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EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITING AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES
INTO TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

BY

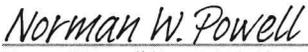
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EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITING AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES INTO
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

BY

FREDRICK W SNODGRASS

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION

2021

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DEDICATION

First, I would like to thank God for providing me with the strength, knowledge, and perseverance to complete this dissertation journey. I would like to dedicate my dissertation work to my wife, Kim and parents Walter and Lena Snodgrass. I would like to thank my wife, Kim for her unwavering support and strength on this journey. I look forward to the day you become Dr. Kimberly Snodgrass. Then, my parents Walter and Lena Snodgrass for your love and support throughout my life. Your support has given me the strength to finish this dissertation journey. Thank you so much.

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Finally, I would like to thank my dissertation committee, Dr. Bill Phillips, Dr. Norman Powell, Dr. Wardell Johnson, and Dr. Gerald Smith for serving on my committee. During the past three years, I have learned a lot from you and benefitted from your expertise. In addition, I appreciate your patience, time, and wisdom along this dissertation journey.

ABSTRACT

In today's society, the teaching workforce should be more diverse. However, it still consists of majority white females. From a survey reported by Education Week in 2017-2018, the teaching workforce consisted of 79.2% white teachers. The same data reported that the teaching workforce consists of 7% African-Americans (Will, 2020). From that 7% of African-Americans, African-American males consists of 2% of the teaching workforce (Bell, 2017). Some school districts are seeking to attract more minority teachers to reflect their student demographics. In 2018, data reported from [statista.com](https://www.statista.com) shows the following student demographics in K-12 public schools across the U.S.: 47% White, 15.1% African-American, and 27.2% Hispanic ([statista.com](https://www.statista.com), 2018). In order to diversify the teaching workforce to reflect the student demographics, some underlying issues need to be addressed.

Before the 1954 Brown Decision, the teacher workforce consisted of more than 30 % African-American males. Today according to numerous research articles, the teacher workforce consists of 2% African-American males (Bell, 2017). The question I ask myself as a researcher is "What happened to the African-American male teacher pipeline?" I seek to explore the factors contributing to the decline in African-American male teachers from 1954 to the present.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Overview	1
Problem Statement.....	4
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Research Questions.....	6
Definition of Key Terms	6
Significance of the Study.....	7
Research Method.....	8
Research Hypotheses	8
Objectives/Outcomes	9
Limitations.....	9
Delimitations	10
Assumptions.....	10
Organization of the Dissertation.....	11
Historical Background	11
Career Opportunities.....	13
African-American Male Students' Perception about Teaching	14
Stereotypes.....	15
Standardized Testing.....	17
Recruitment Models and Programs.....	18
Summary	19
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	21
Theoretical Framework.....	21
Historical Background	23
Other Career Opportunities.....	30
African American Males' Perception about Teaching.....	34
Stereotypes.....	37
Standardized Exams	40
Recruiting Models and Programs.....	47
Attrition	51
Summary of Literature	52
Chapter Three: Methods	54
Research Design	54
Unit of Analysis	57

Research Questions	58
Role of the Researcher	58
Informed Consent	59
Instrumentation	60
Data Collection	60
Interview Protocol.....	62
Data Analysis	63
Trustworthiness	66
Summary	69
Chapter 4: Results.....	71
Research Setting.....	71
Demographics.....	71
Data Collection	72
Data Analysis	73
Textural Description for Participant 1	73
Structural Description for Participant 1	74
Textural-Structural Description for Participant 1.....	75
Participant 2 Textural Description	75
Structural Description for Participant 2	76
Textural/Structural Description for Participant 2	76
Textural Description for Participant 3	77
Structural Description for Participant 3.....	77
Textural/Structural Description for Participant 3	78
Textural Description for Participant 4	78
Structural Description for Participant 4.....	79
Textural/Structural Description for Participant 4	80
Textural Description for Participant 5	80
Structural Description for Participant 5.....	81
Textural/Structural Description for Participant 5	81
Textural Description for Participant 6	82
Textural/Structural Description for Participant 6	82
Textural Description for Participant 7	83
Structural Description for Participant 7	83
Textural/Structural Description for Participant 7	84

Textural Description for Participant 8	85
Structural Description for Participant 8	85
Textural/Structural Description for Participant 8	86
Textural Description for Participant 9	86
Structural Description for Participant 9	86
Textural/Structure Description for Participant 9	87
Composite Description for Participants	87
Trustworthiness	89
Credibility	89
Transferability	89
Dependability	90
Conformability	90
Themes	90
Microaggressions	90
Isolation	91
Praxis I Exam	91
Underrepresentation of African-American Male Teachers	92
Financial Stability	92
Recruitment	93
Study Results	93
Summary	94
Chapter 5: Interpretations and Recommendations	95
Discussion of Findings	95
Strategies to Address Barriers	98
Limitations	104
Recommendations	105
Implications	106
Conclusion	108
REFERENCES	110
APPENDICES	121
APPENDIX A: EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL	122
APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM	124
APPENDIX C: LETTER OF INTEREST	129

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	131
APPENDIX E: AUDIT TRAIL	134
VITA.....	136

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sample Size for Praxis I Administration.....	44
Table 2: Passing Rate on the Praxis I in Each Content Area.....	45
Table 3: Male Test-Takers on Praxis Exam.....	45
Table 4: Demographics of Students.....	72
Table 5: Final Themes and Structural Elements.....	73

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Modified Stevick-Colaizzi Keen Method.....	64
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Chapter 1: Overview

Merriam-Webster broadly defines an endangered species as “anyone or anything whose continued existence is threatened” (merriam-webster.com, 2020). Further, Wikipedia adds that an endangered species is “a species that is very likely to become extinct in the near future” (en.m.wikipedia.org, 2020). According to both definitions, this term can be used to discuss the percentage of African-American male educators in our public schools system. Before the integration of public schools, African-American male educators accounted for 36% of the workforce in the public schools system (McDaniel, Diprete, Buchmann, & Shwed, 2011). Currently, two percent of public school educators are African-American males (Bell, 2017). The National Education Association is seeking to diversify the teaching workforce (Alvarez, 2017). Some educational experts would argue the teaching workforce would be diversified if retention strategies were developed for African-American male educators. African-American male educators have the highest attrition rate in public education (aft.org, 2016). I agree with their argument that retention strategies are needed. However, I believe underlying barriers are preventing African-American males from obtaining teacher certification. This research study will highlight potential barriers African-American males may encounter as they pursue their teaching certification.

The 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* is one of the most impactful United States Supreme Court decisions of the 20th Century. The court decision led to later civil rights victories for African-Americans. The Brown Decision has benefitted many of its intended recipients, African-American students. African-American

male educators and recipients of the Brown Decision could not foresee the significant economic, social, and educational impact it would have on the black community.

Before the desegregation of public schools, teaching was a viable career option for African-American men. Many African-American clergymen and men and women educators were influential members of the black community and segregated schools. They positively impacted students by addressing their academic, behavior, and social needs (Milner & Howard, 2004). However, after the Brown Decision, the percentage of African-American male educators declined significantly (Tillman, 2004).

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, many African-American males began pursuing different career paths. At that time, teaching was not a viable option as a career for African-American males because of the dismantling of the dual public schools system. A decade after the Brown Decision, 38,000 African-American educators and administrators lost their positions across the southern states (Tillman, 2004). However, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 allowed African-American males to pursue career paths in any profession and barring any discriminatory practices (Wright, 2015). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was important from an economic standpoint for the African-American community because they gained more access to higher-paying jobs. However, African-American college students started seeking other careers outside of the teaching profession.

The lack of African-American educators can be traced back to the mid-1970s. From 1975 to 1985, the number of African-American education majors declined by 66% (Tillman, 2004). This decline has made a significant impact on future generations of potential African-American male educators. Some African-American male students, who

are interested in teaching, do not have access to African-American male mentors in the profession. The impact of declined enrollment of African-American education majors from 30 to 40 years ago is evident today. African-American males consist of 2% of public school teachers (Bell, 2017).

Shortly after the Brown Decision, southern states required standardized tests such as the NTE (National Teacher Examination) and the Praxis I. Both exams have served as potential barriers for African-Americans obtaining teacher certification. The NTE was utilized as a tool to displace African-American educators (Oakley, Stowell, & Logan, 2009). Currently, teacher candidates are required to pass the Praxis I and Praxis II exams before receiving teacher certification. Traditionally, African-American males score below average compared to the white counterparts on the Praxis I exam (Nettles, Scratton, Steinberg, & Tyler, 2011). This barrier must be addressed to increase the number of African-American male certified educators.

Since the integration of the public schools system, extensive literature has been written about African-American males' K-12 educational experiences. Some African-American males experienced hostile learning environments, which dissuades them from thinking about teaching as a career. Some African-American males' have perceptions and experiences of school being a place where African-American males are intellectually inferior and incorrigible. Also, some educators lowering their expectations and reinforcing stereotypes have contributed to African-American males' disdain of the teaching profession (Goings & Bianco, 2016). These negative experiences make it extremely difficult to recruit African-American males into teacher education programs.

In the 1950s, 28% of African-American men were educators in segregated public schools (McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchmann, & Shwed, 2011). Today, teaching is perceived as women's work with a low-paying salary (Rice & Goessling, 2005). Current African-American male educators are in a position to change that stereotype about teaching. Overcoming these stereotypes will break down barriers allowing more African-American males to pursue a career in teaching. In addition, mentoring is an effective strategy in recruiting more African-American males into the teaching profession (Nicolas, 2014).

Problem Statement

Before the desegregation of public schools, the dual public schools system provided job opportunities in the teaching profession for African-American males. With limited access to other professions, teaching provided social mobility and economic security for African-American males. However, in the 1960s, some African-American males gained more access to job opportunities outside of education. The shift in gaining more access to employment opportunities and other contributing factors has limited the number of African-American male educators in the workforce. Today African-American males, who want to become educators, have limited encounters with African-American male educators compared to the dual public school system. Therefore, recruiting African-American males into teacher education programs has been an arduous task across the nation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide insight into the barriers encountered by some African-American males entering the teaching profession. The research collected

from this study will assist African-American male teacher candidates in overcoming potential barriers to teacher certification. Previous research has shown standardized testing, perceptions, and stereotypes have become barriers for many African-American males entering and completing teacher education programs. These barriers have impacted the teacher workforce because of the scarce number of African-American male educators. During 1940, 36% of African-American males were employed in the teaching profession. Today, the number of African-American male educators has declined from 36% in 1940 to 2% in 2017 (Bell, 2017). Standardized testing and other factors continue to pose challenges for African-American males.

Today, traditional colleges and universities are utilizing the Praxis I as an entrance exam into their teacher education program. Utilizing the Praxis I exam as an entrance exam into the teacher education program has contributed to the decline of African-American teacher candidates. To counter the response to the low passing rates of African-American students on the Praxis I exam, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) offer test preparation programs to assist students (Evans & Leonard, 2013). This study will seek effective testing strategies to address this potential barrier and increase the passing rate for African-American males. Passing rates for African-American males on the Praxis I and II exams will heighten the interest of many African-American males entering teacher education programs.

This study explores the perceptions about teaching from the African-American male educators' perspectives. Perceptions about teaching prevent more African-American males from pursuing a teaching degree. Research studies conducted with African-American male high school students documented reasons they pursued other programs in

colleges and universities (Graham & Erwin, 2011). This study will seek to address those perceptions about teaching from the African-American male educators' perspectives.

As a result of the media coverage of entertainers, athletes, and musicians, many African-American males are bombarded with these images of successful African-American males. This study seeks to introduce teaching as a viable option for a successful career. Also, dispelling myths and stereotypes such as teaching being women's work will address those myths and stereotypes with documented data (Rice & Goessling, 2005). The study will describe the significant impact of African-American male educators in public schools.

Research Questions

1. How do barriers impact the enrollment of African-American males into teacher education programs?
2. How does standardized testing influence the decision-making of African-American male candidates pursuing teacher certification?
3. What is the experience of African-American male educators being recruited into teacher education programs at Kentucky colleges and universities?

Definition of Key Terms

For this study, the following terms are defined:

Alternative teacher certification - is a process by which a person is awarded a teaching license even though that person has not completed a traditional teacher certification program (Evans & Leonard, 2013).

Invisible tax - African-American educators are expected to serve as school disciplinarians based on the assumption that they will be better able to communicate with African American boys with behavior issues (King, 2017).

Praxis I exam - The Praxis tests measure the academic skills and subject-specific content knowledge needed for teaching. The Praxis tests are taken by individuals entering the teaching profession as part of the certification process required by many states and professional licensing organizations (www.ets.org, 2017).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) - CRT is a theory that scholars in education have examined and challenged how race and racism shape schooling structure, practices, and discourses (Allen, 2017).

Significance of the Study

The lack of diversity within the teacher workforce has been an issue since the integration of public schools. African-American males comprise 2% of the teaching workforce, while black students make up 17% of the students in public schools. A significant number of students will not have the opportunity to interact with a black male teacher (Goings & Bianco, 2016). The significance of the study addresses an ongoing problem with recruiting African-American males into teacher education programs. The study will provide effective and practical solutions to potential barriers encountered by some African-American males entering teacher education programs. Addressing these barriers will promote more African-American males attaining teacher certification.

The findings from this study will assist potential African-American male teacher candidates and teacher education programs. First, African-American male teacher candidates will be cognizant of potential barriers as they matriculate through the teacher

education program. Next, teacher education programs will benefit by addressing potential barriers to the teacher certification process for African-American males. Finally, the findings will assist teacher education programs in developing effective recruiting strategies.

Research Method

The researcher will be utilizing phenomenological qualitative research for this study. The phenomenological research method is recommended when studying the phenomenon of lived human experiences (Lin, 2013). This method will allow individuals to share their perspectives on the issue of recruiting African-American males into teacher education programs (Graham & Erwin, 2011). One-on-one interviews will be conducted with tenured and non-tenured African-American male educators. These interviews will allow the researcher to collect and analyze the information from participants. These in-depth discussions will inform the researcher of potential solutions to the research problem.

Research Hypotheses

National Signing Day for high school football players is an important day because student athletes have decided what college or university to further their education and football ability. The best college football teams recruit these players across the nation. Similarly, some successful recruiting strategies can be employed by teacher education programs to recruit African-American male students. Some policymakers and educators are seeking solutions to increase the number of African-American male educators (Bryan & Browder, 2013). The research hypotheses state the contributing factors are preventing African-American male teacher candidates from entering teacher education programs.

The factors are other career opportunities, standardized testing, African-American males' student perceptions of teaching, myths, and stereotypes. The researcher will conduct interviews with African-American male educators to address these factors preventing African-American males from entering teacher education programs. The data collected will be utilized to develop effective strategies to recruit African-American males into teacher education programs.

Objectives/Outcomes

This study will address the following outcomes: (1) African-American male educators will confirm factors contributing to the lack of African-American male educators. (2) Teacher education programs will employ successful recruitment strategies to increase the number of African-American male teacher candidates. (3) Teacher education programs will provide the needed test preparation and academic support for African-American male teacher candidates to pass the Praxis I teacher certification exam.

Limitations

One limitation of this study will be due to the lack of African-American male educators, who have experienced any challenges while they matriculated through their teacher education program. Due to the specificity of the research study, the researcher will utilize homogeneous purposive sampling to select the participants for the study (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2016). Also, due to the nature of the job, contacting African-American male educators outside of the Fayette County school district to schedule interviews will be difficult.

In addition, ensuring all current African-American male teacher candidates have access to Praxis I test prep materials. According to the Kentucky Praxis I data in table 3, it reveals a 23% achievement gap that exists between African-American males and their white male counterparts. Therefore, it is the utmost importance that all universities and colleges provide African-American male teacher candidates with these materials to increase passing rates. Overcoming future limitations, the advisors of teacher candidates can discuss and provide access to the Praxis I test prep materials or notify the candidates about any workshops to assist with test preparation.

Delimitations

One delimitation is choosing African-American male educators and not including African-American female educators in the study. There is ample research that discusses African-American educators. However, there is limited research about recruiting African-American males into teacher education programs. More African-American females are needed in our public schools across Kentucky as well. However, they are entering and graduating teacher education programs at a higher rate than African-American males. The researcher is seeking effective recruiting strategies to increase the number of African-American males in teacher education programs.

Assumptions

The dramatic decline since the early 1950s of African-American male educators has come to the forefront in some educational circles. Throughout some African-American male's K-12 educational experience, they will never have an African-American male teacher. The lack of exposure of African-American male educators during the K-12 educational experience characterizes the teaching profession for both white and African-

American students as a profession for only educated white educators (Smith, Mack, Akyea, 2004). Specific factors are contributing to the limited number of African-American male educators.

One factor is African-American male teacher candidates struggle with passing the Praxis I teacher certification exam. Therefore, it limits the number of African-American male teacher candidates certified to teach. Some African-American male teacher candidates decide to pursue a different career path after failing the Praxis I. Another factor is African-American males are interested in careers that pay higher salaries than the average teacher salary and are interested in career advancement, and teaching does not offer much career advancement (Graham & Erwin, 2011). Finally, most African-American males pursue a career in teaching only to become a coach at the secondary level of education (Bryan & Browder, 2013).

Organization of the Dissertation

This study will focus on teacher education programs at predominately white institutions. Until the culture changes at these institutions, African-American males will continue to encounter these barriers in their teacher education programs. Chapter 1 introduces the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research method, significance of the study, research hypothesis, definition of terms, limitations, assumptions, and delimitations. The research questions will be addressed throughout the dissertation.

Historical Background

The 1954 Brown Decision v. the Board of Education of Topeka has historical significance in this study because of the impact on the Black community. National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) viewed the Brown Decision as a historical achievement for black communities across the nation because black children were being taught in substandard facilities and lacked the resources provided in the all-white public schools (Madkins, 2011). Now, African-American students attend prestigious traditional white institutions such as Harvard and Yale. Also, African-American college graduation rates have increased from 3% in 1960 to 46% in 2018 (www.jbhe.com, 2018).

The Brown Decision benefitted many African-Americans significantly. However, it negatively impacted black educators through demotions and job loss (Milner & Howard, 2004). Before the desegregation of the public schools system, many African-American male educators served multiple roles as leaders in the black community. They served as community activists, educational experts, and mentors to black students. However today, they are no longer at the forefront of leadership in the black community. In today's society, clergymen, entertainers, musicians, athletes, and social activists are viewed as respected leaders in the black community. Once the schools started to integrate, a level of mistrust developed between the public schools and the black community. The mistrust between the public schools system and the black community still resonates today (Milner & Howard, 2004). With the significant loss of African-American educators due to desegregated schools, African-American communities felt they lost their voice in education, role models for their children, and cultural pride (Lutz, 2017).

Career Opportunities

The 1950s caused an economic change in the black community. Black professionals were increasing in number during the 1950s in the black community. W. E. B. Dubois referred to black professionals as the "Talented Tenth." They had the responsibility of uplifting and teaching blacks within the community about their profession (Landry & Marsh, 2011). According to E. F. Frazier, "The black middle class was composed of mainly educators and a few businessmen. Now, Negroes are working in a variety of professional and technical occupations" (Landry & Marsh, 2011). More black males were pursuing and being employed at white-collar jobs than in previous decades. According to Fairclough (2006), "The decline in status of both black and white educators is attributable to a variety of factors notably the expansion of white-collar employment (Fairclough, 2006)."

During the 1950s, blacks were limited in their employment opportunities. However, legalized segregated school systems provided job security for black educators. During this time in the black community, teaching was viewed as a gateway to middle-class status (Collier, 2002). Today's society views teaching as an undervalued profession compared to other professions such as engineering, business management, and computer science. Most white-collar jobs have a higher salary and more career growth advancement than teaching. Therefore, most African American male students are not encouraged to pursue a career in education.

The Brown Decision impacted the black community economically. According to Balkin (2002) after the Brown Decision, "He contends that as a result of the displacement of such a large number of black administrators and educators, a whole generation of

black educators was lost" (Lyons & Chelsey, 2004). Some African-American male educators were able to find employment. However, some dismissed African-American educators had to rely on financial support from different organizations such as NEA and NAACP (Lyons & Chelsey, 2004). However, after the Brown Decision, blacks received more access to job opportunities. Blacks did not have much access to careers in science, business, and mathematics before the 1950s (Madkins, 2011). Therefore, black parents and educators dissuaded black students from pursuing a career in teaching (Smith, Mack, and Akyea, 2004).

African-American Male Students' Perception about Teaching

During the 1940s, the majority of professional black men were educators (McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchmann, & Shwed, 2011). Today, the lack of African-American male educators contributes to the problems in the African-American community. Many African-American male students rarely have close personal relationships with their educators. Before the desegregation of schools, black male educators served as mentors and role models for black male students (Graham & Erwin, 2011). In today's schools, communal ties rarely exist because of the lack of African-American male educators.

Today, the teaching profession has lost its status in the African-American community. Today, athletes, music artists, and doctors are viewed as highly respected professions in the African-American community. Some African-American male students share the views of the community about teaching. Data revealed through numerous studies affirm the beliefs of African-American males about teaching losing its status in the African-American community (Bianco, Leech, & Mitchell, 2011). Also, the lack of African-American male educators serving as mentors contributes to the lack of interest in

African-American male students (Smith, Mack, & Akyea, 2004). According to Buxton, "Unless, African-American students choose to teach, our youth could complete a K-12 academic program and never encounter an African-American teacher" (Buxton, 2000).

Additionally, K-12 schools have been hostile environments for many African-American male students (Bryan & Browder, 2013). For example, some African-American males have received harsher consequences compared to their white counterparts for the same discipline infraction. Some schools are the gateway to the school-to-prison pipeline. Often, African-American male students receive low-quality instruction from non-certified teachers, which contributes to low performance on standardized testing, low graduation rates, and higher dropout rates compared to their white counterparts. Some African-American males are labeled as hyperactive and low cognitive functioning because they learn differently from their same age peers. These students are labeled as early as kindergarten and are placed in special education during their K-12 educational experience. Typically, African-American males receive the most discipline referrals, suspensions, and expulsions compared to their white counterparts. These trends will continue unless the public schools system begins to address these inequities. As a result of their K-12 educational experience, some African-American males will not consider teaching as a career.

Stereotypes

Since the beginning of slavery in this country, racial stereotyping has been interwoven into the customs and beliefs in the United States. Consciously or unconsciously, stereotypes have reinforced the concept of racial inferiority of African-Americans. According to Goings, Sambo represented the attitudes of many Americans

had about African-American males in this country (Varkonyi, 1994). According to Green, the Sambo stereotype flourished during the reign of slavery in the United States. Sambo was characterized as a docile, lazy, and happy slave. White slave-owners created this image of African-American male slaves to instill a sense of inferiority among African-Americans (Green, 2012). In the 20th Century, Sambo became a popular caricature used to sell commercial goods such as postcards, children's books, and artifacts (plastics.syr.edu, 1994). After the movie "Birth of a Nation" in 1915, the image of African-American males began to shift from Sambo the happy slave to the Savage. In Birth of a Nation, African-American males are characterized as being simple-minded, physically intimidating, criminals, and sexual predators (Green, 2012). Today, some media outlets use the Savage image to depict some African-American males when they are under scrutiny. Unfortunately, some African-American males are portrayed as a savage in our public schools system. Since predominant white colleges are an extension of the larger society, these images of African-American males follow them into the postsecondary experience (Harper, 2009). Even after their postsecondary experience, some African-American male educators are viewed as savages. The following statement by Brandon Lewis discusses the perspective of African-American male teachers. "I contend that black male teachers enter the classroom and are conjoined with the prevailing stereotypes and propaganda that are disseminated globally about who they are particularly in the United States." This warring of identities perception versus reality is not only a factor in the school structure, but an everyday experience for black males (Sandler, 2018)."

Stereotypes portrayed in the media can be a determining factor for the lack of African-American males pursuing a career in teaching. The media portrays teaching as a women's career field. Teacher education programs are designed to prepare middle-class white women, which comprises a large number of the teaching workforce (Allen & White-Smith, 2014). Therefore, men pursue other careers besides teaching.

Standardized Testing

Over the past 30 years in education, standardized testing has been utilized to evaluate school effectiveness and students' level of proficiency. Standardized testing has presented barriers when entering certain professions. Teaching has been one of those professions in which standardized testing has limited the number of African-American males entering the profession. As the teaching profession attempts to become more diversified. The profession must overcome one major hurdle, cultural bias in standardized testing. Many educational experts raise the question whether the Praxis I exam is biased. Historically, African-Americans have underperformed on Praxis I compared to their white counterparts. It has been monumental a challenge for some African-American male pre-service educators to pass the Praxis I exam (Latiker & Washington, 2013).

Approximately, over the past ten years, researchers have determined specific factors contributing to the low passing rates of the African-Americans males on the Praxis I exam. Low passing rates have persuaded some African-American male college students to pursue other degree options (Thornton & Driver, 2013). Some Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are providing their students with testing workshops and materials for the Praxis I and other licensure exams (Latiker & Washington, 2013). HBCUs produce more than fifty percent of the African-American

educators across the United States. Philanthropic, state, and federal funding should be allocated to improve HBCUs' schools of education to increase the number of African-American male educators (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011).

Recruitment Models and Programs

Nearly twenty years ago, colleges and universities began targeting African-American male students for their teacher education programs (Waddell & Ukpokodu, 2012). HBCUs are leading the charge in the recruitment of African-American male students. They have developed initiatives and programs to recruit more African-American male students. Urban school districts are finding it extremely difficult to staff their low socioeconomic schools. Highly qualified educators are not applying or they are leaving the low socioeconomic schools after a year (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011). According to educational researchers and policymakers, African-American male educators have been considered to be a possible solution to this problem (Brown, 2012).

The Call Me MISTER (Mentoring Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) program is a nationally known African-American male recruitment program founded on the campus of Clemson University. The initiative was designed to target African-American males to work in South Carolina's lowest-performing elementary schools (www.wkkf.org, 2007). This recruitment model has been replicated on thirteen or more college campuses across the country. Call Me MISTER's goal is to recruit African-American males willing to teach at the elementary level.

Teacher education recruitment programs such as the Urban Teacher Education Program (UTEP) and Urban Community Educators Project (UCT) have close ties to the community in which they provide effective educators. UTEP targets first-generation

college students of color. UTEP was founded on the premise of developing a partnership with an urban school district with a history of low graduation rates for students of color (Waddell & Ukpokodu, 2012). UCT was founded at City University in New York on the Brooklyn College Campus. The school district is diverse; however, it lacks the presence of African-American male educators. The goal of the UCT project was to place 100 black male educators in urban schools by 2015 (Pabon, Anderson, & Kharem, 2011).

Another recruitment model designed to attract more African-American male teacher candidates are called "grow-your models." These models are designed to recruit possible teaching candidates in high school. For example, Teach Tomorrow in Oakland (TTO) is a grow-your-own model that partners with universities in California. Grow-your-own models have become popular in the past ten to fifteen years (Ferlazzo, 2015).

Some African-Americans have decided to pursue a career in teaching. They have expressed a desire to work with young people as a way of giving back to their community. As a result of the teacher shortage, alternative certification has become a popular pathway into the field of education (Evans & Leonard, 2013). Some colleges and universities offer alternative certification for those college students, who received a bachelor's degree but have a desire to enter the teaching profession. Alternative certification programs are targeting teacher candidates from the nontraditional candidate pool. According to Madkins, "Nontraditional routes have been effective in diversifying the teaching workforce" (Madkins, 2011).

Summary

In conclusion, the overview provides context about the relevance of the research study. Chapter 2 is the literature review, which has the theoretical framework and broad

topics related to the problem statement. The Critical Race Theory (CRT) theoretical framework provides a structure for the research study. These topics are historical background, career opportunities, standardized testing, recruitment programs and models, African-American male students' perceptions about teaching, and stereotypes.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

According to Mary Ellen Flannery in 2018, NEA representative assembly members stated, "NEA believes that to achieve racial and social justice, educators must acknowledge the existence of white supremacy culture as a primary root cause of institutional racism, structural racism, and white privilege (Flannery, 2019). Based on this statement, the researcher selected critical race theory as a theoretical framework. The objective of critical race theory is to reveal the privileges granted because of race and patterns of exclusion that exist in the United States society (Hiraldo, 2010). This theoretical framework addresses barriers preventing more certified African-American male teachers. The tenets of critical race theory serve as a foundation for the framework. Critical race theory tenets are counter-storytelling, racism is permanent, challenge to the dominant ideology, centrality of experiential knowledge, interest convergence, and intersectionality (Allen, 2017).

Critical race theory originated during the mid-1970s by Derek Bell and Alan Freeman, who were dissatisfied with the racial progress in the United States. Critical race theory was developed to address the effects of institutional racism in the criminal justice system. Critical race theory analyzes the social disparities between the majority race and people of color (Hiraldo, 2010). According to Parker, unlike other theoretical frameworks, critical race theory does not adhere to a strict definition or interpretation (Parker, 2003).

The critical race theory tenets address the ingrained institutional racism that exists in postsecondary education. In 1995, educational researchers Ladson-Billings and Tate

began applying the critical race theory framework to analyze and assess the inequities in education (Harper, Smith, & Davis, 2018). The role of critical race theory is significant when addressing the issues encountered by marginalized groups at predominantly white institutions. However, some predominantly white institutions are working toward creating a more diverse and inclusive environment (Hiraldo, 2010).

Intersectionality, a tenet of the critical race theory defines various ways race and gender interact to shape the experiences of people of color. This framework provides in-depth knowledge about the lived experiences of people of color. In this study, intersectionality highlights the barriers encountered by African-American males in their teacher education programs. African American males have the highest attrition rates among all races when attending predominantly white institutions (Robertson & Chaney, 2017). African American males at predominantly white institutions are bombarded with racist stereotypes. For example, African-American males are seen as criminals or beneficiaries of affirmative action and that all of them come from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Robertson & Chaney, 2017). These detrimental factors have contributed to the low college success rate of African-American males at predominantly white colleges and universities. Some predominantly white institutions have associated the lack of African-American male college success due to the lack of financial resources, interpersonal skills, social interactions, and the rigor of college classes (Robertson & Chaney, 2017). Some African-American males have encountered unwelcoming environments during their K-12 and postsecondary education experience. (Robertson & Chaney, 2017).

Historical Background

Plessy v. Ferguson set a precedent for the segregation laws across the Jim Crow South in 1896. The United States (US) Supreme Court decision stated, “Separate but equal” would be the law of the land. The landmark constitutional decision was upheld until the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, which reversed the *Plessy v. Ferguson* US Supreme Court decision (landmarkcases.org, 2017). The 1954 *Brown* Decision catalyzed later Civil Rights Movement legislation. Since the *Brown* Decision African-American students have access to more resources and build better facilities in the K-12 public schools system, college enrollment, and completion rates have increased over the past five decades, and the number of African-American attending graduate and professional schools has increased. Also, the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has granted African-Americans more access to white-collar job opportunities (Grawe & Wahl, 2009). However, all African-Americans did not benefit from the 1954 *Brown* Decision. African-American educators were unintended casualties in the fight for equal education. Some African-American educators suffered through job loss and demotions. Other African-American educators were involuntarily reassigned to white schools enduring hostile working environments, while white educators could decide to transfer to schools of their choice. Also, black educators were assigned classes out of their content area and given evaluation stating they were incompetent (Oakley, Stowell, & Logan, 2009). The 1954 *Brown* Decision was the root cause of the dismantling of the black male teacher pipeline.

Subsequently, the *Brown* Decision has contributed to the lack of African American males pursuing a career in teaching. Today, some teacher education programs

are seeking effective recruitment strategies to attract more African American males into the field of education. Some African-American male educators serve as mentors, disciplinarians, and role models for African-American male students without a positive adult male influence in their life. Therefore, many African-American male educators will seek to model positive and influential behaviors for African-American male students. African-American male educators can recruit future African-American male educators through empowering African-American males inside and outside of school. Also, African-American male educators will dispel stereotypes portrayed in the media.

During the 1940s, teaching was the number one profession for African-American men. Approximately 36% of African American men were teaching across the United States. However, today, the number of African-American men teaching has drastically decreased to 2% across the nation (McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchmann, & Shwed 2011). In Kentucky's two largest school districts (Fayette and Jefferson), African-American men consist of 3% of the teaching workforce (www.fcps.net & jefferson.kyschools.us, 2017). Before the 1954 Brown case, approximately 82,000 black educators served over 2 million black students across the country. As a result of the 1954 Brown case, approximately 39,000 African-American educators were demoted or lost their jobs because of the desegregation of the public schools. Black educators, who kept their jobs, were only allowed to teach black students and white educators taught white students in "integrated schools" (Madkins, 2011). Since the desegregation of schools, the number of African-American educators has declined for both men and women (Madkins, 2011).

The following factors contributed to the dismantling of the black male teacher pipeline: job loss, and other career opportunities. Many white principals and superintendents refused to hire, and fired, or demoted most African-American male educators. The white principals and superintendents did not condone African-American male educators teaching white children because they deemed them as being inferior or incompetent. Some African-American principals were demoted or fired because white superintendents did not want African-American men to have authority over white female educators (Fairclough, 2006).

Many African-American males seeking upward mobility began to have access to white-collar job opportunities outside of the teaching profession. African-Americans began to have more access to professional and technical jobs during the 1950s. After the Brown Decision, African-American male teacher job opportunities were nonexistent in the teaching profession. Higher wages from white-collar jobs have contributed to the dismal number of African-American males seeking to enter teacher education programs. Also, the Brown Decision is a contributing factor in the limited number of African-American males entering the teaching profession (Madkins, 2011).

Some African-American students have been the primary victims of the Brown Decision. African-American students have received harsher discipline consequences because of the lack of cultural sensitivity and consistency shown by some teachers and administrators. Annually, discipline data shows the disparity between black and white students. For example, black students are four times likely to be suspended from school and three times as likely to be expelled from school compared to white students (Morrison, 2019). This data has a direct correlation to the school-to-prison pipeline.

Since 1970, suspensions of black high school students have increased eleven times more quickly than their white peers (Lynch, 2017). In desegregated schools, black students are sent to the office or suspended more frequently than their white counterparts. Black students were suspended more because of subjective offenses than objective offenses. Subjective offenses were based on the teacher's personal judgment. For example, black students were suspended for offenses such as insubordination, dress code, and disrespectful behavior. Objective offenses involve guns, drugs, and alcohol (Irvine & Irvine, 1983). Still today, black students are significantly impacted socially and emotionally, which leads to higher suspension, high dropout, poverty, and incarceration rates (Lynch, 2017).

After the Brown Decision, the loss of black educators continues to have an educational and social impact in our public schools. In segregated black schools, educators and students had a distinctive relationship. The relationship between black educators and students served as the foundation for student achievement. Black educators held their black students to high expectations. Black educators expected their students to be successful and encouraged them to uplift the community. Black schools were mission-minded and believed all students learned as a collective whole (Irvine & Irvine, 1983).

In segregated black schools, black educators instilled a sense of cultural pride and high expectations. Black educators shared similar social and cultural experiences with their students. Black educators promoted cultural empowerment by telling students they are intelligent. During that time, the white media promoted stereotypes about black people being unintelligent. Black educators taught from a cultural and historical perspective to prepare students for social change (Tribbett, 2020). However, once black

students enrolled in desegregated schools, they lost their sense of cultural identity. Black students had to adjust to the Eurocentric cultural norms and values in desegregated schools. For example, segregated black schools' mission focused on the collective effort to help everyone succeed educationally (Irvine & Irvine, 1983). Black educators created this type of learning environment to ensure the success of their students. On the other hand, in desegregated schools students are recognized for their individual academic achievement based on merit and effort. As a result, many African-American students lag behind their white peers academically. Furthermore, black students had to adjust to the lack of relationship with their white teachers. Relationships were the foundation of black student success in black schools. However, in the desegregated schools some white teachers refused to establish a relationship with black students. The lack of relationship reinforced the isolation black students felt in desegregated schools (Irvine & Irvine, 1983).

Desegregated schools were supposed to be a gateway to a better education for black children. For example, black students would have access to better facilities and resources to prepare them for a better life after high school. The federal order did allow black children to have access to better facilities and resources. However, black children lost their best advocate for a more prosperous life through education, their black educators. Black educators served as a mentor, role model, parent, and disciplinarian. The desegregation of schools destroyed the teacher-student relationship for black students because of the absence of black educators in the classroom.

Before desegregated schools, black churches and schools were the main institutions in the black community. Black schools were semi-autonomous. However,

they consulted with the local white school board about policy decisions, budget, hiring, and other matters (Irvine & Irvine, 1983). Black educators served as leaders in the affairs of the black community. Once desegregated schools were enforced, black educators were transferred from black schools or terminated. The transfers and terminations of black educators dismantled black schools (Ramsey, 2017).

In an effort to resist the federal order to desegregate public schools, some school districts begin to allocate funds to improve the conditions at black schools (Ramsey, 2017). When their efforts failed, black teachers felt the backlash as white school boards closed the black schools. Additionally, white parents refused to send their children on buses to attend black schools. Black schools were deemed unsafe because they were located in black neighborhoods. Once, the desegregation orders were enforced black schools were closed. Black students were bussed from their neighborhoods to schools in white neighborhoods (Ramsey, 2017).

The sole purpose of the Brown Decision was to improve the educational outcomes of black students. However, the Brown Decision has negatively impacted not only black educators, but the whole black community (Lash & Ratcliffe, 2014). Even though the Brown Decision determined that black students were receiving an inadequate education, black students valued their teachers and education. The black community had strong ties to the black schools because the educators lived in the same community as the students. Also, educators and students attended the same social functions, such as church and other events in the community. Black educators and administrators gave a voice to the black community involving social and political matters. Plus, the community had a collective stake in the educational process for all black youth. However, desegregation changed the

idea of the collective whole, struggle, and will in the black community. The mindset has been altered from the collective whole to individual achievement (Irvine & Irvine, 1983). During this transformation of the collective whole to individual achievement, strong communal ties were severed between the school and the black community once the schools were integrated (Fairclough, 2006). Additionally, some whites protesting against the Brown Decision across the nation heightened the fear of the black community. Many African-American children were being mistreated by some white students and educators or alienated within the building. The level of mistrust between school administrators and the black community continues to be an issue today.

The integration of schools negatively impacted black male educators' employment status in the public school system. Black men became the casualties of the integrated schools because most of them were the principals at the all-black schools. From 1954 to 1965, 38,000 African-American educators and administrators lost their positions across seventeen southern and border states (Smith & Lemasters, 2010). Also, from 1984 to 1989, 21,515 African-American educators were displaced because of new certification requirements and new teacher education admissions requirements (Tillman, 2004).

White female educators replacing black male educators was another example of the damage inflicted by the Brown Decision. White superintendents and principals believed black male principals and educators received poor training and were incompetent. Also, white superintendents demoted black male principals because they believed black male principals should not have the authority to give directives or evaluate white female educators (Fairclough, 2006). The results of these decisions have been

devastating because it has limited the number of black males actively pursuing the teaching profession. The number of black males pursuing teaching as a career has not improved since the enforcement of the Brown Decision.

The 1954 Brown Decision had a dual impact on the African-American community in multiple ways. With losing so many black educators after the Brown Decision, black students and communities lost their educational, social, and political leaders. Today, the loss of black educators still has a lingering effect in the black community. On the other hand, black students were enrolled in white schools despite hostility from the white community. The Brown Decision benefitted African-American students by providing them access to better facilities and resources. For example, in segregated schools the African-American pupil-teacher ratio was 47 to 1 and in white schools 28 to 1. Another example is black students gained access to bus transportation and adequate resources. Next, according to the National Assessment Educational Progress (NAEP), African-American student achievement has drastically improved since Brown. Although, gains have been made the achievement gaps between black and white continues to be a persistent problem (Rothstein, 2014). Finally, African-American students have more access to postsecondary opportunities. Before Brown, most African-American students attended Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). As a result, African-American college graduates have more access to jobs with higher paying salaries.

Other Career Opportunities

Before the Brown Decision, teaching was viewed as a pathway to middle-class status. Educators were held in high esteem and they were the social, political, and

educational activists for the black community (Lash & Ratcliffe, 2014). In the early 1950s, black educators were half the professionals in the black community. However, the trend started to change once more college graduates gained access to more job opportunities outside of teaching. These new job opportunities provided an alternative pathway to middle-class status (Smith, Mack, & Akyea, 2004). Potential black male teacher candidates began seeking other career opportunities outside of teaching as a means for upward financial mobility. Today, the status of teaching in the black community has changed with more access to white-collar jobs.

During the 1940s and 1950s, many black men did not have access to many job opportunities. During that time, overt discrimination denied black men job opportunities in the labor market (McElroy & Andrews, 2000). However, during the 1940s and 1950s, black men were employed as school educators more than any other occupation (McDaniel et al., 2011). By the mid-1950s, black men gained more access to previously denied job opportunities. McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchmann, and Shwed stated, they utilized data gathered from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) to conduct a study about employed 28 to 32 year-olds with bachelor's degrees in various occupations by gender and race from 1940 to 2000. The data revealed a decrease in black men school educators in 1940 from 35.6% to 31.5% in 1960 (McDaniel, et al., 2011).

During the 1960s, the decrease of black male school educators can be attributed to two factors. First, teaching was no longer a viable career option for many college-educated black males because of the dismissal of African-American educators after the 1954 Brown Decision. Second, The Civil Rights Act of 1964 legislation led to new economic advancement in income, occupational status, and educational attainment for

African-Americans (Wright, 2015). The legislation impacted the South significantly because before the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The South had established discriminatory structures to deny employment to qualified African-Americans (Wright, 2015). The Civil Rights Act of 1964 opened new employment opportunities for African-Americans in all career fields.

The Brown Decision ignited the dismantling of the Jim Crow laws across the South (Smith, Mack, & Akyea, 2004), which encouraged the segregation of schools. Consequently, this brought about a dynamic change in job opportunities for black men (Fairclough, 2006). Some educators and parents discouraged teaching as a career option for gifted black students. During a survey in 1988, some African-American educators discussed discouraging talented African-American students from pursuing a career in teaching. As potential role models, these educators interviewed during this survey contributed to the dismantling of the black male teacher pipeline (Smith, Mack, & Akyea, 2004).

Specifically, the integration of the public schools dramatically transformed the black community by providing more access to job and educational opportunities, but it negatively impacted the black teacher workforce (Fairclough, 2006). According to Dr. Laruth Gray, education has always been very important in African American communities, but professions such as law and medicine, not teaching, are now valued as higher signs of success. Especially, since the American dream is built on capitalism, teaching is not an attractive field to accumulate wealth and social mobility (Chastain, 2015). Therefore, recruiting African-American males into the field of education has become a major challenge. Currently, the highest percentage of African-American males

are employed in the management and business fields at 9.6% while 2.8% of African-Americans males are employed in the education field (www.bls.gov, 2015).

“The Talented Tenth” was a phrase used by W.E.B. Dubois to describe the college-educated African-American males in the early 1900s. This group consisted of doctors, teachers, lawyers, and clergymen. Dubois believed higher education was a path to social mobility for African-Americans. Also, he believed that “The Talented Tenth” would become the leaders of social change across the United States. “The Talented Tenth” was a key component of Dubois’ community development strategy. Additionally, Dubois knew the effectiveness of the community development strategy would depend on African-American male teachers because they possess the basic skills to help others in their profession. Dubois’ vision for “The Talented Tenth” was for them to educate future generations of black professionals (Landry & Marsh, 2011).

Before the Brown Decision, most professional black men were educators or ministers. Teaching in a segregated school system provided job security and stable income for African-American males. During the initial phase of the desegregating plan for the public school system, many African-American male educators were dismissed or demoted. African-American educators’ loss of income devastated the black community financially and socially (Lash & Ratcliffe, 2014).

Following the Brown Decision, those black male educators dismissed from their position was confronted with the issue of being unemployed. In 1954, the unemployment rate data revealed white males’ average was about 5% while the rate for black males was 9.9%. The black male unemployment rate has doubled compared to white males since the 1960s (Desilver, 2013). The unemployment rate continues to plague the black community

especially black males. Currently, black males have the highest unemployment rate for any demographic for the past 60 years (Desilver, 2013).

In summary, the task of recruiting African-American males into teaching will be difficult. There are multiple factors deterring African-American males from entering teacher education programs. Meaningful conversations need to occur between potential African-American male teacher candidates and African-American male educators. These conversations can address misconceptions about the teaching profession. Also, strategies can be developed to create and sustain a teacher pipeline.

African American Males' Perception about Teaching

At Morehouse, Arne Duncan, head of the Department of Education said, "That faced with the fact that black males represent 6 percent of the population and 35 percent of the prison population, it is troubling that black male educators are only 2 percent of all educators (Radio Boston, 2014)." S. O. Johnson argues, "That the serious decline in African Americans entering the field of education poses significant problems for our communities in meeting the needs of the children they must serve (Collier, 2002)." Many African-American male students have preconceived notions about teaching. They have inaccurate or lack of information to make an informed decision about pursuing a career in the field of education. Also, the teaching profession has developed a negative perception in the African-American community (Collier, 2002). Eleventh and twelfth-grade African-American males participated in a research study about teaching as a career option. They reported perceiving the level of respect for teaching careers to be low and in their community (Bianco, Leech, & Mitchell, 2011).

The Pathways2Teaching program developed a partnership between an urban high school and a midwestern university. The course offered was called “Urban Education.” The course was designed to increase minority students’ interest in teaching. Thirty-three students enrolled in this course 17 African-Americans (12 females and five males) and 16 Latino (10 females and six males). The results from the study revealed only data about the five African-American male students (Bianco, Leech, & Mitchell, 2011). Four out of five students in the research study rated being an athlete, entertainer, or a doctor were respected professions in their community. Two out of five students rated teaching as a respected profession in their community. However, three out of five students reported that African-American educators were respected in their community (Bianco, Leech, & Mitchell, 2011).

It is well documented that K-12 schools have not been a welcoming and nurturing environment for African-American male students. Schools have been hostile places for many black males. The lack of educational support has contributed to the bleak and distorted images of African-American males in K-12 public schools (Goings & Bianco, 2016). In K-12 public education, many African-American males are associated with the highest dropout rates, suspensions, and expulsions. This subgroup has been marginalized since the desegregation of schools. K-12 public schools have been seeking strategies to address the suspension, expulsion, and dropout rates problem. However, they have continued to be the highest among all subgroups.

There are numerous reasons many African American male students do not consider pursuing a career in teaching. The students’ perception of teaching reverberates as a common theme through extant literature. In a study of sixty-three African-American

male 11th graders, the participants were asked to draw their image of a teacher. Forty-two participants drew a woman teacher, eight drew a man, five drew both, three did not give a specific gender, and five did not draw anything at all. The data revealed that the majority of African-American male students perceive teaching as “women’s work” (Graham & Erwin, 2011). Also in the same study, one of the themes that developed from the interviewing process was these African American males’ dislike for educators who devalue the experiences and voices of African American males (Graham & Erwin, 2011).

Many African-American students are not being exposed to African-American educators. Therefore, teaching is characterized as a profession for white female Americans. Also, role modeling affects the students’ decisions about entering the teaching profession. The number of African-American students entering the teaching profession has decreased because of a lack of strong role models (Smith, Mack & Akyea, 2004). In a study of high school seniors, they reported that negative school environments discouraged them from considering teaching as a career option. In addition, the majority of the students had never talked to anyone about selecting the teaching profession as a career (Smith, Mack, & Akyea, 2004).

The lack of African-American male educators has dissuaded some African-American males from pursuing teaching as a career option. Mentorship is the lifeline to sustaining the teacher pipeline for African-American males. Call Me M.I.S.T.E.R. is a prime example of the importance of mentorship being a vital component of any successful teacher recruitment program for African-American males. Some of the perceptions about African-American males in the field of education will change once you see more African-American males teaching in the classroom. According to Jones and

Jenkins, “In seeing a role model and a strong black man in front of their classroom, children also see possibilities for themselves” (Jones & Jenkins, 2012).

Jawanza Kunjufu visited elementary schools and made observations about how black boys learn in the classroom. He noticed that white educators failed to stimulate the enthusiasm for learning among black boys. Also, he stated that the only males in the schools were the administrator, physical education teacher, and the janitor (Harper & Davis, 2012). According to Harper and Davis, these explanatory factors for black male students’ interest in education had been linked to both psychological and educational outcomes (Harper & Davis, 2012). In addition, these factors could explain the shortage of African-American males pursuing a bachelor’s degree in education.

Stereotypes

“They can’t be what they can’t see” is a phrase used by the members of Profound Gentlemen, an African-American male teacher organization founded in Charlotte, North Carolina (www.teachforamerica.org/, 2018). The phrase is utilized to combat the stereotypes constantly being portrayed as factual evidence about African-American males through the media and in research. African-American males being portrayed as the Savage in the media reinforces the African-American male stereotype. These stereotypes instill fear in the minds of citizens around the world. Then, it is justified when law enforcement utilizes excessive or deadly force against African-American males and the criminal justice system imposes harsher sentences for African-American males. These perceptions have deterred many potential African-American males from teaching. For example, a common reason cited for the lack of men choosing a career in education is because teaching is perceived as women’s work (Rice & Goessling, 2005). According to

the National Education Association (NEA) in 2014, white women comprised of 76% of the teacher workforce (Walker, 2016).

The images of African-American men have changed significantly over the past fifty years. During the 1970s, research by social scientists concluded that black fathers and other black men in the community created issues for black boys in public schools (Brown, 2012). Some African-American men, who were absent from their homes were directly and indirectly, the cause of the problems of African-American male youth (Brown, 2012). However, during the early 1990s, researchers, activists, foundations, and politicians suggested that African-American men as a potential solution for the problems of African-American boys. Even the Oprah Winfrey Show highlighted the importance of black male educators working with black males students (Brown, 2012). On the other hand, African-American male educators have unfair pressure placed upon them to eliminate systemic and institutional issues ingrained in the public school systems across the country (Milner, 2016).

“Anthony Brown suggests that African-American male educators are mainly viewed as coaches and disciplinarians, not educators in the classroom. African-American male educators need to redefine their role and identity in the classroom (Bryan & Browder, 2013).” In addition, many African-American male educators are imposed with the invisible tax when they are hired as educators or paraeducators. They are supposed to keep the unruly African-American males from misbehaving. The invisible tax manifests itself in different forms depending on the context of the school. Another form of the invisible tax imposed on many African-American educators is preparing their students for racism outside of school (King, 2016).

In a study conducted by the Education Trust research team, they interviewed 150 black educators to listen to their perspectives about teaching in different regions of the United States. The sample size was twenty percent male educators from public and charter schools (Griffin & Tackie, 2016). The participants had different levels of teaching experience. Common themes emerged during the study (Griffin & Tackie, 2016). For example, the participants stated their dispositions they perceived as strengths were viewed as a hindrance to their professional growth (Griffin & Tackie, 2016). Also, educators are limited to teaching mainly black students. In addition, they reported being categorized by their colleagues, parents, and administrators into specific roles within the school based on their strengths. Limiting their professional growth as an educator (Griffin & Tackie, 2016)

Next, racial microaggressions are racial putdowns that have been extensively studied, examined, and connected to the lived histories and experiences of people of color (Bryan & Browder, 2013). Racial microaggressions can cause its victims to experience feelings of isolation, exclusion, and rejection (Bryan & Browder, 2013). Racial microaggressions have deterred some African-American males from pursuing a teaching degree at predominantly white colleges and universities. Hostile and unwelcoming K-12 school environments can be attributed to the shortage of African-American male educators (Harper & Davis, 2012).

Generally, many African-American males accept the role of mentor, role model, and pedagogue when becoming a teacher. They have a social commitment to the community in which they work. According to King, “African American male educators are of critical importance not just because children need to see educators of color exist

but, people of color can assume leadership positions (King, 1993).” According to Irvine and Fenwick, “African-American educators serve as accessible models of intellectual authority. Moreover, diversity among educators increases educators’ and students’ knowledge and understanding of different cultural groups, thereby enhancing the abilities of all involved to interact with each other” (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011).

Standardized Exams

Teacher licensure examinations have been under scrutiny since their inception. In the 1940s, the NAACP challenged the legality of the salary differential between black and white educators across the South. As a response to the NAACP legal challenge, white school board authorities worked with Ben Wood, a testing and measurement specialist. Wood, the developer of the National Teacher Examination (NTE) worked with white school board officials to utilize the NTE as a weapon to maintain their stance on inequitable salary differential. In addition, white school officials justified their decision by stating black educators had inferior teaching credentials compared to white educators (Baker, 1995).

During the 1960s, the NTE became a testing requirement for teacher certification. Segregationists within the public school system utilized it as a tool to displace African-American educators (Oakley, Stowell, & Logan, 2009). Designers of the NTE were white middle-class educators. The NTE was criticized because some test-items did not assess teacher ability. However, during the 1960s, black educators who did not meet the minimum required score on NTE were terminated (Oakley, Stowell, & Logan, 2009). Although salary differentials continued to be an issue across the southern states, the NTE’s significantly impacted on the black educator workforce through the dismissal of

teachers. According to Walt Haney and G. Pritchey Smith and others have stated the use of the NTE during the desegregation of school has done more to perpetuate patterns of racial discrimination than any caliber of the teaching force (Scott, 1995).

Today, some educational experts have conveyed that the Praxis I and II exams are culturally biased similar to the NTE. For example in a research study conducted by an English professor, she studied the causes behind her African-American preservice teacher candidates failure on the Praxis II English exams. Out of 17 students in the cohort, all five African-American preservice teacher candidates failed the exams. On the hand, all the white preservice teacher candidates passed. All students received similar undergraduate preparation. During the interviews, African-American students shared that the majority of the questions focused on canonical literature (Albers, 2002). The African-American preservice teacher candidates experienced a sense of inferiority because African-American literary works are not viewed as canonical literature. Praxis I and II test designers cater to middle-class white preservice teacher candidates. As its predecessor the NTE, Praxis I and II exams have become the gatekeeper preventing more teacher candidates of color entering the teaching profession.

In this country, public education utilizes standardized testing to measure student achievement. Extensive research has been written about the achievement gaps between African-American and white students. The standardized testing research reflects the underperformance of African-American students compared to white students. Some African-American students are underprepared before taking standardized tests. However, some African-American students are well prepared and still underperform. Some standardized testing research suggests that the underperformance of African-American

students compared to white students can be linked to a cultural issue. Depending on the academic environment, many African-American students have experienced stereotype threat. Claude Steele defines stereotype threat as being viewed through the lens of a negative stereotype or the fear of doing something that would inadvertently confirm that stereotype (Steele, 1999). Everyone can experience stereotype threat depending on the external situational factors involved. Oftentimes, stereotype threat can be misinterpreted as self-fulfilling prophecy. The difference between stereotype threat and self-fulfilling prophecy is stereotype threat is based on external situational factors (Steele, 1999). Generally, stereotype threat operates under external factors comparing groups of people using gender or race. For example, Claude Steele, Joshua Aronson, and Steven Spencer conducted an experiment with black and white students taking the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). Students were grouped according to comparable SAT scores. Before conducting the experiment, students were told the GRE would measure their intellectual abilities. By making this statement before the test, stereotype threat was present. This statement made by the researchers was an external factor that influenced the testing environment for African-American students (Steele, Aronson, & Spencer, 2016). Based on extensive educational testing research, blacks underperform compared to their white counterparts on standardized tests. After the GRE experiment, the results reflected current standardized testing research. However, the researchers conducted another experiment using the same exact test. Students were told it was a problem-solving lab task and intellectual ability was not discussed. Therefore, stereotype threat was not present and black students performed equally as well compared to white students. Furthermore, when standardized testing requires black students to record their race.

Blacks students underperform compared to their white counterparts. By recording their race on the form, this triggers the stereotype threat (Steele, Aronson, & Spencer, 2016).

Many factors contributed to the low pass rates for African-American males on the Praxis exams. Generally, African-American males are the subgroup that scores the lowest on standardized reading assessments (Latiker & Washington, 2013). This reading gap starts at kindergarten and continues until college. Low reading achievement is the primary factor in the low passage rate of African-American males on the Praxis I and II exams (Latiker & Washington, 2013). According to the National Reading Panel (NRP), students who fail to develop reading fluency, in spite of their high intelligence, are prone to remain poor readers throughout their lives (Thornton & Driver, 2013). According to Thornton and Driver as a result, African-American males are more likely to underachieve or disengage themselves from coursework and to experience challenges associated with higher education settings as students (Thornton & Driver, 2013).

In the last thirty years, most states have adopted licensure exams such as the Praxis I as a criterion for pre-service educators. Until 2006, only three states did not require educators to pass some form of standardized licensure exam (Latiker & Washington, 2013). However, the Praxis I exam has presented major challenges. Testing requirements were not required in the early years of public education, changes in educational policies and teacher pay prompted testing requirements in nearly every state in the U.S. (Madkins, 2011). The low passing rates for black candidates and the difficulty of the Praxis I exam has discouraged some black college students from pursuing education as a major (Madkins, 2011). According to Latiker and Washington, “Many Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and many teacher education

programs have adopted a policy created by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) recommends that eighty percent of a programs’ students complete the state licensure exam as policy for their program (Latiker & Washington, 2013).” These exams have contributed to the lack of African-American educators. Since, some African American teacher candidates struggle to demonstrate a level of proficiency to pass the Praxis I exam (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011).

Educational Testing Service (ETS) and the National Education Association (NEA) conducted a study of first-time Praxis 1 examinees. The examinees were randomly selected between the years of 2005 to 2009 across 28 states. White first-time test-takers were compared to African-American first-time test-takers in this study (Nettles, Scratton, Steinberg, & Tyler, 2011). Data table 1 shows the sample size was much larger for white students than the African-American students.

Table 1

Sample Size for Praxis I administration

White	65,782	65,792	64,637
African-Americans	8,408	8,213	8,117

The data in Table 2 reveals a significant gap in pass rates for each content area. In addition, ETS conducted another study when controlling the grade point average, house income, parents’ educational attainment, and other variables there is still a seven percentage point difference in math scores between White and African-American test-

takers (Ahmad & Boser, 2014). This study confirms that the Praxis 1 exam is a barrier for African-American pre-service educators from attaining certification.

Table 2

Passing rate on the Praxis I in each content area

White	81.5	79.5	78.2
African-Americans	40.7	44.2	36.8

Table 3 below reveals Kentucky’s Praxis exam data for males from January 1, 2012, to August 23, 2017. The data possibly shows a similar trend in table 2 of the African-American males’ pass/fail rate on the Praxis exam. Table 3 compares the pass/fail rate for African-American males’ and males from different ethnic groups.

Table 3

The number of male test-takers on the Praxis exam in Kentucky from January 1, 2012 to August 23, 2017 (www.epsb.ky.gov, 2017).

American Indian/ Alaskan Native	22	16	72.73	6	27.27
Asian/Pacific Islander	124	109	87.90	15	12.10
Black	765	505	66.01	260	33.99
Ethnicity Not Specified	560	475	84.82	85	15.18
Hispanic	164	132	80.49	32	19.51
Two or more races	166	147	88.55	19	11.45
White	10,681	9,525	89.18	1156	10.82

Standardized tests such as the Praxis I exam have created teacher shortages across the nation because of the lack of qualified, caring, and effective educators (Irvine & Fenwick,

2011). In addition, enrollment is decreasing in teacher education programs (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011). According to Latiker and Washington, “Solutions are being sought to increase the passing rate on the Praxis I exam for African-American males. HBCUs are addressing Praxis preparation through a variety of means including semester-long courses, weekend workshops, making materials available, and encouraging faculty to take the exams to become more knowledgeable (Latiker & Washington, 2013).”

According to Bennett, McWhorter, and Kuykendall, “Over the years, some minority students develop a strong sense of ethnic identity through their interactions with peers from all-minority honors peer groups. Sometimes this assists minorities when passing the Praxis 1 exam (Bennett, McWhorter, & Kuykendall, 2006).” Another strategy would be working in partnership with community-based organizations such as the NAACP and the Urban League (Thornton & Driver, 2013).

Strategies being implemented are providing African American males academic support and reading strategies if needed. Also, African-American male candidates can receive test prep support for tests such as the Praxis I and II exams (Thornton & Driver, 2013). Companies such as Educational Testing Services can provide test prep materials through an online ordering process. Students have to take advantage of the support services offered. ETS states, “That African-American students, who are successful on Praxis I are more likely to be successful on Praxis II (Latiker & Washington, 2013).” The low passing rate on the Praxis I exam reduces the likelihood of African-American children having an African-American teacher. Many African-American children have to be exposed at an early age about the possibility of becoming a teacher (Smith, Mack, & Akeyea, 2004).

Recruiting Models and Programs

Since the early 2000s, colleges and universities have targeted African-American males for their school of education across the nation. Yet, the number of African-American males pursuing an education degree is still stagnant. During the 2014-2015 school year, the National Center for Education Statistics data reveals the number of degrees conferred by African-American males. Out of 63,275 conferred bachelor's degrees by African-American males from postsecondary institutions, 1,677 or 2% of those degrees were conferred in education compared to 16,627 or 26% in business (<http://nces.ed.gov>, 2016).

K-12 public educators have realized that African-American male educators can be viable options in closing the achievement gap. For example, the Urban Teacher Education Program (UTEP) is located in Chicago, Illinois. UTEP was designed to recruit educators of color in urban Midwestern cities with a history of low graduation rates. UTEP was created in 2004 and enrolled their first cohort in 2005. UTEP has created a cohort-based model, which creates a small learning community for teacher candidates.

During their first year in the program, students take the same classes and thus develop professional relationships with and among that group. Cohort students are provided with support and given opportunities to create a social network. UTEP has partnered with the urban school district, which assists with the expansion of the program. UTEP has a year-long internship component, which is different from other programs around the country. The internship allows teacher candidates to apply their knowledge of culturally relevant teaching strategies in a “real world” environment (Waddell & Ukpokodu, 2012).

As the UTEP continues to grow, they have been more intentional about who they recruit for the program. They target candidates of color, first-generation college students, candidates with urban school experiences, candidates who want to teach diverse student populations, and those that live in urban communities (Waddell & Ukpokodu, 2012). UTEP's eighty-eight percent retention rate of graduates teaching in urban schools is a testament to the model created through the partnership of the university and the public schools (Waddell & Ukpokodu, 2012).

Another recruitment model was created with close ties to the community at the City University's New York Brooklyn. The campus has developed an initiative to recruit and train Black male educators for urban classrooms (Pabon, Anderson, & Kharem, 2011). The Urban Community Educators Project (UCT) is a pilot in the School of Education at the City University of New York (CUNY). The goal of the UCT project is to place 100 black males in urban schools by 2015. It was developed through a partnership between the School of Education at Brooklyn College and The Empowering, Recruiting, Investing, Supporting (ERIS) Program of the City University New York (CUNY) and the Black Male Initiative (BMI) to recruit and develop Black male educators.

The program has engaged in vigorous campus-based recruitment efforts that have included visits to classrooms and open houses (Pabon, Anderson, & Kharem, 2011). In 2014, the UTC project consisted of 21 black male teacher candidates: 11 undergraduates and ten graduates. During 2014, 10 UTC scholars graduated from the Brooklyn College School of Education as certified educators (Pabon, Anderson, & Kharem, 2011).

According to the 2014 data, forty students have participated in the program since 2009 (Brooklyn College, 2014).

Call Me MISTER (Mentoring Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) is an innovative and effective leadership development program for African American males to prepare and place them as educators and role models in elementary schools (www.wkkf.org, 2007). Call Me MISTER was founded in 2000 by Mark Joseph. Call Me MISTER focuses primarily on the lower grades. The name is borrowed from a line in the 1967 Sydney Poitier movie, "In the Heat of the Night" (Holsendolph, 2007). Call ME MISTER has been replicated across the country to recruit African-American males. The program has expanded to thirteen two and 4-year colleges and universities across the nation. Also, students receive tuition assistance, academic support, attend classes as a cohort, and participate in service-learning initiatives (Hawkins, 2010). Since the inception of the Call Me MISTER program in 2004, 150 men have been employed as public school educators. Ninety-five of those men teach in South Carolina (Cary, 2016).

Teach Tomorrow in Oakland (TTO) is a grow your-own model that partners with universities in California. This program was founded back in 2008 and is a federally funded initiative housed with the Oakland Unified School District designed to recruit and retain local permanent educators (Ferlazzo, 2015). The program has developed partnerships with community organizations, churches, and other groups who are working with minorities to develop a pipeline of teacher candidates. TTO provides reimbursement for teacher test fees, credential fees, fingerprinting fees and other tutoring services for teacher tests at no charge (Ferlazzo, 2015). Teach Tomorrow in Oakland hired sixty new

educators through this program in four years. Almost half of the educators hired through the Teach Tomorrow in Oakland are African-American (www.nctq.org, 2013).

The Boston Teacher Residency Program was created in 2003 to attract recent college graduates, community members, and people willing to make a career change. Boston Teacher Residency trains and certifies pre-service educators who commit to teaching for three years in the Boston Public Schools. According to Travis Bristol, "I create monthly professional development opportunities for male educators of color by male educators of color. Also, the mission of the Male Educators of Color Network in the residency program was to provide social-emotional support to male educators of color and space to reflect on practice in service of student learning (Bristol, 2015)." Boston Teacher Residency graduates have an eighty percent retention rate over three years compared to the fifty-three percent retention rate before the program. This program is in the process of being replicated in fourteen other cities across the nation (www.ash.harvard.edu, 2012).

Federal funding should be procured by HBCUs to provide support and incentives for their teacher education programs and initiatives. HBCUs have produced the majority of African-American educators. Therefore, they should receive assistance with initiatives targeting African American males for the field of education. For example, Howard University has created a Ready to Teach program in, which they have received federal funds from the Department of Education. This program focuses on the recruitment and preparation of African-American male teacher candidates (Irvine & Fenwick, 2011). Strong and effective African-American male educators could attract more African-American males into the teaching profession. In addition, recruiting more African-

American males could reduce the suspension, expulsion, and drop-out rates for African-American males.

Alternative certification has become a popular pathway into the field of education. Many African Americans have decided to make a career change. They have expressed a desire to work with young people as a way of giving back to their community (Madkins, 2011). According to Madkins:

Colleges and universities offering alternative certification for educators have increased its number of African-American males. Alternative routes support the induction of more Blacks into the teaching profession who have already completed bachelor's degrees. Therefore, the use of non-traditional teacher certification programs is one strategy to recruit Black candidates (Madkins, 2011).

According to the U.S. Department of Education, alternative teacher preparation programs are producing 39% African-American candidates compared to 6% through traditional teacher preparation programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Attrition

Since the late 1980s to 2012, minority teacher growth has doubled from 325,000 to 666,000. However, the growth of minority educators has increased steadily, from 12% to 17% (Ingersoll & May, 2016). Many policymakers and educators seem to think that ineffective recruiting strategies contribute to the lack of diversity within the teacher workforce. The significant problem is the attrition rate of African-American male educators. In general, many educators of color leave the profession at a higher rate than their white counterparts (aft.org, 2016). Attrition is a contributing factor for the 2% of

African-American male educators in K-12 public education (McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchmann, & Shwed 2011). For example, retention data from 2004-2005 reveals that 56,000 minority educators left teaching, 16,000 retired, 30,000 left the profession to pursue another career, and 10,000 left for reasons unknown (Ingersoll & May, 2016). In 2012-2013, the teacher turnover rate was 18.9% for minorities compared to 15% for non-minority educators (Ingersoll & May, 2016).

Many African-American males typically work in low-income urban schools. African-American educators stated the students were not the reason they left teaching (Griffin, 2015). However, minority educators stated other reasons for the high attrition among African-American males and other minorities were the work conditions. The following factors contributed to the undesirable work conditions are lack of administrative support, lack of classroom autonomy, and lack of influence in decision-making (Partee, 2014). Recruitment of potential African-American male educators is still a contributing factor to the lack of diversity in the teacher workforce. However, retention is a more significant issue.

Summary of Literature

This study is important because it will provide teacher education programs practical and effective recruiting strategies for African-American male students. Also, the study is significant because of the growth of African-American male educators in the public school system. The critical race theory framework highlights and provides an in-depth understanding of the topics discussed in the literature review. First, a collective effort is needed to address the potential barriers facing many African-American males as they enroll in teacher education programs. Second, teacher education programs need to

implement test preparation programs to address the African-American male passing rate of the Praxis I exam. Third, teacher education programs must develop effective recruiting strategies and find ways to engage interested African-American male students at the secondary and post-secondary level. Next, increasing the number of African-American male educators will begin to dispel negative perceptions and stereotypes of African-American males in the media and the public school system. African-American male educators are in a prime position to create positive images of African-American males. Finally, Predominantly White colleges and universities will begin implementing recruiting models such as Call Me MISTER to increase the number of African-American males enrolling in teacher education programs. In conclusion, chapter 3 will include the research design, research questions, methodology of collecting, recording, and analyzing data.

Chapter Three: Methods

This phenomenological qualitative research study explores the lived experiences of African-American male educators, who encountered barriers as they matriculated through their teacher education programs. Through this research study, the researcher seeks to provide effective recruiting strategies for African-American males into teacher education programs across Kentucky and the nation. Some teacher education programs across the nation have restructured their program to focus their recruiting efforts on African-American male candidates. Previous research has identified barriers impeding African-American males from pursuing the teaching profession. These barriers have impacted the diversity of the teacher workforce. By interviewing the participants, information from the interviews will provide an in-depth understanding of why there is a shortage of African-American male educators.

Research Design

The researcher will utilize the phenomenological research design. The phenomenological research method originated with Edmund Husserl, a German mathematician. This research method is popular in social and health science, nursing, and education. According to Husserl and writers, who follow his philosophy, all qualitative research has an aspect of phenomenology (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). The philosophical assumptions of this research method are common themes about the study of the lived experiences of persons, who view that these experiences are conscious ones (Creswell, 2006). The important attribute of phenomenological research is how the participants have experienced the phenomenon being examined, rather than relying on the researcher's perspective about the phenomenon (Hirsch, 2015). Phenomenological research is a

recommended methodology when studying the phenomenon of lived human experiences (Lin, 2013). Based on the philosophical and research design of the phenomenological research method, the researcher believes it will be an effective method to collect, analyze, and interpret data for this study. This study will utilize the descriptive phenomenological qualitative approach. Diaz stated, “Descriptive phenomenological research approach refers to the study of personal experience and requires a description or interpretation of the meanings of phenomena experienced by participants in an investigation (Padilla-Diaz, 2015).” As Diaz stated, the descriptive phenomenological approach will allow the participants to share their experience in their teacher education program. The researcher will interpret and share the analysis of the experience with each research participant.

The participants will be asked open-ended questions that will allow them to expound on their answers for a more in-depth analysis of the research study. The information gained from the participants through the interview process will be utilized to address the potential barriers encountered by African-American male teacher candidates. Data collected from the participants in this study will provide a collective belief about the factors contributing to the lack of African-American male teacher candidates. In addition, the phenomenological qualitative research method will allow the researcher to analyze the information from the interviews to provide practical and effective recruiting strategies for teacher education programs.

The researcher will formulate three research questions directly linked to the purpose statement. The purpose statement informs the reader about research questions that will be addressed in the study (Creswell, 2008). These research questions will encompass all the topics discussed in the research study. After formulating the research

questions, the researcher will select the participants who are familiar either directly or indirectly with the research study. The participants' responses will provide the researcher with valuable data to address the problem in the study.

For this study, purposive sampling will be selected as a method to identify participants. Purposive sampling is a method utilized in qualitative research. This process identifies and selects individuals or groups knowledgeable about the phenomenon (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2016). One homogeneous group will consist of ten participants (5 to 10 African-American male non-tenured and tenured educators. In addition, each interviewee will have to sign an informed consent form agreeing to be interviewed for this study.

Interviews are typically the source of data collection in phenomenological research. Interviews will be utilized to collect data for this research study. The researcher will develop interview questions aligned with the research questions. The researcher will ask the participants open-ended questions. The purpose of the interview process will give the researcher a greater understanding of the participant's perspective (Knox & Burkard, 2009).

The length of the interviews will be between 45 minutes to an hour. The interview format will be conducted virtually. The researcher needs the participants to be as comfortable as possible during the interview. All interviews will be audiotaped during the session. After each interview, the researcher will transcribe the data from the interview. The researcher will read the transcript multiple times to check for accuracy. The researcher will provide each participant with a copy of the transcript to check for any accuracy before publishing.

Unit of Analysis

According to Palinkas, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest. Purposive sampling is used to ensure the generalizability of findings by minimizing the potential for bias in selection and to control for the potential influence of known and unknown confounders (Palinkas, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2016).

Homogeneous purposive sampling will be utilized to select participants for this study. Homogeneous purposive sampling is selected in qualitative research for having a common attribute or set of attributes related to the phenomenon (Crossman, 2018). The researcher will select a specific race and gender of participants who have primary knowledge about the phenomenon being studied. Participants who are familiar with the phenomenon will be expressive and reflective during their interview (Palinkas, Horwitz, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015). African-American male tenured and non-tenured educators will provide an insight into the potential barriers encountered in their teacher education program.

The researcher will email Kentucky public school administrators, employees, district personnel, and educators to assist in the selection process of the African-American male educators being interviewed for this research study. These educators will be emailed with a letter of interest to participate in the study. Educators who want to participate in the study will notify the researcher via email. Educators selected for this study have experience with the phenomenon. This specific criterion will be utilized during the selection process by the researcher. The researcher will interview educators

between the ages of 22 to 50. These participants can discuss recruiting strategies utilized to attract them to the teaching profession.

In qualitative research, sample sizes are generally smaller because the researcher is conducting in-depth interviews of the phenomenon being studied. Generally, the number of participants is between 5 and 50 (Dworkin, 2012). Saturation plays a role in determining the number of participants in a qualitative study. Saturation is a term defined in qualitative research when data collection becomes redundant. When a researcher fails to reach data saturation, it can adversely impact the validity of the study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Saturation has to be determined by the researcher as he or she analyzes data. The researcher must be cognizant of his or her bias when collecting data. The data must represent the participant's perspective (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Research Questions

1. How do barriers impact the enrollment of African-Americans males into teacher education programs?
2. How does standardized testing influence the decision-making of African-American male candidates pursuing teacher certification?
3. What is the experience of African-American male educators being recruited into teacher education programs at Kentucky colleges and universities?

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is an African-American male currently working as an administrator at a Title I high school. As an educator in Fayette County Public Schools for twenty years, the researcher has worked in five different Title I schools. So, the researcher has witnessed the need for African-American male educators in the public

school system. In the researcher's role as an administrator, the researcher has the opportunity to hire African-American male educators. However, the applicant pool is dearth across the state and nation.

The researcher will conduct all interviews throughout the study. The researcher will attempt to select participants, whom the researcher does not have a previous relationship. Before meeting with participants, the researcher will engage in a process called bracketing. Bracketing is defined as, putting aside one's beliefs or biases about the phenomenon being studied. (Tufford & Newman 2010). The researcher will write notes throughout the study to safeguard against any biases.

Many researchers will also maintain a folder of field notes to complement audio-taped interviews. Field notes allow the researcher to maintain and comment upon impressions, environmental contexts, behaviors, and nonverbal cues that may not be adequately captured through the audio recording. They are typically handwritten in a small notebook at the same time as the interview takes place. Field notes can provide important context to the interpretation of the audiotaped data and can help remind the researcher of situational factors that may be important during data analysis.

Informed Consent

The researcher will email 10 to 20 possible participants the informed consent form. According to Nijhawan, Janodia, Muddukrishna, Bhat, Bairy, Upada, & Musmade, the consent form must be signed by the participant before they actively engage in the research study (Nijhawan, Janodia, Muddukrishna, Bhat, Bairy, Upada, & Musmade, 2013). Completed consent forms will remain in a locked file cabinet in the home of the researcher. Participants will be assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity. Also, the

participants will receive a copy of their rights as a participant in a research study. Throughout the research study, the participants have the right to review any data collected during their interviews and the results of the findings. Participants have the right to dismiss themselves without any consequence (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2000).

Instrumentation

According to Pezella, Pettigrew, and Day (2012), the phrase researcher as the instrument refers to the researcher as an active respondent in the research process. Before the researcher engages in the phenomenological research process he or she must practice bracketing. Bracketing is the process of suspending the researcher's existing personal biases and assumptions about the phenomenon (Pezella, Pettigrew, & Day, 2012). As the primary data collector, the researcher is responsible for collecting accurate and valid data for the study. During the data collection process, the researcher has to be flexible and a good listener when collecting the data (Sutton & Austin, 2015). In this phenomenological study of African American male educators, the researcher will utilize individual interviews to discuss the fundamental thoughts and insights of African American male educators.

Data Collection

Phenomenological human scientific researchers tend to select interviews as a data collection procedure (Englander, 2012). Interviews will be the primary source for this research study. The researcher determined that interviews would be the most effective procedure for data collection. Data collected during the interviews will focus on the lived experiences related to the recruiting of African-American males in teacher education

programs. The purpose is to show a connection between the research questions and the data collection procedures (Englander, 2012).

The participants will be asked open-ended questions that will allow them to expound on their answers for a more in-depth analysis of the research study. The information gained from the participants through the interview process will be utilized to address by African-American male teacher candidates. Data collected from the participants in this study will provide a collective belief about the factors contributing to the shortage of African-American male teacher candidates. In addition, the phenomenological qualitative research method will allow the researcher to analyze the data from the interviews to provide practical and effective recruiting strategies for teacher education programs.

The initial step in data collection will begin with the selection of the participants (Englander, 2012). The participants are critical in the data collection process because they have to meet a specific criterion. The participants will consist of 5 to 10 African-American male non-tenured and tenured educators who have experienced the phenomenon being studied. The researcher will communicate via email or phone with Kentucky public school administrators and employees, educators, and district personnel will assist in the selection process of the African-American male educators being interviewed for this research study. The researcher will interview educators between the ages of 22 to 50. This group of educators can discuss some recruiting strategies utilized to attract them to the teaching profession.

Next, step in data collection is developing interview questions aligned with the research questions. Interview questions will adhere to a semi-structured interview format.

Semi-structured interviews are those in-depth interviews where the respondents have to answer preset open-ended questions (Jamshed, 2014). The researcher will develop open-ended questions referring to the research questions that will allow participants to expound on their answers for more in-depth analysis of the research study. The researcher will begin with broad questions about the research study and will transition into more detail-oriented questions toward the end of the interview (Padilla-Diaz, 2015).

Interview Protocol

Then, the researcher will develop an interview protocol. An interview protocol is an interview guide with the questions or topics that are to be explored during the interview process (csed.engin.umich.edu, 2019). The researcher will conduct all interviews throughout the research study to ensure reliability. The interviews will be conducted in a semi-structured format with predetermined directions and questions for each participant. The goal of the interview is to explore the lived experiences of African-American male educators who encountered barriers in teacher education programs. Also, the transferability of the data collected from the findings and results should apply to other contexts or populations (statisticssolutions.com, 2017).

Participants will schedule a time with the researcher for their interview. Since, the interviews will be conducted through a videoconferencing format. The researcher will schedule the interview 30 minutes before the scheduled time. The interviews will take place in the teacher's classroom or designated location.

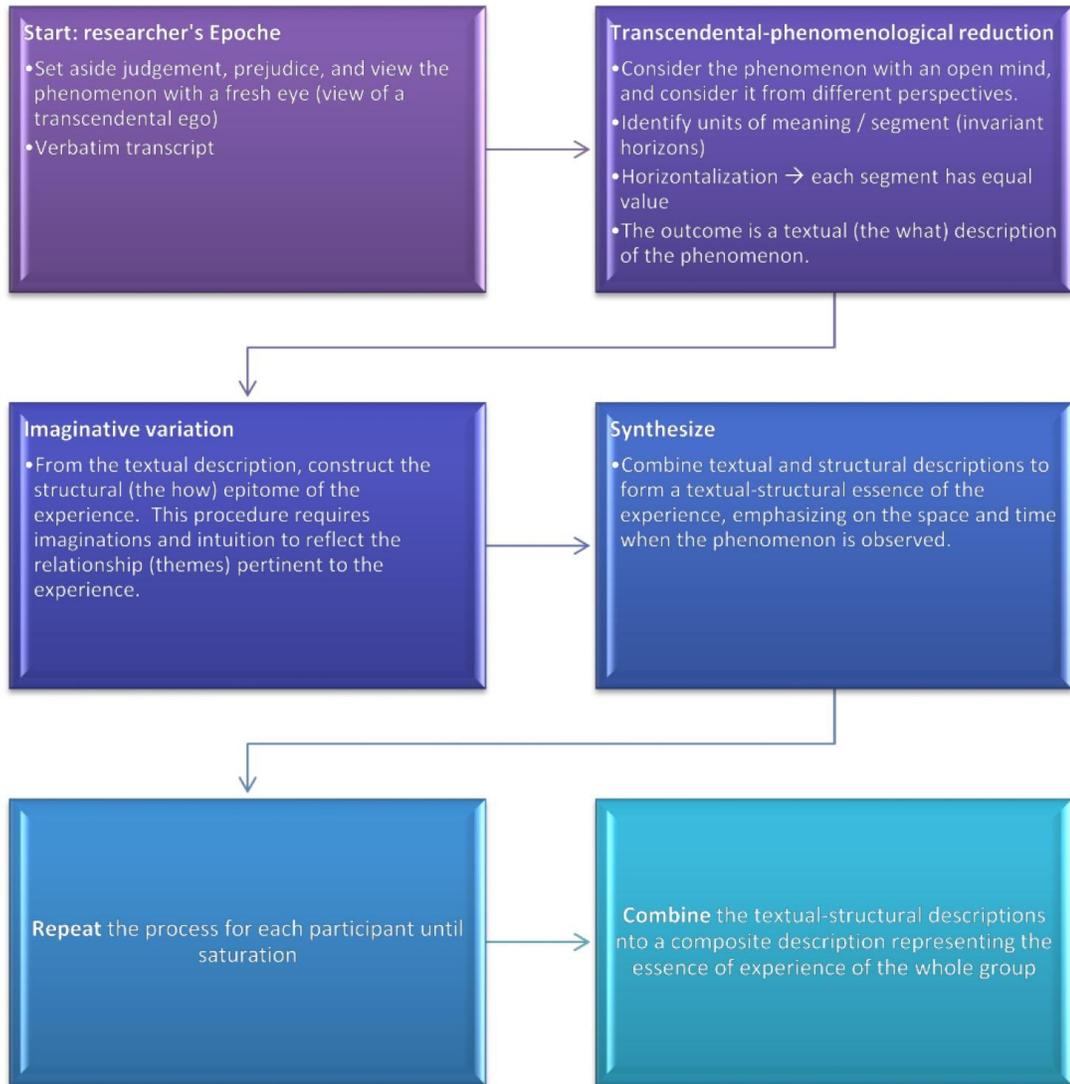
All interviews will be recorded using a transcription device. Once the interview converts from speech to text, the researcher will review the transcript multiple times for any errors by listening to the audio version of the interview and comparing it to

the text version (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Then, the researcher will allow the participant to review the transcription for accuracy. This method is known as member checking. Member checking is used primarily to ensure the accuracy, credibility, and validity of the data collected during the interview (Harper & Cole, 2012). Once the interview is transcribed and member checked. The researcher will store the audio versions of the participants' interviews to safeguard confidentiality. Transcribed interviews will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the home of the researcher. The researcher will be the only person with access to the data for future analysis used in the findings of the study.

Data Analysis

The researcher selected the modified Stevick-Colaizzi Keen method for the data analysis. The Stevick-Colaizzi Keen method is popular among researchers conducting phenomenological research (Chun, 2013). Figure 1 below shows the data analysis process of the Stevick-Colaizzi Keen method (Chun, 2013). In addition, the Stevick-Colaizzi Keen method provides the researcher with a clear description of the research steps (Chun, 2013). This method allows the voices of the participants to be heard in the study. Through data analysis, participants' transcripts will highlight the significance of the study and their relationship to the phenomenon.

Figure 1:



Before analyzing the data from the interviews, the researcher needs to engage in a practice called bracketing. According to Tufford and Newman, “Bracketing should not take place while interviewing, as engagement with the participant takes precedence over holding preconceptions in abeyance” (Tufford & Newman, 2010). Bracketing is a method used by some researchers to mitigate the potentially deleterious effects of unacknowledged preconceptions related to the research and thereby to increase the rigor of the project (Tufford & Newman, 2010).

After each interview, the researcher will begin analyzing the data. According to Ratliff, “It is vital that the analysis follows very soon after the data is collected; preferably the same day or within 24 hours if at all possible (Ratliff, 2008).” The data collected from the interviews will be transcribed and analyzed line by line to check for any errors. Then, the researcher will engage in a process called horizontalization. Horizontalization is a phenomenological reduction process that gives value to each participant’s statement (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). Before engaging in this process, the researcher will read each participant’s transcript multiple times to gain a different perspective (Cilesiz, 2011). Once participants’ statements have been read, the researcher will eliminate all repetitive and unrelated statements not correlated to the research questions.

After horizontalization, the researcher will engage in a process to categorize the participants’ statements and phrases. Then, a gathering of the significant participant statements correlated to the phenomenon; the process is called the clustering of meaning. Specifically, the cluster of meanings initiates the coding and labeling process. Themes correlated to the phenomenon begin to emerge during this process. Then, the researcher will interpret the themes and how they are related to the research questions (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016). The participants’ statements serve as the foundation for the textual and structural descriptions (Chun, 2013).

Next, the textual description describes each participant’s experience being examined. The textual description answers the, “What” as it relates to the participants experience (Chun, 2013). The participants’ words from the interview transcripts create a different perspective on the phenomenon (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). The participants will

share their perspectives as they matriculated through their teacher education programs. The varying perspectives will give credence to the phenomenon being studied. Statements from the participants' experiences will be written in the composite textual description narrative (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015).

After the composite textual description, the researcher will proceed to the next combined steps of imaginative variation and the structural description. The imaginative variation of analysis consists of explaining the individual textual descriptions to arrive at the essential structures of the encounter, questioning what could justify the experience (Cilesiz, 2011). Then, the structural description describes the "how" and the context of the participant's experience. Through interviews, the participants will provide details about the context in which the experience occurred (Chun, 2013). At this stage in data analysis, the researcher is reconstructing the participants' descriptions of the experience (Cilesiz, 2011). Then, the researcher will write a composite structural narrative.

Finally, the researcher will combine composite textual and structural descriptions. This process is referred to as the essence of the phenomenon. The essence of the phenomenon will reflect emerging themes from the data analysis and the collective description of the participants in the study. The essence of the phenomenon will be written in a third-person narrative from representing the participants (Cilesiz, 2011).

Trustworthiness

The researcher has selected member checking and audit trail to ensure the trustworthiness of the research study. For qualitative research to establish trustworthiness, research studies should meet the following criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Based on Lincoln and Guba

qualitative research criteria, each step in the qualitative research are defined below (Korstjens & Moser, 2017):

- Credibility is the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. Credibility establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants' original views.
- Transferability is the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents. The researcher facilitates the transferability judgment by a potential user through thick description.
- Dependability The stability of findings over time. Dependability involves participants' evaluation of the findings, interpretation and recommendations of the study such that all are supported by the data as received from participants of the study.
- Confirmability is the degree to which other researchers could confirm the findings of the research study. Confirmability is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but derived from the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2017).

According to Cole and Harper, member checking is primarily used in qualitative inquiry methodology and is defined as a quality control process by which a researcher seeks to improve the accuracy, credibility, and validity of what has been recorded during a research interview (Cole & Harper, 2012). The researcher selected this method to ensure the accuracy of the data collected from the participants. It is

important that the researcher capture the participants' lived experiences accurately. In addition, member checks are utilized to strengthen the trustworthiness and credibility of the research study (Chase, 2017).

During the early 1980s, Lincoln and Guba debated about member checking being utilized as a method to ensure trustworthiness in a qualitative inquiry. In qualitative research, researchers have the opportunity to impose their personal views on the data collected from participants in the study. Member checking is utilized as a quality control measure to ensure the accuracy of the data from the participant. In addition, member checking allows the participant the opportunity to add or delete information from the transcript (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016).

Before the interview, the researcher will inform the participant about the member check process. This process will consist of the researcher collecting the data during the interview, transcribing it, and reviewing the data multiple times to ensure the accuracy of the transcript. The researcher will email the participant's transcript to check for accuracy. Along with the transcript, the researcher will include things that emerged during the data analysis. Participants will have two weeks to review their transcripts for any errors or misinterpretations. After the participant has reviewed the transcript, the researcher will schedule a time to discuss the final transcript any additional findings that have emerged during the data analysis process (Chase, 2017).

Another key point from a theoretical perspective, member checking is utilized as a way to enhance the rigor in the qualitative research and establish credibility in the accuracy of the descriptions and interpretations of phenomena (Birt et al., 2016). From the researcher's perspective, it is important to understand why member checking was

selected for the study. The researcher must be clear about the purpose of the study. According to Cole and Harper, member checks are not without fault. However, they decrease the incidences of incorrect data and inaccurate interpretations of the data with the overall goal of providing findings that are authentic and original (Harper & Cole, 2012). However, the greatest benefit of conducting member checks is that it allows the researcher the opportunity to verify the accuracy and completeness of the findings, which helps to improve the validity of the study.

For qualitative research, an experienced researcher recommends an audit trail as a strategy to establish dependability and conformability in a research study (www.statisticssolutions.com, 2017). According to Carcary, the origins of the audit trail process in qualitative research can be traced back to the work of Lincoln and Guba. They suggested that a second person should be familiar with the research process and the findings (Carcary, 2009). Audit trails explain the step-by-step procedures from the start of the research study to the reporting of the findings (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The audit trail will record the changes in methods throughout the study and the reasons reported by the researcher (White, Oelke, & Friesen, 2012). Throughout the research study, the researcher is encouraged to keep a log of all activities, research journals, and data collection and analysis (Carcary, 2009).

Summary

Chapter 3 focused on the methodology of the research. The researcher selected the phenomenological research design because it explores the lived experiences of the participants in the research design, which makes it a logical selection for this

qualitative study. Chapter 3 provides step-by-step procedures as to how to replicate this study. In chapter 4, the researcher will discuss the results of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter begins with the purpose, which is providing insight into the barriers encountered by some African-American males entering the teaching profession. The interview questions were directly correlated to the three research questions. I presented in this chapter the following topics: research setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, textural and structural descriptions, composite description, trustworthiness, themes, study results, and summary.

Research Setting

The homogeneous purposive sampling strategy was utilized for this research study. The homogeneous group consisted of tenured and non-tenured in-service African-American male teachers in the Kentucky Public Schools system. Each participant shared a lived experience about their teacher education program. The participants' lived experiences were shared through their textural and structural descriptions.

Demographics

The participants consisted of K-12 in-service African-American male teachers. The participants' years of experience ranges from 3 to 17 years. All participants attended a teacher education program in Kentucky. This group of participants were inspired by a family member or coach to become a teacher. Participant 3 was the only participant with an aspiration of earning a bachelor's degree in education. He wanted to teach English on the collegiate level. The other participants changed their major to education during their third year as an undergraduate student or after earning a bachelor's degree. The table 4

includes the following information: years of teaching experience, school level, and content area.

Table 4

Demographics of Participants

Teacher	School Level	Years of Exp.	Content Area
Participant 1	High School	11	PE/ Health
Participant 2	Elementary	9	All subjects
Participant 3	High School	3	English
Participant 4	Elementary	6	All subjects
Participant 5	Middle School	17	Special Education
Participant 6	Middle School	10	Middle School
Participant 7	Middle School	3	English
Participant 8	Middle School	12	Special Education
Participant 9	High School	18	Business

Data Collection

The researcher conducted nine single in-depth interviews with African-American male teachers. All interviews consisted of 21 open-ended questions. The researcher did not deviant from the order of the questions. These interviews were conducted via Google meet because of the COVID 19 pandemic. All interviews were recorded and transcribed by a google meet extension called, tactiq. The duration of the interviews ranged between 45 minutes to an hour.

Data Analysis

I used the Stevick-Colaizzi Keen data analysis method. Through the data analysis process, 11 themes emerged. The following themes are: stereotypes, microaggressions, implicit bias, isolation, Praxis I exam, financial stability, underrepresentation of African-American male teachers, diversity, competitive salary, job opportunities, bias, and recruitment. Even though 11 themes emerged from the data, five themes were recurring through the data analysis process. Composite descriptions were generated for the five themes.

Table 5

Final Themes and Structural Elements

Themes	Structural Elements
Microaggressions	Negative comments made about marginalized groups of people
Praxis I exam	Assessment used for teacher certification
Underrepresentation of African-American male teachers	Scarce number of African-American male teachers
Financial stability	Being able to pay monthly expenses
Recruitment	Enrolling new members into an organization

Textural Description for Participant 1

After switching majors, Participant 1 decided to pursue a degree in education at the encouragement of his former basketball coach. Participant 1 experienced microaggressions as he continued his education in a predominantly white institution. Experiencing microaggressions are common among African-American male students in

teacher education programs. Participant 1 experienced microaggressions through interactions with his classmates and a professor. Being the only African-American student in the class, Participant 1 said, “You got to have thick skin, when you walk into the classroom and don’t see anybody that looks like you.” Also, Participant 1 felt a sense of isolation because he was the only African-American student in the class. His class consisted of 30 to 40 white students with him being the only African-American student. Being the only African-American student in the class heightened Participant 1’s sense of exclusion and frustration within his teacher education program.

Structural Description for Participant 1

Participant 1 experienced a sense of isolation and distrust within his class. Being the only African-American male in the class caused a sense of isolation and level of insecurity. The level of isolation and insecurity increased as he heard the whispers from his classmates and none of them talked to him. When the interviewer asked Participant 1 the following question, “Tell me what you found challenging if anything about being an African-American male pursuing a degree in education?” Participant 1 responded, “I felt isolated, I used it as motivation and you know to me I felt like you know the main thing was I know I’m here for a reason and I put in the work and I’m getting the job done.”

Participant 1 described another encounter of microaggression involving a professor in his class. The professor was respectful at the beginning of the conversation by introducing himself to Participant 1. The professor assumed Participant 1 was an athlete. Then, the professor made the following statement to Participant 1, “I don’t do favors for athletes and I was like excuse me, and he’s like, I don’t do anything for athletes and I was like Sir. I’m not an athlete. He was like what? What are you doing

here? I was like, well I'm a teacher I'm here for my master's degree. His whole demeanor changed." After this conversation with his professor, Participant 1 informed his counselor that he would be switching universities and pursuing his master's degree online.

Textural-Structural Description for Participant 1

Participant 1's experience is typical of African-American males in a teacher education program at a predominantly white institution. While attending the teacher education program, he experienced a sense of isolation and was confronted with dealing with microaggressions from both students and a professor. During his interview, Participant 1 was concerned about his treatment in the teacher education program. He anticipated being excluded by his classmates and feeling isolated in his classes. However, he did not anticipate being disrespected by the professor. Unfortunately, feeling isolated and dealing with microaggressions is quite common for African-American students at predominantly white institutions.

Participant 2 Textural Description

Participant 2 reported that he felt respected by faculty and students in his teacher education program. He discussed how his professors treated him and other African American males as leaders within the classroom. He felt comfortable and respected in his classes. However, during his interview, Participant 2 discussed the relevance of the Praxis I exam. To provide context to his statement, standardized testing has been a struggle for K-12 African-American male students. Through extensive literature, the data shows African-American males underperform on standardized assessments compared to their counterparts. This trend continues into post-secondary education. However, cultural bias in standardized testing could be a reason for the achievement gap between African-

American male students and their white counterparts. Some African-American test-takers have reported that standardized tests such as the Praxis I exam are culturally biased. The Praxis I exam has been a barrier preventing many African-Americans from attaining certification.

Structural Description for Participant 2

Participant 2 was asked the following question about the Praxis I exam. “Do you believe the Praxis I exam is culturally biased? Why or why not? Participant 2 responded, “Absolutely, the Praxis I exam is and I don’t understand what it’s assessing. I have several African-American friends and several white colleagues from Eastern Kentucky not necessarily from urban areas who were not able to pass the Praxis I exam.”

Participant 2 provides context behind his response in the following statement about the test-designers, “I think they truly feel like people are monolithic like we are all the same and we all grew up with the same experiences.” Participant 2 provided an example of the type of questions asked on the Praxis I exam. “Like they are asking you to measure the angle of the sun and I’m thinking like when in my life am I gonna need to measure the angle of the sun.” Participant 2 referred to these types of questions that are irrelevant and do not measure the future success of a teacher. Therefore, the Praxis I exam needs to be reassessed for its cultural bias and relevance.

Textural/Structural Description for Participant 2

Participant 2 was a former social worker before he decided to pursue a Master’s Degree in Elementary Education. His teacher education experience was enjoyable because he was well-respected by his professors. Also, he attended a predominantly white institution. Participant 2’s issue was passing the Praxis I exam to become a teacher. He

felt the Praxis I exam was culturally biased, which are the same beliefs of many test takers of color. Participant 2 felt frustrated by the questions asked on the Praxis I exam. He felt that the Praxis I exam questions were irrelevant to classroom practice in theory.

Textural Description for Participant 3

Participant 3 teacher education program experience was quite unique because he wanted to be a college English professor. He was the only participant who wanted a career in education. He earned two master's degrees at predominately white institutions and felt respected and comfortable in his classes. However as he pursued his K-12 teaching degree, he was disturbed by the lack of diversity and conversations in his teacher education classes. Participant 3 repeatedly discussed the diversity in his classes before pursuing his teaching degree. Plus, he felt the isolation within his classes that many African-Americans have experienced in their teacher education classes at predominately white institutions.

Structural Description for Participant 3

Participant 3 discussed how he felt comfortable and respected as an African-American male in his undergraduate and graduate classes before pursuing his teaching degree. First, Participant 3 discussed the lack of diversity in the teacher education program classes. Lack of diversity is common in teacher education classes; however, he experienced an unnerving experience in his teacher education classes. Participant 3 made the following statement about the lack of diversity, "I couldn't feel the lack of diversity in a way that I felt it in my third degree." In addition, the microaggressions were evident during his teacher education experience. He was quite surprised by the conversations discussed in class about students of color. These conversations made Participant 3

uncomfortable in his classes. Participant 3 made the following statement during his interview, “They were coming from a place where we understood that if anybody is of the thought that the folks of color are inferior they would make me uncomfortable in the classroom.” Students did not make blatant racist statements, but had a racial undertone. He expected more anti-racist conversations in his teacher education classes. Obviously, these conversations were not an issue in his undergraduate and previous master’s degree classes.

Textural/Structural Description for Participant 3

Participant 3 had a desire to earn an English degree. He wanted to teach English at an institution of higher education. Participant 3 felt respected as an African American in his English classes. However, his teacher education program experience was different. He discussed how the conversations in classes were uncomfortable because of the microaggressions. He anticipated anti-racist conversations in his teacher education classes. However, it was a stark contrast in his classes. He talked about the statements his classmates made in class about students of color. These microaggressions made Participant 3 feel isolated and excluded in his classes. The lack of diversity compounded the issue because he was the only African American student in his classes and no African American professors in the program.

Textural Description for Participant 4

The lack of cultural awareness has been an issue in our teacher education programs. It is a common complaint made by students of color in our teacher education programs. Some students of color feel there are not divergent perspectives about being prepared as a classroom teacher. Participant 4 is a classic example of this type of

thinking, which caused a little conflict between him and his female observer during an observation. Some teacher education programs are rigid and adhere to standard teacher dispositions by the dominant gender and race in the teacher workforce. In some teacher education programs, student-teachers who do not adhere to the standard teacher dispositions are considered to be in conflict with the program's standards of practice. Participant 4 felt she was biased toward him based on his gender and race. He felt perceived as being aggressive in nature toward his students.

Structural Description for Participant 4

The conflict between Participant 4 and his university observer occurred when she was observing Participant 4 during an observation. When the interviewer asked Participant 4 the following question, "What challenges or obstacles did you encounter that could have prevented you from becoming a teacher?" He responded, "You get tagged as an aggressive person simply by the way that your personality is if you know you were working in a predominantly Caucasian female profession and I think a lot of times your gender and color is intimidating." This interaction refers back to the teacher dispositions that are rigid and do not allow for any alternative style of teaching. Participant 4 referred to his familial and cultural background when he engaged students in the classroom. Also, Participant 4 stated the following when asked the same question, "You come from a culture that may be a little more animated a little louder those things intimidate and you know implicit biases come in and you are judged on those things really easy." Participant 4 was asked the following question as well, "Tell me about your experience in your teacher education program that you feel are unique to African-American men? He responded, "So being an elementary teacher a lot of things have been expected I don't

know, Baby Talk. You are talking really sensitively and nice to students. They say you know maybe speak in a little softer tone and I'm like that won't work for me." Participant 4 felt the observer evaluated him based on him being harsh toward the students when in fact it is a cultural difference in addressing students. Primarily, Participant 4 wanted his university professor to understand that some African-American males discipline students using a different method. Teachers have to use a style that makes them effective as a classroom teacher. Some teacher education programs do not embrace alternative teaching methods and only want "Cookie cutter" type of teacher graduates, which is usually white middle-class females.

Textural/Structural Description for Participant 4

Participant 4's experience occurs often especially at the elementary level. African-American male teachers at the elementary level are expected to be soft-spoken. When their teacher dispositions are in contrast to teacher education program practices then there is a possible issue. The lack of cultural awareness was evident during Participant 4's teacher education experience. His observer was challenging his method of discipline. She refused to allow any alternative method of discipline. During his interview, Participant 4 felt this was a standard of practice the way his observer reacted toward him when he was disciplining students during his observation.

Textural Description for Participant 5

Participant 5 discussed his journey about becoming a special education teacher. First, he was hired as a basketball coach. Then, his mentor encouraged him to pursue a teaching degree. Participant 5 was working as a paraeducator at an alternative school. So, Participant 5 had a great experience in his teacher education program. He had a mentor in

graduate school who encouraged him as well. However, he struggled passing the Praxis I exam. The Praxis I exam has become a barrier for some African-American males.

Structural Description for Participant 5

Participant 5 struggled passing the Praxis I exam. He had an issue with understanding how the questions were being worded. The interviewer asked Participant 5 the following question, “What challenges or obstacles did you encounter that could have prevented you from becoming a teacher?” Participant 5 responded, “I struggled with the Praxis I exam at first and it almost drove me out because I'm not a great test taker and almost not wanting to do it anymore. I felt like personally it was a culturally biased test the way that this thing is done. I probably wouldn't do that as an educator because I know what the result is going to be coming from my experiences as coaching that ain't gonna work.” Unfortunately, many test takers of color struggle with the Praxis I Exam. Also, they discuss how the test is culturally biased.

Textural/Structural Description for Participant 5

Participant 5 discussed speaking in education jargon kept him from becoming a certified teacher. Also, throughout his interview he talked about intentionality when discussing recruitment and the lack of African-American male teachers. In addition, he discussed his struggles with passing the Praxis 1 exam because he was not familiar with the educational jargon. He stated when applying for positions it might have kept him from being hired. His story about struggling with the Praxis 1 exam is not uncommon among African-American males.

Textural Description for Participant 6

One obstacle to recruiting African-American males into the field of education is the amount of money educators get paid. During his interview, Participant 6 discussed that two of his friends, one a civil engineer and the other is a financial broker. They were interested in teaching but, decided on another career path. However, Participant 6 talked about how the civil engineer was given the opportunity to teach a class at the college level. After earning his bachelor's degree, Participant 6 decided to pursue a master's degree in education.

Participant 6's interview was interesting because he comes from a family of educators. However, he chose to pursue a different degree as an undergraduate student. After earning a bachelor's degree, Participant 6 decided to pursue a master's degree in education. During the interview, he discussed how the teachers are not compensated the same as engineers and other professions. For instance, the interviewer asked Participant 6 the following question, "What challenges or obstacles did you encounter that could have prevented you from becoming a teacher?" Participant 6 responded, "Teachers are making very little money." He has 2 friends who are making more money in different career fields. One of his friends is a civil engineer and the other one is a financial broker. The civil engineer was asked to teach a class at the university level. Participant 6 does not understand why K-12 teachers are not paid more money.

Textural/Structural Description for Participant 6

Participant 6 discussed financial stability, which keeps some African-American males from pursuing an education degree. He discussed his frustration because educators are not compensated enough for the work. Also during his interview, he talked about his

family and coming from a family of educators. However, he pursued a different degree as an undergraduate. Eventually, he decided to pursue a degree in education.

Textural Description for Participant 7

Participant 7 comes from a family of educators. His mother was a school speech pathologist and his brothers and sisters are educators as well. During his interview, he stated that his mother told him at 12 years old he had the gift of teaching. Instead, he earned a master's degree in Industrial Organizations and Psychology before pursuing a career in education. He wanted to pursue a teaching degree as an undergraduate. However, he stated money was an issue.

Participant 7 had another barrier, which almost prevented him from becoming a teacher. He felt isolated in his teacher education program being the one of two African American males in the program. Being the only African-American in his classes Participant 7 experienced stereotype threat. Some African-Americans experience stereotype threat in their teacher education programs. The isolation creates a high level of stress to perform because you are the only African-American in the class.

Structural Description for Participant 7

Even though, Participant 7 comes from a family of educators. He had no desire to become an educator as an undergraduate. When the interviewer asked Participant 7 the following questions, "What challenges are obstacles did you encounter that could have been prevented you from becoming a teacher?" Participant 7 responded, "I want to make money and I can't make money in teaching therefore I have no desire to be a teacher." Salary is a factor when African-American males choose a career path. Participant 7 discussed financial stability as a motivating factor for earning a master's degree in

Industrial Organization and Psychology. His change in mindset shifted and he decided to pursue a teaching degree at 35 years old.

Participant 7 when asked the following question, “What challenges are obstacles did you encounter that could have been prevented you from becoming a teacher?”

Participant 7 felt isolated in his teacher education classes because he had an African-American teacher that was criticized by her students for the lack of structure in the class. Yet, those same students did not criticize the other teachers in the program. He felt she had more structure for her students than the other teachers in the program. Additionally, he experienced stereotype threat. Participant 7 was asked the following question, “Tell me about your experience in your teacher education program that you feel are unique to African-American men?” He replied, “I thought that it’s one of those negatives is that you end up becoming a novelty. So as a novelty, it’s like there’s a little different type of pressure put on you to be successful because they know you’re the only one in the program.” Stereotype threat is experienced by some marginalized groups in a particular setting. Some African-Americans have experienced stereotype threat in teacher education programs because they are the only one or two in a program of 50 or more students.

Textural/Structural Description for Participant 7

Participant 7 comes from a family of educators. However as an undergraduate, he decided to pursue a bachelor’s degree in Industrial Organization and Psychology because of financial stability. As a child of an educator, he knew that educators do not make much money. Therefore, his decision to pursue the Industrial Organization and Psychology degree was based on financial stability. However at the age of 34, he decided to pursue a degree in K-I2 education.

Unlike his undergraduate classes, Participant 7 felt isolated in his teacher education classes. The sense of isolation led to what is called, stereotype threat. During his interview, he stated he felt under pressure to perform at a high-level because he was the only African-American in his teacher education classes.

Textural Description for Participant 8

Participant 8 is quite unique because in elementary school he had an IEP for reading. He stated he struggled a little through high school, but once he attended college that is where he learned to become a better student. With assistance from his sister, Participant 8 became a better student and writer in college. Despite becoming a better student, Participant 8 discussed his struggles with passing the Praxis I exam.

Structural Description for Participant 8

Participant 8 discussed the obstacles he encountered being accepted into a teacher education program. The interviewer asked the following question, “Tell me what you found challenging if anything about being an African-American male pursuing a degree in education? Participant 8 responded, “I applied to multiple graduate schools but, was not accepted because of my GPA.” Besides not being accepted into graduate programs, Participant 8 struggled with passing the Praxis I exam. When asked the following question,” What challenges or obstacles did you encounter that could have prevented you from becoming a teacher? Participant 8 responded, “Coming to the Master’s program, I struggled with the Praxis test. Considering some standardized tests are culturally biased. When asked the following question, “Do you believe the Praxis I exam is culturally biased? Participant 8 responded, “Well yes it’s culturally biased. I think it’s culturally biased and the reason why is I think most standardized tests are culturally biased. The

designers of those tests may or may not include African American representation.” The Praxis I exam has been scrutinized by many test takers of color because of testing bias.

Textural/Structural Description for Participant 8

Participant 8’s K-12 experience is quite different from the other participants in this research study. He discussed how he was in special education classes as an elementary student for reading. Although, he struggled through his K-12 educational experience. He flourished in college. During the interview, he discussed how his sister gave him some study tips to help him become a better writer in college. When he was asked the following question, “Tell me what you found challenging if anything about being African-American male pursuing a degree in education?” He talked about the graduate school admissions process. Once, he was accepted by a graduate school. He discussed how he struggled with passing the Praxis I exam. Also, he stated that most standardized tests are culturally biased and that companies producing standardized assessment need to have a diverse group of test designers.

Textural Description for Participant 9

Participant 9’s lived experience is quite different from other participants in this study. Participant 9 did not experience any issues within his teacher education program or the Praxis I exam. However, he experienced racism before interviewing for a teacher position. Being a coach, he assumed that was the reason behind being discriminated against.

Structural Description for Participant 9

The interviewer asked Participant 9 the following question, “What challenges are obstacles did you encounter that could have prevented you from becoming a teacher?”

Participant 9 responded with the following statement, “The woman who interviewed me had her back to me. So, when she turned around you thought she had seen a ghost. So I knew then I wasn’t going to get that job.” Participant 9 talked about the stigma being a coach. Especially being an African-American male coach, Participant 9 alluded to being disrespected as a professional. He discussed how coaches are perceived in the teaching profession. Participant 9 responded, “We are not necessarily the greatest teachers at times and you know, you go back and look at all my observations. I think sometimes they are surprised how well things go in my classroom.” Participant 9 lived experience is not unique to the African-American males pursuing a teaching position. Professional teaching organizations such as NEA discuss diversifying the teaching workforce. However, some principals or hiring managers are opposed to the message.

Textural/Structure Description for Participant 9

Participant 9 felt comfortable and respected his teacher education program. He had the perception that the teacher education faculty did not believe coaches can be effective classroom teachers. He felt this was a common stereotype about coaches. Although, he did not experience any issues within his teacher education program. He did experience racial discrimination when applying for a teaching job at an university. This barrier has prevented more African American teachers from being hired.

Composite Description for Participants

Currently, the participants in this research study are teaching in K-12 public schools. This research study is unique because only participant 3 had a desire to teach and he wanted to teach English at the university level. The other participants switched majors during their junior year as an undergraduate or earned a Master's degree in education.

Throughout the interview process, the participants stated potential challenges they encountered as a student in their teacher education program. The two most common challenges they encountered were microaggressions from teachers and students and passing the Praxis I exam.

The participants encountered microaggressions from their teachers and students. For example, Participant 1 shared his experience during the interview that a professor blatantly mistaken him as an athlete. When Participant 1 replied that he was not an athlete and the teacher asked him “Why are you in this class?” This is just an example of the challenges African-American students face in teacher education programs. Another example is Participant 3 during his interview shared how his white classmates made disparaging comments about students of color. Unfortunately, these instances are not isolated incidents in teacher education programs.

Some participants experienced isolation being the only African-American in their classes. They felt that the classroom environment could have potentially become hostile and uncomfortable. This feeling of isolation is common among African-Americans in teacher education programs. Some African American are made to feel inferior which impacts their academic and social-emotional well-being.

When the interviewer asked the following question, “Do you think the Praxis 1 exam is culturally biased? All the participants answered the question with a resounding yes. Some of the participants discussed the relevance of the questions. For example participant 3 stated that some questions were geared towards a specific demographic of students. Also, he stated the content questions were biased. Test takers of color have complained vehemently about the Praxis I exam being culturally biased. Participant 8

stated the Praxis I exam needs to be created by a diverse group of people. Until then, the assessment will be considered culturally biased.

Trustworthiness

Credibility

To ensure credibility for the research study, the researcher utilized a technique called, member-checking. After each interview, the researcher emailed each participant their transcript. The participant had the opportunity to check for accuracy and make any modifications in the transcript. After checking the transcript, the participant will email the researcher if any corrections or modifications are needed. All participants were in agreement with the data collected through their interview.

Transferability

The researcher utilized an online chat tool called, Google meet because of the COVID 19 pandemic. This online tool can be utilized to conduct face-to-face interviews. The researcher and participants agreed to keep their video on during the whole interview to ensure a degree of transparency. Then, the researcher used an online google extension tool called, tactiq to record and transcribe the interviews. All participants were interviewed at home outside of their work hours. The duration of the interviews were between 45 minutes to an hour.

After each interview, the researcher read each transcript multiple times. After reviewing the transcript, the researcher emailed each participant their transcript to conduct a member check. Once, the participant conducted a member check. The researcher used the data in the research findings.

Dependability

To establish dependability, an audit trail was utilized by the researcher. The audit trail provided the research steps taken throughout the research study. Audit trails establish a level transparency for the research study. The audit trail will include the research design, data collection, and data analysis of the study. The audit trail will serve as a guide for researchers willing to replicate this study.

Conformability

The researcher remained unbiased throughout the data analysis process. Being an African-American male educator, the researcher experienced similar incidents in his master's degree classes. Before engaging in the data analysis process, the researcher engaged in a process called, bracketing. By engaging in the bracketing process, the researcher analyzed the data multiple times to ensure the neutrality of research study.

Themes

Microaggressions

Microaggressions emerged as the most common theme from the data collected. The microaggressions encountered by the participants were covert instead of overt. Microaggressions impacted their academic and social well-being of African-American students. Three participants provided examples how they experienced microaggressions in their teacher education program. These microaggressions made participants uncomfortable in their teacher education classes. For example, a participant was frustrated by the conversations students were having about students of color. Two participants contemplated dropping out of school. One participant did change universities and decided to take courses online because he experienced blatant racism from a

professor and did not feel comfortable staying in the class and left the university.

Unfortunately, these incidents are common in teacher education programs and college campuses across the nation.

Isolation

Two participants shared their experience about feeling isolated in their master's degree classes. These participants were surprised because they did not experience this sense of isolation in their undergraduate classes. One participant discussed how he felt a sense of stereotype threat being the only African American male in his teacher education courses. Unfortunately, African American males experience isolation because of the lack of African American males pursuing education degrees. Isolation is an additional stressor African American males encounter in their teacher education programs.

Praxis I Exam

The National Teacher Examination (NTE) was a tool used to displace African-American teachers after the 1954 Brown Decision. Then, the NTE was replaced by the Praxis I exam. The Praxis I exam has served as a gatekeeper for many African-Americans from obtaining teacher certification. The Praxis I has been heavily scrutinized ever since its inception. Some test takers of color have complained about the Praxis I exam being culturally biased.

During the interview process, four participants discussed their issues with the Praxis I exam. Two participants discussed the culturally biased questions on the exam. Another participant shared his experience taking the Praxis I exam and how irrelevant the questions were to standard classroom practices. He stated that the questions only applied to a specific demographic of students. Analyzing K-12 standardized testing data,

researchers will see the continued achievement gap that exists between African-American males and their white counterparts. This achievement gap still exists as they matriculate from high school to college.

Underrepresentation of African-American Male Teachers

All participants alluded to the lack of African-American male teachers during their K-12 experience. For decades, the underrepresentation of African-American male teachers has been a concern in the field of education. However great the need, few districts are making a concerted effort to recruit more African-American males into education. On the hand, many African-American males will not pursue an education degree because of their K-12 experience. The following factors have prevented some African-American males from obtaining teacher certification: challenges within the teacher education program, standardized testing, and isolation. These are some factors that impact African-American males once they are accepted into teacher education program.

Financial Stability

Financial stability is a reason some African-American males do not pursue a degree in education. Considering that most professions make more money than teachers after graduating from college. Becoming a teacher was a dilemma for three of the participants. Coming from a family of educators, they knew teachers were not compensated as much as other professionals. One participant alluded to teachers being underpaid compared to the hours they work.

Then, teachers have to earn a master's degree to maintain their certification. In order to pay for their master's degree, some teachers have to take student loans. Student

loans can add financial stress to an already stressful profession. From data collected through the interviews, I believe that is the reason more African-American males pursue other job opportunities. Some African-American males believe that teaching does not provide the financial stability needed to start a family. Therefore, African-American males pursue more lucrative professions such as law, engineering, and business management.

Recruitment

Recruiting African-American males into teaching has been a major topic of concern in the last 20 years. Programs have been created at Clemson University, Eastern Kentucky University, and other universities around the nation to address this issue. Clemson University's Call Me MISTER program has been successful and received national recognition for its work. I believe their intentionality makes the program successful. During the interviews, participants repeatedly stated the word, intentionality when responding to questions about recruiting African-American males into education. Through the interview process participants provided multiple strategies to improve the recruitment process of African-American males into education.

Study Results

The results were consistent with numerous articles about African-American males in teacher education programs. As an African-American male teacher, I encountered many of the same experiences in my master's degree program. The underrepresentation of African-American male teachers was a primary motivator for me deciding to pursue research in this area. The results of the study will be addressed in chapter 5.

Summary

In summary, readers will be introduced to the lived experiences of African-American male teachers in their teacher education programs. Each participant shared their lived experience through the textural description, which is the “what” of the experience and the structural description, which is the “how” of the experience (Chun, 2013). I generated a textural and structural description of each participant’s lived experience, which described the essence of their lived experience. From the combined textural and structural descriptions of all the participants’, the composite description was developed (Chun, 2013). From the composite description, six themes emerged: microaggressions, isolation, Praxis I exam, underrepresentation of African-American male teachers, financial stability, and recruitment.

Chapter 5: Interpretations and Recommendations

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand the lived experiences of African-American male teachers during their teacher education program. I conducted this study because of the scarcity of African-American male teachers. Before the 1954 Brown Decision, 36% of the teaching workforce consisted of African-American male teachers. In 2017, the teaching workforce consisted of 2% African-American male teachers (Bell, 2017). Personally, I believe more African-American male teachers can positively impact the overall education environment in our schools.

Utilizing the phenomenological research design, participants shared their lived experience. After conducting 9 single in-depth interviews, it is evident that there are barriers impacting the number of certified African-American male teachers. The research questions were addressed during the research study. The following themes emerged from the data: financial stability, microaggressions, isolation, Praxis I exam, underrepresentation of African-American male teachers and recruitment. In this final chapter, I present the interpretations of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and the conclusion.

Discussion of Findings

The research findings are consistent with the current body of research about barriers preventing the certification of African-American male teachers. One theme discussed by participants was financial stability. This theme aligns with the research of Chastain (2015) and data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015). For example, one participant alluded to financial stability of teaching. Being raised in a family of educators, he was worried about being able to raise a family on a teacher's salary. Therefore, he

earned a bachelor's degree in industrial organization and psychology instead of pursuing an education degree. Since the American dream is built on capitalism, teaching is not an attractive field to accumulate wealth and social mobility (Chastain, 2015). According to the 2015 Bureau of Labor Statistics, the highest percentage of African-American males are employed in the management and business fields at 9.6% while 2.8% of African-Americans males are employed in the education field (www.bls.gov, 2015). Recruiting African-American males into education makes it difficult because of the salary differential between education and other professions.

The theme of microaggressions align with the research of Bryan and Browder (2013) and Harper and Davis (2012). An example of microaggressions are presented in Bryan and Browder's research. Three participants shared their experience with microaggressions. Two participants discussed the differences between their undergraduate and teacher education courses. Especially conversations discussing students of color made them uncomfortable. Unfortunately, these experiences are not uncommon in teacher education programs.

Unfortunately, isolation is a common barrier encountered by African American males in their teacher education program. According to researchers including Scott and Rodriguez (2015), there are factors such as stereotype threat that begins to impact the academic, social, and emotional well-being of African American male students. These stressors lead to poor academic performance and possibly dropping out of school or program. Some African American males felt they were not receiving the same support as their white counterparts from the professors (Walker, Goings, & Wilkerson, 2019).

The Praxis I exam theme aligns with the research of Albers (2002) and Oakley, Stowell, and Logan (2009). In this research study, there was a consensus among participants that the Praxis I exam is culturally biased and relevant to the test items. For example in Albers's research, white and African-American students received similar test prep strategies for the English Praxis II exam. As a result, all African-American students failed the English Praxis II exam. In an interview, African-American students shared that the majority of the test questions were about canonical literature. Literary works by African American authors are not viewed as canonical literature. Therefore, African-American students felt a sense of inferiority because the exam catered to middle-class white preservice candidates.

According to Oakley, Stowell, and Logan's (2009) research, the participants in this research study shared similar concerns about the relevance of the Praxis I exam test items. Similar to its predecessor the NTE, the Praxis I exam has been criticized because some test-items do not assess teacher ability. These test questions are not aligned with current classroom practices. The participants discussed how the questions presented scenarios for a specific student demographic. Based on one participant's response, he stated the test designers of the Praxis I exam needs to be a diverse group. Therefore, the test reflects current classroom practices and does not cater to a homogeneous group of students and teachers.

The following themes of recruitment and the underrepresentation of African-American male teachers are highlighted in chapter 2 and are aligned with the literature from Goings and Bianco (2012), Fairclough (2006), Smith, Mack, and Akyea (2004), Bristol (2015), and Jones and Jenkins (2012). Three participants shared in their interview

that colleges, organizations, and school districts must be intentional about recruiting African-American males into the teaching profession. Programs such as Call Me MISTER and the Boston Teacher Residency Program have been successful recruiting African-American males into teaching (Bristol, 2015). These programs have a robust mentorship component, which is vital to their program success (Jones & Jenkins, 2012). Universities and organizations across the country are seeking to replicate the success of these two programs.

The underrepresentation of African-American male teachers has been an issue since the desegregation of the public schools. According to Fairclough (2006) across the southern states, African-American male teachers were not allowed to teach white children. Therefore, this practice dismantled the pipeline of African-American male teachers. The underrepresentation has dissuaded some African-American males from pursuing a degree in education (Jones and Jenkins, 2012). Some research participants shared that the lack of African-American male teachers discourages African-American males from pursuing teaching as a career option. According to Smith, Mack, and Akyea's (2004) research, the lack of exposure to African-American male teachers prevents many African-American students from considering teaching as a career option. Teaching is characterized as a white middle class female profession. According to Jones and Jenkins (2012), seeing more African-American male teachers in classrooms, will change the perceptions about African-American males.

Strategies to Address Barriers

Financial stability is a difficult challenge to overcome in recruiting African American males into teaching. They are bombarded with media images of athletes,

entertainers, and musicians. The teaching profession is valued in the African American community. However, more African American families are encouraging their children to pursue a career in the medical, criminal justice, or engineering professions. These professions pay more money and have more opportunities for career advancement compared to the teaching profession.

Offering financial incentives when recruiting African American males may be the gateway to increasing the number of African American males pursuing a degree in education. Participant 1 discusses ways to recruit more African American males into teaching, “Let them know you have some very good incentives, such as maybe paying off student loans if they are working in school.” Other incentives include summers off from work and receiving a monthly paycheck. The following strategies could address the financial burden African American male students perceive as potential issues once they graduate from college:

- Apply for the TEACH Grant students receive up to \$4,000 a year for their coursework (www.sitesed.gov/whieea.)
- Apply for loan forgiveness programs.
- Men.teach.org has a list of scholarship, grant, and loan opportunities (menteach.org).
- Create Grow-Your-Own programs and support African American males throughout their college education.
- Colleges, universities, school districts, or professional organizations setting aside scholarships for African American males.

Through the data analysis process, the theme of isolation was the barrier that emerged most often in the data. The feeling of isolation weighs heavily on some African American males in their teacher education programs. They are worried about their academic performance and may experience stereotype threat. Participant 7 shared this quote about isolation in his interview. "I walk into a room and I'm the only African American in the room. I'm one of only two in the program and I never saw the other person other than at the end when we graduated". To address this issue, colleges, universities, and professional organizations should collaborate to recruit a cohort of five or more African American males attending college each year. This strategy would reduce the level of stress experienced by African American males in their teacher education program. They would attend the same classes, study together, fellowship with one another, and become accountability partners on a weekly basis. According to Jones and Jenkins, forming this brotherhood is crucial to the success of the Call Me M.I.S.T.E.R. program (Jones & Jenkins, 2012). With the limited number of African American male students in the cohort, colleges or universities might provide additional financial support to cover college expenses. In addition, these students would be supported by an on-campus mentor or advisor to provide additional support as needed. This person would be responsible for the following:

- Scheduling weekly meetings to discuss academic and social issues within the teacher education program.
- Monitoring their academic progress.
- Developing mentorships with in-service African American male or female teachers within the local school district.

- Scheduling events and activities for professional growth.
- Maintaining a social media platform about the program for recruiting efforts.

Additionally, microaggressions experienced at the K-12 and post-secondary level by African American male students have deterred many of them from pursuing a degree in education. Participant 4 responded to a question in the interview with the following statement, “You come from a culture that may be a little more animated and louder and it is intimidating”. Recognizing that few African American males pursue a degree in education that often leads to them experiencing microaggressions and an unwelcoming environment in their teacher education programs (Bryan & Browder, 2013). Teacher education programs at predominantly white institutions can address the barriers encountered by African American males by implementing the following strategies:

- Address issues of equity and diversity in the pre-service education curricular to help dismantle negative stereotypes and microaggressions.
- Provide supports for African-American males who want to partake in local school district or university-based teacher support groups.
- Address the issues concerning African-American males in predominantly white teacher education programs and how they feel in their teacher education programs with particular emphasis on post-secondary and K-12 administrator awareness (Bryan & Browder, 2013).
- Provide mentoring to African American male pre-service teachers by an African American male or female teacher within a local school district.

The Praxis I exam has been the gatekeeper preventing more African American males from obtaining teacher certification. According to K-12 research literature, African American males underperform on all standardized tests compared to their white counterparts. Unfortunately, this trend continues into post-secondary education. During the participants' interviews, it was a consensus that the Praxis I exam was culturally biased. The following quote is from Participant 3 why he thinks the Praxis I exam is culturally biased. "Yes. The reason why I would argue that some of the content stuff is culturally biased as well. It assumes that there is a standard practice that is also the best practice". The Praxis I exam has been a barrier to teacher certification to many African American males. The following are strategies employed at some HBCUs and other colleges and universities across the nation to increase the passing rate:

- Semester-long courses
- Weekend workshops
- Encouraging faculty to take the exams to become more familiar (Latiker & Washington, 2013)
- Study groups consisting of African American male or students of color.
- Redesign the Praxis assessments to include a diverse group of test-designers.
- Submit the Praxis I exam to review board to check for culturally biased test-items.
- Give students free access to online Praxis I exam materials.

The underrepresentation of African American male teachers has been an issue for some school districts. Some public school districts have made a concerted effort to recruit more African American males. Participant 5 responded to a question about the

underrepresentation of African American male teachers. He stated, “They don't see us in those roles or they don't see us in positive role such as teaching”. He was referring to African American school-aged males. However, the attrition rate for African American males has been an issue as well. Retention efforts need to be addressed to maintain the number and increase the number of African American male teachers. The following strategies could be implemented to increase the number of African American male teachers:

- Provide a non-tenured African American male teacher with a tenured African American male or female teacher as a mentor.
- Schedule monthly meetings to address the educational inequities within the school district.
- Equity and Diversity committee must invite and offer services to African American male teachers.

Recruitment of African American males into these programs has been an important topic the past 20 years. Programs such as Call Me M.I.S.T.E.R. have been sustained their success for over a decade and received many accolades for their achievements. Other colleges and universities have replicated this program. The critical component of the Call Me M.I.S.T.E.R. is the mentoring, which is incorporated into the name (Jones & Jenkins, 2012). However, other colleges and universities have not been as successful as the Call Me M.I.S.T.E.R. program. Participant 2 made the following statement in reference to recruiting African American males into teaching. “Let us come talk. Let us share our stories. Let us talk about our experiences in elementary school. Let us tell them how great it is and how rewarding it is and how fulfilled you feel every day because you are able to

honestly affect change on a student's life every single day.” This statement exudes the passion this teacher has for the teaching profession. Here are some strategies for recruiting African American male students into teaching:

- African American male teachers speaking at career days.
- Seek out African American male students, and plant that “seed” about considering the education profession.
- Promote teaching opportunities in schools, churches, and social events in the community.
- Have interested students to shadow the principal, assistant principal, or coaches for a few periods during the school day.
- Use male-to-male recruiting. Have current Cadets or male administrators and male teachers to talk to the young men in your building.
- Tell students about scholarships available (www.cerra.org/malesofcolor).
- Talk to paraprofessionals about going back to school to earn their education degree.
- Visit college minority recruiters across the state and schedule a meeting with undeclared African American male students.

Limitations

Due to the specificity of the study, the researcher interviewed a homogeneous group of African- American male teachers. I work in a district where 3% of the certified teachers are African- American male teachers ([\[http://\]www.application.education.my.gov](http://www.application.education.my.gov), 2017). It was extremely difficult finding African American male teachers willing to share their experience. The findings from this

study are subjective perspectives based on the limited number of participants. However, they represent the general population of the teachers across the district.

Recommendations

This study has shown that African-American males encounter barriers in pursuit of a teaching degree. However, there are programs through universities and organizations addressing the issue. I would like to offer some recommendations for future research:

1. Conduct research about African-American males who pursued an education degree but failed their Praxis 1 exam or were denied admission into their teacher education program. This research would require a qualitative research design because the researcher wants to capture the lived experiences of the participants. I believe their shared experiences could be the first step in finding solutions to this problem.
2. Conduct a study with African-American males in middle school or freshmen high school students. This study will provide multiple perspectives about the teaching profession. The researcher could conduct a qualitative or quantitative based on the number of participants. The study will address any issues or concerns those students may have about the teaching profession (Smith, Mack, & Akyea 2004).
3. Investigate universities and professional organizations that are successful recruiting African-American males into teaching. Conduct a qualitative research study with the dean of education programs and founders of organizations who are successful with recruiting African-American males into teaching.
4. Conduct a qualitative research study to examine the lived experiences of African-American male students pursuing an education degree at predominantly white

universities and HBCUs. This study will provide insight into the resources, academic supports, and academic environment within the teacher education programs.

Implications

As I reflected about the research study, I believe the research will have a far-reaching impact on K-12 public education. Particularly black male students will become primary beneficiaries of more African-American male teachers in our public schools. Also, I believe they will significantly impact all students of color and their white counterparts. Through the interview process, participants provided practical solutions to address the ongoing recruitment of African-American males into teacher education programs. Through this study, the research focused on barriers impacting the admission for African-American males into teacher education programs. Responses from participants about potential barriers recruiting African-American males into teacher education programs were consistent with the research literature. Two of the three objectives will be addressed in the future because it requires universities, school districts, and professional organizations to work collaboratively to address the issues. However, professional organizations and universities are actively recruiting African American males for teaching. Highlighted in chapter 2 professional organizations such as, Profound Gentlemen are creating developing programs across the country. In addition, university-based programs like Call ME MISTER have sustained their success for almost 2 decades. The removal of potential barriers for African-American males to teach is trending in the right direction.

During the interview process, participants were asked to respond to the following question, “What type of impact if any do you think African-American male educators have on students and the overall educational setting?” Among the participants there was a consensus, that an increased presence of African-American male teachers in the K-12 would positively impact the educational environment. Collectively participants reiterated African-American male teachers create a rapport with students and families. Many responses were African-American male teachers are relatable and able to foster relationships with students struggling in school. Some African-American male teachers share their life experiences and can identify with their students’ external factors impacting their educational success. For example according to Nyla Pollard, several studies show the effect of having a black male teacher, especially between grades 3 and 5, decreases the dropout rate among black male students by 30% and increases the likelihood of black students aspiring to higher education. We need more black male teachers in public schools. A positive snowball effect of representation in classrooms will also increase the number of black boys who aspire to become teachers, aiding generations to come (Pollard, 2020).

Intersectionality is a tenet of critical race theory. It highlights the mistreatment of marginalized people. Some African-American males have been mistreated during their K-12 and post-secondary experience, which impacts their career options. In this study, intersectionality examined the lived experiences of African-American male teachers during their teacher education experience. To provide historical context over 100 years ago, the media began creating these caricatures of African-American males. These images showed African-American males having brute strength, lacking intelligence, and

were criminals. Unfortunately, these same images are still present today. By increasing the number of African American male teachers in our public schools. According to Jones and Jenkins, “In seeing a role model and a strong black man in front of their classroom, children also see possibilities for themselves” (Jones & Jenkins, 2012).

Conclusion

In summary, it is evident that African-American males encounter hardships as they matriculate through their teacher education programs. This is consistent with the research literature and the participants’ shared experiences. This is a small sample size of African-American male teachers and the barriers they encountered in their teacher education programs. Using intersectionality from the Critical Race Theory framework emphasizes the K-12 and post-secondary educational experience for some African-American males. The lack of diversity among the teacher workforce impacts the goals and possibilities for children of color. Especially, African-American males because before 1954, the teacher workforce consisted of more than 30% of African-American males (McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchmann, & Shwed 2011). Now, the percentage of the teacher workforce consists of 2% African-American males (Bell, 2017). However, I am optimistic about school districts, universities, and professional organizations addressing the barriers that impede African-American males from obtaining teaching certification. The first step is implementing the practical strategies in this study to address the barriers encountered by African American males. The strategies presented in this study are cost-effective for colleges, universities, school districts, professional organizations. Second, colleges, universities, school districts, and professional organizations have to work collaboratively to procure resources as needed. Third, appointing a chairperson or

committee to oversee the strategies being implemented and provide monthly updates about the progress to the local school board or university administration. Finally, begin promoting education as a viable career option for African-American males in our public school districts and universities.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

BOARD APPROVAL

Eastern Kentucky University Institutional Review Board Approval

Hello Fredrick Snodgrass,

Congratulations! Using expedited review procedures, the Institutional Review Board at Eastern Kentucky University (FWA00003332) has approved your study entitled, "Effective Strategies for Recruiting African American males into Teacher Education Programs." Your approval is effective immediately and will expire on 8/23/21.

As the principal investigator for this study, it is your responsibility to ensure that all investigators and staff associated with this study meet the training requirements for conducting research involving human subjects, follow the approved protocol, use only the approved forms, keep appropriate research records, and comply with applicable University policies and state and federal regulations. Please read through the remainder of this notification for specific details on these requirements.

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Participant Consent Form

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITING FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES INTO TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Fredrick W. Snodgrass, Doctoral Candidate
Eastern Kentucky University, College of Education

Key Information

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This document includes important information you should know about the study. Before providing your consent to participate, please read this entire document and ask any questions you have.

Do I have to participate?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering. If you decide to participate, you will be one of about 6 to 10 people in the study.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to provide insight into the barriers encountered by some African-American males entering the teaching profession. The research collected from this study will assist African-American male teacher candidates in overcoming potential barriers to teacher certification. Participants will be in-service African-American male educators between the ages of 22 and 50 in Kentucky.

Where is the study going to take place and how long will it last?

The research procedures will be conducted at a public library, participant's house, or workplace. You will need to come to the public library or workplace once during the study. This visit will take about 1 hour to 1 ½ hour.

What will I be asked to do?

First, the principal investigator will email or call participants about their role in the research study. Second, the principal investigator will provide an overview of the research study and participants' rights. Next, the principal investigator will schedule a date and time for their interview. Participants will be reminded to arrive 15 minutes before their interview. Also, each participant will be assigned a pseudonym. The pseudonym protects their identity. Participants should not discuss the research study with anyone. Then before and after the interview, the principal investigator will ask each participant if there any questions or concerns. The principal investigator will remind each participant about the member checking process. Finally, the principal investigator will email the interview transcript to each participant 5 days after the interview. Each

participant will review their transcript for accuracy and email it back to the principal investigator.

Are there reasons why I should not take part in this study?

The principal investigator does not foresee any reasons to exclude participants from the research study. However, the participants must meet the specific criterion for the study. The specific criterion is in-service African-American male educators between the ages of 22 and 50 in Kentucky.

What are the possible risks and discomforts?

If the research involves minimal risk to the subject, include the following statement: To the best of the principal investigator's knowledge, the participant will encounter minimal to no risk when participating in the research study. The research study will not impact the participant's social, psychological, emotional, or financial well-being.

What are the benefits of taking part in this study?

You are not likely to get any personal benefit from taking part in this study. Your participation is expected to provide benefits to others by sharing your personal experience about potential barriers African-American male teacher candidates may encounter as they matriculate through their teacher education program. Next, teacher education programs will benefit by addressing potential barriers to the teacher certification process for African-American males. Finally, the findings will assist teacher education programs to develop effective recruiting strategies.

If I don't take part in this study, are there other choices?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except to not take part in the study. Participants who decide to leave the research study will not have other choices except not to take part in the study. Now that you have some key information about the study, please continue reading if you are interested in participating. Other important details about the study are provided below.

Other Important Details

Who is doing the study?

The person in charge of this study is Fredrick W. Snodgrass at Eastern Kentucky University. He is being guided in this research by Dr. Bill Phillips. There may be other people on the research team assisting at different times during the study.

What will it cost me to participate?

There are no costs associated with taking part in this study.

Will I receive any payment or rewards for taking part in the study?

You will not receive any payment or reward for taking part in this study.

Who will see the information I give?

Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write up the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about this combined information. You will not be identified in these written materials. The study will be kept confidential. Also, participants will be assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity. The principal investigator will keep interview transcripts in a locked a file cabinet. In addition, the dissertation chair will be given copies of the interview transcripts.

Can my taking part in the study end early?

If you decide to take part in the study, you still have the right to decide at any time that you no longer want to participate. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

The individuals conducting the study may need to end your participation in the study. They may do this if you are not able to follow the directions they give you, if they find that your being in the study is more risk than benefit to you, or if the University or agency funding the study decides to stop the study early for a variety of reasons.

What happens if I get hurt or sick during the study?

If you believe you are hurt or get sick because of something that is done during the study, you should call Fredrick W. Snodgrass at (859) 619-3912 immediately. It is important for you to understand that Eastern Kentucky University will not pay for the cost of any care or treatment that might be necessary because you get hurt or sick while taking part in this study. Also, Eastern Kentucky University will not pay for any wages you may lose if you are harmed by this study. These costs will be your responsibility.

What do I need to know about the use of the biospecimens I provide?

N/A

What else do I need to know?

N/A

Consent

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the investigator, Fredrick W. Snodgrass at (859) 619- 3912 or fred.snodgrass@fayette.kyschools.us. If you have any questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you can contact the staff in the Division of Sponsored Programs at Eastern Kentucky University at 859-622-3636.

If you would like to participate, please read the statement below, sign, and print your name.

I am at least 18 years of age, have thoroughly read this document, understand its contents, have been given an opportunity to have my questions answered, and voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person taking part in the study

Name of person providing information to subject

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF INTEREST

Letter of Interest

I am currently writing my dissertation about, Effective Strategies for Recruiting African-American Males into Teacher Education Programs. As I conduct my research, I am specifically looking for African-American male teachers, who meet a specific criterion for my research. After reading multiple articles about the lack of African-American male teachers in our public schools, I decided to address the following barriers encountered by African-American males as they enter teacher education programs. I am looking for participants who are willing to share their experience as it relates to the topics listed below. Interviews will be the primary source of data collection. All questions will be aligned with the topics listed below.

Standardized Testing: Praxis I

- As a student, I was inadequately prepared (resources, information, test prep materials)
- Requirements for teacher education programs

Other Career Opportunities

- Higher salaries outside of teaching
- Lack of career advancement

African-American Males' Perceptions of Teaching

- Perceived as Women's work
- Lack of respect/status in the African-American community
- Lack of African-American male teachers

Stereotypes

- Racial microaggressions that occurred during their K-12 educational experience
- Limited roles for African-American male teachers in public schools (coaches, mentors, and disciplinarians only)

Minority Teacher Education Programs

- Call Me M.I.S.T.E.R
- Structures of Successful Minority teacher education programs

All participants will be required to sign an informed consent form before participating in the research study. Participants' information will remain confidential throughout and after the research study. The researcher will be the only person with access to their information collected through the interview. Participants will be assigned a pseudonym to ensure their identity. For example, Fred Snodgrass will be assigned Participant # 1. Please contact me via email at fred.snodgrass@fayette.kyschools.us if you meet the criterion or if you know someone who meets the criterion above. You can forward this email to any African-American male educators who would be willing to participate in this study. Thank you for your support. Have a great summer.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Protocol

Researcher _____

Pseudonym _____

Date _____

Introduction:

I would like to thank you for participating in this study. During the interview, I will be audio-recording and using text-speech technology on an Apple laptop. After the interview has been transcribed, I will email you the transcript and any notes taken during the interview. The transcript will be transcribed verbatim. You will need to read the transcript and check for accuracy. You have the right to modify or correct any errors made in the transcript. You may email or call the researcher if you have any questions or concerns about the study or transcript. Once, you have reviewed the transcript email the researcher. Thank you for your time and consideration.

1. Please state your professional title, where you are currently employed and how long you have been in the position.
2. What or who inspired you to become an educator?
3. Why did you choose K-12 education as a profession or career?
4. During your personal experience in school did you have an African-American male teacher and what was their impact on you? If you did not have the opportunity to have an African-American male teacher, what type of impact do you think it would have had on you?
5. Why is there an underrepresentation of African-American males in the teaching profession?
6. What challenges or obstacles did you encounter that could have prevented you from becoming a teacher? Please explain.
7. Tell me what you found challenging if anything about being an African-American male pursuing a degree in education?
8. What reasons would you attribute the current representation of African American educators in K-12 public education in general?
9. Tell me about your experience in your teacher education program that you feel are unique to African-American men.

10. Do you believe the Praxis I exam is culturally biased? Why or Why not?
11. Do you believe the Praxis I exam measures the future success as a classroom teacher? Why or Why not?
12. Do you believe the shortage of African-American male teachers happened intentionally or unintentionally? Why?
13. Does background and life experience factor into African-American males deciding not to enter the teaching profession? Why or Why not?
14. What type of impact, if any do you think African American male educators have on students and the overall educational setting?
15. Why do you think there are fewer African American males entering K-12?
16. Do you think public education would benefit from an increased representation of African American male educators? Please explain.
17. To what extent was your educational/preparation effective in preparing you to become a teacher? Please explain.
18. In your opinion what strategies and techniques can be used to recruit more African-American males into teaching?
19. Would you encourage African American males to enter the field of education? If so how? If not why?
20. What do you think needs to be done, if anything, to increase the representation of African American males teachers in the field of education?
21. What are your thoughts about the integration of the public schools system?
22. If you had it to do all over again would you choose the same profession? If so, why? If not, why?

APPENDIX E: AUDIT TRAIL

Audit Trail

March 2, 2017	Research proposal submitted to dissertation chairperson
March 8, 2017-Sep. 22, 2018	Researcher worked on chapters 1-3
October 2, 2018-Nov. 11, 2018	Researcher worked on prospectus defense
November 16, 2018	Prospectus defense was presented and approved by the dissertation committee
July 7, 2020	IRB application was submitted for review and approval
August 24, 2020	IRB application was approved
September 15, 2020-Oct. 10, 2020	Identified potential participants for the research study
October 10, 2020	Consent forms were disseminated to participants
October 18, 2020-Dec. 1, 2020	Consent letters were received and signed from participants
October 21, 2020-Dec. 10, 2020	Conducted research interviews
December 14, 2020-Jan. 18, 2021	Data analyzed and coded for chapter 4
February 15, 2020	Submitted chapter 4 to dissertation chairperson
February 18, 2020	Began writing chapter 5
March 8, 2020	Submitted chapter 5 to dissertation chairperson
March 13, 2020	Submitted chapters 4 and 5 to committee
March 15, 2020	Send dissertation to editor for revisions
April 2-7, 2020	Revise dissertation based on feedback from committee and editor
April 11, 2020	Dissertation defense

VITA

FREDRICK W. SNODGRASS, Ed.D.

(C) 859- 619-3912

E-mail: fred.snodgrass@fayette.kyschools.us

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Effective communicator with planning, organizational, and negotiation skills with an ability to lead all stakeholders to reach consensus and attain goals.
- Extensive background in developing and implementing programs to meet the needs of marginalized groups of students in K-12 public schools.
- Accomplished career demonstrating consistent success as a K-12 administrator ensuring student achievement.

EDUCATION

- **Ed.D., Educational Leadership and Policy Studies**, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY, 2021 DISSERTATION: *Effective Strategies for Recruiting African American Males into Teacher Education Programs*
- **M.Ed., Administration and Supervision**, University of Kentucky, School of Education, Lexington, KY, 2005
- **B.A., Elementary Education**, Kentucky State University, Frankfort, KY, 1998

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Administrative Dean, Bryan Station High School, Lexington, KY, 2015-Present

- Assists with data organization from all assessments and diagnostic instruments and develops strategies for intervening with students who are experiencing difficulties.
- Implements and supports the goals determined by the district/schools' comprehensive plan.
- Works collaboratively with other educators to integrate educational initiatives and resources
- Assists in program implementation and curriculum development.
- Assists schools in developing and implementing comprehensive plans designed to meet individual schools' student achievement needs.
- Coaches and models research based instructional strategies.
- Supervises staff as needed and required.
- Evaluates staff as needed and required.

Administrative Dean, Liberty Elementary, Lexington, KY, July 2012-2015

- Assists with data organization from all assessments and diagnostic instruments and develops strategies for intervening with students who are experiencing difficulties.
- Engages staff in intensive data analysis and results planning.
- Implements and supports the goals determined by the district/schools' comprehensive plan.
- Works collaboratively with other educators to integrate educational initiatives and resources
- Assists schools in developing and implementing comprehensive plans designed to meet individual schools' student achievement needs.
- Coaches and models research based instructional strategies.
- Supervises staff as needed and required.
- Evaluates staff as needed and required.

Principal, Bryan Station Middle School, Lexington, KY, July 2010-2012

- Plans, administers, and supervises the educational program.
- After consultation with the SBDM Council, selects staff; conducts all personnel evaluations.
- Supervises all certified and classified personnel assigned to the school.
- Assumes responsibility for school correspondence, general correspondence, notices for general distribution to the school community, etc
- Participates in curriculum study and revision.
- Directs and assists in preparing all reports as required by the school district.
- Handles all discipline in the school per the SBDM policies.
- Enforces the observation of all school policies, rules, and safety regulations.
- Serves as the link between school and home.
- Participates in establishing and maintaining community relations, including the use of the school facility.
- Directs and assists in the classification and promotion of pupils.
- Cooperates with student groups in defining and achieving the overall objectives and effectiveness of the total school program
- Coordinates and supervises extracurricular and co-curricular programs and activities.

Associate Principal, Leestown Middle School, Lexington, KY, July 2009-2010

- Coordinates, supervises, and maintains accurate student attendance and encourages and promotes good student attendance. •
- Contacts parents concerning pupil's absences and investigates, with assistance of the Counselors, the cause of this behavior.
- Responsible for general supervision of building, grounds, and maintenance of same.
- Assists and coordinates with the Middle School Principal, all co-curricular activities. •
- Assists new teachers in acclimating themselves to school routines.

- Assists in the evaluation and improvement of curriculum and classroom instruction.
- Handles discipline in school per SBDM policies.
- Handles all paperwork and monitoring of Safe Schools program.
- Assists in preparing reports as required by the District.

Dean of Students, Leestown Middle School Lexington, KY, July 2008-2009

- Shares the responsibility for protecting the education, health, and welfare of students assigned.
- Counsels individual students and when necessary, makes appropriate referrals for testing, guidance, or psychologists, social workers, and other personnel.
- Makes recommendations for appropriate revisions of policies and rules affecting the student's life in the school.
- Serves as an active member of the school's discipline committee.
- Resolves all discipline problems in a fair and just manner, and maintains records of any disciplinary action taken; confers with parents, teachers, counselors, support service personnel, and students on matters of discipline and welfare.
- Counsels with students, parents, and teachers regarding student progress, special needs, and preventative and positive approaches to discipline.
- Communicates with parents, staff, community, and governmental agencies on problems/solutions relating to individual and student group issues.

Teacher, Tates Creek Elementary, Lexington, KY, July 1999-2008

- Meets and instructs assigned classes in the locations and at the times designated.
- Plans a program of study that, as much as possible, meets the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.
- Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and appropriate to the maturity and interests of the students.
- Prepares for classes assigned and shows written evidence of preparation upon request of immediate supervisor.
- Encourages students to set and maintain standards of classroom behavior.
- Guides the learning process toward the achievement of curriculum goals and establishes clear objectives for all lessons, units, projects, and the like to communicate these objectives to students.
- Employs a variety of instructional techniques and instructional media, consistent with the physical limitations of the location provided and the needs and capabilities of the individuals or student groups involved.
- Maintains accurate, complete, and correct records as required by law, district policy, and administrative regulation.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Kentucky Education Association, 1999- Present

Fayette County Education Association, Lexington, KY, 1999-Present

Fayette County Education Association Diversity and Equity Committee, Lexington, KY,
2020- Present

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Superintendent Leadership Institute, Bryan Station High School, Lexington, KY, 2016- Present
- Academy School Model, Bryan Station High School, Lexington, KY, 2016-2017

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Member, Black Males Working, Lexington, KY, 2008-Present