reach One” by which it supports STEM, special education, and foreign language teachers. Perhaps Colleges of Education could invest social studies teachers who in turn could reach young Black male students through high accountability factors and culturally relevant curricula. In 2015, President Obama’s administration invested \$2.9 billion in STEM programs (White House Office of Science & Technology Policy, 2014), while decreasing its support of the social studies, American history, and civics. If these Colleges of Education are to be successful in preparing social studies teachers to effectively and positively teach young, Black males, federal and state policies must lend financial support. A social studies teacher can only reach a student if properly equipped. Funding from these state and federal entities make this possible.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Social Studies Curriculum and the Black Male Student—Teacher

You must be 19 years of age to participate in this study.

This is an anonymous survey. Please DO NOT write your name on it. The purpose of this survey is to examine your attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions as social studies teachers of Black students to understand how these factors potentially influence your comfort level, practices, and planning of inclusive social studies curricula.

For the purpose of this survey, an inclusive curriculum is one that provides narratives of marginalized voices and is culturally relevant. Culturally relevant teaching involves purposefully teaching relevant material to Black students.

When completing this survey, think only about how these constructs may apply your Black male students.

Please circle your response following each statement, using the following scale: strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D), agree (A), or strongly agree (SA).

1. The academic success of my students is important to me.		SD	D	A	SA
2. Black history is relevant to positive student success.		SD	D	A	SA
3. It is the teacher's responsibility to implement a culturally relevant social studies curriculum.		SD	D	A	SA
4. The social studies curriculum, currently implemented in your classroom, exposes students to the narratives of several (at least 10) other positive Black males.		SD	D	A	SA
5. Black male students tend to enter my classroom with a negative self-perception of themselves.		SD	D	A	SA
6. Black male students tend to feel as if they offer little valuable input to classroom discussions.		SD	D	A	SA
7. Black male students tend to find social studies irrelevant.		SD	D	A	SA
8. I provide my Black male students with a culturally relevant social studies curriculum.		SD	D	A	SA
9. I implement a variety of methods to teach Black history.		SD	D	A	SA

10. Black male students are less inclined to participate in class.		SD	D	A	SA
11. In my classes, students are exposed to lessor known Black males and events, e.g. Stokley Carmichael and SNCC.		SD	D	A	SA
12. In my classes, students are always exposed to positive Black male through the social studies curriculum.		SD	D	A	SA
13. I have invited community members and leaders to discuss Black history with my students.		SD	D	A	SA
14. I believe the social studies can be used to instill positive self-worth within the Black male student.		SD	D	A	SA
15. Black male students possess limited prior knowledge of lessor known Black people and events (e.g. Stokley Carmichael and SNCC).		SD	D	A	SA
16. I believe the social studies, as a whole, exposes students to the positive narratives of a diverse group of Black men.		SD	D	A	SA
17. I use primary source documents to teach Black history.		SD	D	A	SA
18. I believe the social studies can counter the negative stereotypes often seen of Black males in the media.		SD	D	A	SA
19. My Black male students often emulate the negative images of Black men they see in pop culture (drug dealers, gangsters, hard core rappers).		SD	D	A	SA
20. My Black male students often emulate stereotypical roles of Blacks (athletes, entertainers).		SD	D	A	SA
21. My students often emulate powerful, positive Black men (President Barak Obama, Representative John Lewis).		SD	D	A	SA
22. My Black male students feel as if they cannot succeed academically.		SD	D	A	SA
23. My Black male students dislike social studies class.		SD	D	A	SA

24. It is my responsibility to implement a social studies curriculum that fosters a positive self-image within my Black male students.		SD	D	A	SA
25. My students identify with an inclusive social studies curriculum.		SD	D	A	SA
26. I lack the materials I need to adequately teach Black history.		SD	D	A	SA
27. My students enjoy social studies only when studying Black history or other pertinent content.		SD	D	A	SA

In order for the researcher to gain insight into each participant of this survey, please complete the following three items. Please remember this survey is anonymous and your identity is protected. There will be no way to determine your identity.

Gender: Please circle one.

Male

Female

Race/Ethnicity: Please circle those that apply.

Black White Hispanic Asian Pacific Islander Native American

Age: _____

Instrument created by Takisha Durm (2016).

APPENDIX B

Social Studies and the Black Male—Student

This is an anonymous survey. Anonymous means no one will know who you are. Your survey results will remain private. Please DO NOT write your name on it. The purpose of this survey is to determine your opinion on social studies and how it relates to the Black male identity. For the purpose of this survey, social studies is the class you study history, geography, philosophy, etc. In some cases, history class may be the class name instead of social studies. Please circle your response following each statement, using a strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree scale.

Strongly Disagree
SD



Disagree
D



Agree
A



Strongly Agree
SA



1. Making good grades is important to me.

SD

D

A

SA

2. I do not care about my social studies grade.

SD

D

A

SA

3. Black history should be taught all year.

SD

D

A

SA

4. My social studies class exposes me to enough positive experiences of Black men.

SD

D

A

SA

5. I feel bad about myself as a student.

SD

D

A

SA

APPENDIX C

MIBI—Teen

This is an anonymous survey. Anonymous means no one will know who you are. Your survey results will remain private. Please DO NOT write your name on it. The purpose of this survey is to understand how you identify with yourself and others as a Black person. Please circle your response following each statement, using a strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree scale.

Strongly Disagree

SD



Disagree

D



Agree

A



Strongly Agree

SA



1. I feel close to other Black people.

SD

D

A

SA

2. I have a strong sense of belonging to other Black people.

SD

D

A

SA

3. If I were to describe myself to someone, one of the first things that I would say is that I'm Black.

SD

D

A

SA

4. I am happy that I am Black.

SD

D

A

SA

5. I am proud to be Black.

SD

D

A

SA

Do you take social studies every day? _____ YES _____ NO

Age: Please write your age in the blank. _____

APPENDIX D

Student Interview Protocol

1. Please tell me about yourself, sharing any information you think is important. For example, “My name is Ms. Durm. I have been a teacher for a long time, but I do not think I know everything there is to know. I am always eager to learn more you.”
2. How would you define social studies?
3. As a Black male, how do you feel about the material you study in your social studies class? Why is this?
4. How do the things you learn in social studies make you feel as a Black person in general? As a Black student? As a Black citizen? Please explain.
5. What do you like most about social studies?
6. What do you like least about social studies?
7. How do you feel about the amount of time spent learning about Black individuals?
8. How often do you learn about Black people? Why do you think this is? How does this make you feel?
9. Tell me about some of the Black people you studied. Why do you remember studying this?
10. Who can tell me about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.? Rosa Parks? Harriett Tubman? Malcolm X? Ben Carson? President Barack Obama?

11. Who can tell me about SNCC? Angela Davis? Stokley Carmichael? Assata Shakur? The Civil Rights Movement?
12. If you could create your own social studies class, who or what would you study? Why?
13. What materials would you use to teach others in your social studies class? Would you like your teacher to do some of these things?
14. How or does the social studies make you feel about yourself? How does it make you feel about other Black people?
15. How do you feel society, (people in the general public) views Black boys? Do you agree with these views?
16. As a Black male, how do you feel your social studies teachers view you? Why?
17. Do you think social studies could be used to help Black people feel more uplifted or better about themselves? Do you think social studies could help other people see Black men differently?
18. If you could change one thing society thought about you and other Black men, what would that be? Why?
19. If you could change one thing your social studies teacher thinks about you and other Black males what would that be? Why?
20. Would you like to ask me any questions?

APPENDIX E

Teacher Interview Protocol

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself and your role is at your school.
2. How long have you been teaching? How long have you been teaching social studies?
3. What motivated you to pursue this career?
4. What is the current social studies curriculum?
5. Can you please tell me about any Black historical moments or Black individuals you all study?
6. Can you please describe in detail various methods you use to teach those topics?
7. How significant is the social studies to the development of a positive perception of Black males?
8. What methods to you employ to make social studies relevant to them?
9. How relevant is the social studies curriculum to the promotion of a positive self-identity within your Black male students?
10. Tell me about your Black male students.
11. How do they fare in comparison to the other students?
12. If you could typify your Black male students academically and behaviorally, how would you?
13. Of what levels of success do you feel they are capable? Does your perception align with what they want for themselves?
14. For the male students who possess deficits in their historical prior knowledge, what do you do to remedy the problem?

15. Do you believe a curriculum rich in Black history would help your Black male students excel both academically and socially (particularly as citizens)? Please explain.
16. How comfortable are you teaching about certain aspects of Black history and about certain Black people?
17. Can you tell me about SNCC? Stokely Carmichael? Assata Shakur?
18. Can you tell me about Rosa Parks? Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.? President Obama? Ben Carson?
19. Is there anything else you would like to add?
20. Do you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX F

Student Social Studies Survey (Final Version)

This is an anonymous survey. Anonymous means no one will know who you are. Your survey results will remain private. Please DO NOT write your name on it. The purpose of this survey is to determine your opinion on social studies and how it relates to you view yourself. For the purpose of this survey, social studies is the study of people and events in time. In some cases, history class may be the class name instead of social studies. Please circle your response following each statement, using a strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree scale.

Strongly Disagree
SD



Disagree
D



Agree
A



Strongly Agree
SA



1. I do not care about my social studies grade.

SD

D

A

SA

2. Black history should be taught all year.

SD

D

A

SA

3. My social studies class exposes me to enough positive experiences of Black men.

SD

D

A

SA

4. I feel bad about myself as a student.

SD

D

A

SA

5. I do not have much to say in my social studies class.

SD

D

A

SA

Note: When running statistical analyses, items 6, 8, 9, 21, 22, 24 should be reverse coded for increased internal reliability.

APPENDIX G

Independent Samples Test Social Studies Survey

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q2	Equal variances assumed	1.320	.294	.573	6	.588	.467	.815	-1.527	2.460
	Equal variances not assumed			.695	5.802	.514	.467	.672	-1.190	2.124
Q3	Equal variances assumed	.481	.514	-2.400	6	.053	-.867	.361	-1.750	.017
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.229	3.474	.100	-.867	.389	-2.014	.280
Q4	Equal variances assumed	.006	.943	1.837	6	.116	1.200	.653	-.398	2.798
	Equal variances not assumed			1.744	3.706	.162	1.200	.688	-.771	3.171
Q5	Equal variances assumed	1.122	.330	-.080	6	.939	-.067	.836	-2.113	1.979
	Equal variances not assumed			-.097	5.754	.926	-.067	.686	-1.764	1.630
Q10	Equal variances assumed	1.500	.267	.000	6	1.000	.000	.422	-1.032	1.032

	Equal variances not assumed			.000	4.000	1.000	.000	.316	-.878	.878
Q11	Equal variances assumed	1.181	.319	.080	6	.939	.067	.836	-1.979	2.113
	Equal variances not assumed			.069	2.847	.950	.067	.968	-3.111	3.244
Q12	Equal variances assumed	.521	.498	-.240	6	.818	-.133	.555	-1.492	1.225
	Equal variances not assumed			-.266	5.695	.800	-.133	.501	-1.376	1.109
Q13	Equal variances assumed	.257	.630	-.500	6	.635	-.400	.800	-2.358	1.558
	Equal variances not assumed			-.519	4.859	.626	-.400	.770	-2.398	1.598
Q14	Equal variances assumed	1.456	.273	-.164	6	.875	-.133	.815	-2.127	1.860
	Equal variances not assumed			-.139	2.740	.899	-.133	.958	-3.352	3.086
Q18	Equal variances assumed	.481	.514	-.369	6	.725	-.133	.361	-1.017	.750
	Equal variances not assumed			-.343	3.474	.751	-.133	.389	-1.280	1.014
Q19	Equal variances assumed	12.101	.013	1.543	6	.174	1.200	.777	-.702	3.102
	Equal variances not assumed			1.177	2.161	.353	1.200	1.020	-2.888	5.288
Q20	Equal variances assumed	.549	.487	.750	6	.482	.400	.533	-.905	1.705

	Equal variances not assumed			.638	2.740	.573	.400	.627	-1.707	2.507
Q25	Equal variances assumed	5.463	.058	-2.161	6	.074	-1.267	.586	-2.701	.168
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.783	2.553	.188	-1.267	.710	-3.768	1.235
Q27	Equal variances assumed	.481	.514	-.369	6	.725	-.133	.361	-1.017	.750
	Equal variances not assumed			-.343	3.474	.751	-.133	.389	-1.280	1.014
Q28	Equal variances assumed	.006	.943	-.306	6	.770	-.200	.653	-1.798	1.398
	Equal variances not assumed			-.291	3.706	.787	-.200	.688	-2.171	1.771
Q6_Rev	Equal variances assumed	1.416	.279	-.401	6	.702	-.20000	.49889	-1.42073	1.02073
	Equal variances not assumed			-.327	2.491	.769	-.20000	.61101	-2.38989	1.98989
Q8_Rev	Equal variances assumed	.521	.498	-.240	6	.818	-.13333	.55511	-1.49164	1.22497
	Equal variances not assumed			-.266	5.695	.800	-.13333	.50111	-1.37562	1.10895
Q9_Rev	Equal variances assumed	.117	.744	-.164	6	.875	-.06667	.40734	-1.06339	.93006
	Equal variances not assumed			-.161	4.140	.880	-.06667	.41366	-1.20004	1.06671
Q21_Rev	Equal variances assumed	5.463	.058	1.592	6	.162	.93333	.58626	-.50120	2.36787

	Equal variances not assumed			1.314	2.553	.294	.93333	.71024	-1.56810	3.43476
Q22_Re v	Equal variances assumed	.117	.744	.655	6	.537	.26667	.40734	-.73006	1.26339
	Equal variances not assumed			.645	4.140	.553	.26667	.41366	-.86671	1.40004
Q24_Re v	Equal variances assumed	4.000	.092	-.750	6	.482	-.20000	.26667	-.85251	.45251
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.000	4.000	.374	-.20000	.20000	-.75529	.35529

APPENDIX H

Component Transformation Matrix (Student SS Survey)

Component	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	.606	.637	.294	.152	.201	.277
2	-.640	.360	-.003	.635	.229	.060
3	-.044	-.391	.856	.246	-.205	.099
4	.459	-.267	-.291	.696	-.139	-.360
5	.093	-.390	.051	-.014	.915	-.013
6	.046	-.296	-.306	.165	-.098	.883

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

APPENDIX I

Total Variance Explained—Student Social Studies Survey

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.537	40.653	40.653	8.537	40.653	40.653	5.107	24.319	24.319
2	3.425	16.307	56.960	3.425	16.307	56.960	4.938	23.515	47.834
3	3.219	15.330	72.290	3.219	15.330	72.290	3.429	16.329	64.163
4	2.597	12.366	84.656	2.597	12.366	84.656	3.066	14.599	78.762
5	1.637	7.797	92.453	1.637	7.797	92.453	2.089	9.947	88.710
6	1.143	5.443	97.896	1.143	5.443	97.896	1.929	9.187	97.896
7	.442	2.104	100.000						
8	1.351E-15	6.436E-15	100.000						
9	7.206E-16	3.432E-15	100.000						
10	3.812E-16	1.815E-15	100.000						
11	1.336E-16	6.363E-16	100.000						
12	8.038E-17	3.828E-16	100.000						
13	3.331E-17	1.586E-16	100.000						
14	-1.147E-17	-5.461E-17	100.000						
15	-1.073E-16	-5.110E-16	100.000						
16	-1.925E-16	-9.166E-16	100.000						
17	-2.192E-16	-1.044E-15	100.000						
18	-3.250E-16	-1.547E-15	100.000						
19	-5.752E-16	-2.739E-15	100.000						
20	-6.780E-16	-3.228E-15	100.000						
21	-2.066E-15	-9.838E-15	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

APPENDIX J

Total Variance Explained—MIBI Teen

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	7.190	37.841	37.841	7.190	37.841	37.841	4.432	23.327	23.327
2	4.573	24.069	61.909	4.573	24.069	61.909	4.404	23.178	46.505
3	3.298	17.360	79.269	3.298	17.360	79.269	4.212	22.168	68.673
4	1.677	8.826	88.095	1.677	8.826	88.095	3.524	18.546	87.218
5	1.356	7.137	95.232	1.356	7.137	95.232	1.523	8.014	95.232
6	.534	2.812	98.045						
7	.372	1.955	100.000						
8	2.458E-15	1.294E-14	100.000						
9	8.652E-16	4.554E-15	100.000						
10	6.090E-16	3.205E-15	100.000						
11	4.025E-16	2.118E-15	100.000						
12	2.837E-16	1.493E-15	100.000						
13	1.199E-16	6.311E-16	100.000						
14	7.908E-17	4.162E-16	100.000						
15	2.429E-17	1.278E-16	100.000						
16	-2.300E-17	-1.211E-16	100.000						
17	-1.272E-16	-6.693E-16	100.000						
18	-2.261E-16	-1.190E-15	100.000						
19	-2.720E-16	-1.431E-15	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

APPENDIX K

Component Transformation Matrix for MIBI

Component	1	2	3	4	5
1	.483	.407	.570	.524	.043
2	-.496	.750	-.354	.256	.036
3	-.685	-.352	.490	.353	.206
4	-.226	.325	.534	-.586	-.463
5	-.039	-.208	-.156	.437	-.860

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

APPENDIX L

IRB Approval Form

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects



February 5, 2016

Takisha Durm
Dept. of Curriculum & Instruction
College of Education
Box 870232

Re: IRB#: 16-OR-055 "Critical Race Theory in Elementary Social Studies:
Exploring Racial Identity and Stereotype Threat for Black Males"

Dear Ms. Durm:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

Your application will expire on February 4, 2017. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the IRB Request for Study Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped consent/assent forms to obtain consent from your participants.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,



Director & Research Compliance Officer



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