Black Parents' Racial Socialization Practices and their Children's Educational Outcomes

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Abstract

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The fields of psychology and education have a tumultuous history with regard to equity, social justice and compassion for marginalized populations, specifically for Black Americans. Access to quality education in the U.S. remains a barrier for many Black Americans while resources for high quality, culturally competent mental health services are also relatively limited (Anderson, Scrimshaw, Fullilove, Fielding & Normand, 2003; Hayes-Bautista, 2003). Fortunately, scholars and practitioners in education and psychology have sought to increase access to high quality, culturally competent education and psychology and have made important contributions to research and practice. Culturally competent pedagogy has been an area of research and practice for over 20 years leading to practical changes in teaching and education in support of the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Similarly, multicultural and culturally competent counseling and psychotherapy has been of intensive focus by scholars and mental health practitioners, particularly counseling psychologist for many years (American Psychological Association, 2003; American Psychological Association, Association, 1993; Constatine & Sue, 2005; DeAngelis, 2015; Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992; Sue, 1998). Psychologists and educators have been responsible for the development of racial-identity development models and the introduction and study of racial and ethnic socialization processes (Cross, 1978; Helms, 1984; Hughes, Stevenson, Cameron, Herrero-Taylor & Davis, 2002; Peters & Massey, 1983; Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson & Spicer, 2006; Tatum, 1987;). Preparation for bias, cultural pride reinforcement, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism or silence about race

and racism are some of the most common forms of racial socialization practices employed by Black American parents. These practices are used in effort to prepare Black children to navigate and thrive in a society in which they are discriminated against on the basis of race. Racial socialization messages also serve to counteract negative messages from the larger society from various sectors and institutions including education and health systems (Gaskin, 2015). As such, the purpose of this study was to explore Black American parents' racial socialization practices and the impact of the experiences and educational outcomes of their children who attend private, independent schools. Data was collected through 12 semi-structured interviews with Black American parents whose children attend private, independent schools. Participants' narratives were transcribed and then analyzed using Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR). Results illustrated the participants' experiences in school themselves, messages from family members on race, ethnicity and education. Participants also discussed their own parenting practices including racial socialization practices, messages and beliefs about education and schooling. Implications of the findings, limitations and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Table of Contents

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Dedication

This document is dedicated to my daughter, Sela Olivia White. May you always be curious and inquisitive in life. You are my greatest accomplishment and I hope to make you proud!

Chapter I: Introduction

The United States of America has an extensive history in which the system of public education was intended to provide learning opportunities for citizens. However, an opportunity for quality education was not actualized for all US citizens over the course of history. In fact, immigrants, Black Americans, the poor, and the disabled were not afforded opportunities for quality education at the onset and there is significant evidence that members of disadvantaged ethnic, racial and social class groups continue to suffer from educational inequities in present day.

The landmark ruling of Brown vs. Board of Education determined that separate schools were inherently unequal and that racial integration in schools would be mandatory in the nation. While many hoped that the momentous ruling of Brown vs. Board of Education would mean sweeping changes in the public education system, many significant issues remain. Although some attempts to produce integrated school systems have succeeded, many schools today are segregated by race and by social class (Applied Research Center, 2012).

There have been several political and theoretical shifts in the management of the public school system including financing, school choice programs, academic and curricular standards and accountability measures for schools, teachers and administrators. The shifts and changes that have occurred over time have had a disproportionately negative impact on the country's most vulnerable populations, including people of color and poor, second language learners and working-class people. The hope that the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling would make high quality public education more accessible for people of all backgrounds and circumstances has yet to be fully actualized. Despite many positive factors stemming from Brown vs. Board of

Education, Black Americans, Latinos, ethnic immigrants and the poor suffer from expansive educational inequalities.

As a result, many parents and families are considering alternatives to the public education system. Private, or independent schools have experienced growing demographic changes in their student and community population, and some have prioritized racial, ethnic and social class diversity. However, many independent schools still maintain a majority population of White, affluent students and families (Kane, 1991). For the families and students of color who attend these institutions, there are often many sacrifices and risks financially, socially, and psychologically – and the experiences of children and families of color in independent schools and the associated psychosocial impact have yet to be determined and understood. As people of color continue to explore different educational opportunities, it is important that social scientists conduct research to understand the lived experiences of these children and their families in order to provide appropriate support, guidance and consultation. Closing this gap in the research will provide parents and educators with the important information and guidance on how to support academic, intellectual, social, emotional and identity development for children of color attending independent schools. Educators will also benefit from a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of students and families of color and develop a greater awareness and understanding of the importance of an equitable educational learning environment that is achieved through culturally responsive practices. Psychologists, mental health practitioners and school counselors will gain an understanding about the psychological and social implications of attending or sending a child to an independent school where she might experience the disproportionate reality of being a racial/ethnic minority and/or a member of a disadvantaged social class. Contributing

to the limited research in this area may, therefore, allow educators, mental health practitioners, parents and students to benefit.

This area of research may be particularly important for counseling psychologists. Romano and Kachgal (2004) reported on an APA Education Directorate that encouraged psychologists to increase their involvement in K-12 schools. The researchers further noted that counseling psychologists, in particular, could offer unique contributions. The wave of national attention to education reform that has taken shape over the past several decades has also stimulated an interest among psychologists to become more involved in schools (Walsh, Galassi, Murphy & Park-Taylor, 2002). Counseling psychologists, in particular, have a strong background in psychological development of individuals in addition to a commitment to diversity and multiculturalism (Hoffman & Carter, 2004; Walsh et. al, 2004; Yeh, 2004). However, counseling psychologists have largely separated their research and practice from many areas of education despite the fact the many counseling psychologists studied in schools of education (Hoffman & Carter, 2004; Yeh, 2004). This is unfortunate given counseling psychologist's unique expertise with diversity and multiculturalism, both of which play an integral role in the experiences of children, particularly Black children and their families.

An understanding of the racial-cultural influences in operation in today's schools may offer an important area of concentration for counseling psychologists given that racial and ethnic minority youth are "at risk for multiple mental health concerns including culture shock, racism, identity concerns, depression, school dropout and intergenerational conflict" (Yeh, 2004, pg. 281). Despite clear opportunities for counseling psychologists to work and conduct research related to schools and school-age populations, this area has not been extensively studied by counseling psychologists in recent years (Yeh, 2004). The current study was designed to address

this gap in the counseling psychology literature by bringing a multicultural/social justice perspective to bear on the well-being of children and families in primary and secondary schools.

Chapter II: Review of the Literature

The racial academic disparity gap has been an enduring issue in America's pursuit of educational equity – and an enduring concern for counselors and educators interested in furthering the academic achievement of all children. After hundreds of years of enslavement during which Blacks were forbidden to receive even a rudimentary education, social scientists and policy makers united to create change through educational equity as exemplified by the case of Brown vs. Board of Education. Yet the racial academic equity gap remains, intertwined with an income equity gap that has been equally persistent. This review of the literature will begin by describing the historical impact of the Brown vs. Board of Education case in defining the landscape of the racial-cultural experiences of Black students in U.S. schools. The research dedicated to the racial achievement gap itself will be profiled, as well as the findings with regard to economic disparities. Finally, these points will be connected to the experiences of parents of these children – parents who themselves face racial and economic barriers. These parents must negotiate not only the tangible challenges associated with these barriers, they must also attempt to navigate a social context that often views them as outsiders, all of which affect their ability to support their children's academic achievement. These social factors may be most pronounced in the context of a private, independent school setting. The chapter will close with a statement of the study's aim in exploring the experiences of these parents as they strive to support their children in gaining a private school education.

A Historical Perspective: Brown vs. Board of Education

It is important to examine the history leading up to the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling because the subsequent changes, both positive and negative, helped to shape the current state of our education system and educational policies, both public and private. The case

embodies societal acknowledgement of the failures of segregated schooling, the vision of equitable academic opportunity for all American children, and the educational aspirations that have yet to be completely fulfilled. The following section details historical points of reference before and after the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling and their implications for the educational experiences of Black Americans and other racial minorities in present day American society.

The Brown vs. Board of Education case originated in the lower courts of Topeka, Kansas and was therefore known as Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. This was because the case initially began in Topeka as a class action case filed on behalf of four African American children who were denied access to attend schools heavily populated by White children. While the case originated in Kansas, it was consolidated with three other similar cases in Delaware, South Carolina and Virginia where school segregation was mandated and required by each state's constitution. Segregated schools were considered lawful based on the previous Supreme Court ruling in Plessy vs. Fergusson which resulted in the sanctioned a, "separate, but equal" doctrine.

In the Delaware case, the lower courts ruled that the Black students should be permitted to attend school with White children because the school in which the Black students attended was not, in fact, equal. The court ruled that disparities existed based on student-to-teacher ratios, teacher training, and facilities. Even though the Delaware case ruled in favor of the Black children being permitted to attend schools with White children, all four cases were consolidated because there was a common legal question of the constitutionality of the "separate, but equal" doctrine (Russo, Harris & Sandidge, 1994).

The role of psychology in Brown vs. Board of Education. The goal of Brown vs. Board of Education was an attempt to assert a principle and to advocate for the end of an unfair practice (McUsie, 2004). Many people understood the case as an attempt to end segregation in schools so that receipt of quality educational experiences was not determined by race. One of the primary concerns of the Supreme Court in ruling on this case was the evidence presented by psychologists on the detrimental psychological effects of school segregation on African American and White students. For the first time in its history, therefore, the Supreme Court relied extensively on data from the social sciences in reaching a decision (Fine, 2004; Heise, 2004; Keppel, 2002Pettigrew, 2004; Russo, Harris and Sandige, 1994; Schofield & Hausmann, 2004; Zirkel, 2004; Zirkel and Cantor, 2004). The Brown vs. Board of Education case was the first time social scientists actively participated as expert witnesses, social scientists and researchers (Pettigrew, 2004).

In particular, Kenneth Clark has been credited with leading the charge along with other well-known psychologists who participated in the effort to provide scientific evidence of the negative impact of racial segregation and racism (Pettigrew, 2004). Clark sought to discredit scientific racism and thereby added to work previously done by other social scientists including Otto Klienber, Frank Boaz, E. Franklin Frasier and Charles S. Johnson (Pettigrew, 2004). Additionally, Clark believed that Americans needed to understand themselves better as cultural beings and therefore his work also dovetailed with the previous work of Gunnar Myrdal and W.E.B. DuBois (Pettigrew, 2004). However, the originality of Clark's contribution made it especially influential, to the degree that it led members of the Supreme Court to rule against school segregation (Pettigrew, 2004). In particular, a groundbreaking study by Kenneth and Mamie Clark (1939) revealed the harm done to children by racial segregation in the form of

internalized self-hatred, defeatist attitudes, decrease in personal motivation, ambition and educational aspirations (Clark & Clark, 1939). One of the first studies conducted by the Clarks replicated R.E. Horowitz's (1939) research on children's self-awareness and group identification (Clark & Clark, 1939). The Clarks attempted to investigate levels of emergent racial consciousness in Black pre-school aged children. The researchers presented 150 Black pre-school children with three sets of line drawings and asked the children, "Which one is you?" (Clark & Clark, 1939). Each set of drawings contained different pictures: "Set A included a White boy, a colored boy, a lion and a dog; Set B -- one White boy, two colored boys and a clown; Set C -- two White boys, one colored boy and a hen (Clark & Clark, 1939, p. 594). Results from the study showed that while some three-year-old children self-identified with drawings of the hen, dog or lion, most of the participating, Black children accurately identified themselves with the figure of the "colored boy." Respondents ages four and older did not self-identify with animals or clowns and were more likely to identify themselves as the "colored boy" in the drawings. However, children age five and older were hesitant to identify themselves with the line drawings regardless of the race. Kenneth and Mamie Clark surmised that this was because as children aged they develop ideas about themselves as distinct individuals (Clark & Clark, 1939). Overall, the Clarks gathered early evidence from this study about the racial consciousness, group membership identity and self-awareness of children at an early age (Clark & Clark, 1939).

The aforementioned research was conducted before the Clarks' better-known "doll study," in which the Clarks sought to identify the "genesis and development of racial identification as a function of ego development and self-awareness in Negro children" (Clark & Clark, 1947, pg. 169). In their subsequent work, the Clarks implemented several techniques to

determine the racial identification and preference in Black children, one of which was the doll test. The subjects of this study were Black children between the ages of three and seven from the southern and northeastern regions of the United States. The children from the South had no experience in racially mixed school settings, whereas the children in the North had some experience in racially mixed schools. Each child was presented with four dolls that were identical in every way except for skin color. Two of the dolls were brown and two were White in color. The children were asked to choose one of the dolls based on the questions asked by the experimenter. The children were asked the following questions (Clark & Clark, 1947, pg. 169):

1. Give me the doll that you like to play with -- (a) like best.
2. Give me the doll that is a nice doll.
3. Give me the doll that looks bad.
4. Give me the doll that is a nice color.
5. Give me the doll that looks like a White child.
6. Give me the doll that looks like a colored child.
7. Give me the doll that looks like a Negro child.
8. Give me the doll that looks like you.

The first four questions were designed to identify preference while the last four questions were designed to test knowledge of racial differences. Results from this test indicated that the majority of children expressed preference to the White doll over the "colored" doll. In fact, results indicated that two-thirds of the participants liked the White doll best, preferred to play with the White doll, and indicated that the White doll was the nice doll (Clark & Clark, 1947, pg. 175). The Clarks suggested that the expressed preferences by the participants indicated preference towards the white doll and negative attitudes and beliefs about the brown doll. This study

illuminated the internalized aspects of racism and race-consciousness in children. This study, in particular, provided psychologists, educators and other social scientists with a basis for beginning to understand the implications of racism on the development and psychosocial well-being of Black children.

Other social scientists also contributed to the body of research that was utilized by Supreme Court and eventually led to the decision to desegregate schools. Members of the Supreme Court discussed this in "Footnote 11" where they outlined the research that had influenced their decision (*Brown vs. Board of Education,* 1954; Heise, 2004; Schofield & Hausmann, 2004). The Supreme Court's use of social science research documented in this footnote "contributed to an increasingly empirical equal educational opportunity doctrine." (Schofield & Hausmann, 2004). The theoretical work and empirical research studies by psychologists like Kenneth and Mamie Clark along with Gordon Allport, Stuart Cook, Jerome Bruner and Theodore Newcombe was considered in the Supreme Court decision.

Researchers Max Deutscher and Isidor Chein (1948) gathered opinions from psychologists, anthropologists and sociologists about the psychological effects of segregation. They sought to obtain information from more than five hundred social scientists, soliciting opinions about the psychological effects of segregation on people who are segregated and those who enforce segregation (Deutscher & Chein, 1948). The researchers mailed a questionnaire to 849 social scientists and received 517 responses. Results indicated that ninety percent of the participants surveyed believed that enforced segregation caused negative psychological effects on groups that were segregated. Additionally, eighty-three per cent of survey respondents believed that enforced segregation also has detrimental effects on the people who enforce the segregation (Deutscher & Chein, 1948). The respondents' basis for their opinions was mostly

due to their own experience, although some reported that the basis of their opinion was supported by their own research or the research of others (Deutscher & Chein, 1948). Overall, results suggested that the impact of enforced segregation was believed to result in psychological harm to both the group that is segregated and those who enforce segregation. Kenneth and Mamie Clark supported this research and drew a parallel argument specifically related to school segregation. They noted that Whites learn that they have to achieve personal status in an unrealistic and non-adaptive way, a process that could lead to feelings of guilt and integration of maladaptive defense mechanisms in order to protect the psyche from recognizing and internalizing the injustice and unrealistic fears and hatred towards Blacks (Clark & Clark, 1939). Therefore, school integration might facilitate decreased racist attitudes among Whites and greater racial integration in society. The combination of research and professional opinions related to the psychological impact of enforced segregation created a large body of empirical evidence that supported the decision made by the Supreme Court justices.

On May17, 1954, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that state statutes requiring or permitting segregation according to race violates the 14th Amendment because, according to federal law,

> "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of the law; or deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws (US Constitution Amendment XIV, § 1).

Social scientists celebrated the ruling as a "symbolic turning point after which the psychological implications of racism and discrimination can no longer be ignored" (Zirkel & Cantor, 2004, pg.4). The Supreme Court ruled that separate educational facilities are inherently

unequal even when financing, infrastructure, curriculum, qualification of teachers and tangible factors are considered and required states to "transition to a system of public education freed of racial discrimination…with all deliberate speed" (McUsie, 2004, pg.1337). The response by many state and local district leaders to this ruling was mixed with some taking egregious measures such as blocking school doors with armed guards, closing down public schools, financing private school vouchers and school district leaders assigning children to schools (McUsie, 2004).

Enforcement of Brown vs. Board of Education rulings. The initial ruling in the first Brown vs. Board of Education case did not immediately provide direction on how states should change from a policy of mandated school segregation to a racially integrated system. In 1955, the Supreme Court reconvened to decide what means should be used to implement the principle in the Brown I ruling. In Brown II, however, the Supreme Court was relatively lenient regarding a timetable out of respect for the massive scope of having to restructure and reorganize schools and school districts (e.g., transportation, administration, personnel, policies, etc.). Therefore, the Supreme Court decision in Brown II did not create a timetable for the end of school segregation. Instead, it varied by states and localities and the court simply ordered school districts to make a "prompt and reasonable effort toward full compliance" (Russo, Harris and Sandidge, 1994, pg. 299).

The rulings in Brown I and Brown II officially overturned the separate but equal doctrine, yet progress toward desegregation was not immediate (Reber, 2005). In fact, ten years following the decisions in Brown I and Brown II, only a small percentage of Black children actually attended racially integrated schools, as many states were steadfast in their efforts to maintain school segregation (McUsie, 2004; Russo, Harris & Sandidge, 1994). Not surprisingly, there

were many subsequent court cases related to the Brown vs. Board of Education decision litigated at the district, state and Supreme Court levels over the course of several decades.

One of the most important cases was Green vs. County School Board of New Kent County of Virginia (1968). This particular case was filed on behalf of the parents of African American students in New Kent County, where there were only two schools, one for White students and another for Black students. This configuration of school segregation had been rationalized under the guise of a freedom-of-choice plan that purported to give students the right to choose which school they wanted to attend regardless of race (Russo, Harris & Sandidge, 1994). Policies like the freedom-of-choice plan were among many of the laws and guidelines adopted by many states to maintain a racially segregated educational system. In other areas across the country, districts implemented pupil placement laws, which allowed school districts to deny Blacks access to certain schools by claiming that they did not meet certain criteria, and were not appropriate for the school. Local districts and states used psychological and academic criteria along with student preparation, morals, conduct, health and personal standards to determine the appropriateness of students (Ferri & Connor, 2005). The Supreme Court ruled that such laws and practices did not support school desegregation efforts and, as result, implemented a system of factors called the Green factors (Russo, Harris & Sandidge, 1994). These factors were used to determine whether states and districts are compliant with desegregation orders.

Throughout the 1980s, there was a relative silence in the Supreme Court over issues related to school desegregation but in the 1990s, a few key cases emerged (McUsie, 2004). One of the most impactful cases was the decision by the Supreme Court to dissolve the ruling of 1972 case of Green vs. County School Board of New Kent County. The original ruling in this case produced a set of standards called the Green factors that were used to determine whether a school

system had achieved unitary status. The Green factors determined whether formerly segregated schools achieved acceptable proportion of Black to White students and faculty as well as equality in facilities, transportation, and extracurricular activities. Despite the utility and purpose of using such factors, the Supreme Court changed its position in the case of the Board of Education of the Oklahoma City Public Schools vs. Dowell. In this case, the district federal courts, and eventually the Supreme Court, addressed appropriate standards for determining whether a formerly segregated school system had achieved a unitary system. Instead of using the Green factors to determine the progress towards desegregation, The Supreme Court dissolved the desegregation ruling of 1972 case of Green vs. County School Board of New Kent County and ruled that desegregation orders were not designed to continue forever (McUsie, 2003).

In 1992, following back-and-forth litigation in the Freeman vs. Pitts case, the Supreme Court ruled that local district courts had the authority to relinquish supervision and control of a school district's desegregation efforts in stages as long as the court believed the district had complied with the orders in good faith. Some saw this as a measure by the Supreme Court to relinquish control and oversight of desegregation efforts across the nation (Orfield & Thronson, 1993; Russo, 2004; Teitelbaum, 1995;).

Legacy and relevance of Brown vs. Board of Education. There are many reasons to celebrate the changes that have come as a result of the Brown vs. Board of Education decision and the subsequent school segregation cases. As Zirkel and Cantor (2004) noted, the landmark ruling had many strengths:

> (a) the decision highlighted the human suffering caused by racism and its correspondent racial segregation although it failed to represent the psychological harm done to Whites as well); (b) it clarified that state-sponsored racial segregation and racism were inherently

> more harmful than segregation that occurred without the force of law; (c) it articulated the central role that education had come to play in modern life and concluded that opportunity for all required an end to racial segregation in education; and (d) many argue that Brown vs. Board and its aftermath provided the fuel and encouragement necessary to further the civil rights work of the 1960's which, in turn, led to the Civil Rights Acts (1964, 1991) , the Voting Rights Act (1965), the Fair Housing Act (1968) and related legislation. (Zirkel & Cantor, 2004, pg.4)

Nevertheless, educational inequities remained a reality for many American school children (McDermott, Raley & Seyer-Ochi, 2009). In fact, by the early part of the 21st century, schools across the country had returned to pre-Brown population configurations and only a few districts were under court supervision to ensure that programs and efforts supporting desegregation efforts were upheld (Douglas, 1994; McUsie, 2004; Tatum, 2007). Researchers have acknowledged that US schools are still significantly segregated by race and also by social class such that American school children attend schools with children mostly of the same race (Douglas, 1994; Ferri & Connor, 2005; Howell & Peterson, 2002).

A number of factors seem to have contributed to the stalling of desegregation efforts. One is "White flight," a trend in which European Americans flee certain neighborhoods in search of suburban, racially homogenous schools or private, independent schools (Orfield & Lee, Farlie & Reisch, 2002; Wells, Holme, Atanda & Revilla, 2005). Since African Americans and Hispanic families are, on average, disproportionately poorer than Whites, these families find themselves left in poorly funded schools with a high concentration of poverty and where resources and facilities are subpar (Orfield & Lee, 2005). Another factor has to do with the fact that, even in schools where there is substantial racial integration, there is evidence that students may be re-

segregated by academic tracking assigned to non-college preparatory courses (Ferri & Connor, 2005). Often these decisions are based on students' test results on standardized tests which have been criticized based on cultural biases. Fierros and Conroy (2002) suggested that students from racial, ethnic and linguistic minority groups are more likely to be placed in restrictive or segregated classrooms than their European American peers. This type of ability tracking is another way that schools maintain racially segregated schools, even if the segregation exists within the actual school itself, a practice that functions to the benefit of Whites and wealthy families (Farkas, 2003).

Movement toward authentic educational equity, then, has presented a mixed picture in the years since the Brown ruling. The extent to which the U.S. educational system continues to provide substandard educational resources to poor students and students of color has been called "the shame of the nation" in Kozol's (2000) book of the same name, yet students of color currently represent two to three times the percentage of college graduates that they did in 1960 (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Bowen & Bok, 2016). While statistics are helpful in representing the changes that have occurred over the years, there is still a need for further information on the quality of the lived experience for families and students of color especially within education settings that are still largely segregated.

School Segregation and Educational Outcomes for Blacks

Many politicians and policymakers have agreed that education is "a primary tool to promote and protect the concept of equal opportunity" (Howell & Peterson, 2002, pg.2). In reality, however, there are significant inequalities in educational quality and experiences for students of color and those from disadvantaged social classes (Howell & Peterson, 2002). Students who come from privileged social class backgrounds consistently outperform poor and

working class students. Additionally, Black students, on average, perform less well on achievement tests than their White counterparts by at least one standard deviation (Howell & Peterson, 2002). The National Governor's Association reported that the achievement gap in the United States is an issue of both race and social class and is "one of the most pressing education-policy challenges that states currently face" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, pg. 3).

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the achievement gap is defined as the difference in academic performance between different ethnic groups. The racial-ethnic achievement gap is longstanding in the U.S., and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that while the achievement gap narrowed between 1970 and 1980, recent trends demonstrate that there has been little progress in reducing achievement gap over the past several decades. The relative stagnation in the achievement gap between Blacks and Whites continues to be disappointing and despite a relative narrowing throughout the 1980s, the disparity remains. While inequalities are not always clearly understood, historians point to the persisting legacy of educational inequity for people of color, women, and the poor (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

In the case of Black Americans, this legacy dates back to the period of their enslavement in the US, during which very few slaves were taught to read as it was forbidden or outlawed. Dr. Martin Luther King referred to this disparity when he mentioned that men who start hundreds of years behind the starting line for a race faced a nearly-impossible challenge in attempting to catch up. President Lyndon Johnson reiterated this at his commencement address at Howard University in 1965 (Johnson, 1965):

> You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: "Now you are free to go where you want, do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please." You do not take a man

> who for years has been hobbled by chains, liberate him, bring him to the starting line of a race, saying, "You are free to compete with all the others," and still justly believe you have been completely fair…. This is the next and more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity - not just legal equity but human ability - not just equality as a right and a theory, but equality as a fact and as a result. Thus, it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates. This is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result…. To this end equal opportunity is essential, but not enough, not enough. Men and women of all races are born with the same range of abilities. But ability is not just the product of birth. Ability is stretched or stunted by the family that you live with, and the neighborhood you live in—by the school you go to and the poverty or the richness of your surroundings. It is the product of a hundred unseen forces playing upon the little infant, the child, and finally the man.

The history of Black American's segregation and limited access to high-quality educational opportunities is an important factor in understanding current academic achievement in African American students. Most schools across the nation are no longer held accountable by the tenets of the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling to keep track of the racial composition of their schools. However, many schools track this information in the absence of and mandate and there is substantial evidence that schools in present day society reflect the segregated schools before the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling (Douglas, 1994; Ferri & Connor, 2005; Howell & Peterson, 2002; Mickelson, 2010). The Brown ruling was based, in part, on the notion that

racial segregation in schools results in unequal access and disparities. However, desegregations were slow to take off and by the latter part of the 21st century desegregation efforts came to a halt. Given the resistance towards desegregation efforts, many Black students attended and continue to attend racially homogenous schools. This has led social scientists to explore the factors related academic achievement of African American students.

In the 1960s, when many states were still openly resisting desegregation efforts, some scholars believed that Black families embraced pathological lifestyles, which, in turn, hindered the ability of Black children to benefit from schooling (Ladson-Billings, 2006). For example, a popular publication during this time period, *Equity of Educational Opportunities*, described factors contributing to the academic achievement gap which included school environment, racial makeup of the school population, and family background (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, Partland, Mood, Weinfeld, York, 1966). While Coleman et. al (1966) reported that racial isolation and social class disparities are associated with lower academic achievement, the researchers also attributed poor educational outcomes with various perceived deficits related to culture, family, neighborhood and personal characteristics. There are different perspectives held by social scientists about the way in which social class interacts with academic achievement (Ansolone, 2001). Two common explanations, cultural deprivation and cultural difference, elucidate how social class impacts academic outcomes. The cultural deprivation perspective is the belief that members of disadvantaged social classes have limited access to the social and cultural capital required to do well in an academic institution (Ansalone, 2001). For example, poor and working class families have fewer available resources and access to enriching educational opportunities, social networks or even limitations in time and knowledge to devote to a child's academic enrichment. The cultural difference perspective is based on the notion that

racial, ethnic and social class minorities have cultures that are functionally adequate, but that are different from the culture of the mainstream or majority culture. Thus, in an academic environment, students with different cultural experiences simply may not fit into the prescribed and expected cultural norms, but these differences are not representative of a deficit in ability, resources or exposure. Instead, cultural difference perspective is based on the idea that there are strengths and assets of various cultures and yet there are societal, structural, and institutional barriers that privilege some and place others at a disadvantage (Ansalone, 2001). While Ansalone (2001) describes the perspectives of cultural difference and cultural deprivation as competing perspectives, it may be possible that the combination of both perspectives may provide a broad perceptive of how racial-cultural characteristics and factors impact academic outcomes.

Racial isolation and academic achievement. Racial isolation, a phenomenon closely related to segregation, has been explored as a construct associated with educational experiences. Racial isolation is often measured by determining the percentage of non-White students in the average non-White school (Conger, 2010). According to Conger (2010), this particular measure does not fully capture the impact of racial isolation in school; rather, a more precise and comprehensive analysis, according to Conger (2010), is to focus the racial composition in both the school and the classrooms -- most analyses only look at the school and not individual classrooms. Along these lines, Conger (2010) examined the impact of chronic versus cumulative racial isolation over several years of schooling. Using student population data from New York City public schools, Conger (2010) examined fifth graders in 2000 and 2001, all of whom entered the school system as first graders between the years 1996 and 1997 and remained in the New York City Public school system for five consecutive years. Analysis of these records

indicated that all students, regardless of race, are more likely to be in a classroom with more same race peers than those of different racial backgrounds. New York City schools had previously used a cutoff measure to identify schools with "extreme" racial isolation. Any school that represented ninety percent or more of the same race within a given school was considered to be extremely racially isolated (Conger, 2010). In schools with such extreme racial isolation, Conger (2010) found that White, Asian and Hispanic were in classrooms with two to three times the number of same race peers as the total school population. Black students in extremely racially isolated schools also experienced classrooms with greater racial isolation, but only slightly higher than the school composition.

Conger's (2010) findings corroborate other extant research (Douglas, 1994; Ferri &Connor, 2005; Howell & Peterson, 2002; Mickelson, 2010; Orfield, Ee, Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley, 2016; Rothstein, 2015) demonstrating that racially segregated educational experiences persist for many children across the country. Conger recommended that researchers consider the racial isolation that exists in the school and in the classroom, suggesting that classroom racial isolation is a vital piece of information that is often excluded from the research. It may be important, therefore, to not only examine the effects of attending a racially isolated school, but also the effects of attending racially isolated classrooms. The cumulative effect of racial isolation in the classroom seems to be more significant and prominent for Black and Hispanic students than for Whites and Asians, as Conger (2010) found that Black and Hispanic children attended racially isolated classrooms in at least four out of the five years analyzed in the study while only a small number of White and Asian students experienced the same circumstances. There are both cumulative (i.e., the number of years a student experiences isolation in the classroom) and chronic (persistent experiences of racial isolation) within school and in the classrooms.

Approximately, forty percent of Black and Hispanic students "who experienced racial isolation at least once, experience it chronically" (Conger, 2010, pg.321).

Conger's analysis provides an important addition to research on racial isolation by examining the chronic and cumulative exposure to racially isolated schools and classrooms. This research provided a more laser-focused snapshot of the perpetuation of racial isolation in schools and classrooms. Other research has supported Conger's (2010) findings and expanded the body of research by examining the impact of racial isolation in schools on student achievement (Mickelson, 2010; Orfield & Lee, 2007).

Berunds and Penaloza (2010) analyzed data sets from the longitudinal studies program at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The researchers analyzed data from the High School senior cohorts from 1972, 1982 and 2004. These data included mathematics achievement test scores and information on demographic background of the student and his/her family. In their analysis, the researchers used a series of regressions for each data set and found that increases in school segregation from 1972 to 2004 correspond to increases in the Black-White achievement gap as measured by math achievement test scores. The researchers also found that racial isolation in schools negatively impacts achievement in such a way that can outweigh positive socioeconomic gain in family background (Berunds & Penaloza, 2010). In other words, even as Black families attained more privileged social class status and acquired greater access to resources, students who attended racially segregated schools still demonstrated lower levels of academic achievement (Berunds & Penaloza, 2010).

Proponents of school desegregation have often believed that providing Black American students with the accessibility to attend predominantly White schools would allow for greater social mobility, thereby improving their life chances (Wells & Crain, 1994, pg. 531). While the

logic behind this belief is clear, White children have continued to have greater access to high-quality education and educational resources as a result of the social and economic disparities and racial isolation that tends to leave Black children with reduced access to these resources. Attorneys for the NAACP, who were instrumental in litigating several school desegregation cases, also acted on the assumption that school desegregation would ultimately provide Blacks with opportunities to attend elite colleges and universities, which in turn could lead to higher status jobs and more involvement in social networks and institutions that would promote social mobility (Wells & Crain, 1994). This belief was based on the notion that access to education alone would not necessarily result in social mobility for Blacks. According to this logic, access to elite colleges and universities would not only equip Blacks with a strong educational background, but also with a social network which would support and strengthen opportunities for upward social mobility.

Although there is a body of literature addressing school desegregation and the racial school achievement gap, there is less research on the long-term effects of desegregation on related life outcomes such as higher education attainment, employment, and social mobility and status. Wells and Crain (1994) described three different aspects related to the potential long-term effects of desegregation: a) occupational aspirations and expectations, b) choice of college and educational attainment and c) occupational attainment and adult social networks. The researchers identified a handful of studies that examined the occupational aspirations of Black students in segregated versus desegregated schools. Reviewing findings from Dawkins (1983), Hoelter (1982), Falk (1978) and Gable, Thompson & Iwanicki (1983), the researchers found several commonalities and key points. First, segregated schools may impact or channel Black students' occupational aspirations more narrowly than desegregated schools. This is partially because the

information that students receive about careers and higher education comes from interactions with peers, school personnel and adults outside of the school system, especially parents. In integrated schools, Black students often have the opportunity to be exposed to a broader array of career and educational opportunities than in segregated schools.

Second, in terms of college choice and educational attainment, there is evidence that Black students from desegregated schools showed higher educational attainment (Wells & Crain, 1994). Additionally, several studies suggested that Black students from desegregated schools achieved greater educational attainment and also higher incomes than those who attended segregated schools (Crain, 1970). Furthermore, the research suggests that adults who relied on desegregated social networks for occupational attainment earned more annual income. (Crain, 1970).

These studies provide relevant information regarding the long-term effects of school desegregation, with findings dating back to the 1970s. Nevertheless, there is a need for more recent analyses that could determine the current generational impact of desegregation on the educational attainment, social networks and adult outcomes of contemporary students of color.

Race, Social Class and Educational Outcomes

Social scientists have examined a number of nuanced aspects of academic achievement disparities among Black students (Card & Rothstein, 2007; Conger, 2010; Farkas, 2003; Logan, Minca & Adar, 2012; Orfield & Lee, 2005; Rumberger & Palardy, 2004; Saporito & Sohoni, 2005). In addition to the findings that persistent racial segregation and isolation in schools results in lower academic achievement outcomes for Black students (Conger, 2010; Douglas, 1994; Ferri & Connor, 2005; Howell & Peterson, 2002; Mickelson, 2010), there is substantial evidence demonstrating the impact of race and social class on educational outcomes. Poverty, particularly

concentrated poverty in schools, has a profound impact on the availability of educational, instructional and structural resources at a school as well as on the educational experience and academic achievement of students (Ennis, Rios-Vargas & Albert 2011; Jarrett, 1995; Kahlenberg, 2001; Logan, Minca & Adar, 2012; Mickelson, 2010; Reardon, 2011; Russell, Harris & Gockel, 2005; Rastogi, Johnson, Hoeffel & Drewery, 2011; Rouse & Barrow, 2006; Willingham, 2012).

The impact of race and social class on academic achievement and educational outcomes can be difficult to separate, in that race and class are deeply and historically intertwined in American society. In education, the intersection of race and social class has profound implications for a student's educational experience and overall academic success.

Social class, poverty and educational experiences and outcomes. In education, gross inequities based on social class are common and persistent. Unlike the racial achievement gap, the gap in educational achievement and attainment for poor and low-income students has grown steadily rather than narrowing or fluctuating over time -- in fact, the income achievement gap is nearly twice as large as the Black-White achievement gap (Reardon, 2011). The income achievement gap can be best understood as the income differential between a child from a family at the 90th percentile of the family income distribution and a child from a family at the 10th percentile (Reardon, 2011). Duncan and Magnuson (2011) suggested that the income achievement gap is present when a child enters kindergarten and does not seem to change substantially over time, for better or for worse. In other words, this gap is static and persistent over the student's matriculation through school. The statistics of the income achievement gap are staggering: the income achievement gaps between high and low income students is about

thirty to forty percent higher in children born in 2001 than those born just twenty-five years earlier (Reardon, 2011).

Determinants for income achievement gap are still being assessed, but preliminary research has led to several explanations (Reardon, 2011). First, income inequality itself has grown over the last fifty years in the United States. Second, families with greater incomes are increasingly investing funds into the development of their children's cognitive abilities, which represents a distinct change in parenting practices over the last fifty years that has been linked to high stakes testing as a basis for accountability in systems of education (Reardon, 2011). Families with greater income tend to come from more privileged social class backgrounds, thereby providing children with enriching educational and cultural opportunities and important social connections (Jarrett, 1995; Reardon, 2011; Russell, Harris & Gockel, 2008). Finally, there is evidence of increasing school segregation based on social class, leading to qualitatively different educational and schooling experiences between the rich and the poor (Reardon, 2011).

Concentrated poverty in schools. Socioeconomic segregation in schools has intensified in the last generation (Mickelson, 2010). Students who attend schools with concentrated poverty perform more poorly, in terms of academics, than those who attended schools with less poverty (Kahlenberg, 2001). According to the National Poverty Center, which used census data from 2010, approximately 27.4 percent of Blacks and 26.6 percent of Hispanics lived in poverty (National Poverty Center, 2010). Compared to the total population at large, Blacks and Hispanics each make up 13% of the total population (Ennis, Rios-Vargas & Albert, 2011; Rastogi, Johnson, Hoeffel & Drewery, 2011). The poverty rate for children of color in America is even higher, with approximately 38.2 percent of Black children and 32.3 percent of Hispanic children living at or below the poverty line (American Psychological Association, 2013). Poverty has many

detrimental effects on the physical, cognitive, psychological and overall well-being of children (American Psychological Association, 2013) via inadequate housing, poor nutrition, limited access to health care services, physical and psychological health problems and developmental delays (American Psychological Association, 2013). Poverty has been shown to have an adverse effect on academic and schooling outcomes in children, particularly in early childhood (American Psychological Association, 2013; 2004) including test scores, grade retention, academic persistence, and graduation rates (Rouse & Barrow, 2006), producing the overall outcome that children from poor families tend to do less well in school compared to children from wealthy families (Willingham, 2012). For all these reasons, total household income is directly associated with IQ scores, academic achievement, and college attendance, as well as with more specific cognitive skills such as working memory and phonological awareness (Croizet & Claire, 1998; Willingham, 2012;).

Researchers suggest that the gap between the educational opportunities for students from low-income families and those students from families with greater income and social class status is continuing to widen substantially (Anyon, 2005). Logan, Minca and Adar (2012) reviewed the impact of school segregation by race and social class and its impact on student achievement outcomes, revealing the overwhelming evidence that segregation had a disproportionately negative effect on the academic achievement of racial and ethnic minority children. Using the results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Logan et al. (2012) discovered that only 57 percent of Black students, compared to 87 percent of White students, scored at or above the basic reading level on the eighth grade reading exam in 2003. These statistics are supported throughout the literature on academic performance and achievement among racial minorities and the negative impact of school segregation. For example, Blacks are

disproportionately poorer than are Whites and as a result, Black students are more likely to attend high-poverty schools with limited educational resources (Orfield & Lee, 2005; Rumberger & Palardy, 2004; Saporito & Sohoni, 2005). Students who attend schools with a higher concentration of poverty are negatively associated with compromised academic achievement outcomes even when controlling for a student's family racial/ethnic background (Card & Rothstein, 2007).

Class-based segregation and schooling. The United States has historically funded schools through state budget funds and local property taxes which allows those in the wealthiest districts to spend as much as three times the amount per student in economically disadvantaged districts (Condron & Roscigno, 2003). It is a system where the amount of wealth in the school district, or lack thereof, is a strong determinant of the quality of education received (Condron & Roscigno, 2003; Kozol, 1991 Rouse & Barrow, 2006). Researchers Condron and Roscigno (2003) attempted to determine whether financial resources are directly linked to academic achievement. They noted recent research provided preliminary evidence to suggest that specific attributes of schools can mediate the effect of school finances on academic achievement (Condron & Roscigno, 2003). Furthermore, they pointed out that previous researchers found it difficult to analyze limited overall district data, which did not allow for fine-tuned analyses that might lead to disparities within-districts (Condron & Roscigno, 2003). Condron and Roscigno (2003) suggested that previous research that analyzed finances based on an entire district may have been inaccurate or underestimated the effects of spending. Thus, the authors examined the within-district variations in spending and achievement for eighty-nine public elementary schools in a large, urban school district of North Carolina. The authors hypothesized that analyzing data from schools within the same district would reveal disparities in funding, given that schools

within districts are allocated different amounts of money based on tax revenue and local political decision-making. They discovered that the difference in funding has a direct impact on resources and materials, teacher training and professional development, curriculum, teacher salaries and even class size. Results suggested that the most highly accomplished teachers were concentrated in schools where the population was comprised of mostly wealthier, White students where the funds allocated per student were also significantly higher than in other schools.

Logan et al. (2012) studied segregation in several different types of schools based on racial composition, geographic location, and poverty. They examined the way that these characteristics, school district characteristics, and other related characteristics are related to school performance. With the advent of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), schools now provide data to the federal government that includes test scores in reading and math for children in the 4^{th}, 8^{th} and 10^{th} grades. These tests scores, along with other data, are analyzed so as to determine whether a school is providing an adequate education. These measures serve as a national-level accounting of the performance of schools across the country. It is also a tool by which researchers can investigate the disparities that exist between schools. Logan et al. (2012) analyzed recent test score data provided under the system of evaluative practices of NCLB and found that there are six different types of schools across the country including three types of high poverty schools and three types of schools with lower poverty rates. The three types of high poverty schools include, first, schools located in central cities that are primarily populated by Blacks and Latinos. Another type of high poverty school is heavily populated by Black students, but is in a location that is geographically mixed. The third type of high poverty school is one that is geographically mixed and also has a mixed racial composition. The researchers also identified three types of schools with lower levels of poverty. One type of low poverty school is nearly

ninety-percent White and predominantly in the suburbs. A second type of low poverty school is also mostly White, but in a non-metropolitan area. Finally, a third type of low poverty schools has a clear White majority, is affluent, suburban and has significant numbers of racial and ethnic minorities. The findings suggested that Black and Latino students who attend this type of low poverty school have increased academic advantages, although only ten percent of Black and Latino students have any access to such schools (Logan et. al., 2012). Using these categories, the researchers found that overall school performance was associated with the type of school that a student attends, namely whether the school has a high or low poverty concentration in addition to the racial composition. Specifically, schools with a homogenous racial composition of students of color often score lower on NCLB measures (Logan et. al, 2012). Even when social class is controlled for, schools with high percentage of Blacks and Latinos produce lower standards than other schools. Additionally, schools with a higher concentration of poverty were negatively associated with school performance. Finally, the researchers found that schools with a concentrated population of highly educated parents had higher overall school performance ratings (Logan et. al, 2012). These findings provide evidence to support the belief that schools segregated by race and social class are inherently unequal in the academic experience that they offer students.

Resources in poor schools. Many factors create a quality school environment for all students (Ansalone, 2001). All schools should have the resources and materials necessary for students to succeed; there are also important educator characteristics including a positive outlook on the academic and intellectual promise of all students, a belief in equity, and an understanding and respect of different culture (Ansalone, 2001). Additionally, there is a need for a safe, secure and clean physical learning environment.

Environmental hazards. Jonathan Kozol (1991; 2005) described the environmental hazards that low-income children face in schools every day. In his books, Kozol (1991; 2005) exposed the disparities in school resources by describing his observations of schools with crumbling infrastructure, vermin, mold, and unfit environmental conditions, along with the negative impact that such conditions have on a child's sense of self. Little research has focused on the link between funding in schools with improper conditions and academic achievement; however, Condron and Roscigno (2003) found that in some cases, schools with the lowest proportion of poor students spent nearly $300 more per student on building maintenance alone. As a result, students from these schools benefited from higher overall order and consistency, greater investment in instructional resources, more teachers with master's degrees and advanced credentials, higher student attendance rates and increased student engagement (Condron & Roscigno, 2003).

Financial resources and instructional spending. Condron & Roscigno (2003) also found that schools with the lowest proportion of low-income students receive a greater percentage of local funds per student than do schools with a high concentration of low-income students. In their analysis, this difference amounted to over $300,000 less in instructional spending in schools with the highest concentration of poor students. Ladson-Billings (2006) reported that schools in several large, urban centers suffered similar inequities. Kozol (2005) reported that schools in the urban centers of Chicago, Philadelphia and New York City spent roughly half of what wealthier suburban districts spent despite the fact that these local districts are, on average, less than a few miles outside of these cities. Other scholars have corroborated these finding and found that schools that spend more money per pupil tend to have students who are more likely to enroll in

college and earn a postsecondary degree across both urban and suburban school districts (Hyman, 2017).

Educational and instructional practices. There is also research suggesting a qualitative difference in teaching methods for students who are poor or working class versus those who are middle class or wealthy. Anyon (1980) observed several teachers in schools and noted the differences in teaching methods and educational pedagogy based on social class. In working class schools, teachers relied on facilitating students' procedural knowledge and understanding, relying on rote memorization and provided little room for critical thinking, decision making or choice (Anyon, 1980). In middle class schools, the teachers focused on assisting students in obtaining "correct" answers and information. Lessons in this school came directly from a textbook and critical perspective taking was discouraged so as to avoid "controversial" topics that might upset the parent body. In the affluent and elite schools, teachers encouraged creativity, individual expression of ideas and concepts, thoughtfulness, ability to successfully express oneself and apply knowledge and concepts. Students were encouraged to keep up-to-date knowledge of what is covered on the news so that they can actively participate in daily conversation about current events in social studies. They were also encouraged to voice their opinions and have significant "control" over what happened in the class such that if they wanted to spend more time on an activity or subject matter, the teacher usually allowed for it (Anyon, 1980).

Peer exposure effect. Another aspect of racial/income academic disparities is the effect of peer exposure, whereby Black student's achievement scores are negatively impacted based on the racial and social class composition of the schools and student expectations for achievement (Card & Rothstein, 2007; Hanushek, Kain, Markman and Rivkin, 2003; Hoxby, 2010). In other

words, students who attend school with other poor Black students who also have low expectations for academic achievement potentially achieve lower academic achievement based on standardized achievement tests. Card & Rothstein (2007) conducted a series of regression analysis using the 2000 Census data and found that the strongest predictors of academic achievement, measured by performance on standardized test, was a result of the negative impact of neighborhood and school segregation. Another hypothesis is that geographic location of schools is a contributing factor to the academic achievement of students as well. Students who live in urban, metropolitan areas and attend school in these areas tend to score lower on the national standardized tests and have lower graduation rates than schools in suburban areas (Card & Rothstein, 2007).

Teacher characteristics and school effects. Finally, another perspective is derived from evidence that Black students attend worse schools and receive instruction from teachers who are less well prepared and experienced, thereby substantially contributing the racial achievement gap (Logan et al, 2012; Roscigno, 1998). Sanders and Horn (1998) reported that teacher experience was a strong predictor of overall success (Sanders & Horn, 1998). Although it has been acknowledged that schools that serve low-income students and children of color have fewer resources, it is often the case that these schools find difficulty in attracting high quality, experienced teachers (Lee & Burkam, 2002). Additionally, Black children, who represent a disproportionate number of disadvantaged students, begin school with lower achievement scores in literacy and mathematics than their White counterparts (Lee & Burkam, 2002). Farkas (2003) noted that Black students begin the first year of traditional school with "lower levels of oral language, pre-reading, and pre-mathematics skills, as well as lesser general knowledge than that possessed by White children" (Farkas, 2003, pg.1119).

Acknowledgement of these disparities is important, but the responsibility for them does not reside primarily with children of color, but rather with the sociopolitical circumstances that explain such disparities. For example, some researchers have found that when socioeconomic status is controlled for, racial minorities begin schools with equal achievement levels as their White counterparts (O'Connor, Hill & Robinson, 2009). Over the years scholars have developed an understanding of the sociocultural elements of this situation, suggesting that teacher preparation, teacher perceptions, instructional strategies and training are influential variables (Farkas, 2003). There is some evidence that school effects, defined as the overall quality of teachers and schools, has an increased positive impact on Black student achievement. The same impact of school effects on academic achievement was not found for Whites (O'Connor, Hill & Robinson, 2009). Some researchers have reported findings that Black student academic achievement declines over the course of their time in school and that, at least in part, these declines are associated with school effects (Entwisle & Alexander, 1990). There is evidence that children who come from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to attend a school with limited educational resources (Lee & Burkam, 2002). Given that many urban areas across the country suffer from concentrated poverty, it can be reasonably assumed that some of these disparities can be attributed to poverty, inadequate resources and less-experienced teaching staff in city schools (Conger 2010; Logan, et. al, 2012). It has been suggested that the quality of the teacher is "the major determinant in student success" (Sanders & Horn, 1998, pg. 247) and that schools with fewer inexperienced teachers demonstrate greater academic gains (Clofelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2005). Combined, this research points to the potential failure of schools and educators to "add value" in such a way that supports all students beyond family background advantage or disadvantage that disproportionately places Black students "at-risk" (O'Connor,

Hill & Robinson, 2009, pg.8) particularly racial minorities. It is the failure to add value to the school experience that potentially puts Black students "at-risk".

Several factors are important in determining teacher characteristics that support student achievement. Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2005) suggest that there are three sets of factors that support teacher effectiveness including personality and attitude; the cultural environment, access to resources and support systems; and, of course, level of experience, professional development, training, etc. Schools that implement an institutional standard for high student achievement and put into practice culturally relevant curriculum, positive teacher perceptions, beliefs and teacher-student interactions result in increased academic achievement in low-income children of color (Hilliard, 2003).

Others have suggested that an educator's educational and cultural paradigms as well as his or her own racial identity status can shape pedagogy, which may support or hinder the learning process for students of color (Carter, 2000). For example, there are several different typologies of multicultural education which can be described as Universal, Ubiquitous, Traditional, Pan-National or Race-Based, (Carter, 2000). The Universal approach is based on the idea that culture is defined by individual differences, but based in the assumption that we are all human. There is an emphasis on similarities and common experiences, but there is no acknowledgement of the existence and influence of different worldviews. The Ubiquitous approach is based on the notion the culture is defined by groups of people with shared circumstances. While this approach provides a more nuanced view of different cultural experiences and realities and promotes learning about such differences, this approach fails to incorporate power differentials among different cultural groups. A traditional approach defines culture as country of origin, which is determined by "birth and environment" (Carter 2000, pg.

867). Educators utilizing this typology engage students in learning about exotic cultures and promote learning through a process of cultural immersion. A Pan-National typology is based on the notion that culture is based on the position of power, or lack thereof, of an individual. Teachers who use this approach teach culture in terms of group experience as oppressors or the oppressed. Carter (2000) discussed a preference for the Race-Based typology in which culture is defined by racial group. This type of multicultural educational approach "teaches about the history of racism and sociopolitical use of race, culture, and racial identity development" (Carter, 2000, pg. 867). This approach privileges a process of self-exploration. While Carter (2002) pointed out that there are advantages and disadvantages to each typology, he suggested that an educator's adherence to a cultural paradigm will influence what and how multicultural education is delivered in the classroom. Regardless, he identified that an educator's racial identity, the psychological response to race, is related to their view of culture and related instructional practices (Carter, 2000).

For many years, researchers have reported on the growing racial and ethnic diversity in American schools, yet the teacher population remains mostly White, female and middle class (Cockrell, Placier, Cockrell & Middleton, 1999). Teacher preparation programs in higher education represent a similar disparity (Cockrell, Placier, Cockrell & Middleton, 1999). Accordingly, some have challenged teacher education and training programs and curriculum citing lack of adequate attention to racial-cultural issues in education (Darling-Hammond, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 2001; Sleeter, 2001; Gay, 2010). Hollins (1999) suggested that the racial identity status of teachers has a direct impact on teaching style, curriculum and the learning environment. Some teachers with less salient racial identity statuses may not view culture as an important component of the educational process. They may not consider adopting a multicultural

focus, or this focus is applied in a cursory way by concentrating on cultural artifacts rather than a broader cultural worldview. However, there are many positive results that emerge when educators consider race, ethnicity and culture to be important societal influences on their teaching and student learning (Hollins, 1999). Tatum (1992) reported that talking about race, racism and race-dynamics in the classroom creates an opportunity for students to see themselves as change agents. Tatum (1992) encouraged and provided structure for her college students to learn about racism and racial identity and facilitated an educational process whereby students developed of a sense of agency to make change in their own lives and within society. Tatum (1992) surmised that a sole focus on the impact of racism alone could be disempowering and result in feelings of despair. Instead, she created a dynamic learning opportunity whereby students developed a sense of self awareness of racial identity and an understanding of the way in which racial identity and racism impacts the lived experiences and worldview of all people. Furthermore, students gained knowledge about the historical significance of change-agents and also current movement towards sociopolitical changes (Tatum, 1992). While Tatum's exploration of discussing race and racial identity in the classroom focused primarily on college students, the benefits of self-exploration, understanding the impact of race and racism can transfer to other educational settings where younger students may benefit.

Another study by Lawrence and Tatum (1997) outlined the impact of antiracist professional development project on eighty-four White teachers from a Suburban school district. Despite the multicultural, multiethnic landscape of this country, many teachers were educated in a monoculture academic setting and may have had little exposure to people of different races and ethnicities, thereby creating the possibility of relying on stereotypes and other misguided information from family and friends (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997). As a result, some teachers may

not have acknowledged their own racial identity, which can create difficulties in developing and understanding and connection with students of color (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997). "A teacher who does not acknowledge her or his own racial or ethnic identity, for example, will not recognize the need for children of color to affirm their own" (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997, pg. 163). Given this reality, the researchers investigated whether a professional development course in anti-racist education would promote development of a more salient racial identity for White educators. Participants in the study were teachers from a suburban region of Boston, Massachusetts. The professional development course entitled, "Anti-Racist and Effective Classroom Practice for All Students" was designed to "help educators recognize the personal, cultural and institutional manifestations of racism and to become more proactive in response to racism within their school settings" (Lawrence & Tatum, 1997, pg. 165). The course also covered various topics and concepts including White privilege and theories of racial identity for Whites and for people of color. Additionally, information about the historical significance of scientific racism and intelligence were discussed. Finally, the course covered suggestions for incorporating this knowledge into classroom practices. As a part of the course participants were required to keep self-reflection journals in addition to finding definitive ways to operationalize anti-racist classroom practices and noting how many times they engaged in such practices. Examples included communicating high academic expectations to students of color; educating White colleagues and parents; teaching about racial-identity development and providing support programs for students of color. Overall, the researchers found evidence, based on self-reports and educational practices, that the teachers made anti-racist education a pedagogical priority rather than a superficial celebration of multiculturalism or insincere attempts to make small additions to the curriculum. In sum, the ability for teachers to understand the racial-cultural experiences and

identity formation of White students and students of color allows for a greater connection between teacher and student which could result in positive academic gains.

The quality of interaction between students of color and White teachers is an important factor in students' self-concept, academic motivation, and feelings of connectedness in the academic setting. Students of color sometimes report feelings of distrust with White teachers because of prior experiences of unfair treatment or the belief of racism among Whites (Zirkel, 2005). White teachers also play a role in this disconnect. Research suggests that White teachers report more positive interactions with student of their same ethnicity than those of a different background (Zirkel, 2005, 2004). Tyrone Howard (2003) described strategies by which teachers can develop culturally responsive classrooms, including acknowledging deficit-based notions or negative beliefs that exist for students of color, recognizing the important connection between culture and learning, viewing culture as capital and an asset to student success, and being mindful that traditional teaching practices reflect and privilege Eurocentric, middle class values (Howard, 2003).

Academic tracking and the achievement gap. Tracking and ability-grouping is an educational practice that relegates disproportionate numbers of poor and Black and Latino children to lower-tracked academic classes. "Tracking is the educational practice of categorizing and classifying students by curriculum standards, educational and career aspirations, and/or ability levels" (Akos, Lambie, Milsom, & Gilbert, 2007, pg. 2). American and European schools employ the practice of tracking and ability-grouping as a way of organizing learning by achievement and aptitude levels (Ansalone, 2001). In the United States, tracking and ability-grouping exists in 60 to 80 percent of elementary and secondary schools and often determine the educational pathways for students-vocational or academic (Ansalone, 2001). Educators who

utilize this approach do so based on the belief that grouping students based on ability creates a more effective learning environment for teachers and students (Akos et. al., 2007).

In a review of relevant research, Ansalone (2001) found that there is considerable research, both nationally and internationally, indicating bias in tracking practices based on race, gender, ethnicity and social class. This research suggests that even when family background, social class, and prior achievement are controlled for, Black students are overrepresented in lower-tracked ability groups (Farkas, 2003). As a result of tracking, students in low ability groups may suffer from lack of sufficient intellectual stimulation while students in high-ability groups excel and succeed (Ansolone, 2001). Tracking effects numerous aspects of a student's educational experience. Researchers suggest that academic tracking as early as middle school has the potential to impact a student's ability to acquire knowledge and skills in preparation for college thereby limiting a career and educational opportunities (Akos et. al., 2007; Trusty, Niles, & Carney, 2005). Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that the practice of tracking can lead to the potential development of a negative self-concept and academic self-concept, limits the peer network and social composition and fails to instill strong academic skills of motivation, intellectual curiosity and self-efficacy (Ansalone, 2001; Akos et.al, 2007; Trusty, Niles, & Carney, 2005). This practice, therefore, operates to support the racial achievement gap (Farkas, 2003).

Psychological implications of the academic achievement gap. Psychosocial processes like stereotype threat (Steele, 1999) have been linked to the persistent achievement gap. Stereotype threat and racial stigmatization will be further described in the following sections.

Stereotype threat. Stereotype threat refers to a psychological process that has been demonstrated to negatively impact performance in people of color. Claude Steele and Joshua

Aronson (1995) first introduced the concept in an influential line of inquiry examining the impact of internalized negative stereotypes about an individual's group membership. Specifically, Steele and Aronson (1995) proposed that stereotype threat occurs when stereotypes about one's group are experienced as negative enough to be self-threatening, thereby producing negative effects. Steele and Aronson conducted three separate studies to better understand the impact of stereotype threat on test performance. In the first study, the researchers used a 2X3 factorial design in which race, Black and White, and a test description factor were included. The three test description factors included a) a test that was presented as a diagnostic measure of intellectual ability, b) another test that was presented as a tool for studying problem-solving and finally c) a test that was presented as both a problem-solving tool and a challenge (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Results from the first study indicated that Black participants performed worse than their White peers when the test was presented as a measure of their ability, however, they performed much better and matched the scores of White participants when the exam was presented as being less reflective of their ability (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

In the second study, the researchers wanted to understand the degree to which the effect of stereotype threat could be understood in terms of possible apprehension on the part of the individual regarding the appearance of conformity to the negative group stereotype (Steele & Aronson, 1995). The researchers wanted to determine whether such apprehension could be detected as a higher level of anxiety among stereotype-threatened individuals. So, the researchers randomly assigned 20 Black and 20 White female undergraduate students to the same diagnostic conditions as in the first study, finding that Black participants completed fewer test items in the diagnostic conditions and also exhibited a reduced rate of speed and accuracy in completing test items. Based on the results from the first two studies, the researchers hypothesized that

experiencing difficulty or frustration with a diagnostic test is enough to activate stereotype threat in Black individuals. Additionally, individuals taking a test that purports to measure intellectual ability may feel threatened by a specific racial stereotype, which, in turn, causes some impairment in information processing and cognition. Steele and Aronson (1995) also wondered whether Black participants would distance themselves from racial stereotypes when experiencing apprehension about being judged or evaluated in light of a racial stereotype that interferes with performance, and also whether or not endorsing racial stereotypes will make Black participants even more uneasy about an intellectually evaluative test. In fact, Steele and Aronson discovered that a large majority of Black participants refused to indicate their race, suggesting avoidance of stereotyping. The researchers also wanted to know whether or not stereotype threat is, in itself, sufficient to result in decreased test performance. In a final study, Steele and Aronson (1995) required all participants to indicate their race prior to any test condition. Results indicated that priming racial identity results in depressed test performance for Black participants (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

Since the pioneering article by Steele and Aronson (1995) was published, many researchers have attempted to understand the impact of stereotype threat on academic and test performance for racial minorities (Aronson, Quinn & Spencer, 1998) members of disadvantaged social classes (Croizet & Claire, 1998) and women (Spencer, Steele & Quinn, 1999). This body of research suggests that when negative stereotypes are activated based on a social identity, a burden is created that can interfere with the ability to perform a mental task (Schmader & Johns, 2003). Given this, it can be reasonably understood that people who experience chronic stress related to his or her social identity may also experience some cognitive disruptions, such as reduction in working memory capacity and attention regulation controls, two cognitive process

critical to learning (Eysenck, Derakshan, Santos & Calvo, 2007; Klein & Boals, 2001). This is partly due to the fact that the psychological and cognitive effects of anxiety operate in a way that it can impair cognitive functioning because a great of deal mental energy is expended during periods of anxiety thereby reducing cognitive capacity to attend to other tasks such as learning new information, for example (Klein & Boals, 2001). Anxiety is a common experience reported by individuals encountering stereotype threat, providing additional evidence that fear of confirming a negative stereotype salient to one's identity can potentially disrupt cognitive abilities such as working memory (Eysenck & Calvo, 1992; Eysenck, Derakshan, Santos & Calvo, 2007; Schmader & Johns, 2003).

Parents' Socialization Practices and Children's Educational Experiences and Outcomes

While the experiences of Black American children in segregated schooling situations is an obvious focus of counselors and educators who seek to respond to the social-emotional needs of marginalized populations, it is important to understand the way in which parents respond as well. Psychologists and mental health therapists often work within the family systems to understand the emotional processes and experiences of individuals (Bowen, 1993). Parents' personal experiences, roles and parenting practices are a vital part of understanding the full picture of a child's educational experiences and outcomes (Garcia Coll & Pachter, 2002). Therefore, it is reasonable that counselors, psychologists and educators consider the role of parents in the overall development and psychological well-being of children and identify ways in which to collaborate in order to fully support Black children.

Successful parenting can be understood as a set of practices, strategies, beliefs and actions aimed at assuring a child's successful navigation through the human developmental lifespan (Garcia Coll & Pachter, 2002). LeVine (1977) suggested that evolution has led to the

creation of both biological and cultural norms for parenting that allow for proper development and result in self-sufficient adults. Therefore, there may be universal goals for parenting that include physical safety, proper environment for optimal growth and development, modeling and teaching normative values and behaviors (LeVine, 1977). These universal goals may, however, appear very differently based on the sociocultural context of the family. Racial and ethnic minorities often experience different contextual issues, both in terms of social hierarchy and also negative stereotypical or erroneous representations and images of ethnic and racial minorities that impact parenting style and practice (Hughes & Chen, 1997). Encounters of social marginalization and economic hardship may not be as commonly experienced by people in the majority or those of a more privileged social position. Social class, proximal environments, traditions, culture, family and child factors are contextually relevant to all parents, yet these variables may have different effects on racial and ethnic minorities and poor parents (Garcia Coll & Pachter, 2002). Race/ethnicity, discrimination, prejudice, racism, migration and acculturation are challenges that are specific to ethnic and minority parenting (Garcia Coll & Pachter, 2002).

Academic socialization. Of particular importance to a child's growth and development is the role parents play in preparing and socializing children for school (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004). Researchers called this "academic socialization," which "encompasses the variety of parental beliefs and behaviors that influence children's school related development" (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004, pg. 163). Socialization is "a process by which parents shape a child's behaviors, attitudes, and social skills so that the child will be able to function as a member of society" (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004, pg. 163). A specific area of focus for academic socialization is the parent's involvement in a child's education, which supports academic success. Parents who volunteer, create suitable learning environments at home, communicate

with teachers and school leaders and maintain connections with the school community tend to be most successful in socializing their children for academic success (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004). However, it should be acknowledged that because of various sociocultural factors, such as ethnicity and social class, some parents are not able to fulfill these practices (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004).

One reason is that parental involvement is often influenced by parents' perceptions, beliefs and attitudes about schools-including their own schooling experiences. Thus, it is plausible, given the history of segregation in schools in the US, that some Black parents may have negative views or experiences related to their own experience in school. Parents' feelings about school can impact the way in which parents socialize a child for school (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004). As a result, children's educational outcomes are, in part, determined by the parents' perceptions, beliefs and attitudes about school. It is therefore important for counselors and psychologists to understand parents' feelings about their child's educational experiences in addition to understanding the parent's feelings about his or her own school and current connection with their child's school. Understanding the parent's educational experience and developmental history can help counselors and psychologists identify the ways in which the parents' experiences potentially shape academic socialization and racial-ethnic socialization, processes that significantly impact and determine a child's educational experiences and academic success (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004).

Racial-ethnic socialization. Considering that Black American children disproportionately attend schools segregated by race and class, learn in buildings with inferior infrastructures and limited resources, and are taught by more inexperienced teachers, parents of Black children can play a vital, often protective role, in the racial-ethnic socialization of their

children. Hughes, Smith, Stevenson, Rodriguez, Johnson and Spicer (2006) suggested that racial-ethnic socialization refers to the way in which adults transmit information to their children regarding race and ethnicity. Boykin and Tom (1985) suggested that African American parents must employ different parenting practices, strategies, and techniques based on various cultural orientations including race/ethnicity and minority status. African American parents are tasked with the responsibility of raising children to develop a positive sense of self, racial and personal identity despite the social circumstances and phenomena like racism, racial stereotypes and negative representations of Blacks in the media (Thomas & Speight, 1999). The way in which parents communicate with children about race, racism and discrimination, otherwise known as racial socialization, can be considered strategic because such communication prepares a child to navigate a socially stratified society and develop competencies that will allow for success (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). Racial socialization has been found to have a positive impact on self-esteem and academic achievement and parents play an important role in the development of a child's racial identity (Thomas & Speight, 1999). Children whose parents emphasized the importance of being knowledgeable and proud of his or her racial-cultural traditions, history, practices and values have reported higher levels of self-esteem (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). In addition, part of racial socialization practices has been found to have a positive impact on a child's self-concept, racial identity, self-efficacy, in-group attitudes and academic achievement (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001).

Researchers have focused on four basic themes, which included cultural socialization, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism (Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph & Nickerson, 2002; Hughes et.al, 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001). Cultural socialization is the process by which messages that transmit racial pride by teaching children

about racial-ethnic history and heritage, promoting customs and traditions based on cultural background and pride in one's racial-ethnic heritage. Preparation for bias is an effort often undertaken by parents to advance children's awareness of discrimination and bias in order to help them cope. This practice is considered an important part of racial-ethnic socialization. Promotion of mistrust is considered a socialization practice in which parents impart messages promoting wariness of particular of interracial interactions. Finally, egalitarianism is a theme of racial-ethnic socialization by which parents encourage children to value qualities of the individual over racial group membership. In some cases, parents avoid having discussions about race entirely. These four dimensions of racial-ethnic socialization are most common among people of color (Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph & Nickerson, 2002; Hughes et. al., 2006;).

Hughes and Chen (1997) conducted a study of African American parents as part of a larger study conducted by the first author, which examined the interrelations between the individual's experiences at work and family processes, which included the socialization of children. The authors interviewed 157 participants who were all married and had children under the age of 18. The researcher interviewed either the mother or father of the family and covered a range of topics including "job experiences, work, family role difficulty, marital behaviors, parenting practices, and racial socialization behaviors" (Hughes & Chen, 1997, pg. 204). Their findings related to racial socialization practices produced results which indicated that parents of older children, ages 9-14, imparted more frequent messages of racial socialization than parents of younger children, ages 4-8. In addition, parents with higher status jobs and higher educational attainment reported more cultural socialization and preparation for bias. Finally, parents who reported personal experience of racial bias in the workforce also reported more frequent messages of preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust. Combined, these findings suggest

that personal characteristics of both parents and children result in different messages of racial socialization. Parents' employment status and education may determine the type and frequency of racial socialization and a child's age may also determine when and what type racial socialization messages are delivered. Researchers have found that there are sociodemographic variables that dictate how parents racially socialize their children (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor & Allen, 1990). While the majority of Black parents reported that they racially socialize their children, researchers found that parents' level of education plays an important role in the way in which children are racially socialized (Thornton, Chatters, Taylor & Allen, 1990). Additionally, researchers have found that Black parents focus on cultural socialization frequently, followed by preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust and egalitarianism (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson,2001; Thornton et.al., 1990).

Impact of parents' racial-ethnic socialization. Research suggests that racial-ethnic socialization can have a positive impact on the psychosocial, cognitive and emotional well-being of Black children (Caldwell, Zimmerman, Bernat, Sellers & Nataro, 2002; Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph & Nickerson, 2002; Constatine & Blackmon, 2002; Hughes & Chen, 1999; Neblett, Phulip, Cogburn & Sellers, 2006; Parham & Helms, 1985a, 1985b; Stevenson, 1995; Thomas & Speight, 2002; Wilson, Foster, Anderson & Mance, 2009). This is due, in part, to the role of racial-ethnic socialization practices in developing a positive racial identity (Stevenson, 1995; Thomas & Speight, 2002).

Racial socialization and racial identity. Racial identity has been defined by scholars as the beliefs and values held by an individual regarding his or her racial group membership (Thomas & Speight, 2002) and has been called "one of the most heavily researched areas of African American psychological functioning" (Caldwell et. al, 2002). Stemming from Kenneth

and Mamie Clark's research examining internalized racism in children, scholars have sought to identify the ways in which an individual's racial identity is developed over the lifespan (Caldwell et. al., 2002). William E. Cross (1971, 1991) developed a model of *nigresence*, a term with a French origin meaning "to become Black" (Parham & Helms, 1993, pg. 8; Caldwell et. al, 2002). This model describes five different stages that Black Americans experience in the process of developing a strong African American identity. The first stage is *preecounter*, which is characterized by a White frame of reference, idealization of Whites, and devaluation of Blackness. The second stage, *encounter*, is when an individual experiences several different events directly linked to race that lead individuals to re-examines their identity, resulting in more distinct development of a Black identity. Having a pro-Black and anti-White value system is a feature of the *immersion-emersion* stage, the third stage. While individuals in the immersion-emersion stage often embrace pro-Black attitudes, they have not necessarily committed to cultural traditions or values characteristic of Black culture (Caldwell et. al, 2002; Parham & Williams, 1993). The *internalization* stage, the fourth stage, is when an individual has a sense of security and satisfaction with their identity as a Black person. Finally, the last stage, *internalization-commitment*, is when an individual can translate his or her own internalized identity as a Black person into action (Calwell et.al., 2002; Parham & Williams, 1993). The nigresence theory has evolved over time with a general focus on development of a healthy Black identity that does not always include a developmental process in which the individual holds dichotomous attitudes. In other words, individuals do not necessarily have to have pro-Black and anti-White attitudes, but rather a mixture of emotions, reactions and beliefs about people of both races. Ultimately, Cross (1991) believed that a healthy Black identity would function as a protective factor against psychological attacks or the nature of living in a racist and oppressive

society; provide meaning and establish a primary reference group of Black people; serve as a medium for developing a greater sense of awareness beyond the individual's own racial identity (Cross, 1991, pg. 328 as cited in Stevenson, 1995)

Stevenson (1995) has studied the impact of racial socialization on the racial identity development of children and adolescents. Specifically, he suggests that understanding racial socialization processes could create a link between racial awareness in young children and racial identity development in adolescents. Considering the function of a healthy Black identity as noted by Cross (1991) it is also understandable that racial socialization can support in the development of such an identity. Cross suggested that an individual can acquire the characteristics of a healthy Black identity over the course of time, however, that is dependent on the individual's parents or caretakers having a strong Black identity (Cross, 1991, pg. 214-215 as cited in Stevenson, 1995).

In a study of 287 African American adolescents between the ages of 14 and 16 years of age, researchers sought to determine the relationship between racial socialization and racial identity attitudes (Stevenson, 1995). Participants completed two separate measures, the Scale of Racial Socialization (SORS-A) and the Racial Identity Attitude Scale (RIAS). The SORS-A is a measurement that assesses different aspects of racial socialization and the (RIAS) is a measurement that evaluates four stages of nigresence (preencounter, encounter, emersion/immersion and internalization) (Stevenson, 1995). The results of the study indicated that there was a correlation between participant's attitudes representing the internalization stage and racial socialization factors of spiritual and religious coping, extended family caring, cultural pride and reinforcement and global racial socialization (Stevenson, 1995). Another study conducted by French and Coleman (2012) examined the relationship between four, more general,

dimensions of parents' racial socialization including cultural socialization, preparation of bias, promotion of mistrust and egalitarianism and participant's racial ideologies. According to French and Coleman, racial ideologies "refer to how African Americans interpret their experience relative to racism and discrimination and reflects their beliefs about how African Americans should act in society" (French & Coleman, 2012, pg.398). Racial socialization and racial ideology work together in helping individuals understand and cope with racism (Stevenson and Arrington, 2009 as cited in French & Coleman, 2012). In order to determine the relationship between racial socialization and racial ideologies, the researchers asked 89 participants (84 African American and 5 biracial participants) to complete two measures that evaluate racial socialization, one by Hughes and Chen (1997) which measures three dimensions of racial socialization including cultural socialization, preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust. The researchers also used a subscale developed by Fisher, Wallace and Fenton (2000). Additionally, participants took portions of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley & Chavous, 1998). Results indicated that there was a positive correlation between egalitarianism and humanist ideologies. A nationalist ideology was positively correlated with preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust (French & Coleman, 2013). The researchers also found that overall, racial socialization had a significant impact on racial ideologies (French & Coleman, 2013).

Racial socialization and academic achievement. Research suggests that the way in which Black adolescents internalize achievement experiences in school may be linked to self-esteem. However, self-esteem has the potential to be compromised because Black people are often exposed to racism and discrimination (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002). The process of racial socialization has been known to serve as a way to proactively socialize children so that they have

an awareness of racism and discrimination and also a strong cultural identity and pride (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Fischer & Shaw, 1999; Harris-Britt, Valrie, Kurtz-Costes & Rowley, 2007; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Stevenson, 1995). There is research that suggests that high academic achievement and self-esteem is correlated with racial socialization (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002).

Neblett, Philip, Cogburn and Sellers (2006) conducted a study to examine the relationship among teenagers' experience(s) of racial discrimination, parent racial socialization practices and academic achievement outcomes among African American adolescents. The researchers were specifically interested in the impact of teenagers' experiences of racial discrimination on a number of academic outcomes including intellectual curiosity, academic persistence and performance (Neblett et. al, 2006, pg. 204). The participants in the study included 584 African American students' grades 7-10 in public middle and high schools in the Midwestern United States. The researchers found that individuals who received more messages of self-worth and racial socialization were more likely to persist in the face of difficult academic challenges, demonstrate greater intellectual curiosity and academic achievement (Neblett et. al, 2006).

Racial socialization and mental health outcomes. While most parents engage in socialization practices, Black parents have the unique task of preparing children for the world they will encounter, which can often be harsh and discriminatory for Blacks. Thus, Black parents often have to consider socializing their children within a broader social context where the environment in which they are exposed is often incompatible with the development of a positive mental health (Thornton et. al., 1990, pg. 61). Black parents "function as both a filter of societal information and as a primary interpreter of the social structure" (Thornton et. al., 1990, pg. 61). Racial socialization has been seen as a protective factor from the negative effects of racism and

discrimination across the lifespan (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Harris-Britt et.al., 2007; Stevenson, 1995). Experiences of racism has been linked to harmful physiological and psychological symptoms (Harris-Britt et. al, 2007). Davis and Stevenson (2006) suggested that Black people are often misdiagnosed and clinicians are less skilled in identifying depression in Black Americans that is often partly a result of chronic experiences of discrimination. Given these associations, researchers have sought to identify the way in which racial socialization provides a protective buffer of harmful psychological outcomes (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Davis & Stevenson, 2006; Fischer & Shaw, 1999; Harris-Britt et. al, 2007). In a study conducted by Davis and Stevenson (2007) the researchers examined the relationship between depression and racial socialization. The authors recruited 160 African American adolescents to complete four different scales including the Neighborhood Social Capital Scale (NSC) (Stevenson, Mitchell, Hall & Fry, 2000 as cited in Davis & Stevenson, 2006) which measures the extent to which an individual perceives his or her neighbors as supportive of the individual's activities and relationships; the Multi-score depression inventory short form (SMDI) (Berndt, 1986 as cited in Davis & Stevenson, 2006) which measures depressive symptoms and the Teenage Experience of Racial Socialization Scale (TERS) (Stevenson, Cameron, Herraro-Taylor & Davis, 2000 as cited in Davis & Stevenson, 2006). The researchers found that certain racial socialization experiences are related to more frequent experiences of depressive symptoms where other racial socialization practices are closely related to lower reports of depressive symptoms. For example, the authors found that adolescents who received messages that insinuated power behind fitting in to the mainstream, reported a greater number of depressive symptoms. Davis and Stevenson hypothesized that these results were indicative of the incongruence of receiving messages about of egalitarianism while simultaneously receiving environmental messages indicating racial bias

and discrimination. The researchers noted that other studies do not support these findings entirely. For example, Fischer and Shaw (1999) found that African American adolescents who reported greater preparation for bias from parents or caregivers also reported a lower significant relationship between perceived racist experiences and poorer mental health.

Proactive racial socialization may have particular protective effects because these practices involve spirituality, cultural pride and a sense of extended family (Wilson et. al, 2009). Wilson and colleagues conducted a study where 105 African American families (mothers and children) enrolled in grades 6-8 participated in a study that focused on how families cope with poverty related stressors. Participants completed the Family Economic Pressure Index (FEPI) (Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz, Simons, 1994 as cited in Wilson et al., 2009); The Youth Self-Report Scale (YSR) (Achenbach, 1991 as cited in Wilson et al., 2009); and the Scale of Racial Socialization for Adolescents (SORS-A) (Stevenson, Cameron, Herrero-Taylor, and Davis, 2002). Despite the researchers' hypothesis that racial socialization practices would be correlated with lower internalized and externalized psychological symptoms, results from this study did not support that hypothesis. In fact, the results suggested that African American adolescents living in greater poverty reported more externalized symptoms when they also reported increase messages of racial socialization (Wilson et al., 2009). The researcher noted that these findings were surprising, but suggest that some racial socialization practices may be beneficial for certain adolescents, whereas other messages may be more detrimental and result in more aggressive or delinquent behavior (Wilson et al., 2009).

These findings suggest that while racial socialization may serve as an important protective factor for Black American children and adolescents, there is a need for greater understanding of how racial socialization practices impact individuals psychologically and also

how such practices impact academic and social outcomes. Furthermore, it is important to understand how these practices impact African Americans of various socioeconomic status and social positions. With regard to the latter, little is known about the influence of racial socialization practices on psychological outcomes for low-income African Americans (Wilson, Foster, Anderson & Mance, 2009). African American children and adolescents all face the risk of racial discrimination, but low-income African Americans face additional economic and classist factors that disrupt or impede healthy psychosocial development (Wilson et. al, 2009).

Social Class, Parenting and Education

Social class has an impact on the experiences of children and adolescents via its effects on parenting (Lareau, 2003). Low-income parents face many challenges in raising their children as a result of having reduced capital resources, both economic and otherwise. Bourdieu (1986) believed that social class could be understood in terms of one possession of various forms of capital, including financial, social and cultural capital. Social capital refers to the access to individuals, social networks and peer groups that can facilitate economic or cultural capital gains. Cultural capital is different from both financial and social capital in that it refers to a knowledge base about the specific cultural practices, norms and traditions of a dominant culture (Willingham, 2012). Bourdieu (1986) believed that financial capital alone does not explain the inequalities that exist based on social class. In other words, the disparities in educational outcomes between the wealthy and the poor may not be the result of finances alone. Instead, there are other intervening forms of capital that enable wealthy, socially-connected children to experience enriching educational experiences and opportunities.

Financial capital. There is a plethora of research that identifies the impact that finances have on overall well-being. In their review of relevant research, Wilkinson and Pickett (2007)

identified income inequality as an influential corollary of poor health outcomes, violence, infant mortality, obesity, and poor educational performance. With regard to education, low income families are also at a disadvantage, and may struggle to afford tools associated with improved academic outcomes including tutors, technology, and books (Willingham, 2012). Willingham (2012) reported that children born to poor mothers who have less-adequate access to health care are at greater risk of low birth weight, which in turn is linked to potential cognitive impairments. Experiencing poor health throughout childhood, adolescence and even adulthood has a lasting impact on educational outcomes (Willingham, 2012). While research suggests that school health programs can support key behavioral skills and overall health and wellness, including the development healthy coping skills and interpersonal relationships, many of these programs have been de-emphasized (Rajan & Basch, 2012). Low socioeconomic class status is directly related to stress levels such that those living in poverty are at risk for chronic stress, which has a negative impact on brain development and cognitive performance (Willingham, 2012). There is evidence that children who experienced chronic stress exhibited changes in brain function and anatomy impacting working memory, long-term memory, spatial reasoning and pattern recognition, formation of new memories and other deleterious effects on cognition (Willingham, 2012).

By contrast, families with ample financial capital are often able to shield their children from stress inducing environments and provide adequate health care. They are also better able to supply high quality early education and enriching educational experiences that are known to result in higher achievement scores in reading and math (Kozol 2005; Willingham, 2012). The educational assets of parents in the form of knowledge and skills has been shown to impact children's educational outcomes such that low-income students often begin school with a limited

vocabulary compared to their wealthier counterparts (Farkas, 2003; Hochschild, 2003; Willingham, 2012).

Social capital. In association with education particularly, social capital refers to both the number and the quality of supportive familial and social connections that aid in the overall academic and social development of the student (Ansolone, 2001). Parents who are connected and involved with the educational environment (including teachers, administrators, and policy-makers) are more likely to have children who experience greater academic achievement (Lareau, 2003; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Willingham, 2012). Parents who have access to professionals such as child development specialists, doctors, educators and other professionals have access to information and social networks that are not always available to poor and working class individuals who may not have those personal connections. These connections provide parents with such access with guidance and information that allows them to make decisions and strategize about the best way to insure academic success for their children.

Cultural capital. The opportunity for students to participate, engage in, and appreciate culturally-enriching activities promotes the development of cultural capital through exposure. Children who grow up in families with higher incomes and increased access to culturally enriching educational opportunities benefit substantially from such exposure because such practices are valued by academic institutions and educators (Ansalone, 2001). Not surprisingly, children from middle class and wealthy families often possess more of the social capital that enables access to the enriching opportunities that promote the acquisition of cultural capital.

Social class, parenting and education. In addition to describing the importance of financial, social, and cultural capital, Bourdieu (1986) also acknowledged that differences in socialization affect individual life outcomes and trajectories. He theorized the existence of the

habitus, a general socialized experience that reflects the amount and types of resources available or inherited (which includes all forms of capital). In addition, one's habitus reflects one's acquired ability to use capital effectively based on various social and institutional locations or fields (Bourdieu, 1986; Lareau, 2011).

Working from Bourdieu's theorizing, Lareau (2011) conducted a longitudinal study of poor, working class, middle class and affluent families. Lareau focused upon the parenting styles and daily experiences of children and families. She found that certain patterns existed related to parenting styles such that poor and working class parents primarily prescribed to the child rearing method of natural growth whereas middle class and affluent parents employed a parenting style of concerted civilization (Lareau, 2011). According to Lareau (2011; 2002) middle class parents who engage in concerted civilization practices are highly involved in organizing the daily leisure activities of children in order to foster particular talents, increase cognitive skill sets and build reasoning ability. In middle class families, the child's organized activities are seen as an important part of the family life, and parents believe that these activities are important and necessary components in developing and facilitating particular life skill (Lareau, 2002). Furthermore, middle class parents stress the importance of language development, usage and use reasoning and talking in disciplinary procedures. By contrast, poor and working class parents typically engage in natural growth by providing environmental, social and nurturing conditions in which a child can grow and develop, but allow children to manage their own leisure time. These parents relied upon disciplinary practices that included directives, and believed that by providing a safe home environment, food, love and nurturing, the child would develop successfully and thrive (Lareau, 2002). Poor and working-class children therefore

had more independence to organize their own leisure time leading to richer and deeper connections with extended family members and peers (Lareau, 2002).

Schooling Options for Parents of Black American Children

Given the obstacles facing many families of color in obtaining a quality education for their children, the search for the best schooling option can be challenging. The legislation known as "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) has affected the options that parents can consider. In 2002, President George W. Bush signed the sweeping education legislation into law. This legislation required that all states test students annually in grades 3-8 and once a year in high school and that states align these tests with the academic standards (Cavanagh, 2010). Following the passage of this piece of legislation, critics argued that congress failed to consult with local policy makers or educators when the legislation was developed. Educators and critics were particularly concerned about the requirement that schools show improvement in standardized test scores every year in order to receive funding or risk being shut down (Sunderman & Orfield, 2006). There have been many legislative changes since the implementation of NCLB, however, high stakes testing remains a reality for educators, parents and students. In 2009, forty-eight states signed on to take part in the Common Core State Standards which claims to provide clearer academic expectations and test based on standards (Cavanagh, 2010). This plan does not abolish the high stakes testing that has proven to be an unfair measure for poor and low-income immigrant students and other ethnic minorities (Orfield, 2006).

These policy shifts and changes have caused many parents to be feel disillusioned about that state of public education and wary about their child's ability to receive a high quality education in a public school, especially given the reality of segregated schools and the disproportionate negative impact on students of color and the poor. With regard to public school,

parents may have some options as to where they send their children, but this varies from state to state. In some states, parents are given the option of choosing a different educational institution for their child if they are unhappy with the school or if the school fails to meet annual yearly progress (AYP). Even before the sweeping changes of NCLB, the option of school vouchers has been available to some so that families can use government funds to supplement education in private or religious institutions (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2001). Some believe that school choice will result in better educational opportunities because it provides competition for services and motivation to deliver quality services in the form of education (The Center for Education Reform, 2002). Critics of such programs argue that voucher programs divert public money intended for public schools into private industry, yet these institutions are not subject to the public oversight (People for the American Way, 2000).

Regardless of the type of educational institutions pursued by parents seeking better educational opportunities for their children, it is important to understand the lived experiences of children in various educational environments including private, independent schools.

Independent schools. The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) defines independent schools as non-profit, private schools each with an independent philosophy driven by a unique mission (NAIS, 2014). Pearl Kane, a leading expert on independent (or private) schools, acknowledged the stereotypical view of such schools as institutions that focus on educating the elite, often wealthy White children. Independent schools share six basic characteristics, which include self-governance, self-support, self-defined curriculum, self-selected students, self-selected faculty, and small size (Kane, 1991). These common characteristics of self-support has a major impact on the composition of the student population in independent schools. Since these schools are non-profit and exempt from corporate taxes,

independent schools must rely on funding through tuition and fees, in addition to charitable gifts and donations which thereby limits the school's ability to shape the social class composition of the school (Kane, 1991). In other words, independent schools rely on the monies from tuition to help fund the school. This means that many independent schools maintain a population of students from affluent social class backgrounds.

In addition, many Black students experience feelings of isolation, racial and social invisibility (Thompson & Schultz, 2003). Farlie and Resch (2002) estimated that White children are more likely to attend private, independent schools than racial minorities. Private schools have a smaller population of racial minorities than do public schools serving primarily White students (Farlie & Resch, 2002).

The psychological experiences of Black students in independent schools are significant. Black students often report feeling socially isolated or lonely, socially invisible, but racially visible, and racial-cultural discomfort (Thompson & Schultz, 2003) Kuriloff and Reichert (2003) interviewed a small sample of twenty-seven boys from an elite, independent school to understand how students from different races and social class navigated the school's academic and social geography as well as level of personal awareness. Researchers discovered that White, blue-color boys accurately perceived the social grouping of the school population. One student noted that the school was divided into distinct groups, which mostly based on social class and included the rich, those that were not and a group of others (Kuriloff and Reichert, 2003). Some of the White, blue-collar boys were able to identify parallels between stereotypical beliefs about Blacks and stereotypical beliefs about working class Whites. Other White, working class boys admitted to hiding their social class status even from close friends in order to fit in with the group. Like other students with marginalized identities, Black students had a keen sense of distinct social

groupings and which group was at the center (Kuriloff & Reichert, 2003). They articulated the interaction of racism and classism that played a role in who was recognized and honored by school leaders and faculty members. However, unlike some of the White working-class students who experienced some forms marginalization based on social class, Black students utilized a set of sophisticated coping mechanisms for managing the social and academic landscape of the school. These coping mechanisms and collective support from other Black students, regardless of social class, served as a buffer from the detrimental psychological effects of marginalization observed in other students (Kuriloff & Reichert, 2003).

While researchers like DeCuir-Gunby (2007) have suggested that African Americans are enrolling in independent schools at an increasing rate, particularly middle class African Americans who seek upward mobility, students of color in independent schools often experience challenges in terms of racial identity development. African American students often feel marginalized from the social, academic and curricular components of school and also disconnected from African American peers outside of the independent school context (DeCuir-Gunby, 2007). The author found that even when African American students came from well-to-do families, racial conflicts still existed in the lived experiences of students.

DeCuir-Gunby (2007) outlined the important role that students, families and the school community can have in supporting student of color in independent schools. Students who are helped to understand the multidimensionality of race and class will feel more empowered and might also develop the ability to advocate for themselves. Families of African American students can support by being actively involved in student's academic and extracurricular activities. Finally, independent schools can play a large role in creating more inclusive and responsive communities for marginalized populations by committing to recognizing and understanding the

racial-cultural and social class influences within the school community. Faculty can commit to designing culturally rich and relevant curricula representative of people from various racial, ethnic and social class backgrounds (DeCuir-Gunby, 2007). DeCuir-Gunby also stressed the importance of hiring more African American faculty to create more representative school communities.

Parents of Black students enrolled in independent schools also experience difficulties similar to that of Black students (Stevenson & Arrington, 2012). African American parents express concern and anxiety about the social and emotional costs of sending their children to independent schools that are primarily populated by the White elite (Stevenson & Arrington, 2012). Specifically, there is a struggle for African American parents that involve attempting to identify an educational environment with ample resources that is also aligned with the cultural background of the family (Stevenson & Arrington, 2012). Researchers Stevenson and Arrington conducted a longitudinal study, which examined the experiences and successes of Black students in independent schools. The participants were all parents of children in independent schools. The large majority of participants identified as African American. Participants completed the Parent Experience of Racial Socialization (PERS, 2002) which follows the teenage version (TERS) but parents note how often they convey racial socialization messages to children; the Perceived Racism Scale (PRS); and the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI). The researchers also conducted focus groups among parents of children and adolescents attending two different independent schools. Results from analysis of these focus groups suggested that parents had concerns about providing high quality educational opportunities for their children and the psychological impact of how their children view themselves and racial-cultural beings and also their social and academic success (Stevenson & Arrington, 2012). The authors also

found that parents' emotional responses to racial discrimination resulted in more frequent racial socialization practices.

Counseling Psychology, School Counseling, and Students of Color in Independent Schools

While the research on experiences of children and adolescents in independent schools continues to grow, it is also important to understand the experiences of parents, in that the socialization practices of parents have a substantial impact on the psychological, social and academic development and overall well-being of children and adolescents. Many Black American parents struggle with where to send their children for schooling, and cannot simply assume that any particular school will be a supportive learning environment (Mandara, Moore, Richman & Varner, 2012). The psychosocial struggles and circumstances faced by Black parents and children experience as a result of systematic and institutional racism and bias continue to be an important area of research for social scientists.

Counseling psychologists have illuminated the problematic results of applying a predominantly Eurocentric worldview of psychology to understand the lived experiences of people of color (Fischer & Shaw, 1999). Researchers have found that it is essential for mental health clinicians to understand the role of racism and discrimination on the mental health outcomes of African Americans (Fischer & Shaw, 1999) and that the experiences of people of color are consequently very different from White Americans. These experiences have a pronounced impact on the psychological, social, work-related, and academic outcomes that concern counseling psychologists. It is vital for counselors working with youth and families to develop a keen understanding of the racial-cultural experiences of parents and children in various educational environments and the psychosocial and academic outcomes of students. Such an understanding will allow counselors to work more effectively as they avoid misdiagnoses and

misunderstandings. For school counselors and educators, an increased knowledge base regarding the racial-cultural experiences of parents and children of color in independent schools and other educational environments can help to shape the policies, practices and institutional standards within such institutions to become more responsive and supportive for Black children and families.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study emerges from the preceding discussion, which began with an outlining of the fact that historically, Black Americans have been disproportionately exposed to substandard educational environments with fewer resources and well-trained teachers and staff. Thus, it can be reasonably surmised that some parents may have experienced such conditions at some point in their academic careers. A parent's personal educational experience can influence emotional feelings about school and potentially impact the way in which a parent socializes his or her child, both academically and racially. These experiences may play a role in the way they prepare their child for school both in terms of academic preparation and for the experiences the child may encounter that are directly related to his or her social position as a Black American. Additionally, a parent's experience within their child's educational environment may also impact these socialization practices. For example, a parent's interaction with school administration, teachers and staff in addition to a connection with the larger parent body community may impact a parent's feelings about their child's academic environment.

Drawing upon the foregoing, there is a need to better understand the psychosocial experiences of Black parents in independent school communities, yet the research that addresses these issues directly is scant. The purpose of the current study is to contribute to the building of this knowledge base by exploring the experiences of Black parents whose children attend

independent (or private) schools. Specifically, this study examined the racial-cultural experiences of Black parents within the independent school community with a particular focus upon parent's racial socialization practices. The following overarching questions will guide this research:

1. What are the racial-cultural and psychosocial experiences of Black parents whose children attend independent schools?
2. How are these experiences associated with parents' perceptions of their child's integration and socialization within the school community?
3. How do Black parents whose children attend independent schools attempt to utilize parenting practices and other techniques/resources to facilitate their children's socialization and success?
4. How do Black parents believe these experiences and practices influence their child from an academic, social and emotional perspective?

Chapter III: Method

Given the exploratory aim of this study with regard to the understanding of the racial-cultural experiences and perspectives of Black parents who send their children to independent schools, a qualitative method was chosen. As compared to quantitative methods, a qualitative approach allowed the researcher to collect richer, more nuanced data derived from parents' narratives that allows for the emergence of new and unanticipated concepts and ideas. Moreover, qualitative methods are a good fit with the culturally-relevant, context-specific nature of the research questions, as discussed below.

Participants

Participants were recruited from independent schools in Tri-State area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Participants eligible for inclusion in the study were parents who identified as Black American or African American, live in the United States and had children enrolled in independent schools in grades 5-12.

The sample consisted of 12 adults, a number of participants that is within the guidelines outlined in for Consensual Qualitative Research (Hill et. al., 1997; Hill et. al., 2005). Eleven participants were female and one participant was male. Participants ranged in age from 35 to 57. The ages of the children of the participants ranged from age 12 to 16. According to the results of the study's demographics questionnaire, ten of the 12 participants were married and two participants were single. Seven of the 12 participants self-identified as middle class, four participants identified as upper middle class and one participant identified as working class. The social class of the family in which the participants were raised was also reported by participants based on their own self-assessment of the social class of their family of origin. Seven participants were raised middle class, three participants were raised working class, two participants were

raised lower middle class. All of the twelve participants earned at least a college degree. Two of the 12 participants had doctoral degrees and five had Master's degrees. Ten out of the 12 participants attended public school for elementary, middle and high school. Two participants attended Catholic school for elementary and middle school and attended a public high school.

Procedures

Participants were recruited from eight independent schools in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut area through personal contacts of the primary investigator who are staff members in schools. The primary researcher also contacted organizations, including Resources in Independent School Education (RIISE) and Early Steps, which are involved in supporting families of children of color in independent schools, and an invitation to participate in the study was posted on the website of the RIISE organization. Twenty-one people responded, however, five were ineligible for participation and four ultimately decided not to participate. Interviews were conducted between Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. Seven interviews were conducted in person and the remaining five interviews were conducted over the phone. Each participant recruited for participation completed a consent form, informing them of the nature of the research study and that participation is completely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point. Prior to each interview, participants signed this consent form and completed a demographic questionnaire. Participants whose interviews were conducted over the phone completed and emailed the consent form and demographic questionnaire to the primary researcher in advance of the interview. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed for analysis.

Instruments

Demographic questionnaire. A brief demographic questionnaire contained items corresponding to participants' gender, age, race, education level, marital status, social class and

occupation, as well as the age(s) and gender of each of their children. Additionally, the questionnaire captured participants' family and personal background, which includes the education level of the participants' parents, family social class background and type of primary and secondary school attended by the participant. A copy of the demographic form is contained in Appendix A.

Interview. A semi-structured interview questionnaire was developed from the research questions and previous longitudinal study involving Black parents with children in independent schools (Arrington & Stevenson, 2006). The semi-structured format allowed participants to share their own personal thoughts, feelings and reactions to raising and parenting a Black child attending an independent school.

Prior to data collection, the interview protocol was piloted on three individuals who met the criteria for participation. These individuals provided feedback to the primary investigator about the overall interview process and protocol. Based on the results and feedback from the pilot study, the interview protocol was implemented as originally written. A copy of the interview protocol is contained in Appendix B.

Qualitative Methods, Counseling Psychology, and Race-Related Research

Researchers and psychologists, particularly counseling psychologists, have advocated for a paradigmatic shift from reliance upon largely quantitative methods of psychological research to the inclusion of qualitative research methods (Ponterotto, 2005). Historically, qualitative research is well-established in a number of different fields, including anthropology, sociology, education and psychology, yet psychological research has been dominated by quantitative methodology (Ponterotto, 2005). Ponterotto (2005) suggested that many psychologists, particularly counseling psychologists, could benefit from applying qualitative techniques to the

study of their research interests, in that these methods are "designed to describe and interpret the experiences of research participants in a context-specific setting" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, as cited in Ponterotto, 2005, pg. 128). Specifically, qualitative research methods appeal to counseling psychology's proclivity towards culturally-sensitive research in accordance with the American Psychological Association's Multicultural Guidelines (American Psychological Association, 2008). Along the same lines, the APA Task Force on the Implementation of Multicultural Guidelines recommended that "the APA encourage all those involved in psychological research and publication to be grounded in the empirical and conceptual literature on the ways that culture influences the variables that they investigate as well as culture-specific variations of research design, assessment, and analysis." (American Psychological Association, 2008, pg.12). In enacting these recommendations, qualitative research methodologies can be particularly useful in understanding and conceptualizing phenomena related to sociocultural experiences as they are focused upon the research participant's personal description (Ponterotto, 2005). Accordingly, qualitative methodologies are frequently used in psychological studies of individuals' experience of racial-cultural bias, oppression, and discrimination (e.g., Blustein, Murphy, Kenny, Jerrigan, Perez-Gualdron, Castaneda, Koepke, Land, Urbano & Davis, 2010; Smith, Constantine, Graham, Dize, 2008; Smith & Redington, 2010; Flores, Mendoza, Ojeda, He, Meza, Medina, Ladehoff & Jordan, 2011).

In the current study, Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR: Hill, Thompson & Williams, 1997; Hill Thompson, Hess, Knox, Williams & Ladany, 2005) was used to analyze interview data. CQR (to be described below) is a methodological approach that incorporates constructivist aspects as well as some elements of post positivism (Hill et. al., 2005; Ponterotto, 2005); it is primarily constructivist because of the emphasis on reality as constructed by

individuals based on their experiences (Hill et. al., 2005). Another important element of CQR is the emphasis on consensus among the analysis team to make meaning of the data gathered from participants (Hill et. al, 2005). As a qualitative method, CQR is particularly useful in areas of research that have not been fully explored, and the CQR process allowed for a robust examination of each participant's individual experiences. One of the essential components of CQR is the use of open-ended questions allowing for a detailed examination of the breadth and depth of each participant's experience (Hill et. al., 2005).

Data Analysis

CQR, the data analysis method used in this study, centers upon the importance of examining the meaning conveyed by the data while staying as close as possible to participants' words. At the outset, it is necessary for the analysis team to be cognizant of their own biases, expectations, and assumptions, as they can influence the data analysis process. CQR follows a standardized set of procedures by which the research team members analyze the data in order to understand the phenomenon of interest while maintaining the integrity of the data and the experiences of the individual participants.

Research team. The primary researcher was a Black American female doctoral student who has experience conducting research with CQR methodology. She is not a parent, but attended an independent school herself from the 5^{th}-12^{th} grade. She is also currently employed as a counselor at an independent school in New York City. The primary researcher led, supervised and managed all procedures and steps of the study, which included recruitment of participants, data collection and analysis. The research supervisor for the study was a White faculty member at a large Northeastern graduate school. She has substantial experience and expertise in CQR. The primary researcher recruited two research assistants to join the CQR research team. One

research assistant was a Black American male doctoral student in counseling psychology and a White, Jewish American female doctoral student in clinical and health psychology. Both assistants received training in the methodology before embarking on the data analysis. The auditor for the study was a multiracial American female doctoral student in Counseling Psychology with significant experience in CQR research.

Expectations and biases. As mentioned, an important part of CQR is that the members of the research team identify and discuss their expectations and biases before embarking on the analysis. The rational for this is that expectations and biases may unduly influence the data analysis process. Hill et. al (2005) suggested that biases are developed through our own individual experiences and must be brought to the awareness of research team members so as to reduce the impact on data analysis. Similarly, Hill et. al (2005) pointed out that exposure to relevant literature may influence the expectations of the researchers; the bias derived from this source may be minimal, yet should still be acknowledged and discussed.

Prior to the start of the data analysis, the members of the research team met to discuss their expectations of the results of the data and potential biases based on the research sample. Each member shared that they had attended independent schools themselves and that they expected to be confronted with their own experiences of being a student in this environment. One member spoke about attending an independent school and being raised by a single mother who didn't make as much money as the other families in the school. She spoke about the different experiences she had had compared to some of her peers, and expressed that she anticipated this experience might be shared by some of the participants either based on race or social class. Another researcher recalled conversations he had had with his family about education and the importance of education, and anticipated that parents might discuss the sacrifices they made in

order to provide a high-quality education for their children. Similarly, the primary researcher shared her belief that participants might recall difficult experiences in their own schooling that informed their decision to send their child to an independent school and might also frame the parenting practices employed.

Development of and coding into domains. Once the interviews were completed, the research team developed a "start list" of potential domains, or topic areas, that were derived from the interview protocol as well as from relevant and related literature. In order to do this, each researcher shared their list of proposed topic areas and together the research team discussed to consensus the domains that best represented the data from the interviews. The list of domains and the raw interview data was submitted to the auditor who reviewed the materials and provided feedback to which the researchers made necessary and appropriate changes.

In the following step, the researchers independently reviewed the interview data into the agreed upon domains. Afterwards, the researchers came together to reach consensus on the portions of the narrative that fit within each domain. The start list of domains and two transcribed interviews were sent to the auditor and research supervisor for review. The research team later reviewed and came to consensus on the feedback from each auditor which included revising the domain list and re-sectioning the narratives based on the new domain list.

Abstracting core ideas within domains. The purpose of developing core ideas is to summarize the data from participants' interview data under each domain while maintaining the integrity of the participant's words and statements as much as possible. The research team members created core ideas for each domain in each case (i.e., participant interview) and then came together and work towards consensus in order to arrive at a summary statement for each

domain. The materials were then submitted to the auditor who provided feedback for the research team.

Cross analysis and auditing of the cross analysis. The purpose of this process is to find similarities within the various domains across interviews. In this stage, researchers examine the core ideas within each domain and derive categories that summarize the core ideas. Eventually these categories received labels that described the frequency with which they appeared in participants' narratives. The auditor reviewed this process as well and provided feedback to the research team.

Frequency labels. As previously stated, part of the CQR process has a quantitative element, and that step involves counting the cases that are represented in each category. Categories that were endorsed by each participant, or all but one participant in the analysis, were labeled *general*. When at least half of the cases are represented within a category they were labeled *typical*. Categories that apply to more than one case, but less than half are considered *variant*. Finally, categories that only represent one case are considered *rare* and are not considered to be representative of the sample. These categories were excluded from the final results.

Stability check. Hill et al. (1997) recommended that, in the beginning of the data analysis, two interview transcripts should be left out of the analysis to be used later for the stability check; this procedure was followed in this study. In this final stage, the researchers repeated the same sequence of analysis for these two remaining cases, and then incorporated the results into the frequency calculations. The core ideas which emerged from the two sets of interview data did not significantly alter the previously-assigned frequency labels. Therefore, the analysis was determined to be stable without the need for further interview data to be collected.

Chapter IV: Results

In this chapter, the results of the qualitative analysis will be presented based on the ten domains that emerged from the data in addition to the categories represented within each domain. According to the specifications outlined by Hill and colleagues (2005), there are frequency labels applied to each category reported in the analysis. Categories referring to 11 or 12 cases were labeled general, those applying to 6 to 10 cases were labeled typical, and those applying to 2 to 5 cases were labeled variant. Categories represented by only one case were labeled rare. Consistent with the recommendations from Hill and colleagues (2005), these cases are deemed as uncharacteristic of the study's sample and therefore will not be included in the results of this chapter.

Hill, Thompson and Williams (1997) suggested that researchers conducting consensual qualitative research (CQR) develop a narrative based on the categories found to be either general or typical. According to the interview data collected from this sample of participants, the following narrative articulates the prototypical experience of a Black American parent with a child enrolled in an independent school.

Within the analysis, the typical Black American parent whose child (or children) attends an independent chose to enroll their child because she felt that the public school system was inappropriate. In general, she has good relationships with faculty and administrators at her child's school. She believes the school demonstrates a commitment to diversity and multicultural education, but feels that efforts in this area need improvement. Specifically, she feels that schools must focus more on race and racism. She socializes with other parents at the school. Her child performs well academically and has a lot of friends. She believes her child is confident in her racial identity at school. Upon reflecting on her own experiences at school, she recalls being

in the Gifted and Talented (G&T), Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) programs. Common messages about education from her own original family members were that college was expected; her parents stressed the importance of a college education. In general, education was considered a core value in her family. A persistent family message about race and ethnicity was the need to work "twice as hard" as compared to White people. As a parent, she consciously prepares her child the for racism and discrimination he will face. She teaches her child about Black history and culture and she tries to instill a sense of racial pride in her child. She affirms her child's racial identity and teaches her child to be strong in representing her identity as a Black person.

Domains and Categories

A comprehensive, systematic analysis of the 12 semi-structured interviews conducted in this study yielded 10 overall themes which describe and represent the participant's experiences. Each of these themes, represented by domains in CQR analysis, will be described, as well as the categories that emerged within each from a cross-analysis of the interview narrative. A list of the domains and their respective categories can be found in Table 1. In the text below, domain titles are represented by section headings, and category titles are italicized in the text within each section.

Parents' experience of the school community. This first domain described participants' experience of the community within the school in which their child attends. There were two general categories emerged within this domain: *I have good relationships with the faculty and administration* and *the school demonstrates a commitment to diversity and multicultural education.* With regard to the first of these, one participant discussed her involvement in the school community and relationships with faculty, administration and parents:

> You know, I am on the Board of Trustees... I feel pretty good, I feel that I'm well respected. I don't feel any overt animosity. I feel that I can talk to the teachers and administration and we have good relationships. And the same is true of the parents. I feel the parents have worked with me because I am an active parent. I've always felt that they've welcomed me into the parent organizations and have included me. I mean, we don't hang out, which is fine. Maybe one or two parents that I connect with like that, but I don't really get invited to their homes or anything like that, but I do feel like I'm part of the community, as much as I can be a part of the community.

Another participant spoke about how the relationships she has established with teachers:

> I have a good relationship with the faculty and with her teachers, I think. I mean, they are super good at partnership. They spot out her weaknesses. They understand it and they communicate that with me and they have a plan. And sometimes it scares me a little bit. Sometimes. Because, I question it. Because I don't think other parents of color experience the same thing. They tell me that they don't get that same kind of treatment. That they don't get that same kind of communication, so I don't know if it's because of something that I've done. I don't know if it's just that I know how to play the game the right way and that we are communicating the right way? Is it because I'm a little passive and I don't rock the boat enough that they feel more comfortable with me? I don't think so, but I think whatever it is that we've done…we've done it right! We've created a good partnership between school and home and were able to have that communication. And they see the potential of my child and so academically she's doing really well.

The second general category that emerged from the analysis, *The school demonstrates a commitment to diversity and multicultural education*, is illustrated by a comment by one participant who spoke passionately:

> Yes, they really, really do! My son cried so hard after Trump won. I've never seen him cry so hard. He said he didn't want to go back to the Ruby Bridges days. So, I just held him and told him we would overcome this. And just a few days later I heard him singing before school, "Ain't nobody gon' turn me 'round, turn me round, turn me round…" So I asked him where he heard that and he told me he learned it at school. You see how they build Black boys up and empower them! That is the song they were taught to sing after the election!

There were three typical categories that emerged within this domain: *I socialize with other parents; I am involved in the school communit*y and *The school's efforts towards improving diversity and multicultural education need improvement.* One participant spoke about the first of these typical categories regarding the close relationships she has with other parents at her child's school:

> Some of my dear friends are parents in the class. We hang out all the time. In fact, three couples from the class...we all went to see Straight Outta Compton together! I mean these are people whose kids go to school together and then we had drinks and deconstructed the movie intellectually! But I also and I have to admit I think I socialize on that level with the families of color. Like, the people I am closest to are a Black couple, one couple where the mom is Mexican American and dad is Guyanese; one couple is an Iranian lesbian couple. Like those are my go-to's in the class. And that's my level of social interaction.

With regard to the second typical category, *I am involved in the school communit*y, another participant spoke of her involvement in the school community:

> We have this mother-daughter book club that I started, and all the moms and daughters get together and talk about books. We also talk about friendships and puberty, too. There is only one class per grade so I think it is important that we work together or it will be miserable for the parents and the kids.

The third typical category, *The school's efforts towards improving diversity and multicultural education need improvement*, is illustrated by a participant who mentioned the need for the school to focus on diversity of the curriculum and hiring people of color:

> I will say that the parents push to diversify the curriculum and that has been effective. The curriculum does represent multiculturalism in everything from the assemblies, to the programs and the academic curriculum. Parents really infuse themselves to beef up Black history month or the Lunar New Year or Hispanic Heritage month. You know, we make ourselves…we are always on them to make sure this stuff is imbedded into the curriculum all the time. So, us pushing back on the curriculum made a difference and the hiring is something we want to get up on a level that is more representative. Hiring is certainly something we want to improve. I mean the few Black teachers we do have are like a hot commodity!"

Four variant categories emerged from the analysis *My child's cultural heritage and racial cultural background is honored and validated. My child benefits from having teachers of color; I have a network of other parents of color at the school; I must advocate for the needs of my child*. In speaking about the first of these, participants discussed how the school and teachers are

committed to honoring and validating the cultural background and heritage of the students. One participant commented about her feelings about the school and teachers,

> It is the best place. Everyone is honored and validated for who they are… And the teachers are not Teach for America teachers who are just there for a few years. They authentically want to lift these kids up and honor their cultural heritage and background. And they support the entire family.

Another variant category that emerged from the analysis, *my child benefits from having teachers of color,* was mentioned by several participants who discussed these benefits to their child. One participant elaborated on her and her child's experience:

> And, I like that she goes to school with teachers and administrators who look like her, you know. Women of color, and it's not just about how it benefits her. It also is beneficial to me as a parent! Because those are the people who often report to me when she's not doing what she needs to do. Or, if there is something they notice that needs to be managed there seems to be like a common language and communication that we can have that maybe I won't be able to have with some of the other White teachers. And so it works really well. They'll tell me what they notice and I also feel like I can be myself around them and I can say a little bit more of what I'm thinking without the filter of thinking I got to change things for White folks. You know, I can be more candid with the teachers and administrators of color.

With regard to the third variant category, *I have a network of other parents of color at the school,* participants spoke about their school-based parental network of people of color. One participant stated, "I am a part of the Parents of Children of Color group at our school which has been a tremendous resource. I've learned about things happening in the school and opportunities for my

daughter that I may have not known of otherwise." Finally, the last variant category which emerged from the analysis, *I must advocate for the needs of my child,* was endorsed by a few participants. In discussing this belief, one participant elaborated with the following:

> I like to call myself a "nagging parent"… I like to think that they go the extra mile for my daughter because they know that if something is missing or something is lacking they know they will get an email or a phone call for me…so I think the teachers are really hands on and responsive to her needs. They're going to make sure they dot all the I's and cross your T's when they're dealing with my daughter.

Parent's reasons for selecting the school. This domain includes categories that highlight participants' reasons for selecting a particular school for their child. Only one typical category emerged within this domain: *Public school was inappropriate for my child.* The remaining five categories in this domain were variant. With regard to the typical category, one participant spoke about her own thoughts of her daughter attending public school:

> I can remember after I first had my daughter and I was pushing her in the stroller around the neighborhood. And I saw the conditions of the schools and I thought, "I can't send my child to these schools. I want something more for her. She deserves better for her education."

Another participant shared a similar belief:

> The public school in our neighborhood was not sufficient for her. And by sufficient, I mean it wasn't academically rigorous. And then, socially, she would not fit. In the middle and high school, she would not fit. In elementary she would have been fine, but middle and high school we felt like she needed something completely different. She went to visit on a field trip to the local public middle school that she was zoned for, even though we

had already chosen a private school for her and had been accepted. But just with her visiting...in that one visit to the public school, she came home and told my husband that she was so happy that she did not have to go to that school. There was just... in that short time she was there, there was fighting, people stealing -- students stealing teacher's bags, just some real bad behavior. She's just had life experiences that are different -- she's seen a little bit more of the world as well compared to some of the other kids at that school. So, this would just be a very different experience for her. The demographics of the school just wouldn't have been the right fit for her.

Similarly, another participant spoke about experiences that her child had had at public school, which led her to pursue independent school.

> We went over to the public schools -- one of the best public schools in my town. It was one of the best elementary schools in our district. Out of the 10 schools in our district, her school was considered the top. So she went to that school from second grade to fourth grade and that was a very diverse neighborhood and a diverse school. But things changed around third or fourth grade. There were more children in the class that were disruptive. My daughter complained a lot about kids being very disruptive in the classroom, and not presenting themselves well and slowing down the learning process. She's very studious, so I looked at a lot of other schools that were a good fit for her. I began looking for private school for middle and high school and I found this school that started in the fifth grade and it went to the 12th grade that was perfect for her.

Five variant categories emerged from the analysis explaining reasons for which parents selected their child's school. These variant categories included *the atmosphere of the school; I did a lot of research to find the best fit; there were many teacher of color; I was not happy with my child's*

previous school; the head of school. Participants who spoke about the first of these described how the atmosphere of the school influenced their decision: "It was also the color and vibrancy of the school...you know, the atmosphere...I could see myself going to that school." Similarly, another participant shared her feelings about the atmosphere of her child's school:

> It's more chill. I would say that the school is pretty comfortable I don't feel that it is stuffy or whatever. We are in this space that is this beautiful wooded expansive campus, and so when you go and visit for the first time it is beautiful. It's like you're at Yale or Harvard or whatever. It's so different from the Manhattan schools. You go in through these gates and there are buildings separated by land, so it is like a campus as opposed to a single school building. So that environment creates that kind of...well, you could take it either way, but I think the people in that environment made us feel really comfortable and cozy in that way. In this wooded space, we felt comfortable...So, I was like, okay, I could see how this could be to their advantage. It wasn't my thing at first, but I get it now. I would say that now I feel very good about it and I have grown to be more comfortable with it.

Another variant category, *I did a lot of research to find the best fit,* was endorsed by participants, such as one who highlighted the amount of research she did to find the best school for their child. She described her process for researching schools, "When I first looked into an independent school for my child I did all my research, I had a matrix. I can't help it…you know us Ph.D.'s. So I had a matrix with different categories from diversity to educational programs, etc." With regard to the third variant category, *there were many teacher of color*, one participant identified the presence of teachers of color as a primary reason for selecting a particular school. She illustrated this choice:

> I picked this school and we didn't apply to that many. I think I looked at 25 schools and we only applied to four or five because NYC is just so segregated, and so I picked this school though because there were not just women of color, there were men of color in the classroom, too! And they had boys and girls of color in the classroom!

There were also a variant number of participants who spoke about the fourth variant category, *I was not happy with my child's previous school*. A few participants spoke of how displeased they were with their child's previous school and how their discontentment led them to choose a different environment for their child. One parent spoke specifically about the curriculum at his child's previous school, "His school is a very traditional school. I don't feel that the curriculum is as progressive as it was in his prior school that he attended where I thought the curriculum was progressive to the point where it was ridiculous! The culture at his current school is just great!" Finally, participants endorsed a fifth variant category, *the head of school,* as an important factor in deciding on a particular school. One participant mentioned, "When we went to the open house I was impressed with the head of school first of all. She was really involved with the students so I liked that. And I liked her approach to education."

Children's experiences at school. This domain includes categories that capture the participants' description of their child's experiences, both academic and interpersonal, at school. There was one category within this domain that emerged as a general response: *My child is doing well academically*. One participant articulated her child's academic performance, "She's doing very well! Academically it's phenomenal! I mean...it is like bomb good! I have never seen her perform so well, it's just phenomenal and the school is not a joke! They expect a lot from her." Two typical categories and three variant categories also emerged from the analysis. A typical number of participants shared that their *child has a lot of friends* and that their *child feels*

confident in his/her racial-identity at school. With regard to the first of these, one participant described her child's network of peer relationships and friendships at school:

> She seems to be doing well. She has friends and this past summer we were on vacation in Greece we actually saw one of our Indian friends and their family and they were very welcoming and we took a picture together so she really is doing well. Again, she's on the debate team so she's constantly texting and emailing her debate team friends, which can run the gamut in terms of race. They seem to have a good vibe going so no complaints. She has a core group of her girlfriends at school who are all Black -- I would say probably like six or seven. So she has a good group of girls who are smart and very sweet and likeable and of all different backgrounds, all different shades of Black -so she feels very comfortable. I did tell her, you know, and I love her little group of friends and sometimes they come over. But, I do tell her to make sure that you have a diverse set of friends because...for one thing, I pay for your network of friends so you need to diversify as much as possible.

With regard to the second typical category that emerged from the analysis, *my child feels confident in his/her racial identity at school*, one participant discussed her child's confidence in her racial identity, "She feels positively about it. She's just never had the experience of feeling totally isolated based on her race or having the feeling like there was something wrong about being African-American. So, she feels really confident in her race and her who she is."

Three variant categories emerged from the analysis including *my child has difficulty socially, my child does not feel like race plays a role in his/her experience at school; my child doesn't work to his/her potential*. In discussing the first of these, participants mentioned that their child has had difficulty socially in school. One participant elaborated about her child's

experience, “His first year was rough because he is the youngest in the class and he was getting teased. But it is getting better now.” The second variant category, *my child does not feel like race plays a role in his/her experience at school,* is illustrated by a parent who elaborated, “I know she doesn't feel that her race is an issue and in her school, she doesn't really feel that. Her friends are all different backgrounds and races and she gets invited to things, so she doesn't feel that her race is a problem.” Additionally, several participants discussed the third variant category, *my child doesn’t work to his/her potential*. A participant commented that, “He gets all A’s and B’s and doesn’t come home and study. He is lazy. My mother says that I was the same way. My son keeps telling me it is fine because he is passing. But his teachers tell me that he could get all A’s if he tried.”

Parent’s experiences with school. In a domain that encompassed the participant’s own experience in school, only one typical category emerged from the analysis. A typical parent’s experience in school was involvement *in the Gifted and Talented, Honors and Advanced Placement programs*. One participant spoke of the experience in the Honors program at school compared to the network of friends from neighborhood in which they lived:

> I was in honors classes all the way through school. You know, one of the things that was unique about me was that I was in honors classes with all these White kids but I lived in neighborhood with other Black kids so when I went to high school not only did I have friends who are White but I also had all my Black friends and I ended up you know, kind of being the person that connected everyone -- connected the Black kids to the White kids.

Six variant categories emerged from the analysis. A variant number of participants spoke of the quality of relationships with their teachers, with participants indicating that *I had good*

relationships with my teachers or that they *didn't have close relationships with my teachers.* Other variant responses included participants who reported that *I received a good education; I had good relationships with my peers; I had difficulty making friends in school; my teachers were unsupportive; teachers liked me because I was smart.* With regard to the first of these, one participant described the relationships with teachers in a positive manner and the impact of the relationship on academic trajectory:

> You know, I had a couple of teachers who took a liking to me. My homeroom teacher, he was a White male, and he kind of took a liking to me. He was fine by me. And he was one of my math instructors as well. There was also a Black teacher, she taught math and she was also really fond of me. And there was another Black teacher who taught history and she actually went to [name redacted] University as well. She was one of the main reasons that I applied to that school. And she was like the first person that taught me about Black history, so I had those people to kind of go to-to just talk in general and they motivated me

Conversely, another participant discussed the second variant category, *I didn't have close relationships with my teachers*, and described the lack of a connection with her teachers and feeling that the treatment received was different than that of the White students:

> With the teachers, I felt like I wasn't give the same opportunities. The same quality of work wasn't expected of me as it was from the other White children. I never really had a great relationship with my teachers. I think it was pretty difficult for me during those years because I was the only child of color in my school so there were lots of issues regarding that. In elementary school, I was the only Black person-the only person of color. And the teachers were all White as well.

Other participants endorsed the third variant category, *I received a good education*. One participant discussed her educational experience: “It was a very different experience than my child’s. I am not sure how academically rigorous it was, but I think I received a good education overall.” Several participants discussed the quality of relationships with their peers. Specifically, a couple participants endorsed another variant category, *I had difficulty making friends in school,* and described their own difficulties in fostering and maintaining relationships with their peers:

> So, I never really had many positive experiences when I think back on being in elementary school. It was very difficult. The school was pretty large because it housed kindergarten through 6th grade and I remember it being very large and I remember being the only person of color in that school. I felt really alone a lot. And I didn't have that one teacher that I could go to and talk to so I just remember feeling alone a lot. Yeah, school was more like a chore versus a place where I felt like I could go in and learn something. It kind of felt like a prison. Maybe I shouldn't say that, but I didn't feel comfortable in that environment at all and it was really difficult for me.

Another participant shared a similar experience:

> I had a good relationship with my teachers I always did. My peers not so much. I think it's just (my) social awkwardness. I just I didn't fit in, which I think I'm lucky to say that now…it was a good thing. I didn't have maybe I had like one or two friends in elementary school. I don't talk to any of them anymore, but I met my best friend in high school. But, I didn't have a huge clique.

While some participants expressed difficulty with peer relationships, other participants described a different experience. A variant number of participants mentioned the dynamic of having *good relationships with peers*. Others expressed the feeling that *teachers were unsupportive*, with one

elaborating that, “I always had good friends in school and got along with everyone. That was never an issue for me. As for my teachers, I didn’t really have much of a relationship with them. They weren’t particularly supportive and I didn’t feel compelled to establish a connection with them. I just went to school and did my work and went home.” Finally, a variant number of participants expressed feeling as though *teachers liked them because they were smart*, the last variant category which emerged. One participant explained this by recounting her experience in high school: “I had another teacher, several teachers actually, who I would kind of hang out with it. I was kind of the teacher's pet so I was very close to several teachers both Black and White. I think they liked me because I was smart and always did my work.”

Parent’s racial-cultural experiences. In a domain that comprised individuals’ racial-cultural experiences, participants discussed various encounters in which racial identity was affirmed, supported or challenged. No general or typical categories emerged from this domain; the diversity of experiences of the participants was captured by several variant responses. Some participants discussed their experiences in terms of the impact of *growing up in an all-Black community.* One participated illustrated this experience:

> The neighborhood that we lived in, the whole neighborhood, was Black pretty much. And, so we were part of the town but we lived in a section of all middle-class Black people. So, there were a lot of civil service professionals, fireman, corrections officers, train conductors. And we also had professionals like doctors and lawyers who all lived in the same neighborhood -- maybe they were about 300 homes or so. And the reason I know this is because this is something that we talked a lot about as a family... our town growing up because it was just a very different town in Long Island. We had a cohesiveness of Black community together. A whole community, so we would do a lot of

> things together and have all types of events...we were so close. And, at the same time, we went to school with everyone even though we were only 15% Black... we were really close with one another and I also had the experience of being around White people just in general. Just like the whole world and so I've never felt like a real outsider, if you know what I mean. We went to school with all types of people and it was a pretty good education.

Others spoke of the demographic changes in their neighborhood and schools, recalling *my neighborhood shifted from White to Black.* One participant discussed how the demographics of the school and surrounding neighborhood shifted from mostly White to primarily Black:

> My father is college-educated and even though we lived in a nice neighborhood, we lived with mostly White people who were not college educated and had less money than we did and a lot of the White kids I went to school with. Growing up was very difficult for me. The kids didn't want to play with me, so all that stuff that I had to experience at a young age. And then the neighborhood changed and now the people who moved in were all Black and were teachers, lawyers, doctors. And we could just walk down the block to see a doctor or dentist. So everything was fine.

Other variant responses included participants who *had experiences with teachers who treated me differently than my White peers.* One participant spoke about feeling that White teachers had low expectations of the Black students:

> My relationship with my classmates -- I felt like I had a good relationship with them. But with the teachers, I didn't feel like they were as open to me. I guess I just didn't feel like they were as accepting of Black students. They didn't feel like they weren't warm they weren't engaging with me. I didn't have such a great experience with the teachers.

Another shared the difficulty of being the only student of color in school and feeling that her teachers expected less from her than her White peers.

> I think it was pretty difficult for me during those years because I was the only child of color in my school so there were lots of issues regarding that. In elementary school, I was the only Black person -- the only person of color. And the teachers were all White as well. With the teachers, I felt like I wasn't given the same opportunities. The same quality of work wasn't expected of me as it was from the other White children. I never really had a great relationship with my teachers.

Other variant categories included participants whose *first encounters with racism in school was in college* while others recalled that *I didn't learn about Black history or culture in school until college.* With regard to the former, one participant spoke of a first encounter with racial tension in school and the impact that those experiences had:

> I think because of that experience with the White kids at school academically and socially, I was okay when I got to college. I knew what was coming. I'd already been in classes with my folks and, you know, the White people in Cleveland Heights, we were cool. There was never any racial tension. When I got to college there was a lot of racial tension. So I became like the militant in college.

Similarly, another participant shared experiences of going to school with White students for the first time in college:

> Uhm, looking back, hmmm, probably not until I got to college, that was my first real experience having to manage relationships with non-Black or Hispanic people. And you know you start to see discrepancies in how things are done and how people are treated and when you're amongst a bunch of people who look like yourself, you don't necessarily

> see the difference and there is not that much difference in economic status. You still don't see it until you're among people not like you and that's when you start to notice.

With regard to the variant category, *I didn't learn about Black history or culture in school until college,* a participant discussed how she didn't learn about Black history and culture in school until she went to college:

> When I was in high school my whole objective was to get in to a historically Black college or university. I was planning my exit when I started high school. I knew I wanted something different. I knew I needed something different. And when I went to college I was finally exposed to the Black people and learned about Black history and culture from my teachers for the first time in my life.

In a final variant category, *my experience in school took a toll on my self-esteem,* a participant shared how her experience in a primarily White educational environment impacted her psychologically noting that, "It took a toll on my self-esteem because I never felt like I was good enough."

Family messages about education. A domain that comprised participants' recollections of messages they received from family members about education included one general category: *education was a core value in my family*. In addition, two typical categories emerged as *going to college was expected* and *my parents stressed the importance of a college education*. With regard to the general category, one participant spoke about the reason education was so important:

> They always told us that education was really important. They didn't play when it came to school so it was expected of you to get good grades. They just really stressed the importance of education, especially my grandparents, because my grandfather actually didn't know how to read or write but he also understood the importance of education and

> the power of education. And he felt like if he had the opportunity to be better educated he would have been, but he didn't have the opportunity so he really made sure that we understood that being educated was very important in this world.

In reference to the first typical category, *going to college was expected,* many participants discussed this expectation in their family. One participant explained her family's expectations:

> There was never a choice about going to college, not going was never an option…So, there were the expectations that they had, even having not gone through the experience themselves -- they were very adamant about I had to do it. But I don't think I ever personally thought about not doing it so they didn't have to push me.

Other participants endorsed the second variant category, *my parents stressed the importance of a college education*, by describing the level of parental influence and the importance of attending college. One participant illustrated this as follows:

> From the very beginning I was told, "You are going to college." It wasn't like necessarily a message where it was like, "This is your way out" or anything like that. Yeah, my mom was real serious about that and about school. My summers too were always filled with some enrichment, camp or education based program. It just was what it was. I don't think it was serious, like a strict punishment kind of way. It was just established so early as a part of my psyche that there wasn't even room to question. It was definitely highly valued and I would guess and we haven't ever really talked about it, but I do know her story about how she never got a chance to go to college.

Two variant categories completed the domain: *my parents didn't stress the importance of college* and *my parents never went to college.* In reference to the former, one participant described her family's social class background and mentioned that her father did not emphasize attending

college, stating “My father was a blue-collar worker and he didn’t really stress the importance of going to college.” With regard to the latter category, a participant acknowledged, “Neither one of my parents went to college, but when it came time for me to plan for college, they were really involved.”

Family messages about race and ethnicity. One general category and five typical categories emerged from this domain. With regards to the general category, the most prevalent message received from family about race and ethnicity was that *you have to work twice as hard (or harder) than White people*. One participant captured this sentiment expressed, by family members:

> As a child, I always remember hearing that we would have to work harder than a Caucasian person. So that was always in the back of my head. And as a young Black woman, I was always under the impression that we had to be strong and we had to be independent and we had to make a way out of no way so those are some of the messages that I remember about what it meant to be Black and also what it meant to be a Black woman Black female. And I would say most of these messages came from my family they were the ones that were impressed upon this.

Another participant shared a similar message from family:

> I came up during the 60s and the 70s so they would teach me that we were just as good or better than anybody else. That we could do anything. That nobody's better than me. I was taught to have some pride in yourself and your culture and to take care of people and be a decent person. But know that you'll have to work twice as hard as White people to be just as good -- to be seen as just as good. You'll have to work harder to be recognized, but no one is better than you -- no one is better than anybody.

Participants also shared common racial socialization parenting practices with their own children. Typical categories that emerged from the analysis of this domain were: 1) *I prepare my child for the racism he will face; 2) I teach my child about Black history and culture, 3) I try to instill a sense of racial pride in my child; 4) I teach my child to be strong in representing their identity as a Black person* and *5) I affirm my child's racial identity*. In reference to the first of these, one participant spoke about the current sociopolitical climate in the US and the need to prepare her son for the racism he might encounter while also empowering him with history about Black Americans:

> I am very deliberate in my conversations with my son. Now that Trump is in office I tell him all sorts of things. Like the other day I told him, "Sweetie, I don't want you roaming around in the aisles of the stores anymore. Stay close to me, stay by my side because Trump is in office." I tell my son that slavery is not his story. That is America's Black eye. His story is a story of strength and power. So I buy posters that fill his walls of famous Black people. I've been doing that since he was three or four years old. And we have playdates at our house where we watch films like "The Great Debaters" and things like that so that he (and his friends) are exposed to the greatness in their history.

One participant illustrated her endorsement of the second typical category, *I teach my child about Black history and culture*, in speaking about the various ways that she attempts to infuse Black history and culture into their daily lives and discussions of current sociopolitical events:

> Now it feels like there are always events going on, from Obama, to BLM, and now this Trump mess -- it's gonna be nonstop. So, my husband and I have been very on top of it because we have to. I mean we would have to just ignore it all to not have these conversations about racism and being Black. And that just isn't realistic. And also, they

> are at church constantly...So, anyway these are all things that are happening with them that we are managing as parents and then at home, paying attention to politics and having conversations about things we encounter. We want to prepare them for what they will encounter as Black boys and Black men. Oh, and our neighborhood. They walk around Harlem and they learn about the history and culture of Harlem and Black people in Harlem.

Similarly, another participant spoke about teaching her daughter about painful elements of Black American history:

> So, I've started showing her pictures of lynching's so that I'm desensitizing her. I want her to know, you know, of the experiences of Black people. I don't want her to be ignorant of that. I don't want her to be surprised to see those images or hear that information. As a Black woman, she needs to know. As a Black girl, she needs to know. If she doesn't, then she is ignorant and we can't appear ignorant -- especially amongst White folks. And especially because she's becoming, she's a real powerhouse, and so I want her to know her history.

Another participant highlighted another typical category, *I try to instill a sense of racial pride in my child, and* spoke about how she seeks to instill a sense of racial pride in her daughter's racial identity by teaching her about Black history and culture:

> I think it's more affirming that we are, especially being Black American, that I'm very specific with her. That we are not what they, what White folks say, we are. One time she came home and she was talking about learning about hieroglyphics and I told her that was started in Africa and that's where we come from. That wasn't a Black American thing, that was an African thing. But that is part of our heritage. We did that! That's part

> of our culture. So, it's making sure that she understands that Africa has tremendous resources and history and should not be viewed from a negative standpoint, you know.

Another typical category, *I teach my child to be strong in representing their identity as a Black person,* was illustrated by a participant who shared how her belief in the importance of supporting the development of a strong racial identity and representation:

> Oh my gosh, we were even listening to Strange Fruit and I was telling her the history of that song, and I think now is a good time, because it's not too early and it's not too late for her to understand these things -- to understand the truths -- especially when people talk to her and don't fully represent the truth. I want her to have that resilience and specifically, because she's going to a predominantly White school and it's a given that sometimes when we send them to these private schools -- if they don't have the knowledge of who they really are, and they're not going to get it in school. The worst thing that can hurt her is if she is not proud of herself, of her culture. That would kill me, because I would have never sent her to that school if she was not going to be proud of who she is.

Other parents expressed the importance of affirming their child's racial identity as illustrated by the final typical category, *I affirm my child's racial identity*. One participant elaborated: "We understand the importance of affirming her identity as a Black girl. My husband and I constantly tell her, since she was a baby, that she is smart and beautiful. We know she won't get that in school and she certainly won't get that from the world, so it is important that we always affirm her identity." Three variant categories emerged from this domain, including *my family taught me about Black history or culture; my family shared stories about racism* and *my parents instilled a sense of racial pride in me.* One participant spoke of the first of these categories in describing how family members spoke about Black history through their own family history:

> We were definitely taught to be mindful, that there were these traps that were put in place for Black folks. But from my family standpoint, the stories about our family history and our Black history…they weren't heroic stories. They were more about, like, warnings. Like, here's what happened to a family member that was at least, in part, caused by racism. And so, here are the pitfalls that you need to make sure you avoid. You know, here are the circumstances and encounters that you need to avoid. Like situations with the police or you know things like that.

With regard to the second variant category, *my family shared stories about experiences of racism*, a participant recalled stories shared by her mother about racism and how it informed the messages her parents imparted:

> And I guess they (my family) were always taught to be tolerant of other people, probably because they were raised in the south in such a crazy time of Jim Crow and so they learned to tolerate certain situations. Like my mother, she went to school in Woonsocket as a child and when she was a child, they migrated from the south to the north and so when she went to the schools in Woonsocket she would have to call the White kids ma'am and sir rather than calling them by their name. And, so they never wanted us to be rebellious. They always wanted us to be respectful even if we weren't respected. So that was something that was always taught.

Finally, the final variant category that emerged from the analysis, participants related that *my parents instilled a sense of racial pride in me*. One participant spoke about her experiences with colorism and how her mother offered affirmations and instilled a sense of racial pride in her:

> So, if I had to say anything specific about experiences I had in school, it was colorism. It was being a Black girl with dark skin and coarse hair that played a role. I wasn't

> considered beautiful and that…that was huge. And at home, my mom -- which I thought was corny -- she would try to combat it, and I didn't know why when I was young, but she would always tell me, "You have beautiful skin, you have this beautiful dark skin." But now I understand why my mother kept saying that, you know. She was affirming my existence of my beauty.

Coping with racism. In this domain, participants described ways in which they cope with racism or support their child in coping with racism. Each of the two categories within this domain was endorsed by a variant number of participants. Participants discussed how *family members supported me in coping with racism* and *I learned to deal with racism on my own.* With regard to the former, one participant recalled the support received from parents and family:

> My parents and my aunt supported me. I felt that if I experienced something, I could talk to them and they would listen and let me know that I wasn't the only one that experienced it. They would give people the benefit of the doubt, but they would also talk about having experienced similar experiences or hearing derogatory messages.

Conversely, with regard to the second category, another participant spoke about managing racism on her own: "For the most part I really felt like I would just have to learn to deal with the negative messages you know. So, if I didn't talk to my friends about it, I just tried to manage them on my own."

Suggestions for parents and school communities. One typical category emerged from this domain. The suggestion endorsed by the typical participant was *schools need to focus on race and racism.* One participant expressed feeling frustrated by the school's lack of focus on race and racism:

> I think schools really need to re-focus diversity efforts on race. It is a slap in the face to people of color to talk about all other forms of diversity and ignore race. And it isn't just our schools…it is our culture! But we have to talk about race, and our children need to learn about race and racism. A lot of the education happened in elementary and then it stops as they get older -- at a time when they really need this kind of education, too! So you have to keep talking about it and you have to make sure that White teachers are talking about it and dealing with their own biases. They have to acknowledge it and try to change, otherwise you're just protecting yourself with your privilege and I don't have time for that. I'm tired of protecting the one culture that needs no protection.

Four variant categories emerged from the analysis of this domain. A variant number of participants identified other suggestions, including *schools need to put more energy and resources towards diversity, inclusion and multicultural education; parents must do their research on schools; parents should get to know the parents in the school community* and *parents should be involved in the school community.* With regard to the first variant category, one participant discussed her feeling that schools need to put more time and resources into hiring faculty of color:

> In general, faculty makeup is another story. It's not what it should be and there is definitely some push back from families because we are like, okay what are y'all gonna do about this? But there is an ongoing conversation and I don't think it is just at our school about the trouble that they have finding qualified applicants of color. And I'm like, c'mon, that is bull crap. All of my friends are smart with Ph.D.'s and stuff, so what are you talking about, you can't find any teachers. You better come up with the money!

> Set them up! Move them up. Do whatever you need to do. Steal them from where they are just like everyone else does and let's go! Don't play with us!

In reference to the second variant category, *parents must do their research on schools*, one participant stressed the importance of doing extensive research to find the right fit for your child:

> The one suggestion that I do have for parents is to be open. Do your research. There is no one-size-fits-all, so do your research and just see what type of learning environment works for your child. Do your research and do what you think is best for your child, because different children have different needs and that's pretty much my only suggestion that I have for parents.

In reference to the third variant category, *parents should get to know the parents in the community*, participants spoke of the importance of fostering relationships with other parents: "Just be comfortable in yourself and get to know the other parents…that's what I do. And, if they invite you to something, go!" Additionally, a variant number of participants discussed the belief that *parents should get involved in the school community,* the final variant category that emerged. One participant advised, "Just be involved. Be present. Get to know people in the community. And schools have to create an environment where they are willing to reach out to and incorporate people of color in the mix. You know. It is vital."

Experience of the interview. Participants expressed their reactions and experience of the interview within this domain. One general category emerged from the analysis. In general, most participants shared that *I talk about this topic all the time with friends and family.* One participant expressed, "It's been great. Really. It's a topic that I've frequently discussed all the time with friends and family members, so it's, it was very comfortable." One typical category emerged via the response that the interview *was a nice/good experience*. As one participant said,

"It was good. I talk about this stuff all the time socially, but I've never really had the experience of talking it out in depth, you know. That was good. I feel good about that." A variant number of participants shared that the interview *was therapeutic or cathartic;* one participant highlighted this experience by stating*, "*You know, I am always down to have these conversations, I could talk forever about this. But this has even been, like, therapeutic. I had my tear session and everything." Others expressed that the interview *made me reflect on my parenting and how it is shaped by my own experiences growing up.* A participant who elaborated on this idea shared that "reflecting about parenting my own kids makes me think about myself. Now I can go back and ask my mom about my own childhood, because I don't think I remember." Finally, a variant number of participants reported that *they hoped the research would be shared with schools.* One participant illustrated this sentiment by saying, "I appreciate you taking the time to ask the questions and I'd love to see the results of hard work that you been doing and share with our school."

Chapter V: Discussion

Black Americans have experienced inequitable educational opportunities throughout U.S. history and continuing through the present day. Prior to, and nearly sixty-five years after the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling, Black American children face unequal educational opportunities to learn. Policies that have served to integrate schools and provide equal access to quality education have yielded disappointing results. Schools are more segregated today than they were before the Brown decision (Weinstein, Gregory & Strambler, 2004). Racial integration of schools stalled shortly after the landmark decision and by the year 2000, over 72 percent of Black students attended predominantly minority schools (Darling-Hammond, 2010, pg. 35), creating one of the most inequitable education systems in the industrialized world whereby students receive different learning opportunities based on race, social class and ability status (Darling-Hammond, 2004). Students of color, particularly Black and Hispanic students, are more likely to have less access to quality educational resources including highly skilled teachers, technology, curriculum and limited exposure to peers who positively influence academic learning and outcomes (Kozol, 1991; Darling-Hammond, 2004 and 2010; Logan, Minca and Adar, 2012). The achievement gap between White and Black students continues to widen as Black students perform less well on standardized tests and produce lower graduation rates, which is expected to have a tremendous negative impact on economic growth in the United States (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Logan et. al, 2012).

Furthermore, these racially segregated minority schools are more likely to have a higher concentration of poverty among the student body. Darling-Hammond (2010) identified schools with high concentration of poverty as more likely to have

> less experienced teachers and fewer learning resources, but they also have lower levels of peer group support and competition…Having a critical mass of students from higher income families with better-educated parents may mean that there are more role models in classrooms who model successful learning strategies. (pg. 37)

These "peer effects" have a significant impact on a student's learning opportunities because students from higher-income and well-educated parents often have an "academic know-how" that benefits student learning. Higher-income-earning parents also tend to have more social capital and sense of agency, which often results in an insistence for more resources and accountability from schools (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Therefore, the concentration of higher-income families in schools contributes to better academic outcomes for students regardless of the student's social class background. Overall, Black American students are more likely to attend schools with high concentration of families in poverty, underprepared teachers, less access to challenging curricula and fewer (or inadequate) resources (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Given this persistent inequality in the nation's public schools, Black American parents, many of whom attended racially segregated schools themselves, have turned to private institutions to educate their children. Such a decision, however, does not come without its own challenge, and Black parents enact racial socialization practices with their children in order to prepare them for these unique educational environments.

This chapter will address the ways in which the results of this study, outlined in the previous chapter, correspond to these issues and expand upon the research presented in previous studies and literature. These questions were:

1. What are the racial-cultural and psychosocial experiences of Black parents whose children attend independent schools?

2. How are these experiences associated with parents' perceptions of their child's integration and socialization within the school community?
3. How do Black parents' experiences impact the use of parenting practices and other techniques/resources to influence their children's socialization and academic, social and emotional success?

The chapter will begin with a discussion of the racial-cultural and psychosocial experiences of Black parents, both as students themselves and as parents whose children attend independent schools **(research question one),** and will then move to a commentary on how these experiences are associated with parents' perceptions of their child's integration and socialization within the school community **(research question two).** Following this discussion, the practices parents utilize to facilitate their children's socialization will be reviewed in addition to how these practices influence a child's academic, social and emotional outcomes in school **(research questions three and four)**. A comparison of this study's results to the expectations initially discussed by the researchers will be presented. In the following sections, implications for mental health practitioners and educators working with Black American families and children will be outlined. Finally, the limitations of the current project as well as suggestions for future research, will be described.

Research Question 1: The racial, cultural and psychosocial experiences of Black parents whose children attend independent schools

In addressing this question, the study aimed to shed light on the participants experiences in school themselves in addition to their experiences as parents of children in independent schools. Many of the participants in this study shared that they attended schools that were majority Black, or that became majority Black over time due to "White flight" in their

neighborhoods. Participants often described the racial demographics of their schools as a reflection of the racial and social class demographics of their community. A few participants went to schools that were more racially diverse, attending school with both White students and other students of color, even if their own neighborhood was racially segregated. The findings of this study seem to affirm broad areas of existing knowledge regarding the impact of racial segregation in neighborhoods, as will be outlined in the following section.

Racially segregated neighborhoods and schools. Johnson (2014) discussed the racial segregation patterns in neighborhoods in both the Northern and Southern parts of the United States, where it was noted that the migration of Black Americans to the northern cities resulted residential isolation in various neighborhoods of urban city centers. Whites responded to this influx of Black settlers by leaving these metropolitan areas (Johnson, 2014). As a result of the migration of Blacks to the northern cities and emigration of Whites from the city centers, schools in large northern cities saw their school segregation levels increase and even exceed the average segregation levels in the south. Efforts to create greater racial integration in schools was thwarted and the gains that were achieved in the 1960's and 1970's were lost. During that time period of integration, the racial demographics of schools in the Northern states declined from nearly 100% Black in 1962 to less than 15% by 1975. Schools in the Southern states experienced a similar decline in racial segregation during the same time frame where schools that were nearly all Black in 1962 declined to 20% Black in 1975 (Johnson, 2014). White flight, however, led to a different, legal type of segregation of schools which was sustained when states and counties were released from judicial oversight (Reardon et. al, 2012). Schools have now returned to pre-Brown segregation levels and school segregation impact achievement in Black American students.

Researchers have suggested that segregation leads to "feelings of inferiority and relative deprivation, limiting social learning and exposure to other cultural practices" (Johnson, 2014, pg. 210). One participant spoke about the racial demographics of her school and the social status of the few white children in her school. She stated,

> I was actually talking to someone about this yesterday, if there was a white person in our school, it was because they were on drugs. When they lived in our neighborhoods, it was never by choice...it wasn't because there was a good opportunity for an education, it was because there was something wrong. So, it (my school) was mostly African American...Caribbean. Regardless, it was predominantly people of color. Very much so people of color…like maybe there were a few whites, but again…not by choice.

Other participants described moving out of the city center and attending suburban schools. Some of their participants were a part of the racial minority in the school, but lived in a neighborhood that was mostly Black. One participant described moving from the metropolitan area, where the school systems were experiencing challenges, and attending a primarily White school while living in a predominantly Black neighborhood:

> There was a lot of madness going on in the schools at that time in Queens overall. I moved out to the suburbs when I was in the 6th grade and I went to public school. So, it was a Suburban education and it was about 15% racial minority and the makeup of the town, the neighborhood that we lived in, the whole neighborhood was Black pretty much. And, so we were part of the town but we lived in a section of all middle-class Black people. So, there were a lot of civil service professionals, fireman, corrections officers, train conductors. And we also had professionals like doctors and lawyers who all lived in the same neighborhood-maybe they were about 300 homes or so…We had a

> cohesiveness of Black community together. A whole community, so we would do a lot of things together and have all types of events...we were so close. And, at the same time, we went to school with everyone even though we were only 15% Black we were really close with one another and I also had the experience of being around white people just in general. Just like the whole world and so I've never felt like a real outsider, if you know what I mean, we went to school with all types of people and it was a pretty good education.

Researchers have found that residential patterns and neighborhood demographics have an impact on academic functioning, performance and overall child development (Johnson, 2014). Black Americans who live in highly concentrated Black neighborhoods are less likely to attend a private school or college and instead are more likely to experience disparities in academic performance (Johnson, 2010). Black Americans who live in racially segregated neighborhoods are also more likely to perform less well on standardized tests (Card & Rothstein, 2007). However, researchers believe that this is likely due to the economic composition of highly concentrated Black neighborhoods. In other words, Black Americans are often impacted by socioeconomic barriers which are exacerbated by racial segregation. Card and Rothstein (2007) found that low performance on standardized tests were a result of economic composition of the neighborhoods where Black students live versus the racial composition of the neighborhood itself. The impact of racially segregated neighborhoods on academic performance has less, therefore, to do with the race of the members of the community than the socioeconomic barriers that exist in many poor and low-income Black neighborhoods.

Black Americans who live in racially integrated neighborhoods and attend racially diverse or majority White schools still encounter their own challenges including low teacher

expectations, social isolation and psychosocial challenges with identity and self-esteem. A participant described this experience:

> I guess that my parents made certain that we lived in a good neighborhood so that we went to a good public school. It was majority White-both the teachers and the students. And my parents did a lot of my battles for me. There was a lot that I was unaware of that happened. I know there was one professor in junior high. I mean, my elementary years were fine. Those teachers were good, but I do remember my parents having to do battles for me in junior high school. My father is college educated and even though we lived in nice neighborhood-we lived with mostly White people who were not college educated and had less money than we did…so growing up was very difficult for me. The kids didn't want to play with me. So all that stuff that I had to experience at a young age. And then the neighborhood changed and now the people who moved in were all Black and were teachers, lawyers, doctors. And we could just walk down the block to see a doctor or dentist. So, everything was fine.

The racial segregation of the participants' neighborhoods, and subsequently the student body of the schools they attended, was a pertinent experience as it impacted their social, emotional and academic experiences in school. The majority of participants also discussed attending gifted and talented programs within their school and the impact on their academic trajectory as well as the social connections with peers. The finding of this study both align and diverge with existing research on Black students' experience and representation in gifted education.

Black students in gifted and talented programs. Black students have been underrepresented in gifted and talented educational programs (G &T) in the U.S. dating back to

the early 1930's and little progress has been made to change this trend (Ford, Grantham and Whiting, 2008; Grissom and Redding, 2016; Card and Giuliano, 2016). While African American students comprise about 16 percent of the student population, less than 10 percent of African Americans are enrolled in gifted and talented programs (Grissom and Redding, 2016). Most of the participants in this study, however, were in G&T programs when they were in school themselves. One participant mentioned that she grew up in the "projects" and that the racial makeup of the student body at her school was mostly Black and Hispanic. She stated, "I went to NYC public schools and her dad went to NYC public schools too…and we often compare our experiences. Now, I grew up in the NYC projects...so did he… but um, we were both people who got called out and we were put in honors classes, gifted and talented and that sort." She went on to recall how being in the gifted and talented program separated her from the other students in the school and the ways in which she benefited from a different type of education and cultural experience while she navigated the social challenges created by such separation. She recalled,

> I remember once a friend of mine was saying to me when I let [my daughter] test for gifted and talented she said, "You remember how they beat us up -- you don't want to do that to her." But I don't remember getting beat up. I remember that we got to go see plays, we got to go do a lot of things that the other kids in the school didn't do. We read the NY Times and I do remember we did different things than the other kids. So, we had access and exposure to a lot, but once we got out school it was a level playing field.

Research suggests that the reason for a disproportionate number of Black students in gifted and talented programs is often due to poor performance on standardized IQ tests and low teacher expectations (Ford, Grantham and Whiting, 2008; Grissom and Redding, 2016; Card and Giuliano, 2016). In addition to the lack of representation of Black students in these programs,

there is also the problem of retaining the few Black students enrolled in gifted and talented programs. Ford et. al. (2008) identified several reasons for the retention challenges,

- Unmet social-emotional needs expressed by students (e.g., lack of belonging, isolation, inferiority)
- Concerns expressed by parents and families regarding their child's happiness
- Concerns about meeting the academic standards of the program

These challenges often result in bright students of color withdrawing from these programs altogether. The findings of this study did not align with the research on Black students' experience in gifted education. Many of the participants who were enrolled in gifted and talented programs reported thriving in these environments. One participant spoke fondly of his experience being in a gifted and talented program and honors classes, but still being connected to his friends from his neighborhood who were not enrolled in such programs. He stated,

> You know, one of the things that was unique about me was that I was in honors classes with all these White kids but I lived in neighborhood with other Black kids so when I went to high school not only did I have friends who are white but I also had all my Black friends and I ended up you know, kind of being the person that connected everyone-connect to the black kids to the white kids.

Experiences such as this one, as well as other positive experiences reported by participants in this study, were dissimilar to the experiences that Ford and colleagues (2008) discovered about Black students in gifted and talented programs. The participants in this study often spoke of the support received from parents, family members, friends and some teachers that allowed them to persist through some of these difficult challenges. While the participants in this study received support, guidance and encouragement in their academic endeavors, this is clearly is not always the case

for many students of color. Therefore, scholars and researchers have offered suggestions on how to improve the experiences of Black and Latino students in gifted programs, but also how to appropriately identify and retain these students. Independent schools frequently do not offer gifted and talented programs as these schools often pride themselves on delivering rigorous academic standards and a robust college-prep curriculum for all students. Notwithstanding, it is likely that students of color in those settings may experience similar challenges, especially in honors and advanced placement (AP) programs. As a result, independent schools, as well as public gifted education programs, can benefit from the suggestions offered by scholars and researchers.

One of the recommendations offered by Ford and colleagues (2008) included assessing the methods and tools used to determine eligibility in a gifted program, which usually involve an assessment of IQ or an achievement test. Most public schools use intelligence or achievement test scores to determine eligibility in gifted and talented programs (Ford, 1998, Ford et. al., 2008, Grissom and Redding, 2016). Similarly, independent schools use the same class of assessments to determine acceptance into the school (Anderson, 2013). Researchers suggest that the use of these tests disproportionately disadvantages racial-cultural and linguistically diverse candidates. While these tests have been known to effectively measure the potential of middle-class White students, they are a less effective tool in assessing the abilities of Black and Latino students, regardless of social class (Ford et. al., 2008). Instead of using assessments that are known to contain biases, schools can implement culturally sensitive assessment measures and approach towards "giftedness", and mindsets among faculty (Ford et. al., 2008).

The use of non-verbal intelligence tests (e.g., Universal Non-Verbal Intelligence Test, Raven's Progressive Matrices) have been found to be less "culturally loaded" and may provide a

more accurate measure of a culturally diverse child's cognitive strengths: "These nonverbal tests give Black students opportunities to demonstrate their intelligence without the confounding influence of language, vocabulary and academic exposure" (Ford et. al., 2008, pg. 300). The implementation of these types of assessment may serve to diversify the student population admitted to independent schools thereby benefitting the educational and social experience of the students of color and White students as well. Additionally, educators can adopt a more culturally sensitive approach by understanding that the presentation of "giftedness" is not uniform across cultural groups and therefore not easily measured by one assessment alone. A culturally sensitive approach also includes understanding how discrimination and prejudice influence motivation, self-esteem and academic self-concept which can negatively impact academic and intellectual functioning and performance (Ford et. al., 2008).

In addition to employing different assessment tools and embracing culturally responsive construct of giftedness, educators might also require ongoing professional development and training in gifted education, cultural and economic diversity. A "deficit-orientation" is an unfortunate, but pervasive attitude among some educators who believe that underachievement is related to a personal deficit rather than an environmental one (e.g., racism and discrimination). However, with the projected forecast of greater racial-cultural diversity in schools and the acknowledgement of the negative environmental impacts (e.g., racism, poverty, discrimination etc.), it is imperative that teachers and other educators (e.g., administrators, counselors, psychologists and learning specialists) engage in critical self-examination to explore beliefs and attitudes about culturally diverse students and their academic and intellectual abilities. In order to appropriately serve the needs of a diverse student population, educators must continue their own professional development to expand their knowledge and skills to address the needs of the

academic, social-emotional, cognitive and cultural needs of students. Finally, educators must seek and acquire accurate information about Black families "customs, traditions, histories and child-rearing practices and use this information to support and guide students through school (Ford et. al., 2008, pg. 302).

The views of the participants in this study align with the suggestions of the aforementioned research, Specifically, participants expressed a desire for educators to expand on culturally responsive teaching practices and demonstrate an interest in understanding the cultural history, traditions, parenting and child-rearing practices and of Black American parents. Independent schools and the educators who work within these institutions are in a unique position to address these challenges given the self-governing nature of these schools and the ability to tailor an approach that meet the needs of population served. The following section describes participants' experiences of racism in independent schools and outlines recommendations based on research on addressing race and racism in independent school environments.

Race and racism in independent schools. Arlington and colleagues (2003) suggested that independent schools need to improve their efforts to address Black students' experiences of race and racism in school, something that many participants in this study acknowledged as well. The findings of this particular study parallel the existing research on Black student's experience in independent schools. Very few participants reported experiences with members of the community that would qualify as "crude expressions of racism" (Arrington, 2003); instead they encountered more subtle expressions of racism. For example, one mother spoke about the tendency of White administrators to explain the absence of Black teachers and administrators by pointing to the difficulty they had in finding qualified Black teachers. Another mother mentioned

feeling as though teachers had lowered expectations of her son academically and instead highlighted his athletic prowess. These subtle expressions of racism adversely affect Black students, yet schools demonstrate a reluctance to address them, or perhaps harbor a fear of acknowledging racism within their school community. Given the angst around addressing or acknowledging racism in the school community, many independent school educators tend to downplay racism in school which is detrimental for Black students whose race is a central part of their identity (Arrington et. al., 2003). This type of avoidance of the conversation entirely suppresses students' ability to cope with racism. Given that schools are often considered to be "holding environments" for children and at the same time, racially socializing environments, it is essential for educators to acknowledge and talk about race and racism. Schmidt (2018) offered a description of how school communities, specifically independent school educators, could ideally understand race and racism:

> What if this parent—and the entire school community—had a deep understanding of the profound ways that race matters? What if the research about racial outcome disparities was common knowledge and we all understood that the discrimination that accompanies the identity category of race impacts where we live, our access to quality education, healthy food, or clean air…What if we could all learn to approach the concept of racial identity through a lens of courage and curiosity so that we could come to understand the ways our identity— and subsequently our worldview—has been shaped by race and racism? We know adolescents are grappling with understanding who they are in the world, so what if we provided positive and productive opportunities for students to think deeply about all aspects of their identity, including their racial identity? What kinds of insights could a positive racial identity provide? How much more aware of themselves

> and the world around them could they become… What if, instead of avoiding these hard conversations, we learned how to have them, practiced them and became proficient? What if every member of a school community felt comfortable participating in discussions about race and racism? For that matter, what if they were able to actively engage in conversations about gender, class, religion, or any of the other critical aspects of identity that might come up during a class discussion, a club meeting or a lunchtime conversation? What kind of learning environment would that create? How much more confident might our students feel to tackle the problems in our society head on?

In this study, nearly all participants mentioned that their school demonstrates a commitment to diversity and multicultural education. However, many parents also expressed the need for improvement in the school's efforts towards improving diversity and multicultural education, stating that race and racism need to be a central part of the picture. The success and academic outcomes of Black students can be improved by allowing for honest dialogue and conversations about race and racism among members of the community.

> Talking about race and racism is not something on Black people and other people of color to do. White interracial dialogue that directly addresses race, racism and privilege may be difficult to engage in, but it is necessary for these conversations to take place. These discussions would represent proactive socialization around race and help to promote the emotional health and school connection of Black students. (Arrington et. al.,2003).

A genuine commitment and demonstration of action to identify and confront racism in independent schools will likely lead to Black students and families feeling a greater sense of connection and belonging to an institution as a whole and the members within it who

acknowledge their experience and commit to improvement. It is important for independent schools to identify and address the systems of racism and bias, both implicit and explicit, that serve to create barriers to Black students' school success and outcomes. Robert Greene (2016), an independent school father, recently published an article on how independent school educators can address race and racism. He wrote,

> In the independent school landscape, we tend not to focus specifically, skillfully, and consistently on race. We don't mind studying historical issues of race, but tend to avoid the sustained and challenging conversations that look at contemporary systems, current issues, and individual experiences around race. My personal, parental and professional hopes, however, are that we do focus on developing the skills and the language to tackle these conversations with the urgency and sensitivity they deserve. Much of what paralyzes us as independent school educators is an obsessive compulsion to avoid making mistakes that are not only decidedly human and often inevitable, but have already been made by many of us previously.

The current study aimed to explore participant's personal experiences in school as well as their experiences as parents within the independent school community. Combined, these experiences shed light on the decisions, strategies and parenting practices participants employ and the overall impact on their children's educational experiences. These dynamics will be explored and discussed in the following section.

Research Question 2: The impact of Black parents' experiences on their child's integration within the school community

In the material that corresponded to this research question, participants described their own educational experiences, including the role that teachers and peers had played. They also

made connections to the relationships that their children have with their teachers and peers and the impact of those relationships on their child's educational experiences. Their views affirmed that existing research on the importance of having supportive, nurturing relationships with teachers and good social connections with peers.

Relationships with Peers and Teachers. Racial stigma in educational environments is known to have an impact on self-identity and academic performance in school (Zirkel, 2004). A protective factor against such stigma can be found in positive social relationships between students of color, their peers and teachers (Steele, 1997; Zirkel, 2004). Peer relationships are a particularly important factor for all students' academic performance, but particularly so for students of color. Black American students who are immersed in racially integrated or diverse schools tend to develop a comfort level with other students thereby allowing them to feel as though they can function in other racially diverse settings, reducing anxieties and increasing their chances of pursuing additional educational opportunities. Students of color who attend integrated schools also benefit from increased access to educational resources and relationships that can lead to college attainment (Zirkel, 2004). Similarly, the quality of relationship Black students have with teachers plays a significant role in academic self-concept and academic performance (Zirkel, 2004). Research suggests that students of color have a propensity to be cautious of White teachers except when the teacher is culturally aware, has expressed confidence in a student's ability and facilitates the connections with other peers (Cohen, Steele and Ross, 1999; Zirkel, 2002; Zirkel, 2004).

Along these lines, only a few participants in this study reported having had good relationships with their teachers. Of those participants, several spoke fondly of White teachers

who were supportive, while others spoke of Black faculty with whom they felt a connection. One participant recalled her relationship with two White teachers in her school:

> I mean there were some teachers who were nice to me because they really liked me. I remember two white teachers, hard as the dickens, but they liked me and believed I was very smart. They would call home and tell me that I needed to work harder because I had more potential than what I demonstrated.

The same participant shared a strikingly different description of her son's experience with several White teachers at the first independent school he attended:

> My child was very happy in Pre-K, but by the third week of first grade things had gone awry. As soon as he was out of Pre-K and into first grade things changed. The assistant head of school who had been there for 25 years she has this way of breaking down Black children and trying to say that something is wrong with them. I received a call from the teachers saying that he has no friends. And when I spoke to the school therapist, she told me that she didn't believe that to be true and that he had lots of friends. She even named them for me. So, by the winter time I started to see the joy leave my son's eyes. He wasn't happy anymore. They tried to tell me he had a sensory processing disorder. But I had him tested at Teachers College and there were no findings of a sensory processing disorder. And the head of the school said he had ADHD and that he needed to be medicated. So we took him to a therapist because we were concerned about how all of this was impacting him. And the therapist sat in to observe him at school. She told us that we needed to remove him from the school immediately because she saw it to be a toxic environment for him. She felt like the teachers were destroying him and she was

surprised that she could see that so clearly because they knew she was there observing. This was the end of that school year.

Positive and supportive relationships with teachers serve to motivate and encourage students academically. Similarly, positive peer relationships, or lack thereof, are known to have an impact on educational outcomes. Research by Zirkel (2004) has relevance for discussion of the current study. Zirkel hypothesized that students of color were more likely to be socially isolated in school and have fewer social opportunities available to them, which was believed to be associated with academic identity and future goals. Using a sample of 80 elementary and middle school students from an ethnically diverse working and middle-class northeastern city, Zirkel (2004) collected data through questionnaires, diaries and teacher assessments. The questionnaire was designed to better understand participant's feelings about various life domains (e.g., school, family, friendships/peers, athletic or artistic activities and themselves). Students also completed diary entries over a period of ten days where they wrote about experiences in school, with family and friends, and their predictions about themselves in high school. The researcher sought to determine whether students of color were more socially isolated than their White peers and if such isolation mediated the relationship between social isolation and students' academic goals. Results of the study confirmed several hypotheses. First, students of color did report having fewer friends in school than their White counterparts. Specifically, students of color felt that there were, "fewer people at school to whom they felt extremely close or even moderately close." (Zirkel, 2004, pg. 63). Findings from this study also revealed that students of color anticipate that they will have limited social opportunities than their White peers. The teachers' assessment corresponded with the findings of the questionnaire and diary and found that the students of color were significantly more likely to be a quieter student or a "loner."

Furthermore, the more friends students of color reported having in school, the more likely they were to find their goals to be fun, important, and attainable (Zirkel, 2004). The findings of this study align with some of the current results in that some parents spoke -- particularly parents of older girls -- of limited social opportunities. While many participants in this study reported that their child "has a lot of friends," it is often the case that Black American students in schools with a predominantly White student body feel at a disadvantage socially, particularly as they get older. Participants in this study confirmed this experience. One participant spoke of her daughter, who is currently in high school. She stated,

> You know, sometimes I wrestle with whether or not I did the right thing for her…. sending her to this private school with all these wealthy White kids. She has struggled socially at times to find her place and especially now that she is older and looking to date. The Black girls seem to miss out on things like that, you know. They just aren't looked at in the same way by these White boys and even by some of the Black boys and I have worried about what that will do to her self-esteem.

Another participant shared her child's awareness of the differential treatment that her daughter believes she receives from teachers and peers.

> It's not a topic she likes to talk about…she is conscious of the fact that she is a person of color. She has told me stories where she has personally felt aware of being treated differently because she was a person of color be it the teachers' behavior towards her or the way in which other classmates interact with her-so she is aware but I don't know necessarily that it has impacted her in a negative way. She can see it happening but she is able to move forward through it. and, in one case she was brave enough to talk to the teacher. I was very proud of her.

Many participants in this study spoke about the differences in the social experiences of Black boys and Black girls. While several of the participants with daughters spoke of about their children experiencing some form of social isolation or rejection, participants who are parents of boys often reported that their sons typically had positive social experiences, but expressed concern nonetheless. The concern expressed by these participants with boys was based on a feeling, or fear, that their son was well-liked because of a stereotypical representation of Blackness as cool or trendy. One participant described this concern,

> I don't think he's in danger of being out of touch. I just think…it's just this idea of he wants to be a baller. And we have to knock that down, too. And we talk about this all the time about how he is very well-liked [at school] and very cool, but I don't want him to become the "step 'n fetch it" of the group. Because there aren't that many of y'all [Black students]. I mean, of course you're good at basketball and football. I am not trying to make it a Black thing, but you know…a lot of us have real athletic ability. And we are athletically inclined and we have rhythm and we have swag and charm. Your family and people give you all this swag so of course when you go to school people love you! But did you get the math test right? Check yourself right here! Stop that right now! Because you are not going to be popular with them because you were out on the dance floor or hooping. I want you to be popular because you have good grades.

Another participant spoke of his concern that his son doesn't always put the amount of effort necessary to perform at the level in which he is capable,

> I tell him all the time that it is genetically impossible not to be getting good grades. So, when he applies himself…he's good…and when he doesn't…it shows. And the teachers all say the same thing. They say that he has so much potential. But he is a teen boy… and

he'd rather be cool than smart. He's a nice looking young man so all the girls think he's "that dude". And he's an athlete… so he gets caught up in all that, but I think once he gets to high school, he will get more serious…He is a nice kid and a leader, but for him he's just lazy.

Academic performance. Participants in the current study widely reported that their children perform well academically, as they had themselves. Researchers have found that Black students' academic success is determined by a strong sense of connection with the school environment and community-at-large in addition to a positive self-concept in various life domains, but particularly in school (Arrington, Hall & Stevenson, 2003). Black students in independent schools tend to have multiple experiences of feeling both connected and disconnected from school. It can be reasonably surmised that Black American parents may feel similarly within the independent school community and may have experienced the multitude of emotions as students in school themselves. Arrington and colleagues outlined three main points that are important to recognize as a part of the experience of Black American students in independent schools.

1. Promoting Black students' connection to the school community and their emotional health is key to their academic success.
2. Schools not only socialize students academically, they also socialize students racially.
3. The experience of racism is a reality for Black youth that can compromise the quality of their school experience and tax their emotional resources.

Arrington and colleagues (2003) have found this to be the case because Black students will encounter people and resources within the school that will both affirm and challenge their identity. Along these lines, Black parents' experiences of feeling both connected and

disconnected to the school community can influence and impact how they socialize and prepare their children to navigate the school environment. In the current study, parents spoke of their existing personal relationships with teachers, administrators and other parents. Many participants spoke of having good relationships with the teachers and administrators, but revealed that they don't have close relationships with other parents in the school. One participant described this dynamic:

> In middle school, you don't really see the other parents as much. I mean you do have parent breakfasts or the mom's luncheons or the holiday lunch that I go to. So when I do see parents or teachers it's great and I never feel alienated, you know. There are these parents that have their own cliques and maybe they all grew up together and whatever and that's fine. But when I see...so for example, I was in Starbucks yesterday and I saw one of the moms and I was on my computer and she came over to me and she spoke when we talked for a while. And then she said, "hey let's catch up for Mexican and margaritas on Friday" because she and her friends go every Friday. So I was like, "yeah let's do that" and she'll call me and we'll do that. So, I feel like my relationships with their parents are great there. I wouldn't say we are particular close, but we're cordial and we're kind.

Typically, participants in the current study spoke of socializing with other parents in the school community. However, participants often described the relationships with other White parents as superficial, but cordial. Many participants mentioned that the White parents seem more familiar with each other because of their social networks or shared neighborhood connections. Additionally, participants also acknowledged that because their children are older, they aren't as involved in organizing the social lives of their children and are therefore less

connected to the parent body. Regardless, it was rare that participants in this study spoke of authentic and close relationships with other parents in the school, particularly with White parents.

In order to support and sustain academic achievement among Black American students attending independent schools, it is important to affirm their identity through curriculum, teacher and peer connections, and also through the school's intentional efforts to acknowledge, embrace and involve Black parents and families in the existing social networks of the school. Many participants reported having affinity groups for parents in independent schools which is an important network to express shared experiences as a person of color. Additionally, independent schools must make a concerted effort to make sure that they create a school culture and environment that promotes parental relationships and networks that are inclusive. Doing so may not only support the authentic integration of Black parents into a predominantly White educational institution, but may also smooth the pathway for the children of Black parents to develop stronger bonds with peers, teachers and the school community at large.

Research Questions 3 and 4: Black parents' utilization of racial socialization practices and the resulting impact on the academic, social and emotional outcomes of children

The following section combines discussion of research questions 3 and 4, as they are interrelated and focus on the utilization and impact of Black parents' socialization practices and their children's school performance and outcomes. Sociologists have proposed that, similar to the importance of human capital for economic prosperity, social capital can also be seen as a factor which shapes a person's outcomes in life (Carbonaro, 1998; Morgan & Todd, 2009; Martin, 2012; Fasang, Mangino & Brückner, 2014). Researchers examining this phenomenon believe that social networks are defined by people who are in close contact with one another in order to

disseminate and gather information and develop common norms and expectations reinforced through rewards and endorsements which strengthen the social capital between them (Coleman, 1990; Carbonaro, 1998: Carbonaro, 1998; Morgan & Todd, 2009; Martin, 2012; Fasang, Mangino & Brückner, 2014). In the context of school communities, intergenerational closure is defined by the social capital that exists between parents whose children are friends, thereby creating a relationship between the parents of each child. Such connection among parents serves to increase the channels of communication and serves as an important resource for parents. Accordingly, participants in this study emphasized their connections, or sometimes lack thereof, with other parents in the school.

Black Parents' Social Networks and Intergenerational Closure. Many participants reported that they socialize with other parents and are involved within the school community. Some of those participants spoke specifically about their relationships with other parents of color and the importance of using that network to receive and disseminate information. One parent spoke of this network and the complicated nature of trying to build relationships with other parents. She described her experience,

> I am careful about who I associate with so it's {parent network} probably not as broad as it could be. I have a couple of parents that I'm close with since kindergarten and I keep in touch with them and, but I will say that I have to force myself to be involved because otherwise there are so many things going on that you wouldn't even know about. um, I tend to be someone who shares information so if I learn something you'll know...why doesn't every parent?

Parents in this study often spoke about socializing with other parents of color, but feeling less accepted among the White parents in the school. When describing her relationships with the school community a participant described this experience,

> I feel pretty good. I feel that I'm well respected. I don't feel any overt animosity. I feel that I can talk to the teachers and to the parents. I feel the parents have worked with me because of I am an active parent. I've always felt that they've welcomed me into the parent organizations and have included me. I mean, we don't hang out...which is fine. Maybe one or two parents that I connect with like that, but I don't really get invited to their homes or anything like that... but I do feel like I'm part of the community...as much as I can be a part of their community. The school is in a particular part of the state where the parents are really kind of closely connected and they all go to different clubs together and hang out together and I don't really feel part of that, but I do feel part of the school community.

While this participant spoke positively about the limited relationships that she has with other parents, namely White parents, she reported feeling comfortable with the level of connection. What is clear from her description, however, is that there are bounds to her social connection with other White parents. She described a network of other White parents who socialized together outside of school, thereby building and sustaining among themselves a social network that presumably excludes, intentionally or otherwise, people of color and those in different social class groups. The findings of this study, namely the connection that parents reported having with other parents and teachers in the school, seem to confirm previous research on the benefits of parental social networks on student achievement and school performance. However, as indicated, Black American parents do not always have full access to the social

networks of the White parents in independent schools, leading to the relative isolation that may also be experienced by their children. In other words, while participants in this study typically reported having good relationships with other parents in the school and that their children had a lot of friends, these reports are understood to exist relative to the experience of White students in independent schools, whose parents may have even greater access to social networks inside and outside the school community.

Thus, results from this study, combined with the research on the importance of Black students feeling a connection with the school community, illustrate the need for independent school communities to identify and create opportunities for greater connections among peers, teachers and the parent body. Doing so will provide affirmation that Black students and parents have a place in the community.

Common Racial Socialization Practices of Black Parents. Black American parents use racial socialization practices in order to support their children in navigating complex societal inequities that they will face. Within the literature, four primary themes of racial socialization practices are frequently discussed, including 1) cultural socialization, 2) preparation for bias, 3) promotion of mistrust, and 4) egalitarianism (Hughes, et. al., 2006; Brown, Linver, Evans and DeGennaro, 2009). The findings of this study confirm previous research findings in that parents indeed reported the conveying of family messages about race and ethnicity, both the messages that they received as a child and the messages they disseminated as a parent. Most commonly, participants had received the message from their parents that they must "work harder or twice as hard as White people." This message is a form of *preparation for bias* in that parents send the message that Black people must demonstrate exceptionality in order to get a modicum of

attention or acknowledgement of their skills, efforts or talents. This was the most common message that was received by the participants from their own parents.

Only a few participants spoke about family stories that were shared about racist encounters. Hughes and colleagues (2006) suggested that research participants rarely speak about discrimination in response to open-ended questions about racial socialization either because it is too painful or perhaps less salient to their identity. Either way, this may explain the infrequency of participant responses about their own experiences of receiving preparation for bias from their parents. However, many participants in this study spoke about how they prepare their own children for the racism and discrimination that they will face, which is also a form of *preparation for bias,* as well as the use of *cultural socialization* practices via explicitly teaching their children about Black history and culture. While the parents themselves did not commonly share their own experiences with preparation for bias or explicit teachings about Black history and culture, they were committed to making sure they do so for their own children. It could be presumed that the parents in this study, some of whom attended majority Black K-12 schools and who reported not experiencing racism until college when they encountered more White classmates, understood the necessity of instilling these messages and explicit racial socialization practices in order to support their children in navigating independent school environments.

Black Parents' Efforts to Support Positive Racial Identity Development in Children. Parents in this study reported instilling racial socialization practices that are considered to have a positive impact on the development of a child's racial identity, self-concept and academic achievement (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Neblett, Philip, Cogburn and Sellers, 2006; Hughes et. al., 2006; Brown et. al., 2006). Parents in this study frequently described trying to instill a sense of racial pride in their children and to be strong in representing

their identity as a Black person, and spoke about the importance of affirming their child's racial identity. One parent described the process for both racial identity development and racial socialization in her family:

> "For her it has to be about identity affirmation and safety…I know the importance of racial identity development and racial socialization and how that is going to impact everything she does in her life. So, I've been like, all over it. And my husband is like, "yup!" I mean, he is totally on board. If her hair is looking good he constantly affirms her and says, "oh, your hair looks so beautiful." He is constantly talking to her about being a beautiful Black girl and it's like a thing and we talk a lot about race and society and the role we each play."

Context for such findings is provided by Tatum (2004), who suggested that youth who are raised in race-conscious families are provided with a good foundation from which they can draw upon and build a positive racial identity. Tatum (2004) conducted a qualitative study examining the experiences of 18 middle class Black college students who grew up in predominantly White communities. She described the aforementioned "foundation" as having the potential to be undermined in predominantly White schools that perpetuate the established racial order. All of the participants in Tatum's study reported that their teachers did not expect excellence from them and were often surprised by it. Furthermore, the students in her study reported feeling invisible in the curriculum, and that they had superficial relationships with White friends with whom they did not socialize outside of school. The parents of the students in Tatum's study decided to live in White communities to provide their children with the educational opportunities believed to position them for success, but often therefore left them without Black peers or close White peers and an overall environment that did not serve to build a

healthy racial identity. Participants in the current study described understanding the importance of supporting and facilitating healthy racial identity development in their children, and they also sought to have a school environment that served to support the same end.

Some participants expressed concern about whether or not they were making the right decision for their children. They acknowledged that there were experiences of hardship that come with attending a primarily White school as a Black child while at the same time receiving a high-quality education. Several parents questioned the impact that it might have on their child's self-esteem and self-concept. It is essential for educators and mental health practitioners to consider how racial socialization practices may serve to support mental health wellness and positive salient racial identity.

Racial Socialization and Academic Achievement. Although there is a great deal of existing research on the educational disparities that exist between Black and White students, fewer studies focus on the factors associated with the success of Black American students (Neblett, Philip, Cogburn and Sellers, 2006), including the extent to which racial and ethnic socialization may impact academic and school functioning. Many Black parents believe in the importance of instilling a sense of cultural pride as a component of the racial socialization practices. Practices that address race, racism and discrimination may also serve to support Black youth in developing and utilizing healthy, adaptive coping mechanisms resulting in better academic functioning (Brown et. al., 2009). In a study of 548 Black American youth, Neblett and colleagues found a positive association with messages of self-worth and egalitarianism related to greater academic curiosity (Neblett et. al., 2006). Another study conducted by Altschul, Pyersman and Bybee (2006) found that Black and Latino youth with strong feelings of connectedness to their racial group achieved a higher-grade point average. Additionally, those

students with high values of connectedness with their racial group and awareness of racism and discrimination saw an increase in grade point average in their between their 8th and 9th grade year in school (Altschul, Pyersman and Bybee, 2006).

Participants in the current study affirmed the findings of the aforementioned research as they spoke of the influence that instilling a sense of racial awareness and cultural pride appeared to have on the educational outcomes of their children. While many of the participants described their children as performing well academically, one parent expanded on this and spoke about the role her daughter's increased racial-cultural awareness had had on her academic engagement. She stated,

> I think that she is more confident to speak her mind now that she understands the systems of inequality that exist for people like us. She reads about it and has attended so many seminars to learn about Black history and culture and she's inspired to speak about it and write about it. She has always been outspoken and she is so smart, but now she feels more confident and it shows in her school work.

Based upon the literature and on current participants' accounts, it seems that the positive impact of racial socialization practices that are transmitted from parent to child cannot be understated. Black adolescents' experiences of discrimination are negatively related to academic curiosity, goal-directed persistence and academic performance (Smalls, White, Chavous & Sellers, 2007; Neblett, Chavous, Nguyên & Sellers, 2009). On the other hand, racial socialization from parents is positively associated with intellectual curiosity and academic success (Banerjee, Harrell & Johnson, 2011). Thus, racial socialization practices can serve as a protective factor against the negative impact racial discrimination has on academic outcomes. However, it is important to note that some researchers have found that not all components of racial socialization

practices yield such positive results in academic functioning (Neblett, 2006). Some studies have found that certain components of racial socialization enacted alone can result in declines in academic performance. For example, Neblett and colleagues (2006) found that messages of racial pride negatively predicted academic curiosity and grade point average. The researchers believed this association was due to the parenting practice of transmitting messages of racial pride when a student performs poorly academically. Alternatively, children who perform poorly academically may also have parents who are more alert to their child's discrimination experiences and likely to discuss issues about race and racism (Hughes and Johnson, 2001). Another explanation for this finding is that messages of racial pride alone may result in greater stigmatization or anxiety. Other researchers have discovered similar findings. When race is made to be more salient in the lives of Black youth, there can be a decline in academic performance (Oyersman, Gant and Ager, 1995). Therefore, scholars suggest that parents and educators are cautious about the way in which they proclaim racial pride as a remedy for academic underachievement (Neblett et. al., 2006). Making racial group membership salient for youth whose racial identity is associated with negative stereotypes can be disruptive to academic performance (Steele, 1997).

The findings of these studies and the research on the impact of racial socialization practices on academic achievement and performance suggest that parents can support their children's educational and development experiences via a sensitivity and awareness of the ways in which they disseminate racial socialization messages. The level of cautious parenting necessary to preserve the ego, identity and overall healthy functioning of Black American youth can be challenging, and demonstrates a need for mental health practitioners and educators to have a keen awareness and skillful orientation regarding the support of Black parents and

children. Educators, clinicians, and parents can work in partnership to understand and support the transmission of healthy and positive racial socialization practices that ultimately facilitate children's successful overall functioning in school.

Implications for Counseling Practice

The following section offers considerations and recommendations for psychologists, counselors, and educators working with Black American children and families, specifically those who are members of an independent school community where they represent a racial minority. Recommendations are provided for educators and administrators who must acknowledge the unique circumstances of Black Americans in independent schools and respond with policies and practices that serve to support their overall well-being and academic success.

Cultural competency in mental health clinicians and educators. The findings of this study underscore the need for clinicians and educators to respond to the influence of race, racism and discrimination in the lives of Black Americans in order to support overall school success in Black American children. Furthermore, it is equally important for professionals to understand the proactive and protective factors and practices that mitigate the impact of these societal ills and serve to support Black children's ability to thrive.

Racism and mental health. Historically, Black Americans' tendency to be misdiagnosed by mental health clinicians dates back to at least the 18th century (Davis & Stevenson, 2006). Black youth are often overdiagnosed or misdiagnosed with conduct disorder when, in fact, there is evidence suggesting potential depressive or anxiety disorders. Researchers have found that when young people are diagnosed early in childhood with conduct disorder, they are more likely to be diagnosed later in life with depression (Davis &Stevenson, 2006). Therefore, it is vital for mental health clinicians to accurately assess and identify symptoms of depression and anxiety in

Black youth. Both mental health clinicians and educators are typically trained to identify internalizing behaviors as symptoms of depressive disorders in youth. However, research suggests that experiences of racism and discrimination can result in both internalizing behaviors such as hopelessness and externalizing behaviors like anger, a natural response to a racially hostile environment (Davis & Stevenson, 2006, pg. 305). Encounters with racism are the primary reason that Black American parents engage in racial socialization practices, and these practices have been found to reduce or prevent internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Davis & Stevenson, 2006). In other words, the outcome of racial socialization practices results in the development of healthy coping mechanisms for dealing with experiences of racism and discrimination. When joined together with exposure to diverse neighborhood and school communities, racial socialization practices can facilitate a sense of agency in Black youth to identify sources of support. However, if children do not find their neighborhoods or schools to be spaces where they can seek and receive support, they are more likely to suffer emotionally.

Mental health clinicians who espouse a culturally relevant orientation must therefore be able to "challenge long-held assumptions that Black youth are less likely to be sad and therefore less open to therapeutic intervention" (Davis & Stevenson, 2006, pg. 315). Clinicians must be able to look beyond the surface presentation of some Black youth who present as tough or angry and work to understand the pain and emotional turmoil that can exist beneath the surface. Doing so may also help Black youth to become more active in their own treatment (Davis & Stevenson, 2006). Furthermore, clinicians must reexamine aspects of their own training that are based in Eurocentric and Western perspectives and that do not take into consideration the psychosocial experiences of people of color. Clinicians can simultaneously engage in communicating racial socialization practices or racial and cultural pride and empowerment.

> The development of relationships from emotionally and culturally attuned adults who negotiate these racial and non-racial politics will support many youth who are developmentally and ecologically misunderstood, disrespected, angry, but ultimately sad about their particular ecological lots in life (Davis & Stevenson, 2006, pg. 315).

Practitioners and counselors, specifically those working in schools, can be tremendously supportive for teachers and parents if they have the appropriate skill set, knowledge base, and interest to work in support of Black children and families thriving in school communities.

***Multicultural competency*.** Beginning over 30 years ago, theoretical frameworks were developed to help counseling students and trainees acquire the knowledge and skills to work with individuals from diverse backgrounds (Sue, Bernier, Durran, Feinbur, Pedersen, Smith &Vasquez-Nuttal, 1982). Currently, counseling programs, including school counseling programs, build upon this multicultural competency component to include training which involves increasing understanding of one's own racial-cultural identity and that of the clients served (Chao, 2013). Multicultural training has been found to increase clinicians' ability to work effectively with a diverse population by way of enhanced racial-cultural understanding of themselves (Constantine, 2002). In other words, the introspective process of examining and understanding one's own racial cultural identity supports the development of multicultural competency skills and a clinical perspective that is appropriate for a diverse client population. These skills are particularly valuable for counselors and mental health clinicians working in independent schools where the racial-ethnic diversity of the community members is increasing. Constantine (2002) investigated how multicultural training, racism beliefs and White racial identity attitudes impacted multicultural competency in school counselor trainees and found that there was tremendous benefit of multicultural competency training for White counselors.

> [I]t is likely that White school counselor trainees with more multicultural training and more advanced racial identity attitudes may experience greater counseling effectiveness with culturally diverse students because of their awareness of racial and cultural issues and their potential comfort in cross-cultural or multicultural situations" (Constantine, 2002, pg. 171).

It is important for counselors and mental health clinicians to develop and hone skills of multicultural competency in order to serve the population of students and their families effectively. Counselors who have undergone multicultural competency training and have engaged in deep introspective work on their own racial-cultural identity are well-positioned to understand, acknowledge and support the development and sustention of a health racial cultural identity in Black children. The following section outlines practices that culturally-competent counselors and mental health clinicians can employ.

Supporting a healthy racial-cultural identity in Black children. Racial socialization and racial identity are incredibly important consideration for clinicians and educators working with Black American families and children (Miller, 1999; Stevenson, 1994). Educators and mental health clinicians must develop teaching and therapeutic practices that support Black student's development and maintenance of a strong self-identity and design curriculum, teaching practices, counseling practices and therapeutic strategies to focus on the cultural strengths of Black Americans.

Counselors and mental health practitioners who work in schools play a unique role in supporting the needs of the members of the entire school community including faculty, staff, administrators, students and families. It is therefore essential that counselors themselves are well-versed in best practices for supporting Black students to thrive in school. The Association of

Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) outlines four developmental competencies that counselors should have in order to serve a diverse set of clients, many of whom are negatively impacted by the racial and cultural marginalization (Cunningham, Francois, Rodriguez and Lee, 2018).

> First, counselors must possess certain attitudes and beliefs to commit to practicing counseling and advocacy from a multicultural and social justice framework. Second, possessing knowledge of relevant multicultural and social justice theories and constructs is necessary to guide multicultural and social justice competence. Third, multicultural and social justice–informed attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge provide the background for counselors to develop cultural and change-fostering, skill-based interventions. Finally, taking action by operationalizing attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills (AKS) is critical to achieving multicultural and social justice outcomes. (p. 323)

In addition to developing and refining these elements of attitude, knowledge, and skill, counselors must understand the scope of effective coping skills for Black Americans facing racism and have the ability to support them in utilizing effective culturally specific coping strategies to manage everyday racism and discrimination (Cunningham, Francois, Rodriguez and Lee, 2018). A salient racial identity for African American adolescent can serve as a protective factor against discrimination (Tatum, 1997; Stevenson and Davis, 2004; Neblett et. al., 2006). Racial socialization practices instilled by parents in the home provide the foundation for this racial identity in children. Counselors must therefore understand racial socialization practices and racial identity development and how it might present in their clients. It is also important for counselors to reflect upon and understand their own racial socialization and racial identity, and how it impacts not only their everyday functioning and positionality, but also their counseling

practices. Similarly, it is important for educators, while not clinically trained in mental health, to understand how to support Black youth emotionally as well as academically. There must be consideration for building a knowledge base and skill set of culturally competent teaching practices, anti-racist attitudes and socialization practices that support the identity development and success of Black American students.

Counselors are in a unique position to influence and guide administrators, faculty and staff who may not possess the same skill set of multicultural competencies. In other words, counselors with a strong awareness of racial cultural identity and ability to work effectively with a diverse population can support independent school educators who may not have received training in multicultural education or multicultural development.

Advancing the knowledge and skills of White educators. It is critically important that mental health clinicians as well as educators in schools understand that the processes by which parents socialize their children about race is of utmost importance (Hughes, Smith, Stevenson, Rodriguez, Johnson and Spicer, 2006). The plethora of research in the area of racial-ethnic socialization practices demonstrates an effort on both the part of the psychologists and educators to "understand how families of color experience and discuss social inequalities and injustices and how they teach children to manage them." (Hughes et. al., 2006, pg. 748). Therefore, educators and administrators in schools must build greater competency and awareness of how children are racially socialized both at home and elsewhere.

As context, a literature search of articles in the Independent School Magazine, the primary publication produced by the National Association of Independent Schools (the governing body for most independent schools), revealed only a few articles addressing or highlighting racial socialization practices. Michael and Bartoli (2014) wrote about the

importance of advancing the research and understanding of White racial socialization practices. Bartoli (2014) conducted a study in which she interviewed 13 families, both parents and children, and found that most White parents socialized their children with regard to race by telling them not to be racist or acknowledge racial difference, or use the term "Black." While scholars have found that racial socialization in Black families and other people of color tends to happen primarily at home, White families rely on the socialization practices and competence that they hope will be instilled in racially diverse schools (Michael and Bartoli, 2014). However, very few independent schools demonstrate the conscious awareness and intentional effort necessary to understand the complexity of racial identity development and racial socialization practices, even though research supports the fact that this work leads to positive racial climate and improved academic outcomes for all students (Michael and Bartoli, 2014). Along these lines, a mother in the current study spoke about how she imagines White families are not having the same conversations about race that she is having with her children:

> I think the challenge is that I don't think the White parents are always having these conversations either because they don't have to because of their privilege or because they don't want to. I feel like our kids are ready and prepared for something that a white kid is not up to speed on. I would say we are way ahead of the curve in terms of having these conversations about race and ethnicity because of everything that is in our world. So, it is frustrating because we feel obligated to have these conversations and they don't because they don't have to.

If most White children are expected to be racially socialized by schools and educators – who are primarily staffed by White women, many of whom may lack multicultural competency training -- it can be reasonably assumed that schools do not always have the knowledge or tools

to respond to racial socialization practices nor the ability create a climate in which to create positive affirming racial socialization opportunities within the school context. The demographic makeup of most independent schools is predominantly White, both within the student body and the faculty and administration, which suggests that educators must purposefully develop greater competency, content knowledge, and skills by which to understand race, racism, racial identity and racial socialization.

Michael and Bartoli (2006) identified four knowledge areas and seven skills that students themselves should have in order to be "proactive in discussing race, confronting racism, building interracial friendship, and acknowledging racism" (p. 31). It may be equally, if not more important, for educators and administrators in independent schools to have the same basic content knowledge and skills themselves, since they are instrumental in modeling for and teaching students. The four content knowledge areas included:

1) Be clear about the meaning of race as a social construct versus a biological fact
2) Understand how systemic racism positions the responsibility with the individual rather with the his/her position within a racially stratified system
3) Learn how antiracist action is relevant to all
4) Understand stereotypes and their counter narratives.

In addition to these content knowledge areas, there are skills that White students, and arguably White educators, must develop which included:

- the development of self-awareness about racist beliefs
- the ability to analyze media critically
- learning how to intervene
- managing racial stress

- honoring and respecting racial affinity spaces for students of color
- developing authentic relationships with peers of color and other white students
- recognizing one's racist and antiracist identities

Advancing and expanding the knowledge and practical skill set of White educators is paramount to supporting all students and allowing them to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. Given the changes in training to increase multicultural competency, counselors and school mental health professionals are in a unique position to influence, guide and support teachers in developing greater multicultural competencies in their teaching practices.

Many independent schools have realized this critical shortfall and are examining and evaluating programs, policies, procedures, curriculum, classrooms, and educators' skill set in order to grow as an institution. Participants in the current study spoke about how their schools engage in some form of professional development in multicultural education and diversity, but many found this to be vague, and stated that they would like to see their schools do more and focus on race and racism. Organizations like the Critical Analysis of Race in Learning Institute (CARLE Institute) have consulted with various independent schools to provide a "structured way to give White educators in independent schools the necessary historical framework, interpersonal skills, and curriculum they need to teach a diverse student body." Counselors who are familiar with the interpersonal skills and worldview necessary to work with a diverse study body can provide support to other educators who may be engaging in this type of training later in their careers or have had little exposure to multicultural perspectives and practices.

Advancing the skills and multicultural competency of educators and administrators in independent schools is certainly a key component in promoting the success of all students, particularly students of color. In addition, it is important for those in the position of attracting,

hiring and retaining culturally competent educators to do so with an informed perspective. The following section addresses this recommendation and explores the role of counselors in hiring.

Culturally competent hiring. Counselors possess the skill set to work with administrators and other stakeholders on organizational change that supports the needs of a diverse student body and community. One example includes hiring practices that seek to attract and retain educators with multicultural competence-something participants in the current study mentioned was important for them and their children. In particular, participants in the current study spoke of the significant positive impact that teachers of color, particularly Black teachers, had on their child's educational experience. Research suggests that a disconnect between students' and teachers' racial, cultural and linguistic background has a deleterious impact on student learning, engagement and success (Siwatu, Frazier, Osaghe, Starker, 2011). Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis (2011) discussed the plethora of historical research on the positive impact that Black teachers have in the lives of Black students, particularly the impactful bond that Black educators have with Black students that leads to positive educational outcomes. However, the authors also acknowledged the decline in Blacks entering the field of education, particularly Black males, which has a detrimental effect on the educational outcomes for Black students who thrive on the bond shared with Black educators (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011). The authors articulated that we are in a "crucial time for Black students" and "we must turn our attention to instructive and productive ways to improve the educational outcomes for the millions of Black students in our nation's schools…boosting the number of Black teachers is a major part of that effort" (Sealey-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011, pg. 188).

The racial demographics of many independent schools is overwhelmingly comprised of White students and educators (National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), 2017).

African American students represent only 6.8% of the total student population of Independent Schools and Faculty of Color represent less than 20% of faculty and administrators (NAIS, 2017). Participants in the current study spoke about their desire for schools to improve their hiring practices to attract and retain Black faculty and some independent school educators and consultants have recommended culturally competent hiring practices. Cullinan (2017) described a need for "hiring for cultural competence" and suggests that too often independent schools "hire those who are a 'fit' rather than those who will help our schools grow and evolve. Often those individuals who are hired for "fit" simply reflect the characteristics of the existing community (e.g., race, ethnicity, social class, etc.) and confirm the implicit biases that only the applicants that look like the existing members of the community are qualified. Instead, when schools search for culturally competent faculty, administrators and staff, they are enacting expectations that employees have the knowledge and skills necessary to work effectively in a diverse educational environment (Cullinan, 2017). Counselors with strong multicultural competencies can support school initiatives to hire and retain culturally competent educators whose skills, teaching practices and interpersonal skills will facilitate healthy social, emotional and academic development for all students, especially students of color.

Multicultural education and culturally relevant pedagogy. Participants in the study, by-in-large, are pleased that their child's school has made an effort to increase diversity and implement multicultural education, but they also believe schools must do more. Parents in this study spoke clearly about the importance of culturally responsive teaching and cultural awareness on the part of educators and administrators in the school. Proponents of culturally responsive teaching, defined as "a practice of using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning

encounters more relevant to and effective for them", believe that this approach leads to positive outcomes for both student and teacher (Gay, 2002; Gay, 2000; Howard, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Siwatu et. al., 2011). Teaching practices that incorporate, honor and affirm aspects of a student's cultural norms, traditions and practices serve to contribute to academic engagement and success for Black students (Siwatu et. al., 2011). Given the racial demographics of independent schools and the scarcity of students and faculty of color, it is vital that White educators embrace culturally relevant teaching practices in order to support the learning, engagement and growth of all students, particularly the historically marginalized.

Ladson-Billings (2014) discussed her pursuit of changing the narrative from talking about "what was wrong with African American learners…to what was right with these students and what happened in the classrooms of teachers who seemed to experience pedagogical success with them" (Ladson-Billings, 2014, pg. 74). This inquiry led to her development of culturally relevant pedagogy, a term she used to describe teaching practice that appreciates students' cultural aspects and encourages school success. Ladson-Billings (2014) identified three major domains of teaching practices that represented culturally relevant teaching including academic success, cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness. The author defined the aforementioned domains as follows:

- **Academic success**: the intellectual growth that students experience as a result of classroom instruction and learning experiences
- **Cultural competence**: the ability to help students appreciate and celebrate their cultures of origin while gaining knowledge of and fluency in at least one other culture

- **Sociopolitical consciousness**: The ability to take learning beyond the confines of the classroom using school knowledge and skills to identify, analyze, and solve real-world problems (Ladson-Billings, 2014, pg. 75).

The original theory of culturally relevant pedagogy was intended to highlight the association of the "principles of learning with deep understanding and appreciation for culture" (Ladson-Billings, 2014, pg. 77). Teaching practices that emphasize academic excellence instead of simply behavioral obedience in the classroom and cultural competence over encouraging students to assimilate were found to result in school success for African American students. Additionally, teachers who demonstrated the ability to facilitate a learning process that allows students to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world problems also experienced success in the classroom. Furthermore, those responsible for preparing educators for the teaching practice must ensure that teachers have the ability to understand how racial cultural issues impact the learning experiences of students and "construct pedagogical practices that have relevance and meaning to students' social and cultural realities" (Howard, 2003, pg. 195). In order to effectively do this, Howard (2003) described three components necessary in culturally relevant teaching practices

1. Teachers must acknowledge how deficit-based notions of diverse students continue to permeate traditional school thinking, practices and placement and critique their own thoughts and practices to ensure they do not reinforce prejudice behavior
2. Culturally relevant pedagogy recognizes the explicit connection between culture and learning and sees students' cultural capital as an asset and not a detriment to their school success

3. Culturally relevant teaching is mindful of how traditional teaching practices reflect middle-class, European American cultural values and thus seeks to incorporate a wider range of dynamic and fluid teaching practices

Howard (2003) also described the "critical" importance of teachers engaging in self-reflection. In other words, teachers must be able to reflect on their own racial and cultural identities and understand how their identities impact their students. The author acknowledged that this process can be difficult and that teachers must be able to engage in a "rigorous and oftentimes painful reflection process about what it means to teach students who come from different racial and cultural backgrounds than their own" (Howard, 2003, pg. 198). The author suggested that there are inquiries that educators must consider including

- frequency of interactions with people from different racial cultural backgrounds growing up
- the people responsible for shaping perspectives about individuals from different racial backgrounds
- acknowledgement of prejudiced thoughts towards people from different racial backgrounds
- understanding how prejudiced thoughts impact students who come from these backgrounds

While this type of reflection and personal inquiry can be difficult, it is also essential for an understanding how one may have received racist and prejudiced messages and beliefs passed down by family members and incorporated into the individual's own beliefs. This level of personal inquiry is necessary in order to develop and hone a culturally relevant pedagogy: "A teacher's willingness to ask tough questions about his or her own attitudes toward diverse

students can reflect a true commitment that the individual has towards students' academic success and emotional well-being…one of the most fundamental features of culturally relevant and responsive teaching is the power of caring" (Howard, 2003, pg. 199).

Educators are largely responsible for the intellectual, academic, social and emotional growth of youth and in doing so should embrace this responsibility with care, compassion and an ability to embrace and honor cultural differences. Watson, Sealey-Ruiz and Jackson (2014) discussed the theory of culturally relevant care in teaching that involves nurturing, but rigorous demands, integration of various cultures, affirmation of humanity through mutual respect and trust. The authors speak specifically about the importance of "warm demands" which, when delivered in a mutually respectful interpersonal relationship, can lead to students feeling a sense of trust and acknowledgement of their humanity thereby resulting in greater school success and engagement in a learning community (Watson, Sealey-Ruiz & Jackson, 2014).

Research on culturally relevant pedagogy may not be fully understood by some independent school educators, many of whom may be unaware of the extant literature that has emerged from research on teaching practices found to be successful for students in urban public schools. However, as independent schools increasingly recognize the need to diversity their population and support students who represent a racial, cultural or linguistic minority, it will be important and necessary for educators to have a facility in implementing such practices into their repertoire. In addition to having the knowledge and skills for successful teaching practice, educators must also demonstrate an ability to be self-reflective regarding their practices, personal perspectives, and worldview -- a skill that culturally competent counselor embody. Reflection on one's own racial and cultural identity, assessment of the differences potentially represented by the racial-cultural identities of others, and the ability and interest to learn about the multiple

cultural norms present among students and families is an essential component of being an educator (National Education Association, 2018). Furthermore, it is essential that educators understand the factors that influence positive outcomes in Black American students in the context of their lived experiences of racism and discrimination. Counselors and psychologists who work in partnership with teachers and administrators can speak to the importance of developing these interpersonal relationships with students, employing culturally relevant teaching practices, and embracing cultural competency and care in the practice of teaching for the benefit of all students.

Limitations of the Study

As an exploratory project, this study focused on understanding and learning more about the racial socialization practices of Black American parents whose children attend independent schools. Specifically, the study sought to understand how Black parents' educational experiences combined with educational and racial-cultural messages from family influenced and informed the practices they employ with their own children and the impact on the educational outcomes of their children.

Significant effort was made to stay true to the authentic, original words and intentions of the participants in the study. The analysis team often referred to the original transcripts of the participants and engaged in thoughtful and deliberate discussions to come to a consensus. The interview protocol was used to provide guidance based on the existing literature and the research questions while honoring the distinct narrative of each participant. However, time constraints were such that there are always more opportunities for further exploration, and there are important topics that were not comprised within the interviews analyzed here. For example, some of the parents in the study were new to the independent school community, whereas other

participants had been a part of these communities for many years. It would have been interesting to spend more time exploring how participant tenure in the independent school community might have impacted their feelings about their child's educational outcome and/or the racial socialization practices employed.

Additionally, this study had a sample size of 12 participants, which meets the criteria outlined by Hill et. al (1997, 2005) for consensual qualitative research (CQR). However, as is the case with all qualitative research, the findings of this study should be interpreted within the context of this study's inclusion criteria, and should not be generalized beyond those parameters without careful consideration.

Finally, the research team made every effort to acknowledge and decrease biases by disclosing to each other the assumptions, beliefs, and biases that might possibly impact the interpretation of the data. Additionally, the researchers partnered with external auditors to systematically review data and documentation at each stage of the analysis process in order to ensure credibility of the study. Nevertheless, the research team held their own experiences as independent school graduates and as members of historically marginalized racial, cultural and religious groups, which can be expected to have influenced their reading of participants' contributions.

Future Directions for Research

The themes that emerged from the current data suggest important landmarks within the experiences of Black parents, both as former students themselves and as adults raising Black school-aged children in independent schools. This study is unique in that the experiences of parents were examined in order to better understand how their experiences inform their parenting practices and their choices regarding the education of their children. Future studies could build

upon the groundwork of this study by further examining parents' experiences of racial socialization at home and in school, which could provide a more nuanced understanding of how these experiences shaped their parenting practices and decisions. For example, it would be enlightening to focus on a specific area of racial socialization (e.g., cultural pride) and examine how related practices were (or were not) communicated and enacted by parents, family members, and educators, as well as any subsequent impact on educational experiences and outcomes.

The current study involved participants with children in several different independent schools in the northeastern region of the U.S. Researchers might consider deepening this analysis by conducting research within the parent body of one school that would serve as a case example, thereby allowing for greater elaboration on the current findings.

Participants in the current study were highly educated and the majority identified as middle or upper middle class. Future researchers might consider sampling parents with fewer financial resources and less formal education to determine how social class influences parents' racial socialization practices. Additionally, researchers could expand upon the findings of this study by examining racial socialization practices from an intersectional perspective. For example, it could important to study the way that parents' and/or children's gender impacts parents' racial socialization of their children.

Finally, future researchers could extend the findings of this study by interviewing the children of the parents to get a more accurate understanding of *their* experiences of racial socialization practices as well as their perceptions of the impact on their educational outcomes and experiences in independent schools. Additional studies examining children's experiences would provide parents, educators and mental health clinicians with a rich set of data from which to analyze and possibly use to inform educational and parenting practices.

The use of qualitative inquiry to learn more about this small and unique population of Black American parents and children helps to expand on a body of research by producing rich data that promises to be informative for various constituencies. While research does exist on the topic of racial socialization among students in independent schools, these studies have often been quantitative in nature (Davis & Stevenson, 2006). Participants in this study were eager to speak about their experiences, and many of them expressed that they talk about this topic often with friends and family. Some participants even described the interview process as "therapeutic.". Continuing to build upon the qualitative exploration at the heart of this study will not only honor the personal narratives and voices of Black parents, but can also increase our understanding of their circumstances so that we can support them in appropriate and productive ways.

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APPENDIX A.

Section I: PROTOCOL DESCRIPTION

1. Please describe the purpose of your research. Provide relevant background information and scientific justification for your study. You may provide citations as necessary.

The purpose of the proposed study emerges from a review of the literature and relevant research, which began with an outlining of the fact that historically, Black Americans have been disproportionately exposed to substandard educational environments with fewer resources and well-trained teachers and staff. Thus, it can be reasonably surmised that some parents may have experienced such conditions at some point in their academic careers. A parent's personal educational experience can influence emotional feelings about school and potentially impact the way in which a parent socializes his or her child, both academically and racially. These experiences may play a role in the way they prepare their child for school both in terms of academic preparation and for the experiences the child may encounter that are directly related to his or her social position as a Black American. Additionally, a parent's experience within their child's educational environment may also impact these socialization practices. For example, a parent's interaction with school administration, teachers and staff in addition to a connection with the larger parent body community may impact a parent's feelings about their child's academic environment.

Drawing upon the foregoing, there is a need to better understand the psychosocial experiences of Black parents in independent school communities, yet the research that addresses these issues directly is scant. The purpose of the proposed study is to contribute to the building of this knowledge base by exploring the experiences of Black parents whose children attend independent (or private) schools. Specifically, the proposed study will examine the racial-cultural experiences of Black parents within the independent school community with a particular focus upon racial socialization practices. The following overarching questions will guide this research:

- What are the racial-cultural and psychosocial experiences of Black parents whose children attend independent schools?
- How are these experiences associated with parents' perceptions of their child's integration and socialization within the school community?
- How do they attempt to utilize parenting practices and other techniques/resources to facilitate their children's socialization and success?
- How do parents believe these experiences and practices influence their child from an academic, social and emotional perspective?

2. Federal guidelines state that research cannot exclude any classes of subjects without scientific justification. Will your study purposely exclude any classes of subjects (e.g. by gender, class, race or age)? If so, please justify.

The proposed study will examine the unique experiences of Black American parents whose children attend independent schools in the US. African Americans/Black Americans represent a racially marginalized group in the US and therefore have unique experiences and therefore participants who identify with different racial/ethnic backgrounds would not be included in the study. Also, because this study is intended to explore parenting practices, Black American adults

without children will also be excluded from the study. However, participants Black American adults who serve as the legal parent or guardian will be considered.

3. Please state your research question (in one or two sentences, if possible).

1. What are the racial-cultural and psychosocial experiences of Black parents whose children attend independent schools?
2. How are these experiences associated with parents' perceptions of their child's integration and socialization within the school community?
3. How do they attempt to utilize parenting practices and other techniques/resources to facilitate their children's socialization and success?
4. How do parents believe these experiences and practices influence their child from an academic, social and emotional perspective?
5.

4. Please describe the *specific data* you plan to collect and explain how data and the subjects you choose will help to answer your research question/s.

Data will consist of interview transcripts that are obtained via audio recorded semi-structured interviews with participants.

Section II: DESCRIPTION OF RECRUITMENT AND PROCEDURES

5. Please describe your recruitment methods. **How** and **where** will subjects be recruited (flyers, announcement/s, word-of-mouth, snowballing, etc.)? You will need to include your IRB Protocol number in all recruitment materials, including announcements, online and email text. Paper copies of submitted recruitment materials to be distributed will be stamped with your IRB Protocol number once your study has been approved.

Participants will be recruited from independent schools in New York, Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, Georgia through personal contacts of the primary investigator and snowballing techniques via email and word-of-mouth. Each participant recruited for participation in the study will complete a consent form, which will explain the nature of the research study and that participation is completely voluntary. The consent form will also inform the participant that they may withdraw from the study at any time. Once the participant has consented to be a part of the research study, they will participate in an interview conducted by the primary researcher. Interviews may be conducted in person or over the telephone. All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed for analysis.

6. Are you recruiting subjects from institutions other than Teachers College? If so, documentation of permission or pending IRB approval from the institution/s is required with this submission.

No.

7. How many subjects are you planning to recruit?

Approximately 10-15 participants will be recruited.

8. Please list what *activities* your subject will be engaging in (e.g. surveys, focus groups, interviews, diagnostic procedures, etc.). [**PLEASE NOTE**: If you are collecting any private medical information from your subjects, please see our website **www.tc.edu/irb** under Forms and Guidelines for the HIPAA consent document.]

Name of activity	# of times the activity occurs	Duration of activity per instance	Total time period of active participation per subject (days, weeks, etc.)	Describe the Data collected
Semi-structured interview	1	60-90 minutes	Each participant will engage in s single interview of approximately 60-90 minutes.	demographic information; interview data

Total hours of participation: 60-90 minutes **Duration of participation: 1 meeting**

9. Where will your data collection take place specifically (e.g., in classroom, outside of classroom, waiting room, office, other location)?

In a quiet, private, confidential space (e.g. private meeting room in the Teachers College Library).

10. Will subjects be remunerated for their participation? If, so please describe. [**PLEASE NOTE:** If using a lottery system, please remember to state odds of winning in consent form. Also, if you will be offering course credit for study participation, you must discuss this here and include the alternative assignment for those who decline to participate in the study].

No, participants will not be remunerated for their participation.

11. Will deception be used? If so, please provide a rationale for its use. How will subjects be debriefed afterward? Submit debriefing script. Scripts should include a statement that gives your subjects the opportunity to withdraw their participation at that time. [**PLEASE NOTE:** studies involving deception are given **Full Board Review** unless the deception is minor and risks are minimal].

No, deception will not be used in this study.

12. Will you have a control group? Please describe your procedures and explain the purpose of using a control group.

No, there is no control group needed for this subject.

13. Will you be videotaping your subjects? If so, please describe in detail. [**PLEASE NOTE**: The IRB will only approve videotaping when there is adequate scientific and ethical justification].

No, participants will not be videotaped. Their interviews will, however, be audio taped.

Section III: CONFIDENTIALITY PROCEDURES

14. How will you ensure the subjects' confidentiality? Describe in detail your plans for ensuring confidentiality of data regarding subjects. [**PLEASE NOTE**: If you will be remunerating subjects after their participation, please make it clear if and how you will link their names/contact information confidentially to their compensation].

Participant's confidentiality will be protected by assigning each person an identification number to which their name will never be attached. Once an individual has agreed to participate in the study and has signed the informed consent the participant will be given an identification number. A master list matching the identification information with identifying information will be stored in a locked cabinet. Audio recordings and transcripts will only be identified by the identification number. All materials will be kept in a locked cabinet and transcripts will only be available and accessible to the team members during data analysis. Audio recordings will be stored in a password encrypted file on the password protected computer. Audio data from the interviews will be transcribed as soon as possible and once the analysis is complete, all data will be destroyed. Any identifying characteristics disclosed by participant (e.g., names or other potentially identifying information) will be changed to pseudonyms.

15. If you will be audio/videotaping, please state how you will ensure that subjects have consented to being recorded, **and** if some subjects do not consent to being recorded, explain how you will protect their confidentiality. (This must also be clearly stated in your consent form/s).

The interviewer will explain the confidentiality procedures in detail to each potential participant before they consent to participating in the study. The consent forms will also provide a detailed explanation of the procedures and interviews will not begin unless the participant is completely comfortable signing the consent form.

16. Will data be collected anonymously? Will you be able to link the data? If data will not be collected anonymously, how will subjects' identity/ information be protected? (e.g. codes, pseudonyms, masking of information, etc.)?

Participants will receive a randomly selected identification number that will never appear in conjunction with their names of identifying factors.

17. Where will coding and data materials be stored (e.g. 'in a locked file cabinet in the Principal Investigator's home or office')?

Raw and coded data and other materials will be stored in a locked cabinet in the primary investigator's office.

18. Will you need bilingual interpreters or interviewers, and if so, what will you do to ensure confidentiality of the subjects? What are your procedures for recruiting interpreters/interviewers? Indicate the name of the interpreter/interviewer and for whom he/she works. Submit copies of all questionnaires or interview questions for each subject population.

No. The interview will only be conducted in English.

SECTION IV: DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH RISKS & BENEFITS

19. What are the potential risks, if any, (physical, psychological, social, legal, or other) to your subjects? What is the likelihood of these risks occurring, and/or their seriousness? How will you work to minimize them? [**PLEASE NOTE**: The IRB regards no research involving human subjects as risk-free. You may describe minimal risks for your study (such as discomfort, boredom, fatigue, etc.), or state that the research will involve minimal risk, similar to an activity (named) like that which participants will perform as part of your study.]

Participation in the study has minimal risk. The risks are similar to those involved in a workshop or discussion of social issues related to education. Participants will be invited to express any concerns or questions related to the interview and may do so with the interviewer or the primary investigator. All interviewers have a background in counseling. If at any point a participant feels uncomfortable continuing with the interview, he or she may withdraw from the study.

20. What are your plans for ensuring necessary intervention in the event of a distressed subject and/or your referral sources if there is a need for psychological and/or physical treatment/assistance?

The researcher/interviewer, who is also the primary investigator of the study, will conduct all interviews of the participant. The researcher has a background in counseling and will be able to provide support for participants in the event he/she should experience some form of distress. If a participant becomes distressed at any point during the interview the interviewer will stop the interview and remind the participant that the research process and interview can be cancelled if he/she feels uncomfortable continuing. Furthermore, the interviewer will provide participants with referrals for counseling (e.g., The Dean Hope Center for Educational and Psychological Services).

21. What are your qualifications/preparations that enable you to estimate and minimize risk to subjects?

I have background in psychological counseling in addition to relevant/related research experience that allows me to assess the associated risks that may occur as a result of participating in this particular study. Moreover, I am currently employed as a school counselor. Given my awareness of these aspects of the study and any associated risks, I have designed a interview protocol and process with the intention of minimizing risks and providing a safe, comfortable space for participants.

22. What are the potential benefits of this study to the subjects? Most research conducted at TC provides NO DIRECT BENEFIT to participants and must be STATED as such in the INFORMED CONSENT FORM. Occasionally, study design will include a diagnosis, evaluation, screening, counseling or training, etc., that have a concrete benefit to participants, independent of the nature or results of a research study that may be listed below. Benefits such as "an opportunity to reflect," "helping to advance knowledge," etc., ARE NOT BENEFITS and MUST NOT be included in this section.

There are no direct benefits.

Section V: INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURES

23. What are your procedures for obtaining subject's informed consent to participate in the research?

The researcher will work with organizations and parent groups to recruit participants for the study. Once an organization agrees to allow the researcher to begin the recruiting process, the researcher will conduct private informational meetings and will provide a description of the research study and informed consent forms that clearly outline the procedures and risks associated with participation in this study. Potential participants will also received information indicating that participation in the study is strictly voluntary and that participants may withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher will provide this information in verbal and written forms.

Once an individual has reviewed the information and agreed to participate in the stud, the researcher will contact the participant and schedule a meeting. The researcher will review the procedures and risks associated with participation in this study. The researcher will also describe and review the informed consent process and remind the participant that participation in the study is strictly voluntary and that participants may withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher will allow the participant time to review the material in private and if he/she agrees to participate and signs the informed consent form, the researcher will assign the participant with an identification number and begin the interview process.

24. How will you describe your research to potential subjects? [**Please note:** if working with a population under eight (8) years of age, a script is necessary.]

We will describe the research as a study of the experiences of Black parents whose children attend independent schools.

25. What will you do to ensure subjects' understanding of the study and what it involves?

The researchers will explain the study to the participant in addition to the informed consent statement, which will describe the study and what it involves. We will also respond to any questions about any part of the study and contact information will be provided for any participant who may have follow-up questions.

26. If you are recruiting students from a classroom during normal school hours, what will the **alternative** activities be for those who wish not to participate? (This should also appear in your consent form/s)

n/a

27. Use this section to provide a request for a full or partial waiver of informed consent, and justify this request. You may site criteria from the following link regarding Federal regulations and guidelines: **http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html#46.116**

n/a

Note for Researchers: Submit all consent forms/scripts, using the templates provided on the website. **Drafts of consent forms will not be accepted.** Each consent form must be a separate document and titled for its respective subject population (e.g. teachers, parents, etc.). All consent documents must be in English, even though you may translate them. **All consent documents should be printed on Teachers College letterhead or include the name and address of the college, per the online Informed Consent and Participant's Rights templates**.
If your research project requires using documents that are translated into other languages, please submit both the translated English version AND the translated document with your application. You must sign and date the document. TC strongly urges investigators to use back translation (translation into the target language and back into English) as a method of ensuring the translation's accuracy. Revised consents will also need to be translated.
NOTE: If you are conducting any part of your research within NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION [DOE] Schools: It is required that you receive approval from TEACHERS COLLEGE prior to submitting to the NYC Board of Education's Division of Assessment and Accountability.

APPENDIX B.

Teachers College, Columbia University
525 West 120th Street
New York, NY 10027
212 678 3000
www.tc.edu

INFORMED CONSENT

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH: You are invited to participate in a study examining the experiences of Black American parents whose child/children attend independent schools. You will be asked to participate in an interview lasting approximately 90 minutes, which will be audio-taped. Your name will never be associated with the audiotapes, and they will be destroyed at the completion of the study. The primary investigator for the study is Rashidah Bowen, M.Ed., and is being conducted as part of her doctoral dissertation project.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The risks and possible benefits associated with this study are expected to be minimal, and are likely similar to those associated with participating a workshop or classroom discussion where you might discuss social issues. There are no direct benefits of this study to participants, whose participation is entirely voluntary. The primary investigator acknowledges that participants may experience some distress or discomfort while answering sensitive questions about their own or their child's experiences and therefore participants are free to decline to answer any question that they are uncomfortable answering. Furthermore, you may withdraw from the study at any time, and if you so do, all materials will be immediately destroyed.

PAYMENTS: There will be no financial compensation provided for your participation in this study

DATA STORAGE TO PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY: All data will be stored confidentially in a locked cabinet. Participants' names will never be associated with these materials or with the results of the study. Participants will receive an identification number (ID#) after agreeing to participate and signing the consent forms. The consent forms containing the participant's name and identification number will remain in a locked file cabinet. All information collected after this point will not use any identifying information from the participant. Instead the identification number will be used.
Audio recordings will be stored in a password-encrypted file on a password-protected computer and will be destroyed after the study is been completed. Participants can decline for the interviews to be audio recorded and the primary investigator will take handwritten notes instead. If any identifying information is disclosed during the interview process (e.g., names, locations, etc.) the primary investigator will remove this information and use pseudonyms or aliases instead.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation will take approximately 90 minutes.

HOW WILL RESULTS BE USED: The results of the study will be used for the completion of a doctoral dissertation. They may also be the subject of scholarly presentations and/or publications.

Teachers College, Columbia University
Institutional Review Board
Protocol Number: 14-399
Consent Form Approved Until: 09/20/2017

APPENDIX C.

Teachers College, Columbia University
525 West 120th Street
New York, NY 10027
212 678 3000
www.tc.edu

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

Principal Investigator: Rashidah Bowen, M.Ed.

Research Title: The Experiences of Black American Parents of Children in Independent Secondary Schools

- I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.

  My participation in research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without jeopardy to future medical care, employment, student status or other entitlements.

- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at his/her professional discretion.

- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.

- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.

- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, Rashidah Bowen, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is (770) 722-2291.

- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board /IRB. The phone number for the IRB is (212) 678-4105. Or, I can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY, 10027, Box 151.

- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.

I understand that audio taping is part of this research, and I ( ) consent to be audio/video taped. I ( ) do NOT consent to being audio taped. The written, video and/or audio taped materials will be viewed only by the principal investigator and members of the research team.

- My signature means that I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date:____/____/____
Name: _____
If necessary:
Guardian's Signature/consent: _____
Date:____/____/____
Name: _____

Teachers College, Columbia University
Institutional Review Board
Protocol Number: 14-399
Consent Form Approved Until: 09/20/2017

APPENDIX D.

Teachers College, Columbia University
525 West 120th Street
New York, NY 10027
212 678 3000
www.tc.edu

Investigator's Verification of Explanation

I certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to _____ (participant's name) in age-appropriate language. He/She has had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all his/her questions and he/she provided the affirmative agreement (i.e. assent) to participate in this research.

Investigator's Signature : _____

Date : _____

APPENDIX E.

Demographic Questionnaire

1. What is your race?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your age?
4. What is your marital status (e.g., single, widowed/widower, divorced, partnered, married)?
5. What are the ages and genders of your children?
6. How would you describe your social class (e.g., poor, working class, middle class, upper middle class, wealthy)?
7. How would you describe the social class of the family of which you were raised (e.g., poor, working class, middle class, upper middle class, wealthy)?
8. What is your profession?
9. What is your highest level of education completed (e.g., Some high school, GED, High school graduate, some college, Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, Graduate/Professional Degree)?
10. What is the highest level of education completed by your parents (e.g., Some high school, GED, High school graduate, some college, Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, Graduate/Professional Degree)?
11. What type of elementary school did you attend (e.g., public, private/independent, catholic or religious)?
12. What type of middle/high school did you attend (e.g., public, private/independent, catholic or religious)?

APPENDIX F.

Interview Protocol

1. We're going to be talking about school experiences, both your child's and your own. First, how would you describe the school your child attends?

    Prompts (*to be used if needed*):

    a. What is the racial composition of students and teachers in the school? In the classroom?

    b. How would you describe the socioeconomic makeup of the school?

2. What led you to choose this particular school for your child?

3. Tell me about your own educational experiences.

    a. How would you describe the quality of education?

    b. What was the racial composition of the students? Of the teachers/staff?

    c. How did you feel about your relationships with your teachers and peers?

4. What kinds of messages did you receive from your family about education?

5. Let's talk more about how race and ethnicity can be part of this picture. What kinds of messages did you receive from family and from society about your race/ethnicity?

    a. How did those messages impact you?

    b. How did you handle that?

    c. Were there people who supported you if/when messages were negative/stereotypical? Tell me about that.

6. Was there ever a time in school where you felt your race/ethnicity was a factor or played a prominent role? (If yes) Tell me about that.

    a. How did you handle this situation?

b. How did you feel?

c. What was the impact of this situation on you?

7. What messages have you (and your partner) given your children about race?

a. What do you try to do as a parent to teach or socialize your child regarding race/ethnicity (e.g., preparation for bias; cultural survival; pride development; spiritual coping)?

8. How do you think your child feels about being a person of color in his/her school? Can you give me an example of something your child has said or told you about?

9. Do you think that your child's school takes steps to demonstrate the value of diversity, inclusion and multicultural education? (If yes) Tell me about that.

10. Do you feel that the school addresses issues related to race among students, teachers, and administrators? (If yes) What do you think of those efforts? (If no) How do you feel about that?

a. Are these efforts effective?

b. What has been the impact for you, your child, and family?

11. Tell me about your relationship with the school community – students, teachers, administrators and/or other parents.

a. How do you feel about your relationship with the school community?

b. Do you socialize with other parents outside school?

c. Do you feel that your relationship with the school community plays a part in your child's experience at the school?

12. Describe your child's/children's academic performance at school.

a. Do you think race-related issues play a role?

b. Do you think economic/social class issues play a role?

13. Describe your child's/children's interpersonal or social experiences at school.

    a. Do you think race-related issues play a role?

    b. Do you think economic/social class issues play a role?

14. In light of everything we've talked about, do you have any suggestions for school communities? Any suggestions for parents?

15. What has this interview been like for you? Is there anything that you would like to add that I didn't ask about?

APPENDIX G.

Table 1
Summary of Domains, Categories and Frequencies from the Cross-Analysis

Domain/Category	Label
Parents' experience of the school community	
I have good relationships with the faculty and administration	General
The school demonstrates a commitment to diversity and multicultural education	General
I socialize with other parents	Typical
The school's effort towards improving diversity and multicultural education needs improvement	Typical
My child's cultural heritage and racial-cultural background is honored and validated	Variant
I am involved in the school community	Typical
My child benefits from having teachers of color	Variant
I have a network of other parents of color at the school	Variant
I must advocate for the needs of my child	Variant
Parent's reasons for selecting school	
Public school was inappropriate for my child	Typical
The atmosphere of the school	Variant
I did a lot of research to find the best fit	Variant
There were many teachers of color	Variant
I was not happy with my child's previous school	Variant
The Head of School	Variant
Children's experiences at school (interpersonal/academic)	
My child is doing well academically	General
My child is confident in his/her racial identity at school	Typical
My child has a lot of friends	Typical
My child has difficulty socially	Variant
My child does not feel like race plays a role in his/her experience at school	Variant
My child doesn't work to his/her potential	Variant
Parent's experience with school	
I was in the G&T, Honors and AP program at school	Typical
I had a good relationship with my teachers	Variant
I received a good education	Variant
I didn't have a close relationship with my teachers	Variant
I had a good relationship with my peers	Variant
I had difficulty making friends in school	Variant
My teachers were unsupportive	Variant
Teachers liked me because I was smart	Variant

Parent's racial-cultural experiences	
I grew up in an all-Black community	Variant
I didn't learn about Black history and culture in school until college	Variant
I first experienced racism in school when I went to college	Variant
I remember when my neighborhood/school demographics shifted from White to Black	Variant
I had experiences with teachers who treated my differently from than my White peers	Variant
My experience in school took a toll on my self-esteem	Variant
Family messages about education	
Education was a core value in my family	General
Going to college was expected	Typical
My parents stressed the importance of college	Typical
My parents never went to college	Variant
My family didn't stress the importance of education or college	Variant
Family messages about race/ethnicity	
You have to work harder (twice as hard) than White people	General
I prepare my child for the racism and discrimination he/she will face	Typical
I teach my child about Black history and culture	Typical
I try to instill a sense of racial pride in my child	Typical
I teach my child to be strong in representing their identity as a Black person	Typical
I affirm my child's racial identity	Typical
My family taught me about Black history and culture	Variant
My family shared stories about experiences of racism	Variant
My parents instilled a firm sense of racial pride in me	Variant
Coping with racism	
My family members supported me in coping with racism	Variant
I learned to deal with racism on my own	Variant
Suggestions for parents and school communities	
Schools need to focus on race/racism	Typical
Schools need to put more energy and resources towards diversity, inclusion and multicultural education	Variant
Parent's must do their research on schools	Variant
Parents should get to know the parents in the community	Variant
Parents should get involved in the school community	Variant
Experience of the interview	
I talk about this topic all the time with friends and family	General
It was a nice/good experience	Typical
It was therapeutic/cathartic	Variant
I hope this research is shared with schools	Variant

This made me reflect on my parenting and how it is shaped by my own experiences growing up	Variant

* General (11 to 12 cases), Typical (6 to 10 cases), Variant (2 to 5 cases)