EFFECT OF CULTURAL CONGRUENCE AND LEADERSHIP PRACTICES ON THE
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS POST-
ENACTMENT OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION
IN THE STATE OF DELAWARE

By

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A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Educational Leadership
in the Education Graduate Programs of
Delaware State University

DOVER, DELEWARE

May 2019

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DEDICATION

With great emotion and sincerest gratitude, I dedicate this capstone project to my family
especially my daughters, Caleah and Coryn
"I thank you for reminding Mommy of who I am, what I fighting for, and that dreams are
possible if I am not afraid."

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying,
then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then
teach; if it is to encourage, then encourage; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead; do
it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully
Romans 12: 6-8

May this project be my testimony to the love, grace, and encouragement my family has given me
through this journey.

Effect of Cultural Congruence and Leadership Practices on the Academic Achievement of

African American Students Post-Enactment of Brown V. Board of Education

in the State of Delaware

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ABSTRACT

Since *Brown v. The Board of Education* (1954), the demographics of the United States pre-kindergarten through grade 12 (K–12) public schools are dramatically changing as student populations are becoming more diverse. Even though, years have passed since the lawful end of racial segregation in American school systems, many factors still plague our student academic achievement. This comparative case study analyzed how school integration, and the cultural congruence of teachers of African American students pre- and post-enactment of *Brown v. The Board of Education* affects student achievement. This case study analyzed, compared and contrasted the selected case studies i.e. *The Relationship between Socio-Economic Status and the Academic Achievement of Culturally Diverse Students* (Ford, 2013), *African American Students' Experiences, Achievement and Outcomes; Examined Through the Lenses of Teacher Expectations, Racial Congruence and Stereotype Threat* (Postell, 2011), and *A Study of the Relationship of Student-Teacher Racial Congruence and Student Achievement* (Strange, 2011) to find out how this landmark case has effected minority students in the United States, particularly in the state of Delaware. Student-teacher relationships appeared to be a common thread among the four themes that emerged from the analysis. Conversely, when no student-teacher relationship formed, stereotype threat was activated, making it difficult for the participant to succeed. The observations of the analysis of the three case studies established that the use of a

strategic approach, including evidence-based practices, is vital to sustaining effective culturally responsive instructional strategies and pedagogy for increasing academic achievement of minority students.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the enactment of Brown v. Board of Education (1954), the demographics in United States pre-kindergarten through grade 12 (K–12) public schools have dramatically changed. Student populations have become more diverse. The demographics of the nation are changing, and nowhere is this change more evident than in public school classrooms. Many of these schools encompass multiracial, multiethnic children who were born within the United States and other nations. These children will incorporate multiple cultures, speak different languages, and carry different cultural traditions. The racial, ethnic, socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic orientations of students vary more today than they ever have throughout our country's history. By the year 2020, 48% of the country's school-age children in grades 1–12 will be students of color (Pallas, 1989). The cultural congruence and racial interactions of teachers and students will play a vital role in the academic perceptions. This could affect the closing of the achievement gap for, all minority children, and children of low socioeconomic status.

Ultimately, the way teachers and educational leaders address cultural difference within the class may have a direct influence on the student learning. This makes it imperative that teachers become culturally sensitive to students both personally and instructionally (Garcia, 1997). Within the United States School System, there are complex issues such as cultural congruence presents barriers between teachers and students enter the classroom. To train teachers' understanding the differences between cultures and ethnicities, they will encounter; cultural diversity education is required.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Even though years have passed since the end of racial segregation in American school systems, many factors still plague our students' academic achievement. Fischer (2006) focuses upon one of these concerns. In Fisher (2006) quantitative study titled, Congruence and Functions of Personal Culture and Values: Do My Values Reflect My Culture's Values? examines the effect of cultural congruence for teachers of African American students. Fischer (2006), using 1907 study subjects, compiled data from two studies to describe the correlation between self- and culture-referenced values at a culture level (Study 1) and the correlation between self- and culture-referenced values and self-reported behavior at an individual level (Study 2). Fischer (2006) concluded from each study that "researchers should examine norm aspects of culture. The researcher should consider all cultural differences for individual characteristics, personal preferences, and views about their culture" (p. 1429).

In this century, teachers will be exposed to many ethnicities and cultural differences. How these teachers related to the perceptual cues of their students may affect their students' academic performance. As early as the mid-1980's, studies have been conducted to determine the factors that contribute to student achievement. Singer (1998) study titled, What is cultural congruence: what are they saying that is so terrible, identifies the relationships between the teacher's background with regards to how interactions are affected within their classroom. Osbourne (1989) ethnographic study, Cultural congruence, ethnicity and fused biculturalism, found that a teacher's ability to relate to their students had a direct effect on achievement. Osbourne (1989) study, investigated five elementary classrooms in the Native American Pueblo of Zuni (1983). Osborne (1989), found that of teachers showing culturally sensitive traits of being supportive, competent towards more than two cultures, tended to assimilate easier to their

students than teachers who have a single culture background outside of the ethnic group of students they teach. Osborne's (1989) results concluded ethnicity, in and of itself, do not ensure that teachers will match learning experiences to those of students from their ethnic group. (p. 224). Milner (2011) conducted a qualitative research titled, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in Diverse Urban Classrooms, examined how teachers' and practitioners' build relationships with their students. Milner (2011) researched the factors of racial identity in urban classrooms over a two-year academic school year to examine the cultural pedagogy and experience of a set of middle school teachers. Milner (2011) determined that teachers' must have the ability to build cultural competence with their students in urban settings. Milner (2011) determined that further research is needed on what experiences would be necessary to develop individual skills of preservice teachers. Milner (2011) and Osborne (1989) were supported by Irvine (2006) research. Culturally relevant pedagogy in diverse classrooms, determined a teachers' ability to relate to cultural, ethnic, and racial populations effects the teacher's ability to identify with and relate to a students' culture.

Consequently, by evaluating the perceptions of teachers, there can be a greater understanding of how cultural congruence influences all minority students' backgrounds.
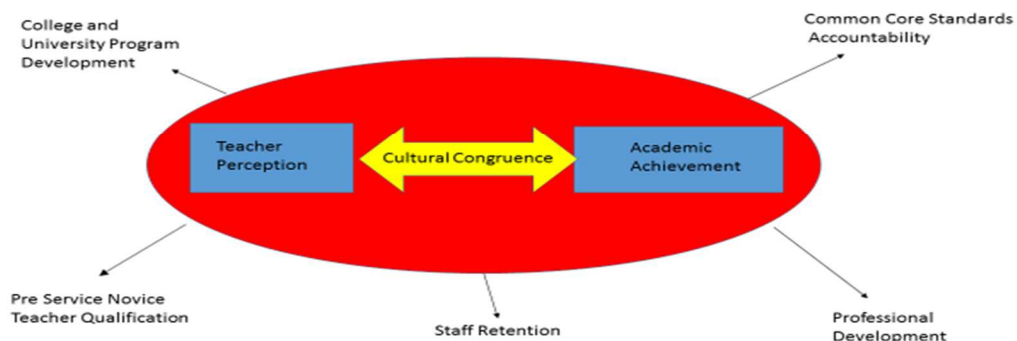
Figure 1.1: The Implications and Outcomes of Cultural Congruence in the Educational System

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine school cultural integration, school leadership practices, and the effect of academic success for African American students' post-enactment of Brown v. Board of Education. This case study forms a historical perspective on integration and cultural congruence of teacher and student population post-enactment of Brown v. (1954) in the State of Delaware will support current literature on teacher perceptions, and academic achievement of African American students. It will examine how school culture and leadership practice influenced the African American students, and teachers. More research is still needed to determine what works in improving students' achievement outcomes. Theoretical study and evaluation studies must be supported in the future (Greenwood, 2001). Descriptive, ethnographic, and quasi-experimental evaluation studies are also needed to determine the characteristics of effective schools and instructional practices for minority students (Lesaux, 2010). Consequently, few studies have been completed on how students' perceptions of teacher expectations influence student achievement.

Although current research has supported the need for integration in public school system, many of our schools under met requirements of Brown (1954) are resegregating according to socioeconomic status. Several studies have investigated the effects of contextual congruence on academic outcomes, such as attachment to school, academic engagement, and classroom behavior (Barrett, 2010). Ostrove and Long (2007) study titled Social Class and Belonging: Implications for College Adjustment surveyed 324 students at a selective, middle to upper-middle class liberal arts college in the Midwest. Ostrove et al. (2007) examined the role that social class congruence plays in students' experiences at the university level. Their analyses suggested that social class background does have significant implications for a sense of

belonging and adjustment to school, with weaker effects on overall experience and academic performance.

Tinto (1993) study, Leaving College: Rethinking The Causes and Cures of Student Attrition, although focused on college leveled student noted that when minority students attended predominately Caucasian institutions, they had more academic difficulties and experienced more feeling of isolation than did the student population in general investigated racial congruence on classroom behavior. Tinto (1993) findings add to the relevance of racial congruence in studies on academic achievement, cultural congruence, and leadership practices within modern day public school systems. Reardon, Grewal, Kalogrides, Greenberg (2014) research (DAZE) titled, Brown Fades: The end of court-ordered school desegregation and the resegregation of American public schools, investigate whether the school desegregation policy. The policy produced by court-ordered desegregation plans for school districts who persisted to segregate are released from court oversight. Reardon et al. (2014) compiled data from over 200 medium and large- sized districts were released from desegregation court orders from 1991-2008. Findings concluded that racial school segregation in these districts increased the following release gradually from a court order, about the trends in segregation in districts remaining under court order. Desegregation increased and was more pronounced in the South, in elementary grades, and in districts where pre-release school segregation levels were low. These results suggest that court-ordered desegregation plans are effective in reducing racial school segregation, but that their effects fade over time in the absence of continued court oversight (p. 1).

Despite numerous studies compiling data on socioeconomics, achievement, and race the focus on school segregation's effects remain theoretically underdeveloped (Fiel, 2012). Glaeser and Vigdor (2011, p. 1-2) study, The End of the Segregated Century: Racial Separation in

America's Neighborhoods, 1890-2010, analyzed data from 13 consecutive census administrations since 1890 to plot long-run trends of racial segregation across American cities. Two forms of segregation were analyzed: the dissimilarity index, which is the extent of which races are distributed evenly; and the isolation index, or the extent to which neighborhoods are racially homogenous (p. 1). The study found the following:

- The dissimilarity index has declined in all 85 of the nation's largest cities. In all but one of the nation's 658 housing markets, the separation of black residents from other races is now lower than the national average in 1970. Segregation continued to drop in the last decade, with 522 out of 658 housing markets recording a decline.

- The isolation index has declined in the nation's 30 largest metropolitan areas and 516 of the 658 housing markets. All housing markets have lower racial-isolation rates than the national average in 1970.

- As recently as 50 years ago, 20% of America's urban neighborhoods had no black residents. Today, African-Americans can be found in 99.5% of neighborhoods nationwide.

- In 1960 nearly 50% of the black population lived in neighborhoods with an African-American share above 80%. Today, only 20% of the black population lives in a neighborhood where the African-America population is above 80%.

- "Segregation has declined in part because African-Americans left older, more segregated, cities and moved to less segregated Sun Belt cities and suburbs. This process occurred despite some public attempts to keep people in these older areas." (p. 7).

While not answering all predominant causes for lack of achievement by minority students, this study will develop a more critical understanding of how the landmark case of

Brown v. the Board of Education (1954) affected teachers' and learning environments of the African American community within the State of Delaware.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

School leaders have to work on the relationship that is marked by understanding, openness and affirmation which require investments of care, time and interpersonal talent. A school leader is responsible for facilitating cohesive environment, advocating integrative practices and cultivating positive relationships with students, teachers, parents and community. The objective of this study is to examine the effect of cultural congruence and school leadership practices on the academic achievement of African American Students post-enactment the effect of cultural congruence and school leadership practices on the academic achievement of African American Students post-enactment of Brown v. Board of Education in the state of Delaware.

1.4 Research Question

What is the effect of cultural congruence and school leadership practices on the academic achievement of African American Students post-enactment of Brown v. Board of Education in the state of Delaware?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Analysis of case study will add to scholarly literature and research in the fields of cultural congruence, educational leadership, and the effects that Brown v. The Board of Education had on the African American students and teachers in the State of Delaware.

In the buildup to the Civil War, Delaware was a microcosm of the country, sharply split between abolitionists in New Castle County and pro-slavery interests in Sussex County (Mackenzie, 2014). According to the Delaware Historical Society (2014), Delaware, although technically a slave state, was a vital part of the Underground Railroad. The northernmost county,

New Castle, is an urban-suburban industrial area represents a typical American metropolis. Kent County lies in the middle of the state and straddles agrarian and industrial interests; the capital of the state, Dover, resides there. Sussex County is the southernmost county and is comprised largely of rural, farming interests (2014). The significance of this study is important for the State of Delaware due to the positioning of the Mason- Dixon Line within the state. The divided of the State of Delaware is due to the split of the state by the Mason-Dixon Line. During the Civil War, New Castle County chose to side with the Union while Southern Delaware chose the Confederacy. Delaware's divide is significant in the fact that the northern county of New Castle did not openly practice traditionally southern forms of slavery. Leaving the southern regions of Kent and Sussex counties had slave plantations. The Delaware state legislature failed to pass a law abolishing slavery on two separate occasions by one vote. Also, for slave states like Delaware, Maryland, Missouri, and Kentucky that sided with the Union, but remained slave-holding colonies where the 13th Amendment of the Constitution was not acknowledged. The 13th Amendment known as the Emancipation Proclamation states that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for a crime within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." Formally abolishing slavery in the United States, the 13th Amendment was passed by the Congress on January 31, 1865 and ratified by the states on December 6, 1865 (Library of Congress, 2017).

After the Emancipation Proclamation, African Americans continued to struggle economically and educationally. In 1930, many African Americans were gainfully employed of these, 21% were in agriculture, 20% were in manufacturing and mercantile industries, 12% were transportation, and 33% in personal and domestic service in New Castle and Kent Counties. African Americans in Delaware comprised 827 farms (Newton, 1997). Education was also an

uphill battle for blacks. Founded on the principles educational and financial growth African Americans Delaware State College in 1892 on a land grant in Dover. In 1951 Thurgood Marshall, Louis Redding, and the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) filed a suit on behalf of black children in Delaware in 1950 for admission to the white public schools because facilities for black children were inferior. As a result, Chancellor Collins J. Seitz of the Delaware Supreme Court ruled to follow the Supreme Court decision to desegregate the State of Delaware. The case was then appealed to the United States Supreme Court. Delaware was one of five defendants in Brown v. Board of Education. In 1954, the Supreme Court ordered the desegregation of school districts in Delaware. Wilmington schools began to comply in that year as did Dover schools, but in other parts of the state, progress was slow. In Milford, which is a town positioned in the middle of the state was the most effected during desegregation in Delaware. As hindrance to the desegregation of the state the National Association for the Advancement of White People headed by Bryant W. Bowles, an ardent desegregation opponent, along with others, prolonged the implementation of the process of desegregation (p. 1).

The historical background serves as a significant backdrop towards research on cultural context, and educational issues that remain prevalent in Delaware today. The Delaware State School System serves over 120,000 students in which 31.5% are African-American, and 51.9% identified as being of low socioeconomic status. As of 2012–13 the Delaware Department of Education's Race and Ethnic Ratio Report states the State of Delaware has 284 schools, which were under improvement by the Federal Government (Delaware Dept. of Education, 2013). These results indicated that state identified a majority of these schools were located within racially high and communities of low socioeconomic status. According to the 2011 Federal

Census, the three counties have the following demographic data. New Castle County has 24.6% poverty, 5.1% unemployment, 25.6% African American population with a median income level of $64,158.00 annually. Kent and Sussex hold the lowest poverty levels with Kent at 12% poverty and 5.1% unemployment. Kent County is 24.9% African American and has a $54,783.00 median income level. Sussex County fell below federal cutoffs across all data sets with 3.1% poverty, 4.5% unemployment, a 12.7% African-American population, and a median income level of $53,215 annually (Federal Census, 2011). New Castle and Kent were recorded as .9 higher in unemployment for the state average but had higher median income levels for the demographic region. Findings from the Federal Census (2013) determined that there are geographic differences among the three counties. New Castle is considered an urban, suburban county while both Kent and Sussex Counties were categorized as suburban/rural areas.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Academic Achievement is a person's beliefs, self-evaluation, and self-awareness regarding their academic-related skills and abilities. Academic achievement is related to academic self-efficacy. The conception of academic ability is concerned with the student's personal beliefs about the nature and level of their academic competence.

Cultural Congruence—indicates a teacher's respect for the cultural background of his or her students. Zeichner (2009) emphasizes that for a teacher to implement the principle of cultural congruence, he or she must have knowledge of, and respect for, the various cultural traditions and languages of students in the classroom. Understanding of how their cultural biases may influence judgments of the student performance, therefore, obstruct students' ability to learn.

Desegregation—the process of ending the separation of two groups is usually referring to races. Desegregation was a focus of the American civil rights movement for a long time, both before and after the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, particularly regarding the desegregation of the school systems and the military (Ware, 2005).

Ethnicity the identification with cultural characteristics of a particular group—that is, the norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors that are typical of an ethnic group and that stem from a common culture of origin transmitted across generations (Phinney, 1996).

Integration identified as the systematic process of the ending of racial segregation. In addition to the desegregation, integration includes goals such as leveling barriers to association, creating equal opportunities regardless of race, and the development of a culture that draws on diverse traditions rather than merely bringing a racial minority into the majority culture. Desegregation is largely a legal matter and integration is largely a social one (Ware, 2005).

Socioeconomic Level—the measurement of poverty levels as a combination of education, income, and occupation. For my study, a school with a low socioeconomic level is defined as those schools with 51% percent or higher of the student body receiving free or reduced lunch, and middle-class schools as those with less than 51% of students receiving free or reduced lunch (Bureau of National Statistics, 2011).

1.7 Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses of a study that are out of the control of the researcher (Simon, 2011). A limitation of this qualitative comparative case study analysis is that it was carried out using the ex-post facto data of three previous studies and, therefore, does not contain any current data. Another limitation of a comparative case study is that, due to using ex-post facto data, there is no way to see if the results of the previous studies could be duplicated in

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this study. Due to the nature of the three selected studies which have small sample sizes, the findings of this study may not be generalizable.

1.8 Delimitations

Delimitations are the characteristics that limit the scope and determine the boundaries of the study (Simon, 2011). A delimitation of this study is that the researcher has chosen to target African American students. Another delimitation of this study is that the researcher has focussed only on cultural integration in the school and the leadership practices post-enactment of Brown v. Board of Education.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Schools in the United States serve as key sites in the formation of racial identities (Lewis, 2003). Student achievement and opportunities continue to be marked by inequitable differences along racial lines. Race is often a delicate and volatile subject within schools. Conversations about race and its effect on education have often been avoided or are riddled with uncertainty, apprehension, and fear (Pollock, 2004). The Supreme Court's 1954 decision in Brown v. Board of Education—and the desegregation of schools that followed—was perhaps the most significant development in U.S. education policy of the last century. Alarmingly, 54 years after the passing of Brown v. Board of Education there have been continual educational, legal disparities based on race, perceptions, and social standings within the United States. Consequently, researchers have tried to find determinant factors for why minorities have consistently lagged behind their Caucasian counterparts. In the areas of poverty and student achievement educational and legal policies contributed to the achievement gap for affecting low income children. Teachers' perception and expectations contribute to the resolution of the achievement discord within the United States (National Center for Poverty, 2014).

2.1 History of Education and Race for African Americans in the United States

Race has played a key role in the educational opportunities and the life of African Americans within The United States of America. In 1619 the first Negroes landed in the Virginia colonies. The sole purpose of the Negroes was for labor purposes only. According to Anderson (2007) the beginning educational practices of the Negroes was meager and widely unsupported by the English colonists. During the U.S. colonial period, two prominent religious groups, Congregationalists and Anglicans, both saw education of Negroes as a conversion of

spiritual obligation, and the ability to read scriptures was seen as part of this process (Monoghan, 2001). While reading was encouraged, writing often was not. In early Colonial life writing was seen as a mark of status. Any persons' in the New World needed to have a basic understanding of reading and writing to move through the social standings within the colonies. During the Colonial time period slave were not considered valid member s of the new Americas therefore unnecessary for the Negro population to learn the skills of the middle class. Memorization, catechisms, and scripture formed the basis of what education was available. Due to fear of revolts and equality status in the early colonies anti- literacy laws were enacted to deter the slave population from educating themselves. As a result, Delaware passed an 1831 law that prevented the meeting of a dozen or more blacks late at night; additionally, black preachers were to petition a judge or justice of the peace before speaking before any assembly. In reaction to these laws the slaves formed schools to cultivate their own minds. Many schools have been dated as early as 1695 (Monaghan, 2011 p. 3). Prior to emancipation, slaves had not only been held back from learning to read and write, but in many jurisdictions it was even a criminal offense to teach a slave to read. Nonetheless, while literacy was scarce during slavery, the practice was not unknown. Nearly 400,000 Blacks—about 10 percent of those in the South—possessed some degree of literacy by 1865 (National Association of Education, 2009).

At the beginning of the 20th century African Americans recorded a 95% illiteracy rate. The African American literacy rate gradually decreased to 70% by the year 1880, and yet again in 1910 to 30% in the United States (Anderson, 1988). Many African Americans were taught to read and write through the creation of Freedmen Schools. The first postwar schools were former clandestine schools, operating openly by January 1865. Literate black men and women secretly opened new, self-sustaining schools. Northern freedmen's aid organizations began establishing

schools for former slaves in mid-1865. During reconstruction the federal Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (commonly called the Freedmen's Bureau) used its authority over former Confederate properties to provide buildings for schools. The Freedmen's Bureau, missionary associations, and African Americans themselves funded the schools; many of the mostly white, female teachers came south with the missionary groups (Virginia Historical Society, 2014).

By the 1900s almost two thirds of the African American school aged population were not enrolled within any formal public school system due to the lack of resources such buildings, or teachers. A study completed by Fultz (1995), *Education of Negro Teachers*, found that the average length an African American teacher was trained fell between six weeks to 2 years of college. Records during this time revealed teacher populations of 55.7% African American, 66.7% Caucasian with only 22.5% of the African American teachers going beyond high school (Fultz, 1995, p. 406).

After the Civil War education and literacy became a means to freedom and social mobility in the United States. With the help of the newly formed Republican Party led by President Abraham Lincoln several acts were sent to Congress to enfranchise the African American demographics. In 1867 the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified. The Fourteenth Amendment granted all African Americans citizenship and equal right under the law.

During those 30 years after the emancipation, Black colleges grew rapidly and thrive in the South. They were aided by northern Christian churches which sent hundreds of "schoolmarms" to the common schools to teach young blacks. During reconstruction, the

Freedman's Bureau, missionary societies, and blacks themselves established over 3,000 schools in the South, laying the foundation for public education in the region.

Coinciding with educational obstacles African Americans have had racial identity and classification inequality throughout US history. Race and ethnicity in the United States Census, defined by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the United States Census Bureau, are self-identification data items in which residents choose the race or racial identification groups. According to The US Census Bureau (2013), the racial categories represent a social-political construct for the race or races that respondents consider themselves to be and "generally reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country." OMB defines the concept of race as outlined for the US Census as not "scientific or anthropological" and takes into account "social and cultural characteristics as well as ancestry", using "appropriate scientific methodologies" that are not "primarily biological or genetic in reference." The race categories include both racial and national-origin groups (US Census, 2013). States since the Early 18th century have been required to monitor racial groups for the purpose of voting rights, bilingual education, civil rights, and residential districting rights.

Due to the complex racial identifications of African Americans the US Census Bureau has changed the categorization of African American as the laws, and civil rights movements have progress within The United States of America. The most significant regulations according to the US Census Bureau pertaining to African Americans are highlighted below by year:

Census 1790
In 1790, the first official year of the U.S. Census, these questions were asked, four of which had racial implications of: Number of free white males aged under 16 years, Number of free white

males aged 16 years and upward, Number of free white females, Number of other free persons and Number of slaves.

Census 1820

The 1820 census built on the questions asked in 1810 by asking age questions about the slaves who were formerly owned. Also the term "colored" enters the census nomenclature. In addition, a question stating "Number of foreigners not naturalized" was included

Census 1830

For the 1830 census, a new question which stated "The number of White persons who were foreigners not naturalized" was included. This reflected the growth of Nativist movements in American society at this time - as well as combining the number and age question of both slaves and free colored individuals.

Census 1850

The 1850 census saw a dramatic shift in the way information about residents was collected. For the first time, free persons were listed individually instead of by head of household. There were two questionnaires: one for free inhabitants and one for slaves. The question on the free inhabitants schedule about color was a column that was to be left blank if a person was white, marked "B" if a person was black, and marked "M" if a person was mulatto. Slaves were listed by owner, and classified by gender and age, not individually, and the question about color was a column that was to be marked with a "B" if the slave was black and an "M" if mulatto.

Census 1890

For 1890, the Census Office changed the design of the population questionnaire. Residents were still listed individually, but a new questionnaire sheet was used for each family. Additionally,

this was the first year that the census distinguished between different East Asian races, such as Japanese and Chinese, due to increased immigration. This census also marked the beginning of the term "race" in the questionnaires. Enumerators were instructed to write "White," "Black," "Mulatto," "Quadroon," "Octoroon," "Chinese," "Japanese," or "Indian."

Census 1900

For 1900, the "Color or Race" question was slightly modified, removing the term "Mulatto". This expanded version included the question "Fraction of person's lineage that is white".

Census 1910

The 1910 census was similar to that of 1900, but it included a reinsertion of "Mulatto" and a question about the respondent's "mother tongue." "Other" was also added to signify "other races", with space for a race to be written in. This decade's version of the Indian Population Schedule featured questions asking the individual's proportion of white, black, or American Indian lineage.

Census 1920

The 1920 census questionnaire was similar to 1910, but excluded a separate schedule for American Indians

Census 1930

The biggest change in this year's census was in racial classification. Enumerators were instructed to no longer use the "Mulatto" classification. Instead, they were given special instructions for reporting the race of interracial persons. A person with both white and black ancestry (termed "blood") was to be recorded as "Negro," no matter the fraction of that lineage (the "one-drop rule"). A person of mixed Black and American Indian ancestry was also to be recorded as "Neg"

(for "Negro") unless he was considered to be "predominantly" American Indian and accepted as such within the community. Persons who had minority interracial ancestry were to be reported as the race of their father.

Census 1950

The 1950 Census questionnaire removed the word "color" from the racial question.

Census 1960

The 1960 Census re-added the word "color" to the racial question.

Census 1970

The US Census Bureau reintroduced "Negro or Black" to the census.

Census 1990

The 1990 Census was not designed to capture multiple racial responses, and when individuals marked the "Other" race option and provided a multiple write in, the response was assigned according to the race written first. "For example, a write in of "Black-White" was assigned a code of Black, a write in of "White-Black" was assigned a code of White."

Census 2000

Race was asked differently in the Census 2000 in several other ways than previously. Most significantly, respondents were given the option of selecting one or more race categories to indicate racial identities. Data show that nearly seven million Americans identified as members of two or more races. The 2000 Census was the first census to categorize Blacks as African American.

2.2 History of Race and Educational Legal Statutes in Delaware

Delaware's desegregation litigation is unique in the history of the country in breaking down the barriers of racial segregation in public education. By the time of the Civil War, some four million residents of the United States, the eighth of its population, were slaves. Acting under his war powers, President Abraham Lincoln in September 1862 announced the Emancipation Proclamation, effective January 1, 1863, freeing all slaves in areas still in rebellion. The Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to the States within the Union since President Lincoln had no constitutional power to act against slavery in areas loyal to the United States. Accordingly, the legal status of slaves residing in Delaware, a border State that stayed within the Union, remained unchanged. The auction of slaves took place in Delaware throughout the Civil War. With the national adoption of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, the majority of Delawareans used statutes providing for the separation of the races to maintain the subjugation of blacks. Thus, in Delaware, African American and Caucasian could not marry without violating the law; nor could they come together in hotels or restaurants, barbershops, public restrooms, or theaters. Also they could participate together in myriad other activities affecting the daily lives of Delaware residents without the risk of violating the law (Delaware Department of Archives, 2014). Not the least of the white majority's efforts was in public education where the Delaware Constitution of 1897 provided: Separate schools for white and colored children shall be maintained (Ware, 2005). Historically post Thirteenth Amendment African Americans went from being identified as Negro to Colored. Then subsequently, Black to African American after the passing of Brown v. Board of Education (1954**).**

Delaware and its African American lawyers have played substantial roles in the preliminary cases leading to the culmination of Brown v. Board of Education (1954). Two

significant prosecuting lawyers for the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People were Louis Redding and Jack Greenberg. Redding and Greenberg played vital roles in prosecution and defense of many of the defining educational cases to reach the State of Delaware's Supreme Court. The landscape of Delaware's eclectic racial history has been molded through the adjudication of the following Supreme Court cases:

Fourteenth Amendment to Constitution

No states shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States. Without due process of law nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.

1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson*

The United States Supreme Court states that "separate but equal" satisfies the constitutional requirements of the equal protection clause. This case involved a man who was 7/8 white and 1/8 black, and had been excluded from an all-white dining car on a Louisiana train.

1897 Article X, Delaware Constitution

Institutes segregated public school system in Delaware.

1952 *Belton v. Gebhar* and *Bulah v. Gebhart*

Chancery Collins Seitz rules that the existing educational facilities for black and white students are not equivalent and orders immediate admission of black children to Claymont and Hockessin schools. These cases are later incorporated in the *Brown* decisions.

1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (Kansas)

The United States Supreme Court declares the "separate but equal" principle a violation against the Constitution and orders schools desegregated.

1955 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (Brown II)

The Court affirms *Brown* I and orders that schools be desegregated with all deliberate speed.

1956 *Evans v. Buchanan*

The case of the District Court of Delaware by residents of Clayton, Delaware is filed; the court enjoins the district to admit black students. In a continuation of the suit filed in1957, seven cases are consolidated for trial. In 1961, District Court Judge Caleb Wright issues the order approving, with modification, the plan presented by the State Board of Education.

1964 Civil Rights Act

Congress passes a law aimed attending discrimination against minority groups. It provides measures for ensuring equal rights for all Americans to vote, work, use public accommodations and facilities, and access public education and programs receiving federal funds.

1965 Delaware State Board of Education

The board adopts a resolution to end "de jure" (mandated by law) segregation. By 1967, the last black school district is phased out.

1968 Educational Advancement Act

Delaware State Legislature establishes a framework to reorganize Delaware schools. Wilmington School District is excluded from parts of this act.

1968 *Green v. Board of Education of Kent County* (Virginia)

The Supreme Court unanimously decides that freedom of choice is not adequate in this case.

1971 *Evans v. Buchanan*

This case is reopened by five black parents from Wilmington. Plaintiffs contend that Wilmington schools have not been desegregated and that the Educational Advancement Act violated their Constitutional rights under the 14th Amendment.

1974 *Evans v. Buchanan* I

The District Court concludes that a unitary school system has not been established and required the defendant State Board of Education to submit, alternate desegregation plans (a) within the present boundaries of the Wilmington School District, and (b) incorporating other areas of New Castle County. The plaintiffs may also submit alternative desegregation plans.

1974 *Milliken v. Bradley* (Detroit, Michigan)

The Supreme Court concludes it must be shown that racially discriminatory acts of

The state or local school districts, or of a single school district have been a substantial cause of inter-district segregation in order for an inter-district remedy to be imposed.

1975 *Evans v. Buchanan* I

The District Court affirms its 1974 ruling and declares part of the Educational Advancement Act unconstitutional. It again orders that remedies be submitted in accordance with the initial ruling. The order rendered by the District Court based on its 1974 and 1975 rulings again all parties were required to submit both inter-district and Wilmington only plans and joins the State Board of Education, in preparing its inter-district plans, from relying upon those provisions of the Educational Advancement Act which had been found to be unconstitutional. The Supreme Court summarily affirms the District Court ruling, through issuance of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), widespread desegregation did not begin until the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned racial discrimination in schools receiving federal aid. The 1968 *Green* decision (*Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, 391 U.S. 430), which stipulated that school desegregation must begin immediately, further accelerated the process. Numerous Southern districts were placed under court-ordered desegregation plans, many with mandatory busing components, and Southern schools ultimately became the least segregated in the country (Lutz, 2005).

2.3 State of Delaware Education Policy and *Brown* (1954) in Public Schools

On May 20, 1954, the Governor of the State of Delaware sent a letter (See Appendix D) to the State Board of Education which read,

"The recent decision of the United States Supreme Court on public education requires our attention now, and for some time to come (Delaware Supreme Court, 1954). Delaware possesses certain geographical features that distinguish it from most other states.

This provides an ideal and unique opportunity to study the extent to which the judicial system affects desegregation. Delaware had forewarning that desegregation might occur and what it might involve. On April 1, 1952, Collins J. Seitz Bard, Supreme Court Magistrate ruled that the facilities offered to blacks were not equal to those offered, to whites in Claymont and Hockessin. These schools were desegregated by the Delaware court order prior to the 1954 Supreme Court decision. However, by September of 1953 the State Board had a request from the Board of Trustees of the Hockessin School. It was further decided that, equal facilities had to be provided and that therefore no colored children are to be admitted to the Hockessin White School, and further that due to equal educational facilities have been provided. The State Board directed the pupils presently attending the Hockessin White School #29 to transfer to the Absalom Jones School (Delaware Archives, Annual Report, State Board of Education, 1954, p. 42).

On April 15, 1954, then Secretary of Public Instruction Dr. George R. Miller developed a panel of all administrators of those districts within Delaware that would be directly involved. The panel decided that, children should attend the school nearest their home and that it might be necessary to incorporate all school districts within a property taxing area, and that there might be, no separation of colored districts (Delaware Archives, Annual Report, State Board of

Education, 1954, p. 43). Its consensus was that it would be necessary to be careful in job placing

the Negro teachers 'because of desegregation, these teachers would have, to 'be cared for' (p.43).

Delaware schools were also involved in the *Brown* decisions. A Delaware public school

desegregation case brought by the NAACP, *Belton v. Gebhart* (1952), reached the U.S. Supreme

Court as a companion case to *Brown*. Interestingly, the Delaware case was the only one in which

the plaintiffs prevailed at the trial court level (Ware, 2005). After the *Brown* rulings, Delaware

public schools experienced lengthy delays before desegregation became a reality, another

characteristic in common with national history. Wilmington schools were not declared by the

State of Delaware as desegregated until 1974 (Williams, 2011). Attempts to rectify the

segregated school system in Wilmington were not ordered by the court until 1976 (Williams,

2011). As of 2012, Red Clay Consolidated School District was found in violation of unitary

status according to Brown v. Board of Education (1954).

Historically, Delaware did not follow the national trends in policies enacted by the State

of Delaware Supreme Courts integration of public schools. Schools in New Castle County were

desegregating several years prior to *Brown*. After the *Brown* (1954), mandated schools halted in

integration and began segregating according to neighborhoods. By stating, the Supreme Court

holding in *Milliken v. Bradley* (1974) prevented most desegregation orders from reaching across

school district boundaries. In contrast, the trial court ruled in the Wilmington case that an inter-

district violation of constitutional rights had occurred and ordered a remedy that involved the

Wilmington metropolitan area, a ruling upheld by the Supreme Court (Williams, 2011).

Therefore, the Wilmington desegregation order affected both urban and suburban students and

crossed district boundaries.

2.4 Demographics of Delaware Public Schools before Brown (1954)

Prior to the handing down of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), Delaware was considered a moderate state when concerns of racial inequality were documented. According to Gadsden (2013), Northern and southern Delaware had different views on how the then recently-mandated case of *Brown* should be implemented within each county. Northern Delaware moved incredibly expeditiously to modify state policy to bring it within the guidelines of implementation of modified attendance zones and voluntary transfer mechanisms that facilitated the desegregation of pupil populations. On June 11, 1955, Delaware local board members from all three counties met in Northern Delaware to discuss a moderate implementation of the desegregation laws.

Consequently, after meeting with all local leaders, formal statements were released stating local board groups in conjunction with community members, should formulate plans to remove racial obstacles that segregate black students and white students. It was determined that they should be submitted for review to the State of Delaware Board of Education (Gadsden, 2013, p. 105). School districts with approved plans were given until the end of the upcoming school year to modify transportation restrictions. Those districts that did not receive approval from the state were given fines and state oversight to expedite desegregation plans.

Delaware Department of Education (2014), during the implementation of *Brown* (1954), local districts had to modify and desegregate 80 African American schools throughout the state. The formation of desegregation plans allowed for overall unbalanced demographic of race within the state, all districts had to implement one of two choices in the employment of school employees. Local districts could employ race-neutral teacher, meaning those teachers' whose racial composition was directly chosen for school acceptance, or allow free choice of transferring

if there was open space for student and/or faculty members from other schools into the newly developed school districts. Gadsden (2013), Blacks were continually locked out of employment and comparable economic growth. This was especially significant for Black teachers. School districts such as Odessa and Townsend used the reasoning of overcrowding to support the need to keep one- and two- room black schools open. While districts such as Wilmington, Delaware City, and Red Clay chose to follow with southern Delaware practices of refusal to submit plans nor follow Brown implementation practices (p. 112–117). Due to lack of modifications and plans for the State of Delaware, The NAACP in 1956 filed multiple proceedings in the Supreme Court of Delaware on behalf of both the students, and Black teachers on the grounds of noncompliance with *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). Subsequently, the Supreme Court of Delaware mandated that all school districts with elementary and/or secondary schools must be integrated by 1970, and thus continue *Brown* practices until unitary status was given for compliance.

In 2000, nearly 12 million American children lived in poverty. In the United States, African American and Latino children made up almost 7.2 million of that number; 60% of all children living in poverty (Children's Defense Fund, 2002). The inability to address the adverse effects of poverty directly affects the academic achievement gap (Talbert-Johnson, 2004). Research indicates that children from low-SES households and communities develop academic skills more slowly compared to children from higher SES groups (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier, and Maczuga, 2009). Since Coleman (1966) identified it in his landmark study, Equality of Educational Opportunity, socioeconomic status is a strong predictor of student achievement.

The ethnic diversity of the K-12 student population in schools in the United States is increasing, in step with the increasing diversity in the country's overall population. Recent figures indicate that 43% of K-12 students are members of ethnic minorities, a percentage that

continues to rise each year. Conversely, the overwhelming majority of K-12 teachers are Whites of European descent. In 2008, 83.5% of teachers reported that they were White, non-Hispanics; a number that has increased slightly in recent years (Institute of Education Sciences, 2008). Western culture, based on Eurocentric values, norms, and worldviews, continues to be the predominant cultural influence in much of U.S. society and many of its institutions, including education (Department of Public Education, 2013).

Coleman (1966) asserted that the influence of student background was greater than anything that goes on within schools. Poverty is certainly a factor among children in the United States. Rainwater and Smeeding (1995), in their 18-nation Luxembourg Income Study, found that, during the 1990s, families of children in the United States had lower real income than families of children in almost every other nation. Although the poverty rate for people under 18 years old dropped from 16.9% in 1999 to 16.2% in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001), American children remained the poorest population by age group. Of these approximately 12 million children, one third lives in extreme poverty families with incomes below 50% of the poverty line (Thomas and Stockton, 2003).

The U.S. Census Bureau (2013), 34% of all youth aged 15–19 were from minority groups. The U.S. Census (2000) estimated that by 2025, this would increase to 46% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Similarly, approximately one in five school-age children currently come from an immigrant family (Zhou, 1997). Approximately 50% of today's Hispanic youth are immigrants, or children of immigrants; for Asian Americans, this proportion is closer to 90% (Zhou, 1997). This proportion is especially high in urban school districts (Suarez-Orozco, 1998; 2001). According to the Department of Public Education (2013), the black population will grow from 39.9 million to 56.9 million, an increase of 17 million or 46%. The black share of the

population will remain relatively the same at around 13%. The non-Hispanic white population will increase by only 1%, from 200.9 million to 203.3 million, a gain of 2.5 million. The non-Hispanic white share of the population will decline from 64.7% in 2010 to 46.3% in 2050 (Department of Public Education, 2013).

In the United States, the gaps in achievement among poor and advantaged students are substantial (Rowan, 2004). Through multiple studies, the U.S. Department of Education (2001, p. 8) clearly demonstrated that student and school poverty adversely affected student achievement. A U.S. Department of Education study conducted with students in third through fifth grade from 71 high-poverty schools (2001) found that: Students in the high-poverty schools scored below norms in all years and grades tested, Students who lived in poverty scored significantly worse than other students, Schools with the highest percentages of poor students scored significantly worse initially, but closed the gap slightly as time progressed.

The *Teachers' Diversity Revisited: A State by State Analysis Report (*2014), ethnicity, socioeconomic, and achievement gaps in Delaware were rated at 35 out of 100 percentile points. Delaware was ranked lower than the national average of 65 in teachers matching the cultural backgrounds of their student populations. This index ranks states on the percentage-point difference between the percentages of nonwhite teachers and nonwhite students (Center for American Progress, 2014).

The racial structures within Delaware are a tale of two cohorts. Within the three counties of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex there are sharp changes in the ethnic poverty populations. There is a stark difference with the racial composition as it relates to poverty and academic achievement when comparing areas north and south of the Chesapeake Canal. According to the 2012 U.S. Census, the individual counties show a divide with race and income. As a result, New

Castle County is 65.5% Caucasian and 23.7% African American; Kent is 67.8% Caucasian and 24% African American; while Sussex showed the largest divide with 79% Caucasian and 12.7% African American (Federal Census, 2013). The three counties showed similar separations when demographics were separated by income level, with New Castle showing 35.8%, Kent at 34.9%, and Sussex at 43% (Delaware Department of Education, 2013).

Consequently, this divide is also apparent in the academic achievement of African American students in comparison to their Caucasian counterparts. The Delaware Department of Education (2013), for the school year 2011–2012 reported that the state employed 6,528 Caucasian teachers out of 8,407 teachers' statewide between the three counties. Most of which served in low-income high-minority schools. Such differences in income, race, and achievement supported by Harris, Rosenthal, Snodgrass, and Jacobson (1998). *The Effects of Teacher Expectation, Gender, and Behavior on Pupil Academic Performance and Self Concept*, correlated the effect of teacher stereotypes regarding gender, ethnic group membership, and socioeconomic status. Harris et al (1998) observed twenty elementary school teachers for 20 minutes during a Language Arts lesson. Harris et al. (1998) investigated the degree to which teacher expectations of at-risk students affect the teacher's instructional behaviors. The results of the study indicated that teacher's expectations of different ability level students affect the teacher's instructional behaviors. The results mirrored those of Rosenthal (1976) in identifying stereotypes that could lead to lower expectations which trigger self- fulfilling prophecies' or perceptual biases that could influence students' academic success (Harris, 1998). These disparities were likewise the focus of Winfield's (1986) study titled, *Teacher Beliefs Toward Academically at Risk Students in Inner Urban School.* Winfield (1986) supported the theory that teacher expectation, perceived intellectual ability, and ethnicity has the second most powerful

effect on both normative and cognitive expectations. These demographics make Delaware a microcosm for the United States demographic patterns in large for low socioeconomic, minority communities and the academic achievement gap.

Delaware's unique standpoint on slavery and race make for a converging of complex issues about race, socioeconomics, civil rights, and minority achievement factors. Delaware as a whole represents a microcosm of the African Americans experience within the United States of America. In no other state has the issue of race relations, socioeconomic or ethnicity played a larger role than in the contexts of education and cultural congruency. Delaware's historical benchmarks allow for the issues of school integration, school culture, and the leadership practices of those involved to be viewed from a critical standpoint. Delaware allows critical analysis of the direct effect that Brown (1954) created in the education and achievement of all minority students.

Figure 2.1: History of Federal Education Initiatives from 1863 to present

13th Amendment "Emancipation of Proclamation" (1863)		Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 US 537 (1896)		**Brown v. Board of Education** of Topeka, 347 U.S. 483 (1954)		**No Child Left Behind** Act (**NCLB**) (2001)		**Common Core Standards** Initiative (2010)
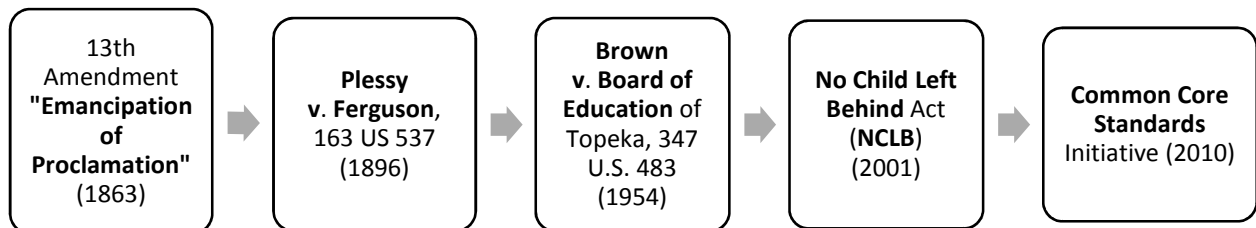
2.5 Leadership and School Culture

There is a growing body of evidence that underscores a significant and positive relationship between effective leadership and student learning and performance (Johnson, Uline, & Perez, 2011). Research completed by Hallinger, Bickman, and Davis (1996), and Marks and Printy (2003) has determined that the nature and size of these effects and concluded that, among school- related factors, leadership is second only to classroom instruction. A leader's effect

within the school is considered to be at their greatest when the context where there is the greatest challenge (Leithwood, 2004). Leithwood determined that high-performing leaders should incorporate the following traits within three domains of behavior: Define and advance the organization's purpose, vision, and direction, Develop people and encourage their individual and collective sense of efficacy for the work, and Redesign and improve organizational structures, systems, and context (p. 224) .

As referenced by Suraya and Yunus (2012), leadership is regarded as the single most important factor in the success or failure of institutions such as schools. The role of the school administration has been a topic that has been subjected to close investigation. Quality leadership styles performed by the administration are considered as the most important tools for achieving and determining the excellence and success of a school's performance. This includes students' performance in curricular and co- curricular activities (Suraya & Yunus, 2012). In Suraya and Yunus (2012), quantitative study*, Principal Leadership Styles in High Academic Performance of Selected Secondary School in Kelantan Darulniam*, 100 teacher responses were collected to identify perceptions of leadership style needed for high-performance leadership. Their study found correlations between leadership styles and the importance of determining high academic performance of their students.

This research has shown the determining factor that schools depend on leadership throughout the organization to shape productive futures through a process of self-renewal (Suraya, 2012, p. 370). Leaders and principals within in educational systems serve to transform school cultures, or to maintain them. Heck, Larsen, and Marcoulides (1991) demonstrated both a direct and indirect effect on student performance and achievement for their measures of principal

influence of operating through school governance, instructional organization, and school climates (Marks & Printy, 2003).

2.6 Cultural Congruence in Education

Public education in the United States has served increasingly diverse student populations, adding new twists to the debates regarding desegregation and equitable learning opportunities for students (Sorrells, Reith, & Sindelar, 2004). From an educational perspective, many schools have established programs that are designed to embrace and explore the difference. Cultural festivals, such as Chinese New Year, can be highlighted, and multicultural days, such as Harmony Day (Department of Education, 2006) are celebrated. While the acknowledgements of cultures' are crucial, one-off occasion recognizing individual ethnic celebrations do not serve to increase cross-cultural understanding. One common error in the teaching of multiculturalism is treating it as a one shot deal – something that happens on a special occasion. Such a limited approach to the curriculum can serve to perpetuate stereotypes and trivialize the values and issues of importance to a certain culture (Ukpokodu, 2008).

While the intention of multiculturalism is the promotion of understanding and respect for diversity, a focus on difference cannot encourage the development of meaningful, trusting relationships at an individual level. Conversely, it fosters the formation of boundaries that delineate difference and create fixed barriers between cultural groups. The traditional approach to cross-cultural studies has dealt primarily with diversity (McCauley, Draguns, & Lee, 1999). In particular, the development of collectivist versus individualist -define theory has served to create boundaries between cultural groups, constructing them as opposite entities (Seelye & Seelye-James, 1995). Accordingly, collectivism can be defined as: (1) concern by a person about the effects of actions or decisions on others, (2) sharing of material benefits, (3) sharing of

nonmaterial resources, (4) willingness of the person to accept the opinions and views of others, (5) concern about self-presentation and loss of face, (6) belief in the correspondence of own outcomes with the outcomes of others, and (7) feeling of involvement in and contribution to the lives of others (Triandis, 1986 p. 227). Triandis (2001) defines collectivist cultures as valuing interdependence between people, whereas individualist cultures emphasize independence from the group. This dichotomy has become so ingrained that it is almost considered an "inviolate assumption" (p.918). As a result, it has reinforced distinct cultural 'them' and 'us' views. Consequently, it serves to create and reinforce stereotypical views of the 'other'.

Over the past decades, scholars have addressed the growing need for educators to possess a greater awareness of and sensitivity to multiculturalism in the classroom (Zeichner, 1993). However, before asking what teachers should be, we must consider what basic premises encompass the concept of cultural congruent-ness. In other words, what do we mean when we say diversity, multiculturalism (Silverman, 2010), or cultural understanding within the classroom?

According to Seelye et al (2005), as humans encounter people from other societies or cultures, they catch our attention because they "look" different, they speak a language we do not understand, their actions are odd, or they believe differently than we ordinarily believe. Additionally, their religious beliefs may not make sense to us, and their cultural heritage and life experiences may differ significantly from those with which we are accustomed Seeley et al, 2005). Indeed, many of these cultural differences are observable, such as skin color, dress, spoken language, customs, gestures, greeting rituals, child rearing practices, emotional expressions, food, eating habits, and lifestyles (Seelye et al, 2005). According to anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists, all individuals develop patterns of feeling, thinking, believing,

speaking, and doing things through the socialization processes of the cultural group of which they are a member. The patterns of behavior that develop over a lifetime are organized, categorized, and stored as cognitive schemata (Gollnick & Chinn, 2009). Matsumoto and Juang (2008) believed how we understand or construe our sense of self is intimately and fundamentally tied to how we understand the world around us and our relationships with others in that world.

The Teacher Education Executive Report Conferences (Zeichner, 2010) determined that many teachers generally have limited experience with those from cultures or areas different from their own; many have negative attitudes and beliefs about those different from themselves (p. 21). The necessity for increased awareness of cultural needs is undoubtedly great. In part, this is because most teachers are Caucasian, middle-class, Christian women—demographics that do not match the majority of students (Woolfolk- Hoy, 2006). Educators who may have little experience confronting the challenges of individuals who historically show under representation in schools and workplaces must be aware that institutional practices inherently reflect the norms and values of the dominant culture (Darder, 1991). Findings showed that minority students were marginalized by the institutional practices of their schools (Sleeter & Grant, 1999). As a result, the study attempted to examine and challenge power and privilege, and the role of the teacher in society. The critical emphasis attempted to question the status quo and critique power relationships within a society. Sleeter and Grant (1999) referenced, address the struggle over ideological hegemony in a society by examining the role of education in transmitting and maintaining societal "norms." Sleeter and Grant's (1999) overall determination was that teachers' have a simplistic view of which allows them a comfortable format for the celebration of diversity without having an awareness of, much less critiquing and transforming, the social injustices and educational inequities that exist in society. This study supports the theory of a lack

of cultural congruence when reassigning Caucasian teachers to segregated schools, and increases in private education facilities catering to mostly Euro-American populations following the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, and has also contributed to future teachers' lack of diversity experiences (Smith, 2004).

Hollins (1996) argued that those children whose cultural background is European American have an educational advantage over children from other backgrounds because culturally different students must learn through cultural practices other than their own. Rose and Potts (2011) study titled, *Examining Teacher Candidate Resistance to Diversity: What Can Teacher Educators Learn?* supports Hollins (1996) research on cultural backgrounds of teachers' and students. Rose et al. (2011) empirical qualitative study was designed to investigate teacher candidates' descriptions of multicultural school experiences. The candidates negated the need to be culturally responsive by inaccurately simplifying culture and using the binary constructs of "same" and "different." The study concluded, contend that teachers cannot be culturally responsive if they do not acknowledge cultural differences among students (p. 17).

Sleeter and Grant (1999), "schools are shaped by cultural practices and values and reflect the norms of the society for which they have been developed" (p. 31). Hollins (1996) pointed out the relationships between mainstream teachers and many of their students from other cultures often represent incongruent worldviews and concepts about human nature, time, the natural environment, and social relationships. When the dominant culture accepts something as common knowledge, the values of other cultural groups are seen as less valid, creating instructional and behavioral challenges and biases.

Many of the schools that the nation's most vulnerable children attend especially those in urban areas, are dilapidated and segregated (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002).

They have large classroom sizes and poor teaching conditions. In addition to attending schools with crumbling structures and little financial and moral support, economically disadvantaged children also face a myriad of challenges brought on by structural and social inequality. Therefore, these children may be predisposed to fail because of the effects of poverty, racism, and hopelessness that are evident in urban classrooms (Cartledge, 2001). In their study of school and individual effects, Rumberger and Willms (1992) found that African Americans scored less well on tests than other racial or ethnic groups. This was after controlling for the effects of a variety of individuals, and school-leveled variables. Ogbu (1989) cited, African American do less well academically than other racial or ethnic groups, resulting in the differing of cultural values to institutionalized schooling rather than of socioeconomic standing (p. 265.Percieved additional research has subsequently identified that during every year of schooling, African American students continue to learn less than their Caucasian peers (Phillips,1998). Whereas African American children begin elementary school approximately 1 year behind Caucasians in vocabulary knowledge, they finish high school approximately four years behind Caucasians. (Phillips, 1998). Lleras (2008) study titled, *Race, Racial Concentration, and the Dynamics of Educational Inequality Across Urban and Suburban Schools*, compiled data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study to model feedback procedures of course placement, academic achievement, and student engagement. The study sampled approximately 24,500 8th-grade students in 1,052 public and private schools who were followed up in the 10th grade (1990), in the 12th grade (1992), 2 years after high school (1994), and 8 years after high school (2000). Lleras (2008) concluded that Caucasian and African American students in predominantly Black, particularly urban, schools are significantly disadvantaged at each point of the learning process

compared to students in other school types. Lleras (2008) suggests, "Minority students enter schools with lower academic skills compared to Caucasian students" (p. 11). Also according to Lleras (2008) African American students generally occupy lower curricular tracks while taking less demanding coursework compared to Caucasian students (p. 11). Ainsworth (2004) research titled, *When Race Matters: Teachers' Evaluations of Student Behaviors in the Classroom* found that, moreover, teachers' rate them as less attached and engaged in their schoolwork compared to White students (Ainsworth, 2004). Despite modest declines in Black-White residential segregation, African American students continue to be concentrated in racially segregated public schools within urban districts. Diamond and Spillane's (2008) ethnographic study titled, *Teacher Expectation and Sense of Responsibility of Student Learning: The Importance of Race, Class, and Organizational Habitus*, research the school leadership practices of urban elementary schools. Diamond et al. (2008) compiled data and sampled over 20 urban elementary schools. Through semi-structured interviews and observation, the study showed overlapping themes with lower achievement gains in urban schools and schools where a higher percentage of the student body was African Americans. Diamond et al. (2008) concluded, that teachers' beliefs about students were patterned by the race and social class composition of the student population (p. 93).

The U.S. Department of Education conducted a Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance (LESCP) in Title I schools (2001a) to determine the effectiveness of Title I schools. Studies have also concurred that individuals within schools with poverty had a clear, negative effect on student achievement and that students who attended schools with the highest percentages of poor students performed worse initially on both reading and mathematics tests (Thomas & Stockton, 2003). To understand the psychological implications of ethnicity, it is

essential to identify the specific cultural characteristics associated with an ethnic group and the outcomes of interest such as educational achievement or mental health (Betancourt & Lopez, 1993). In contrast, Li and Hasan's (2010) study titled, *Closing the Achievement Gap: Strategies for Ensuring the Success of Minority Students,* used pre-service teachers at an HBCU (Historically Black College and University) institutions where the teacher education program is accredited by the National Council of Accreditation for Teacher Education. The participants were sampled from an urban school district in Baltimore City. Out of 185 schools in Baltimore County Public School System (BCPSS), 131 schools were intensely segregated with over 90% of the student enrollment being students of color (p.59). The school districts served high-minority, high-poverty populations with fewer financial and community resources than their peers. The minority students were considerably behind their Caucasian peers in completing high school. This was reflected in the 2003 graduation rate of 59% for minorities compared to 82% for Caucasian students (The National Center for Educational Statistics, 2005). Qualitative survey and interview data was collected from two groups of students enrolled in the teacher education programs in order to examine their current and past learning experiences. The participants' were asked a series of survey questions and interviewed (Li & Hasan, 2007) in accordance with Merriam's (2001) effective data strategies. Both survey and interview questions focused on three areas: 1) life history-past learning, to identify factors from the students past learning experiences that might affect their current learning; 2) present learning, to examine the students current learning experiences; and 3) reflection on meaning, to interpret how the participants felt about their learning experiences. The study found that the two components that were important contributing factors to the success of the candidate participants were supportive learning environments and proactive personal traits. The positive learning environments at schools and in

homes not only supported their physical learning, they also aided a student's confidence and perseverance for achieving success. The students dominating cultural groups at an institution are more likely to stay in school because of teacher authority while engaged in a struggle against norms (Campbell, 2005). Thus, establishing positive environments with quality interpersonal relationships and students is the first step towards student success.

Adding to key factors of teacher congruence and lack of achievement is Huang and Moon's (2009) study titled, *Is experience the best teacher? A multilevel analysis of teacher characteristics and student achievement in low performing school,* which examined several teacher characteristics, with a focus on two measures of teaching experience, and their association with second grade student achievement gains in low-performing, high-poverty schools in Mid-Atlantic regions (Huang & Moon, 2009). The study focused specifically on low-performing, Title I, reading-focused (RF) schools. Reading First is based on scientifically based reading research (SBRR) on what works in reading instruction to reduce the number of children who experience reading difficulties in later years Huang and Moon, 2009). The student background and achievement data came from the state RF dataset. Teacher characteristics came from a teacher survey administered to all teachers in RF schools in the state. School-level information was sourced from the Department of Education website. Surveys were administered in May 2007 to 249 second grade teachers', 195 supporting reading coaches, and school administrators in RF schools in the state. The staff showed that 73% had a bachelor's degree or were enrolled in a master's program, while the rest had at least a master's degree. Around half (50%) of the second grade teachers did not attend any professional reading conference in the past year. In terms of teaching experience, nearly a fifth (19%) of the second grade teachers had less than or equal to two years of experience. This group represented the beginning teachers. Two-

thirds were seasoned teachers (62%), having five or more years of teaching experience and 19% had between two and five years of teaching experience. However, when the same teachers were asked how long they had been teaching in the second grade, 40% had only two years of experience or less, while 29% had more than five years of teaching experience in the second grade (Huang & Moon, 2009, p. 217). Huang and Moon determined school and classroom grouping effects on achievement gains, and teaching experience played a key factor in student achievement.

The Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (2013), African American students who lived in low-income communities scored an average of 31.7 points lower on proficiency for reading and 33.6 point lower in math for proficiency in state standards for Grades 2 through 10 as compared to their Caucasian counterparts (Delaware Department of Education, 2013). These gaps were more noticeable in schools that contained high levels of African American, low-income students with higher than normal percentages of Caucasian teachers.

Fifty years after racially-based segregation was outlawed in Brown v. Board of Education (1954) segregation continues to occur. Ironically, segregation has occurred, not because of legal mandates, but because of socioeconomic and racial composition of neighborhoods in which a school may be contained (Jones & Ramsey, 2011). Data indicate that children from low-income families do less well in school than their more affluent counterparts, and African American children's educational attainment continues to lag behind that of Caucasian (Codjoe, 2006). The perception of blacks as genetically inferior when it comes to academics is reinforced in the minds of some educators and the public at large, partly because of the achievement levels of young Blacks in school systems, and the overemphasis in the literature of school failure and underachievement among Black youth (Codjoe, 2006). As Perry (2003), the idea of black

intellectual inferiority is still taken for granted by many people, despite the illusion of openness

toward and acceptance of all races in society. For no group has there been such a pervasive,

persistent, well-articulated, and unabated assumption of mental incompetence (p. 10). Macias

(2004) reminds us that Black academic underachievement is a complex social phenomenon that

must be explained within a historical, socio-structural view (p. 33).

2.7 Relevance to Educational Leadership

Question three explores the effect of leadership practices on academic achievement of

students' pre and post Brown v. Board (1954).There continues to be a significant gap between

the achievements of learners. The efforts educational leaders have tried desegregation, providing

resources for programs designed to teach basic skills, and reducing class size. However, these

initiatives have not been successful in closing this gap. Garcia (2007) research concluded

developmental practices responsive to cultural differences present a significant challenge for

teachers. The teachers were required to adopt new role definitions, curricula, and teaching

practices that challenge rather than reflect the values of the society. This a multifaceted

approaches to school change (Fisher, 2010). Fisher concluded, after analyzing factors related to

student achievement, that the educational playing field had to be evenly distributed and reduced

in size.

There are differences in opinion between researchers and practitioners related to student

achievement. Lisi and Chinn (2002) suggest researchers need to move beyond traditional

research programs that place emphasis upon children's learning and developmental processes.

More emphasis needs to be placed on multiple perspectives.

According to Carr (1997) in a study titled *Different perceptions of race in education:*

Racial minorities and White Teachers, found that the aim of antiracist education is to change

institutional structures, validate the lived experiences of an increasingly diverse student body, and alter inequitable power relations. In 1997 Carr believed teachers played a crucial role in the effective implementation of antiracist education and the success of change-based policies. However, teachers' perceptions concerning racism and antiracist education have received little attention in the scholarly literature.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

Qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. Phenomenology emphasizes the meaning of an experience for a number of individuals; the intent of a theory study is to move beyond description and to generate or discover a theory, an abstract analytical schema of a process or action or interaction (Packer-Muti, 2009). According to Miles and Huberman (1994) the Conceptual Framework: (a) identifies who will and will not be included in the study; (b) describes what relationships may be present based on logic, theory and/or experience; and (c) provides the researcher with the opportunity to gather general constructs into intellectual "bins" (Miles and Huberman, p. 18). The conceptual framework serves as an anchor for the study and is referred at the stage of data interpretation. For this study, Critical Theory will be the evaluation lens to focus on the theories of Cultural Congruence, The Rosenthal (Pygmalion) Effects and their relationship and effect on the cultural congruence, leadership's practices, and influence on achievement among minority students.

Critical Theory

Critical theory is a school of thought that stresses the analysis and evaluation of society and culture, drawing from knowledge across the social sciences and humanities. Critical theory was developed from several generations of German philosophers and social theorists in the Western European Marxist tradition known as the Frankfurt School. According to these theorists, a critical theory is distinguishable from "traditional" theory according to specific practical purpose: a theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human emancipation, "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them" (Horkheimer, 1982, p. 244). Not only do critical theorists attempt to discover why oppressive structures exist and offer criticisms of their effects, they also consider the ways in which we can transform society.

In this sense, critical theory is not simply a critique of social structures, but an analysis of power relations. Such questions as "What constitutes power? Who holds it? In what ways is power utilized to benefit those already in power?" are central to critical theory (Lynn and Jennings, 2009, p. 174). As such, theories, aim to explain and transform all the circumstances that enslave human beings. Many critical theories in the broader senses developed by emerging in connection with the many social movements that relate varied dimensions of the power of human beings in modern societies. Critical theory seeks to understand the origins and operation of repressive social structures. Critical theory is a critique of domination. Critical Theory seeks to focus on a world becoming less free, to cast doubt on claims of technological, scientific rationality, and then to imply that present configurations do not have to be as they are (Gordon 1995, p. 190).

According to Lynne and Jennings (2009), Critical theory seeks to understand the origins and operation of repressive social structures. Through the examination of critical race theory, connections with particular attention to the role of human beings involved. Humans serve as both

reproducers and producers of culture. Humans in relation to critical race theory actively resist

oppression in theory. In short, critical race theorists' have focused on the:

(1) Questioning of links between knowledge and power;

(2) Recognizing the dialectical nature of oppression as a dehumanizing force that requires

some level of 'participation' from their students;

(3) Believing that dialogue and reflection are key ways to empower students in the

classroom;

(4) Viewing their students are 'producers' of knowledge with the ability to transform

oppressive social and cultural analysis.

Cultural Congruence

Cultural congruence theory means to become familiar with another person's culture for

whatever purpose. Cultural Congruence is a tool for teachers to use in schools to increase their

understanding of the surrounding areas/communities from which their students originate through

cultural understanding teachers can relate to their students, and can assist them in forming strong

bonds with their students (Schonleber, 2007). Gay (2008) broadly defines cultural congruence

and responsiveness teaching as validating, comprehensive, empowering, multidimensional,

transformative, and emancipatory "with the cooperation, community, and connectedness central"

(p.36).

Raymond J. Wlodkowski and Margery B. Ginsberg (1994) proposed a framework in their

book, Diversity and Motivation: Culturally Responsive Teaching, which intended to assist public

school educators in thinking about culturally responsive and congruent pedagogy. The 4

motivational conditions that constitute the conception of a culturally responsive or congruent

teaching framework are:

1. Establishing inclusion refers to those norms, procedures, and structures that are carefully blended together to promote a learning environment in which students and teachers feel respected by and connected to one another.

2. Developing attitude relates to those norms, procedures, and structures that create, through relevance and choice, a favorable disposition among learners and teachers toward the learning experience.

3. Enhancing meaning refers to those norms, procedures, and structures that expand, refine, or increase the complexity of what is learned in a way that matters to learners, includes their values and purposes, and contributes to a critical consciousness.

4. Engendering competence refers to those norms, procedures, and structures that create an understanding that learners are effective in learning something of personal value. (p. 20)

The study Cultural vibrancy: Exploring the preferences of African American children toward culturally relevant and culturally non-relevant lessons (Sampson, 2011), when teacher-student camaraderie and connectedness to the culturally relevant pedagogy are exceptional (p. 281), there is an increased academic performance. Irvine and Jordan (1991) also support the need for cultural responsiveness by arguing a culturally mismatched or lack of cultural sync may occur when African American children do not see themselves in the curriculum, and have frequent reference in which their cultural behaviors are not recognized nor honored (Jordan, 1991). The 1995 Handbook for the study of Multicultural Education (Banks and Banks, 1995) concluded that all teachers and students can bridge this cultural disconnect and rise to meet the current challenges through relevant and culturally responsive curricula. Recent research shows that the school achievement and motivation improve significantly when the protocols and

procedures of teaching are synchronized with cognitive abilities, physical and verbal styles, and

ethnic frames of reference. Thusly, the infusing of multicultural and ethnic curricula can promote

equitable learning for all students.

Rosenthal (Pygmalion) Effect

The Pygmalion effect, also referred to as the Rosenthal effect, refers to an established

effect which describes a form of self-fulfilling prophecy, and in this respect, it predicts that

people with negative beliefs and attitudes about themselves do not achieve their full potentials,

while those with positive labels succeed accordingly (Roberts and Jacobs, 1968). In the teaching

domain, the Pygmalion effect is referred to as the Rosenthal effect. Rosenthal and Jacobson's

research was designed to examine the relationship between teacher expectations and student

achievement. At the beginning of the school year, they gave students an achievement test and

informed teachers that, based on the results of the examination, some students showed potential

for high academic achievement in the forthcoming school year. However, these students were

chosen randomly, not based on their test scores. At the end of the school year, these students

showed greater gains in IQ scores than other students in the same classrooms. Researchers

explain that of the artificial expectations imposed on the teachers seem to have influenced

teachers' behavior towards these students in such a way that the students enjoyed greater gain in

achievement, and produced a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' effect (Tsiplakides, 2010). Rosenthal and

Jacobs (1968) indicated, if teachers hold positive expectations toward students, those students are

given more learning opportunities or increased challenges. Students were provided with more

detailed feedback, were praised more often following successes, and were encouraged more

often following failures. Rosenthal et al. (1976) concluded, when teachers show limited

expectations for students, those students are provided fewer learning opportunities and are less

challenged. Thus, teacher behavior influences student performance in a positive way when teacher expectations are high. If teachers hold negative expectations toward students, they may be providing disadvantageous learning conditions where teacher behaviors influence student performance in a negative way (Chang, 2011 p. 198).
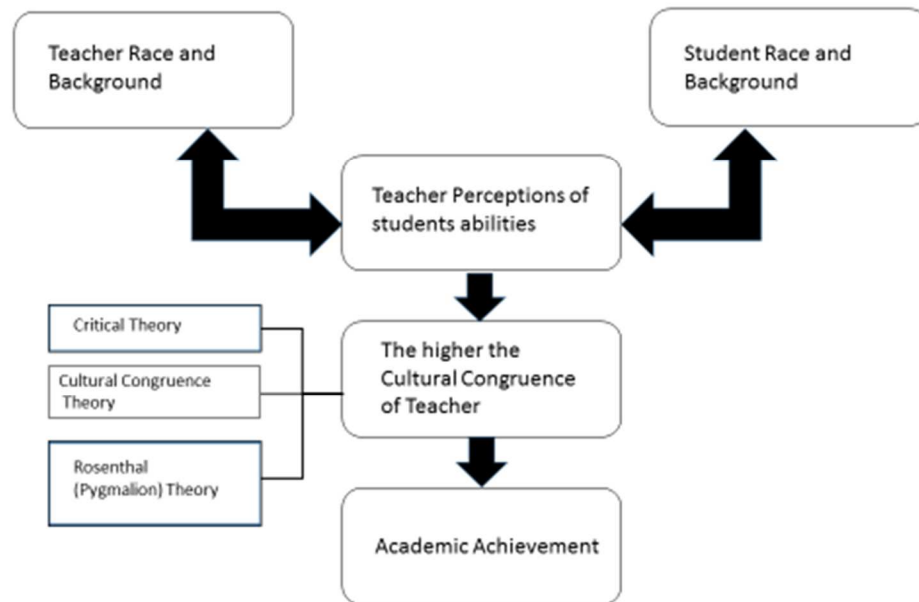
Figure 2.2 Conceptual framework of teacher perceptions and student achievement as related to cultural congruence

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

A case study is an investigation of a "bounded system" based on the descriptions that are complex, holistic and situated within a larger context or settings (Stake, 1978). Creswell (2004) takes the perspective that such research is a "methodology: a type of design in qualitative research that may be an object of study, as well as a product of inquiry. By examining disparate themes from three related case studies about cultural congruence, racial, and socioeconomic status on how teacher perceptions of African American students' achievement, this comparative analysis identified and synthesized multiple overarching research themes to develop emergent possibilities for why certain teachers of at-risk minority students have greater academic success within their classrooms than others.

For significance, literature for analysis was limited to research that assessed cultural congruence, racial backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and perceptions with concentration on academic achievement of African American students from the past eight years. Much of the scholarly literature on academic achievement focused on perceptions of teachers concerning socioeconomics or racial backgrounds. Due to the either/or constraints of the results more research is needed in the field of pedagogical styles, perceptions pre/post academic school years, and the incorporation of developmental programs for teachers in at risk settings. This research intends to fill the gap in the literature by adding to the body of knowledge of comparative case study analyses indicating the effect that cultural congruence, leadership practices, and school integration effects academic achievement of minority students. This chapter presents an in-depth

description of each case, including the methodology used for each study and the significance of the results.

3.2 Case Study One

Ford (2013) The Relationship Between Socioeconomic Status and the Academic Achievement of Culturally Diverse Students

Ford's study completed in 2013 applied the use of the mixed method research design. The method of mixed methods emerged as a third methodological measure in educational research (Truscott, Swars, Smith, Thornton-Reid, Zhao, Dooley, Williams, Hart, and Matthews, 2010, p. 317). The mixed method research design combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research methods process when a researcher has quantitative and qualitative data that can provide a better understanding of the research problem than either type of data alone (Mertler and Charles, 2008, p. 290). The mixed method in educational research has encouraged researchers to move beyond quantitative versus qualitative research arguments (Truscott, et. al., 2010). The mixed method research design allows the researcher the opportunity to create a multifaceted picture of the topic studied and drew from the strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches to minimize their limitation (Mertler and Charles, 2008; Truscott, et. al., 2010). Bartholomew and Brown (2012) shared that in a mixed method research design, the researcher "collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single study" (p. 179). Ford (2013) determined that one critical research question needed to be exposed, "What is the relationship between the socio-economic status of culturally diverse students and their academic achievement?" (p. 183). The participants for this study consisted of approximately two hundred and seven (207) middle school African American and Hispanic students in 7th and 8th grade

from metropolitan areas of Atlanta, GA. Ford's (2013, p. 39) study followed a mixed method research design for in-depth data collection of the 2012 CRCT assessment results of middle school students and semi-structured interviews with four middle school teachers, four parents and four students in a metro Atlanta school district. The mixed method research design combined both qualitative and quantitative approaches in this study and was more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data, but utilized the use of both methods in tandem (Creswell, 2009). The analysis of the data provided empirical evidence on the relationships between the variables examined. Ford (2013) studied the variables using IBM PAWS Statistics 18. The semi-structured interviews helped with the triangulation of data by providing teachers', parents', and students' perspective on students' academic achievement. The interviews were transcribed then coded for categories/themes using ATLAS TI computer software. Interviewing is a basic mode of inquiry. The basis of interviewing participants was to show interest in the lived experience of other people and the meaning they made of that experience. The interview is a powerful way to gain insight into educational and other important social issue **s** through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives reflect those issues (Siedman, 2006, p. 14). To ensure reliability and validity Ford (2011) used the Georgia Department of Education, CRCT statistical method. The CRCT test has a reliability ranging from 0.79 to 0.86 for Reading, 0.85 to 0.89 for English/Language Arts, and 0.87 to 0.91 for Mathematics, 0.89 47 to 0.90 for Science, and 0.88 to 0.91 for Social Studies. For reliabity, all assessment items completed by qualified professional content specialists specifically for the Georgia CRCT (Ford, 2011 p. 43). Georgia's Department of Education solicited help from curriculum specialists and committees throughout the State of Georgia to review the test items. The test items were evaluated for quality, clarity, content coverage, appropriateness, alignment to the curriculum, and grade-appropriate stimuli with

emphasis on higher order thinking (Ford, 2011 p.44). The CRCT was designed to only one clear correct answer with several cognitive distracters per test item.

3. 3 Case Study Two

Strange (2011) A Study of the Relationship of Student- Teacher Racial Congruence and Student Achievement

The purpose for Strange (2011) study was to address the gap in the peer-reviewed literature of analyzing the relationships of teacher-student racial congruence and student achievement. This research could have implications for teacher recruitment, preparation and training, and accountability tied to student achievement. Strange (2011) study was conducted to determine whether racial congruence between faculty and student in grade 3, self-contained classrooms in a Texas public school district was related to student achievement in reading or mathematics as measured by the 2006-2010 TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills). Strange (2011) research sought answers to the question: How does vital congruence between students and teachers relate to student achievement? The study employed descriptive analyses to examine the association of student-teacher racial congruence with student academic performance. Strange (2011) was a non-experimental, ex-post facto study. Strange (2011 p. 66) used reading and mathematics achievement data from elementary campus administrators from three independent school districts in a south-central state. The test scores were analyzed to examine group differences in student achievement of racially congruent and racially non-congruent student-teacher pairs. The study utilized quantitative methods (independent t-test) to determine the relationship between the dependent variables, reading, and mathematics achievement and the independent variables, student race and teacher race (Strange 2011 p. 66). Strange (2011) study relied on phenomenological qualitative approach to support cultural

compatibility established with racial congruence between student and teacher, and its effect on the student achievement. This study also incorporated several theories to complement each other such as representative bureaucracy theory, and critical race theory as an interpretive lens of the participant.

Strange's (2001 p.24) research had one single research question: To what degree the racial congruency between third-grade students and their teachers related to student achievement is? The participants for this study included pre-assessment of individual performance results of third-grade students on 2006 through 2010 administrations of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) reading and mathematics tests in three separate Texas School Districts. The students' reading and 67 mathematics TAKS scaled scores were used as indicators of achievement in the research questions. All participants were third-grade students from a self-contained classroom and enrolled at a Texas elementary school identified as a Title-one campus. For this study, students were classified by race using the student group race/ethnicity indicators, African-American, Hispanic, and White as reported in the State of Texas AEIS report. For Strange (2011) study, 13 students were examined for achievement through the lens of the degree of racial congruence within the classroom (Strange 2011 p. 68).

Strange (2011 p. 67), data used the null hypotheses to draw results from seven different elementary schools in Texas from 2006-2010. Data for the proposed study were requested from elementary school administrators. Written communications were requesting students' reading and mathematics TAKS achievement scores, ethnicities, and teacher ethnicities were made to campus administrators. All student and teacher names were masked to comply with FERPA (U.S. Department of Education, 2010b) regulations and to protect the identities of students and teachers. Campus administrators provided the requested data in a spreadsheet format with no

student or teacher names attached. Data included the following information for each student, reading, and mathematics TAKS scaled scores, student race, and teacher race. Teacher race was self-reported by the teachers to the representative school district office.

Strange (2011) used a Descriptive analysis with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were conducted to summarize the population in regards to the students' and teachers' ethnicities, and students' reading and mathematics scaled scores. An independent t-test using SPSS measured the degree of association between the independent variables and dependent variable. The analyses were conducted to assess the effect of racial congruence on students' reading and mathematics achievement. The data were coded, 0 for non-congruent and 1 for congruent. Racial congruency was determined when student's race and teacher's race were matched (Strange 2011 p. 69)

3.4 Case Study Three

Postell (2011) African American Students' Experiences, Achievement, and Outcomes; Examined Through the Lenses of Teacher Expectations, Racial Congruence and Stereotype Threat

Postell (2011 p. 6) research sought to add to the "lacking" ideas of race is added as a factor in the student-teacher dyad. The influences of race congruence between students and teachers have not been examined to determine if being taught by a person who is of the same or different race influences educational experiences and outcomes. Research is needed on the retrospective appraisal of African American college students regarding the role that teacher expectations, teacher-student racial congruity, and stereotype threat played in their high school education. Postell (2011) study's purpose of this phenomenological study is to examine the retrospective perceptions of the academic experiences and outcomes of 13 African American full

or part-time college students enrolled in either a community college or university located in an urban area. For the purpose of this study, the auther operationally defined educational experiences as the self-reported academic achievement and perceived success level attained by the student during high school, and academic outcomes as the self-reported academic achievement and success level attained after high school (Postell, 2011 p.8).

A qualitative, phenomenological research design was used in this study. The primary research question that guided this study was: What influences teacher perceptions and expectations have on African American student perceptions of their educational experiences including academic achievement, and academic outcomes, when examining their experiences through the lens of (a) teacher expectations, (b) between congruence, and (c) stereotype threat?

Postell (2011) defined the population for this study as the traditional African American student enrolled in freshman classes in postsecondary institutions. Postell (2011) included in the population that the students had to have graduated from high school in 2008, be African American, and 18 years of age or older. These students were enrolled either full or part-time in college level classes at a community college or university located in urban areas.

A set of interview questions was developed for the study. These questions were based on the review of the literature and the researcher's personal experiences with teacher race/ethnicity congruity and experiences with teachers during high school. Postell (2011) had to perform a pilot test of questions to ensure validity. A codebook was developed by the researcher to detail the specific terms that were expected to be included in the participants' responses to the research questions (Postell, 2011 p. 67). Postell (2011) conducted one-on-one interviews following the procedures outlined by Creswell (2007). The first step was determining the type of interview that was most efficient in collecting the data needed to address the research questions and describe

the phenomenon of interest. The types of interviews that could be used included; telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews, and focus groups. Telephone and face-to-face interviews are conducted with each participant separately. Focus groups use 8 to 10 people to discuss a topic that is being studied. The people who are included in a focus group have certain common characteristics or exposure to similar situations (Postell, 2011 p. 68). Postell (2011) developed a series of contexts codes and recorded them within a codebook. This codebook was used to develop the dictionary used with a computer program, such as SPSS Text Analysis for Surveys, to look for commonalities among terms used by the interviewees. This analysis provided information leading to themes and patterns among the interviews, as well as comparisons and contrasts that were inherent in the responses (Postell, 2011 p. 69).

To ensure validity with the interview questions, Postell (2011) had three high school teachers who had knowledge of student/teacher race/ethnicity congruity reviewed the interview questions. They were asked to provide suggestions on the wording and indicate if any questions should be eliminated or additional questions were needed.

Ultimately, the way teachers and educational leaders address cultural difference within the class may have a direct effect and effect student learning. This makes it imperative that teachers become culturally sensitive to students both personally and instructionally (Garcia, 1997). Within the United States School System, there are complex issues such as cultural congruence presents barriers between teachers and students enter the classroom. To train teachers' understanding the differences of cultures and ethnicities were encountered, and cultural diversity education is required.

Table 3.1 Comparison of Methodologies of the selected case studies

	Ford (2013)	Strange (2011)	Postell (2011)
Purpose	Investigate the relationship between socioeconomic status and the academic achievement of culturally diverse students	To examine the relationship between student teacher racial congruency and academic achievement.	Influences of race congruence between students and teachers on academic achievement
Conceptual Framework	Grounded Theory Vygotsky's Constructivism Culturally Responsive Teaching	Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) Oppositional culture theory (Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998; Ogbu, 1991, 1992, 2004) Cultural Deficit Theory (Hess & Shipman, 1965; Tozer, Violas, & Sensese, 2002) Organizational behavior theory (Sohn, 2009)	Stereotype Threat Claude Steele, 1992
Research Design	Mixed Methods The qualitative data codes and interviews were transcribed and then coded for categories/themes using ATLAS TI computer software The quantitative data (MANCOVA) for this study was obtained from the 6th and 7th grade CRCT 2012 results that were published on the State of Georgia	Quantitative t-tests Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 2007)	Qualitative phenomenological research Data was collected in three phases: 1-Pilot questions 2-Data was coded by hand and input into SPSS Text Analysis 3-Data was analyzed using SPSS Text Analysis for Surveys software version 2007 was used to evaluate, analyze the interview data.

Current case study analysis analyzes the following selected three case studies: (i) The

Relationship Between Socio-Economic Status and the Academic Achievement of Culturally

Diverse Students (Ford, 2013), (ii) A Study of the Relationship of Students-Teacher Racial

Congruence and Student Achievement (Strange, 2011) and (iii) African American Student

Experiences, Achievements and Outcomes; Examined Through the Lenses of Teacher

Expectations, Racial Congruence and Stereotype Threat (Postell, 2011) to determine the effect

that teacher perceptions plays on the academic achievement of African American students

through the lens of cultural congruence.

CHAPTER IV

COPMPARATIVE CASE STUDY ANALYSIS: RESEARCH FINDINGS

The landmark case of Brown v. Board of Education (1954) was a lawsuit decided by the Supreme Court of the United States 65 years ago, during a time when the country was in racial turmoil. The original lawsuit put an end to the separate but equal doctrine that had governed much of the United States, particularly in the South (McCollough, 2012 p. 82). Perhaps due to the unique history of the State of Delaware the original Brown 1954 case effected the state and three counties differently decades after the first decision. McCollough (2012) study underlined the effects of cultural congruence of teachers with African American students' academic achievement post enactment of Brown v. Board of Education (1954).

A brief review of Brown (1954) and subsequent education laws in the United States are offered to expound on the Delaware implementation. The findings from previous articles of participants is also presented along with the themes will triangulate informational support for how teacher congruence effect academic achievement.

Brown v. Board of Education (1954) Lawsuit

Brown v. Board of Education (1954) was a consolidated case that first went before the Supreme Court in 1952. Delaware played a vital role in the initial five cases that came from the state. The case answered the question of whether the segregation of public-school children based on race, deprived minority children of the equal protection of the laws (Brown v. Board, 1954). Brought before the court in December 1952, it was reargued a year later, after the death of Chief Justice Fred Vinson, who had originally ordered it to be reheard. The new Chief Justice, Earl Warren, presided over the case and wrote most of the opinion delivered on May 17, 1954.

Warren remarked that segregation in schools had a negative effect on colored children (Brown v. Board of Education, 1954) and ordered the lawyers to return to court to discuss a potential remedy. The stretching out of the case decision was unusual, as was the fact that there was no immediate remedy. The succinctness of the court's opinion given by Chief Justice Warren, was also unusual. It was only 11 pages compared to other decisions that ran upwards of 60 (Wilkinson, 1979). According to author J. Harvie Wilkinson (1979), the court's decision showed that it was content to take one memorable step, while leaving future problems for the future. One year later subsequent steps were taken when Brown v. Board of Education II (1955) was heard before the same court. For a second time, the Chief Justice delivered the opinion for the court. Negro children affected by school segregation would receive a solution. The recommendations would come in the following form:

Full implementation of these constitutional principles may require solution of varied local school problems. School authorities have the primary responsibility for elucidating, assessing, and solving these problems; courts will have to consider whether the action of school authorities constitutes good faith implementation of the governing constitutional principles. Because of their proximity to local conditions and the possible need for further hearings, the courts that originally heard these cases can best perform this judicial appraisal. Accordingly, we believe it appropriate to remand the cases to those courts. (Brown v. Board of Education II, 1955 p. 299)

School districts all over the country were ordered to "make a prompt and reasonable start" that would take place "with all deliberate speed" (Brown v. Board II, 1955 p. 300-301). Due to the wording of the new law states were given freedom in how and when implementation of the Brown (1954) laws would be managed.

Implementation of Brown (1954) in Delaware

In Delaware, Brown (1954) implementation was one of divisiveness and opposition. The same year that the Brown decision was handed down, 11 black students attempted to integrate into the Milford High School despite angry crowd picketing, and burned crosses warning the students to stay away (Camp, 2012). In 1954, when State Rep. Donald Blakey, R-Dover, moved to Delaware from Washington, D.C., he remembers:

> There were so few schools for black students downstate that they had to face hours-long bus rides or find rooms in Wilmington if they wanted to go to high school. We were proud of our schools, and there were some brilliant teachers there. But you had to drive for miles and miles right past all these schools that you couldn't attend just because you were black. It was just a terrible situation. (Blakey, 2014)

In 1978, the counties had to force busing, every student in and around local districts and communities – black or white – had to abide by the 9-3 rule, that meant in New Castle County, children spent 9 years in a suburban school and 3 in an urban school. Due to demographics Kent and Sussex County, Delaware meant being equally distributed amongst suburban and rural areas. In 1981, the greater-Wilmington school district was split into the four districts we have today – Red Clay, Christina, Brandywine and Colonial. That spread city students, often neighbors, among different school systems within the New Castle County area. The split amongst these districts were designed purely to meet population quotas, which led to some strange circumstances, like the island of Christina students traveling through other districts inside the city and county to get to their school (Albright, 2014).

In 1995, the four school districts serving Wilmington were declared "unitary," meaning they were no longer segregated. That lifted the court order that forced desegregation. Soon after in 1997, the Neighborhood Schools Act (the school choice law) passed and charter schools began

to open, giving parents freedom to choose where their kids went to school. The Neighborhood

Schools Act while returning families to their constitutional rights of freedom of choice, left the

suburbs and Wilmington area racially disconnected. Soon after Kent and Sussex County

followed the trend of racially resegregation of schools by choice. "You look at the schools in

Wilmington, they're almost all minority again. It's sad to me how we've gone backward." (Helen

Foss, Former head of the Congress of Christians and Jews)

Smith (2014), lawyer and advocate for The Neighborhood Schools Act has stated:

   The laws did not require racially identifiable schools; they merely gave parents a choice,
   and parents chose to send students to schools largely populated with children of the same
   race. There's a difference between a system that is divided by law or discrimination and
   one in which parents chose schools because they believed it was the best fit.

As result of implementation and unitarian statuses being obtained within Delaware, the

racial make- up of the schools within the three counties has reached disproportionate levels for

African American students living in low socio-economic areas.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of cultural congruence in school, school

leadership practices, and the effect of academic success for African American students' pre- and

post-Brown v. Board of Education. Due to polarizing nature of Brown v. Board of Education

(1954) in the history of American education especially from the State of Delaware, the parallels

were found true in the analysis of the following case studies selected for the present research: (i)

The Relationship Between Socio-Economic Status and the Academic Achievement of Culturally

Diverse Students (Ford, 2013), (ii) A Study of the Relationship of Students-Teacher Racial

Congruence and Student Achievement (Strange, 2011), and (iii) African American Student

Experiences, Achievements and Outcomes; Examined Through the Lenses of Teacher Expectations, Racial Congruence and Stereotype Threat (Postell, 2011).

4.1 Analysis of the Selected Case Studies:

Case Study 1 - Ford (2013):

Ford (2013) conducted a study titled "The Relationship Between Socio-Economic Status and the Academic Achievement of Culturally Diverse Students". The researcher focused on high achieving minority students in order to gain deeper insight of factors that lead to high academic achievement of culturally diverse students (Hispanics and Blacks) from both high and low socio-economic groups. The researcher had sought to answer four research questions: (i) Does cultural diversity make any difference in the academic achievement of students from low socio-economic group? (ii) Does cultural diversity make any difference in the academic achievement of students from high socio-economic group? (iii) Does the gender of culturally diverse students make any difference in their academic achievement? (iv) Does the grade level of culturally diverse students make any difference in their academic achievement? (v) What factors contribute to the high achievement of culturally diverse low socioeconomic student? (vi) What factors contribute to the high achievement of culturally diverse high socioeconomic students?

Research Design of Case Study - 1

Ford (2013) had adopted a mixed method research design that utilized in depth data collection of the 2012 CRCT assessment results of middle school students and semi- structured interviews with middle school teachers, parents and students in a metro- Atlanta school district. IBM PAWS Statistics 18 was used to analyze the selected variables. The data resulting from the semi-structured interviews was triangulated by adding the perspective of the teachers, parents,

and the students on the students' academic achievement. The author transcribed the interviews and coded for categories/themes using ATLAS TI computer software.

Ford (2013) considered the achievement scores in Reading, English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics in the 2012 CRCT results as dependent variable. Whereas, the socio-economic status (determined by the percent of students who were qualified to receive free or reduced-priced lunch) and culturally diverse groups (determined by the demographic data collected per student that met the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act) were treated as independent variables. The culturally diverse students' achievements included students' gender and grade level, teacher qualifications and experiences were examined as extraneous variables.

The author of this study (Ford, 2013) had employed the IBM PAWS Statistics 18 to determine the relationship the strength of dependence between the variables Further, in order to examine the relationship between socioeconomic status and student achievement of the culturally diverse groups Pearson's correlation was used by the author. The study determined the difference in student achievement among the culturally diverse group of low SES students and the difference in student achievement among the culturally diverse group of high SES students were determined by using Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) with teacher qualifications and experiences as covariates.

Case Study 2 - Strange (2011):

In the second study selected for this case study analysis, Strange (2011) examine the relationship between student-teacher racial congruency and academic achievement in his research titled "A Study of the Relationship of Student-Teacher Racial Congruence and Student Achievement". Based on the premises that there has been little empirical evidence shown to link

student achievement and congruence of teacher and student race (Darkenwald, 1975; Dee, 2004; Oates, 2003), Strange (2011) attempted to answer the research question as to what degree is the racial congruency between third grade students and their teachers related to student achievement?

Research Design of Case Study - 2

Strange (2011) conducted a non-experimental, ex post facto study was conducted. The reading and mathematics achievement data were collected from elementary campus administrators from three independent school districts in a south-central state. The test scores were analyzed to examine group differences of student achievement of racially congruent and racially non-congruent student-teacher pairs. The study utilized quantitative methods (independent t-test) to determine the relationship of the dependent variables, reading and mathematics achievement and the independent variables, student race and teacher race.

The author of Study – 2 employed descriptive analyses using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to summarize the population in regards to the students' and teachers' ethnicities, and students' reading and mathematics scaled scores. An independent t-test using SPSS, measured the degree of association between the independent variables and dependent variable. The analyses were conducted to assess the effect of racial congruence on students' reading and mathematics achievement. The data were coded, 0 for non-congruent and 1 for congruent. Racial congruency was determined when student's race and teacher's race were matched.

Case Study 3 - Postell (2011):

The third study, a phenomenological study, titled "African American Students' Experiences, Achievement and Outcomes; Examined Through the Lenses of Teacher

Expectations, Racial Congruence and Stereotype Threat" Postell (2011) examined influences of race congruence between students and teachers. The primary research question posed by Postell (2011) was what influence do teacher perceptions and expectations have on African American student perceptions of their educational experiences including academic achievement, and academic outcomes, when examining their experiences through the lens of (a) teacher expectations, (b) racial congruence, and (c) stereotype threat.

Research Design of Case Study - 3

Postell (2011) had utilized a qualitative, phenomenological research design was used in this study. "The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (van Manen as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 58). By exploring the "lived experiences," phenomenology is considered both a philosophy and a research method. In this type of research, a small group of participants can be studied through personal interviews to obtain information that can be analyzed to determine if patterns and relationships exist within the group (Moustakas, as cited by Creswell, 2003). Phenomenological research can assume two forms: hermeneutical (van Manen as cited in Creswell, 2007) or empirical, transcendental (psychological) phenomenology (Moustakas as cited in Creswell, 2007).

For the purpose of her study, Postell (2011) used the psychological phenomenology approach as the research design. According to Creswell (2007), specific steps are used in phenomenological research. These steps, as adopted by Postell for her study, include:

• Determine if phenomenological research is the best approach. This determination can be made if the participants have shared the experiences being studied.

- Recognize and specify broad assumptions of phenomenology. To accomplish this objective, the researcher must "bracket out" to the greatest extent possible their experiences with the phenomenon.

- Data collection, including in-depth and multiple interviews, are completed by the researcher. Polkinghorne (as cited in Creswell, 2007) suggested that a researcher should interview 5 to 25 participants who have had experiences with the phenomenon.

- Two broad questions are asked of all participants:

1. "What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon?"

2. "What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon?" (Moustakas as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 61).

Other open-ended questions can be asked, but the two required questions provide data that can result in "textural" and "structural" descriptions of the shared experiences.

- Data analysis of phenomenological research builds on the data from the two required questions. The researcher reads through the transcripts of the remaining questions highlighting significant quotes and statements to develop an understanding of the phenomenon (horizonalization). The researcher then clusters the significant quotes and statements into themes to develop "clusters of meaning;" Moustakas as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 61).

- Develop a textural description that is based on the themes and significant quotes and statements developed from the clusters of meaning of the experiences with the phenomenon. The context or setting that influenced the experiences with the phenomenon are used to write a "imaginative variation or structural description" (Moustakas as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 61).

- A composite description is then written using the textural and structural descriptions that presents the "essence" of the phenomenon. This section is concerned with presenting the

common experiences that participants had with the phenomenon (Moustakas as cited in Creswell, 2007).

4.2 Cross Analysis of Research Design of the three selected Case Studies

Ford (2013) had used the mixed method design that utilized in depth data collection of the 2012 CRCT assessment results of middle school students and semi- structured interviews with 4 middle school teachers, 4 parents and 4 students in a metro- Atlanta school district. The mixed method research design combined both qualitative and quantitative approaches in this study and was more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data but utilized the use of both approaches in tandem (Creswell, 2009). Ford (2013) built strength into the study by using multiple sources of data through triangulation. The process of triangulating different data sources can add to the validity of a study (Creswell, 2014). Mixed method research design has emerged as a third methodological movement in educational research (Truscott, Swars, Smith, Thornton-Reid, Zhao, Dooley, Williams, Hart & Matthews, 2010, p. 317). A mixed method research design combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches to the research methods portion of the research process when a researcher has both quantitative and qualitative data that can provide a better understanding of the research problem than either type of data alone (Mertler & Charles, 2008, p. 290). The emergence of mixed method in educational research has helped researchers to move beyond quantitative versus qualitative research arguments (Truscott, et. al., 2010). The mixed method research design allows the researcher the opportunity to create a multifaceted picture of the topic being studied and draws from the strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to minimize their limitation (Mertler & Charles, 2008; Truscott, et. al., 2010). Bartholomew and Brown (2012) shared that in a mixed method research design,

the researcher "collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single study" (p. 179).

On the other hand, in Study-2, Strange (2011) had conducted a quantitative study that employed descriptive analyses to examine the association of student-teacher racial congruence with student academic performance. In quantitative research the aim is to determine the relationship between one thing (an independent variable) and another (a dependent or outcome variable) in a population (Hopkins, 2000). Quantitative research designs are either descriptive (subjects usually measured once) or experimental (subjects measured before and after a treatment). "A descriptive study establishes only associations between variables. An experiment establishes causality. For an accurate estimate of the relationship between variables, a descriptive study usually needs a sample of hundreds or even thousands of subjects; an experiment, especially a crossover, may need only tens of subjects. The estimate of the relationship is less likely to be biased if you have a high participation rate in a sample selected randomly from a population. In experiments, bias is also less likely if subjects are randomly assigned to treatments, and if subjects and researchers are blind to the identity of the treatments. In all studies, subject characteristics can affect the relationship you are investigating". (Hopkins, 2000)

Postell (2011) had employed a qualitative, phenomenological research design. Qualitative researchers do not tend to make group comparisons and instead tend to be holistic and strive to understand phenomena as a whole (Polit et al., 2001). They aim to create a rich description of the phenomenon of interest (Streubert, Speziale & Carpenter, 2003). The strength of this type of research is that rather than choosing a sample that is representative of a given population, the researchers are concerned with including only those participants with rich experiences in the phenomena of concern. The sample size is rarely predetermined. Instead, the

researchers aim to include as many participants as necessary to gain a comprehensive on of the understanding of the phenomena (Streubert, Speziale & Carpenter, 2003). The special contribution and strength of phenomenology is the way it can capture the richness, poignancy, resonance and ambiguity of lived experience, allowing readers to see the worlds of others in new and deeper ways. Along with the strengths, so are the weaknesses in the study. Postell (2011) relied on the interviews of 13 subjects only as a primary source of data and the findings of the study cannot be generalized to other settings.

4.3 Participants of the selected Case Studies

Creswell (2014) explains the importance of research participants when he says that the participants hold the "learning and meaning about the problem or issue (p. 186). In qualitative studies, the participant size is much smaller (Mason, 2010). He states that in qualitative studies, there is usually a point where the information becomes repetitive or doesn't uncover any new information. He refers to this as the point of diminishing returns.

Case Study – 1

Ford (2013) had categorized the sample of the research study as quantitative research participants and qualitative research participants. The quantitative research participants for this study consisted of approximately two hundred and seven (207) middle school African American and Hispanic students in 7th and 8th grade from a metro-Atlanta school district. For qualitative research, Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 4 middle school teachers, 4 parents, and 4 students in a metro-Atlanta school district. In studies involving interviewing, it is not possible to employ random sampling, because it would be prohibitive and it also depends on a large number of participants (Seidman, 2006). Additionally, the participants for an interview must consent to being interviewed.

Case Study – 2

Strange (2011) has stated that three districts accepted the request to participate in this study, and seven schools from within the three districts participated in the study. The data for this study included the individual performance results of third grade students on the 2006 through 2010 administrations of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) reading and mathematics tests. The students' reading and mathematics TAKS scaled scores were used as indicators of achievement in the research questions. All participants were third grade students from a self-contained classroom and enrolled at a Texas elementary school identified as a Title-one campus. For the purposes of this study, students were classified by race using the student group race/ethnicity indicators, African-American, Hispanic, and White as reported in the State of Texas AEIS report.

Case Study – 3

In Postell's (2011) study, a convenience sample of 13 African American freshman students were asked to participate in the study. The primary criteria for inclusion were the race/ethnicity and age range of the students. The researcher contacted students who graduated in 2008 and ask for referrals from freshman students in their classes. She contacted the referred students to determine if they met the criteria for inclusion in the study. She explained the purpose of the study and discussed their roles in the study and answered any questions they had about their participation. A mutually agreeable time was decided for meeting with the students. The time and place were at the convenience of the students, although the researcher who was employed full time only had evenings and weekends available for the interview process. The referral process continued until 13 African American freshman college students had been recruited for the study.

4.4 Cross - Analysis of Study Participants of the three selected Case Studies

Ford (2013) had analyzed students' 2012 CRCT data. The CRCT was taken when the students identified were in 6th and 8th grade, respectively. The students' results were selected from Title 1 school, because a number of economically disadvantaged students are hosted at Title 1 schools. For the quantitative part of the study, a purposive method to identify students appropriate for this study was employed. Students were selected based on a balance of race and level of academic achievement to create a sample which provided the best insight into the study's research questions. High achievers were identified based on their achievement of a level 2 or better in all subject areas on the CRCT. Teachers were selected based on their experience with teaching African American and Hispanic students for at least one academic year at the middle school level. The teachers selected taught the selected students for the study. Teacher selection consideration were also be made based on teacher qualifications and experiences. On the other hand, Strange (2011) had identified seven schools from within the three districts participated in the study on the basis of the consent of the institutions to participate in the study. The participants in Postell's (2011) study the were defined was traditional African American students enrolled in freshman classes in postsecondary institutions. To be included in the population, the students had to have graduated from high school in 2008, be African American, and 18 years of age or older. These students were enrolled either full or part- time in college level classes at a community college or university located in an urban area.

4.5 Cross Analysis of the Findings of the three selected Case Studies

Table 4.1: Matrix of the Findings of the Case Study

	Ford (2013)	Strange (2011)	Postell (2011)
Purpose	Investigate the relationship between socioeconomic status and the academic achievement of culturally diverse students	To examine the relationship between student teacher racial congruency and academic achievement.	Influences of race congruence between students and teachers on academic achievement
Analysis	Mixed Methods The qualitative data codes and interviews were transcribed and then coded for categories/themes using ATLAS TI computer software The quantitative data (MANCOVA) for this study was obtained from the 6th and 7th grade CRCT 2012 results that were published on the State of Georgia	Quantitative t-tests Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 2007)	Data was collected in three phases: 1-Pilot questions 2-Data was coded by hand and input into SPSS Text Analysis 3-Data was analyzed using SPSS Text Analysis for Surveys software version 2007 was used to evaluate, analyze the interview data.
Findings	Showed that no significant relationship existed between SES and student achievement in total achievement.	No differences in overall achievement of students who were racially matched with their teachers and those who were not.	Student-teacher relationships appeared to be common threads among the four themes that emerged from the interviews. Depending if the relationship was made or not made determined how the participants perceived their educational experience. Findings were supported in current literature.
Missing Information/ Assumptions	What about the parental involvement and economic make up? The researcher mentioned these variables as possible causes for school success due to where schools were located. Suggestions: Include income and parental involvement as variable subsets.	Participants in the study while attempting to address equity did not represent the overall teacher/ student make up for all state. Suggestions: Study should be conducted with more than two subgroups, and with a norm reference test.	Which group of Black students perceived being taught by White teachers had positive academic experiences and outcomes, Suggestions: Needed to show a contrast of those students that performed at the same or level higher in academics with same race teacher student make up.

4.6 Findings of the Analysis

After analyzing these three case studies on the cultural congruence of teachers and its effects on African American students, the following three themes occurred in each of the case studies: (i) Teacher Perception, (ii) Academic Achievement of Students, and (iii) the Cultural Congruence of the faculty. Each case study showed that teacher perception had an effect on the academic achievement of African American students. Also, supporting the theory that Cultural Congruence played a major role on how the teacher and student geared their expectations of one another, while in contrast, challenging the current research on the effect of teacher race and student achievement.

4.7 Common Themes Emerging from the selected Case Studies:

4.7.1 Teacher Perceptions

Postell's (2011) study, African American Student Experiences, Achievements, and Outcomes: Examined Through the Lenses of Teacher Expectations, Racial Congruence, and Stereotype Threat, determined the participants perceive their Black teachers had higher expectations in comparison to their White Teachers because the Black teachers set high standards for their students (p. 90).

Postell's finding was reinforced by Participant 13:

> I think Black teachers had higher expectations. They really wanted me to excel. They had a standard and they kept it. They did what they had to do to get you to that standard, not lower it and just let you meet it. That's not what they did… Caucasian teachers lowered the standard when they said, you guys are not passing the test so now I'm going to make it easier, and if that's not easy enough, I'll just give you the answers. Or, I'll walk around and help you while you are taking the test. That's not a test. (Postell, 2011)

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Through data collection Postell (2011) concluded that African American teachers appeared to want to work with all their students regardless of race, behavior, or academic ability, whereas the majority of their Caucasian teachers did not provide the same type of encouragement and support (p. 90). Postell's (2011) was challenged by Strange's (2013), A Study of the Relationship of Students-Teacher Racial Congruence and Student Achievement, which determined Caucasian teachers showed a significant difference on both their racially congruent and racially incongruent students, with the racially congruent students scoring higher in both reading and mathematics (p. 73).

4.7.2 Academic Achievement

As cited in my research, Rumberger and Willms (1992) study on school and individual effects found that African Americans scored less well on tests than other racial or ethnic groups. Rumsberger and Wilms (1992) research supported Strange (2011) results through an independent t-test, showed that African American teachers who were racially congruent as well as racially incongruent to their students caused a statistically significant difference in mathematics and reading achievement. In both cases, racially non-congruent students performed at a higher level (p. 73). Rumsberger et al. (1992) and Strange (2011) implied that:

> Differences in students' backgrounds can explain many of the differences we observe in the performance of schools and the performance of ethnic groups. But they cannot explain all of the differences. If schools enrolled students with identical characteristics, we would still see substantial variation in the performance of schools and students. Nevertheless, our results suggest that students, in general, achieve better results when they attend a school with higher average parental background. Because minority students are less likely to attend schools with favorable school contexts. They are less able to capitalize on contextual effects. Efforts to desegregate students are therefore like, to reduce differences in achievement. (Rumsberger et al., 1992 p. 394)

Ford's (2013) research, *The Relationship between Socio-Economic Status and the Academic Achievement of Culturally Diverse Students*, on teacher qualification and experiences, determine if ethnicity made any significant difference in the achievement of the Black and Hispanic students of high socioeconomic status. Ford's (2013) results showed that Hispanic students in general out-performed the Black students except for Reading, but the differences in student achievement were not significant in any of the academic areas, or in their total achievement (p. 57). Strange's (2011) results once again contrasted Postell (2011) and Ford (2013) studies by determining that Caucasian teachers show a statistically significant impact on both their racially congruent and racially incongruent students, with the racially congruent students scoring higher in both reading and mathematics (p. 73).

4.7.3 Cultural Congruence and Academic Expectations

Cultural congruence is a pedagogical strategy that accepts that the goal of educating minority students is to train individuals in those skills needed to succeed in mainstream society. Cultural Congruence's goal can best be achieved when students feel comfortable because their classrooms, and schools correspond to the learning environments from communities from which they come (Singer, 1988 p. 6). The idea is to identify cultural differences that are obstacles to learning in standardized classrooms, and then to use this information to change classroom instruction and management to fit better with students' cultural standards and expectations (Singer, 1988 p. 7). Understanding how culture plays an insurmountable role in how one communicates, responds to others body language, or understanding the norms of schools or organization can vary from culture to culture (Schonleber, 2007 p. 246). The way the teacher perceives their students' academic ability, and how the student perceives the teachers' expectations of success is vital in their academic achievement. For the purpose of data analysis

two categories' will be reviewed from the lenses of Perception and Academic Expectation i.e.

students' perception of academic expectations and (ii) teachers' academic expectations.

(i) Students' Perception of Academic Expectations

The Teacher Education Executive Report Conference (Zeichner, 2010) determined that

many teachers generally have limited experience with those from cultures or areas different from

their own; many have negative attitudes and beliefs about those different from themselves (p.

21). Rosenthal et al. (1976) concluded, when teachers show limited expectations for students,

those students are provided fewer learning opportunities and are less challenged. Thus, teacher

behavior influences student performance in a positive way when teacher expectations are high. If

teachers hold negative expectations toward students, they may be providing disadvantageous

learning conditions where teacher behaviors influence student performance in a negative way

(Chang, 2011 p. 198).

Postell (2011) Participant 4 supported previous research theory by stating: "Some

teachers dropped their standards and I was able to see that, which made me work   harder…It

made me self -teach…encouraged me to do more because I knew that we should have been doing

more than what the teacher had us doing at the time".

This view was also shared by Participant 5 who described her educational experience

starting from middle school throughout high school as very difficult. "I was faced with racism

and favoritism. Racism due to some of the stereotypical statements that teachers made like, "all

Black people are the same." She felt teachers played favorites by interacting more with the

students who were labeled as smart."

Yet, these encounters were not every participants' experience. Many participants shared

different experiences from their counterparts. Participant 1 described his experience was that:

"Some of his teachers went above and beyond their duties as a teacher to make sure he was getting the tools that he needed, and the teachers kept it "real" with the students by discussing life experiences in and out of the classroom."

Postell's Participant 3 (2011) also revealed that: "She felt that her experiences were very encouraging because she mostly had teachers who would be willing to help her and promoted positive school experiences."

Postell's (2011) results supported that found racial congruence as one reason why participants perceived that their Black teachers as had higher expectations of them as students in comparison to their White teachers. Participants felt this way because they viewed their Black teachers as able to understand them more because of the similarity in race and societal experiences. Because of these perceptions, participants viewed their Black teachers as pushing them more to do well (p. 97). In the same study, Postell (2011) discovered that many of the participants shared that they had a few White teachers who appeared to build a relationship with them as African American students (p. 97).

(ii) Teachers' Academic Expectations

Teachers, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or gender, can help to alleviate the achievement gap among students through quality teaching and caring attitudes toward all students (Nieto, 2010). Noguera and Wing (2008) argued that:

> Teachers also play a role in perpetuating the achievement gap. They do this through lowered standards and expectations; by giving some students more attention and encouragement than others; and through the passion, organization, and skill they bring to their teaching. Teachers can be unconscious in their complicity with respect to the reproduction of inequality, or they can simply accept the failure of many students as normal and blame the students for their failure (pp. 198-199).

In all three case studies the teachers had differing views on how they were perceived by their students and their expectations. In the study, Examining Teacher Candidate Resistance to Diversity: What Can Teacher Educators? conducted by Rose and Potts (2009) a preservice teacher named "Susan" was interviewed on teacher perception of cultural diversity. Susan's preliminary view in diversity and cultural responsiveness in the classroom was:

It's definitely not what I am used to, but I look at the students, and they don't seem different to me from each other. They are different from other students I have been with because of the area; I feel like that is their defining cultural background. I don't feel like they are different because they are Black and White, and I have never been able to understand what the professors' talk about when they said, "Oh, you need to make all of these modifications for diversity because your students are Black or culturally Asian." I would be like, "That doesn't make any sense to me because that is not who they are." Their skin color doesn't tell me anything about their personality and what they need.

In a second interview with Susan she further stated:

It's more in our classes and stuff because this is their big thing…diversity and racial diversity.… I feel like raising my hand and saying, "No, I don't feel like I'm supposed to be doing this…. I feel like every time they bring it up, it makes me more resistant…. I feel like I should be open to anything, and I feel like the more they keep trying to drill this into me, the more I'm saying, "No, I don't want to do it…." Rose and Potts (2009).

In case study, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in a Diverse Urban Classroom, (Milner, 2011), Susan's ideas of cultural responsiveness were differed by educator, Mr. Hall. Mr. Hall, a second year Bridge Middle School teacher conveyed:

I think that you have to develop a relationship with each student. Every kid that you have has a different story and if you show interest in what they've gone through, they're going to show interest in what you're trying to convey to them. Then they will show interest in what you're doing [in the classroom]." (Milner, 2011)

Figure 4. 1: Themes from Cases 1, 2, and 3: Cultural Congruence Responses
- ~~Teachers who build a relationship with Black students need to understand their culture~~
- Black teachers were viewed as role models or mentors
- Black teachers took a more hands-on approach when working with Black students
- White teachers can be perceive as disconnected from Black students who did not take an interest in learning
- Students felt more connected to Black teachers when they were treated like family and had the same background

Ford (2011) reinforced Postell (2011) and Strange (2013) findings by determining factors of teachers that believed that getting to know their students individually and finding appropriate strategies to motivate them have led to the students' high achievement (p. 92).

4.8 Synthesis of Outcomes of the selected Case Studies

This section presents the common themes in findings for the three empirical studies reviewed. The data was grouped together by major themes found during the analysis stage. The Content Analysis Research Process described in Chapter III was used to analyze the data.

As in many current reviews of literature, there were several overlapping similarities as well as differences. Ford (2013) and Postell (2011) qualitative portion of the study, each researcher found that teacher/ student perceptions, along with expectations played a key role in student performance. Strange (2011) determined through quantitative results that teacher of the same race did not increase or decrease the performance of African-American students' in either reading or mathematics achievement. For Caucasian students, having a teacher of the same race did not impact mathematics achievement either positively or negatively (p. 74). All three studies did agree that culturally diverse students of the higher socio-economic group achieve highly in school because they listen to their teachers, practice what they have learned outside of school,

study, work hard, stay focused and try not to talk during teacher's instructional time. These high achieving students also do better when the teachers are fun, relatable, uses examples (including silly examples), and when their teachers show a willingness to help them understand the material better (Strange, 2011 p. 99). Ford (2013), Strange (2011) and Postell (2011) also concurred that student-teacher relationships appeared to be a common thread among the four themes that emerged from the interviews. Depending if the relationship was made or not made determined how the participants perceived their educational experience. For example, if a relationship was formed between the teacher and students, participants viewed that experience more positively. Conversely, when no student-teacher relationship formed, stereotype threat was activated, making it difficult for the participant to succeed (Strange, 2011 p. 101).

These findings are aligned with the conceptual framework derived from three theories i.e. Critical theory, Cultural congruence theory and Rosenthal theory (referred by the researcher in chapter 2, Figure 2.2) which lend the support that higher the cultural congruence of the teacher, the higher will be the student achievement.

4.9 Limitations of the Selected Case Studies

Postell's (2011) study, the limiting factors were that the students who participated in the study were unaware of experiencing stereotype threat in their classes and by their teachers. The students were aware of their teachers' stereotyping them, most used the experience to work harder, get better grades, and prove the teachers and classmates wrong. Strange (2011) study did not account for the substantiated call for greater teacher diversity as a means to increase minority student achievement. Strange (2011) also only took from a small sample population of Third graders in the State of Texas which cannot be used for generalizing the entire teacher-student congruence issue developing in today's schools. Lastly, in Ford (2011 p. 205) the limitation was

that of the students did not recognize that the teacher was not culturally diverse, and the parents

implied that even though the curriculum content might be unfamiliar to them, they offered

support to their children at home. This supported implications that openness between culturally

diverse students' homes and schools demonstrated that clear messages were sent to diverse

students and their families that the school and their homes were working together and failing to

do homework and to work hard, in general, were an unacceptable excuse (Ford, 2011 p. 206).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Summary

The intent of this study was to examine school cultural integration and school leadership practices, and their effect on the academic success of African American students' post-enactment of Brown v. Board of Education. It also examined how school culture and leadership practice influenced African American students, and teachers. The three educational theories i.e. Critical theory, Cultural congruence theory and Rosenthal theory were used to form a base for the conclusions drawn from the three case studies. This study will support current literature on teacher perceptions, and academic achievement of African American students.

This comparative case study analysis sought to discover phenomena patterns in teacher/ student perception and assist in recommendations based on these discoveries to assist stakeholders in educational development. The three cases provided insight to the instances of teachers' perception and its effects on African American students' academic performance. The findings in each case study helped to provide evidence to suggest that teacher perception can affect student achievement both positively or negatively with strong implications for how cultural congruence and teacher/ student background can affect the overall performance of students grades Pre-K through 12. Also, this current analysis provided evidence to suggest that the teacher's perception of the student had had a direct effect on how the student looked at their ability, cultural background, and academic attainment. Concluding that cultural congruence represents a vital asset in increasing assessment scores, community involvement, and in decreasing adverse behaviors within educational school systems.

Based on the research of cultural congruence, teacher perception, and academic achievement, the findings of the three case studies analyzed that pre-service and experienced educators within minority populations should have additional professional development in cultural awareness practices. Current research tenets recommend that schools follow Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP). The three interrelated tenets by Ladson-Billings' culturally relevant pedagogy suggest the incorporation of: academic achievement, sociopolitical consciousness, and cultural competence. CRP has three major principles to empower, incorporate, and create instruction that is challenging through learning opportunities that are innovative and that allow them to meaningfully understand the sociopolitical nature of society and how society works (Milner, 2011 p. 70). CRP states that students who attain the following tenets: EMPOWERS students to: 1) Examine educational content and processes, 2) create and construct and deconstruct meaning, 3) succeed academically and socially, and, 3) see contradictions and inequities in local and larger communities. INCORPORATES student culture in 1) curriculum and teaching, 2) maintaining it, and 3) transcending negative effects of the dominant culture. CREATES classroom contexts that: 1) are challenging and innovative, 2) focus on student learning (and consequently academic achievement), 3) build cultural competence and, 4) link curriculum and instruction to sociopolitical realities (Milner, 2011 p. 70).

Through CRP educators can create culturally relevant learning contexts to the students' culture as an asset, not a detriment to their success. Teachers can incorporate the students' culture in their curriculum planning and implementation, and allow students to develop the skills to question how power structures are created and maintained in US society (Milner, 2011 p. 69)

Chapter One outlined the purpose of the case analysis. The purpose of this case analysis was to determine the effect that teacher perceptions played on the academic achievement of

African American students. This researcher performed a comprehensive analysis of three empirical studies that qualitatively explored perceptions of teachers and students, fundamental beliefs about cultural congruence, and the effect that culturally responsive teaching played on the academic outcome of African American students. Each student demonstrated how perception, and cultural congruence helped to mold the perception the students had about their teachers' expectations of their achievement.

Chapter Two consisted of the literature review, which provided historical and empirical evidence to support and expand the analysis. The literature review provided concepts on Critical Theory, Rosenthal (Pygmalion) Effect, and Cultural Congruence and its effects on student achievement. The themes from all three studies aligned with earlier research found that Teacher Perception, Cultural Congruence of a staff member to students and academic achievement play intricate roles in effectively teaching the 21st-century classroom.

Chapter Three, methodology, consisted of a comparative investigation of three case studies in the research methods of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods to accumulate robustly, and rich data for a complex view on teacher perception and academic achievement. Data collection from the three case studies was clearly defined and organized in a contrast and comparison chart. Each of the three case studies helped to expound on evidence demonstrating how teacher perception and cultural congruence effect the achievement of African American students.

Chapter Four offered a thorough comparative analysis of the results of the three case studies, common themes were associated and differentiated while synthesizing outcomes. This chapter provided a closer look at the data to determine recommendations and solutions for Chapter Five.

This Chapter Five presents conclusions and describes how the findings of analysis meets the objectives of the study and recommends how it can contribute to the existing body of literature.

5.2 Conclusions of the Study

Student-teacher relationships appeared to be a common thread among the four themes that emerged from the analysis. Conversely, when no student-teacher relationship formed, stereotype threat was activated, making it difficult for the participant to succeed (Strange, 2011 p. 107). The observations of the analysis of the three case studies established that educational stakeholders' use of a strategic approach, including evidence-based practices, is vital to sustaining effective teaching strategies and pedagogy for increasing academic achievement of minority students. It can be concluded that cultural congruence and school leadership are vital to increase students' academic achievements.

5.3 Proposed Solutions

The three case studies analyzed explored the effects of teacher perception on the academic achievement of African American students to reveal that effective teacher that acknowledge and incorporate cultural awareness into their teaching styles produce highly effective students for the 21st century. Also, the analysis may provide policy makers, stakeholders, and building leaders with information to make evidence-based decisions thus supporting the academic success of minority children. Finally, this analysis could bring about change in policy to advocate for the cultural awareness training and support teachers that are CRP (Culturally Responsive Pedagogy) in the teaching practices.

5.4 Implications of the study

While vitally important, it is not enough to simply utilize cultural values within the context of culturally congruent curricula and content. Knowledge and use of culturally relevant teaching strategies is also an important factor in the achievement of high academic outcomes and high academic efficacy (Darling-Hammond 1998; Tharp & Entz, 2003). A substantial body of research indicates that how educators teach is as important as what they teach.

Leaders for the 21st Century school systems must take active roles in training and developings culturally congruent staff. The use of socioeconomic status (SES) to assign students to schools has to be eliminated. This may be due to the fact that race and class are highly but not perfectly correlated among students (Orfield, Frankenberg and Seigel- Hawley, 2010). Leaders must also relook at the idea of "Zoning" of school districts. Districts need to consider implementation of original Brown (1954) zones drawn during court-ordered desegregation may have to be reincorporated to help prevent the resegregation that might otherwise occur. Districts and regions might also consider coupling their district school desegregation efforts with housing policies that aim to find homes for Section 8 recipients in middle-class, white neighborhoods (Orfield, Frankenberg and Seigel- Hawley, 2010). Working with and learning from a racially diverse faculty is an important structural element for diverse schools, together with strong school leadership supportive of diversity. In addition, research shows that providing students with opportunities to learn in equal status relationships, working in a cooperative classroom group, for example, or participating in sports teams, are essential to constructing meaningful cross-racial relationships (Hawley, 2007; Slavin, 1995). Further, teachers need training in the use of antiracist teaching practices, exposure and access to multicultural curriculum materials, and ongoing support for working with the families and communities of a diverse range of students (Orfield, 2010).

5.4.1 Implications for the Leaders

A recommendation for district level personnel and school administrators is that they use their decision making authorities in a manner that helps to empower their staff members. This will utilize their combined expertise to find and implement effective strategies that are geared at enhancing increased school achievement for culturally diverse students from both high and low socioeconomic groups (Ford, 2013 p.107). As a researcher, I also agree with Ford (2013) that educational policy makers should resist the temptation to use standardized achievement test scores for justifying and promoting students and evaluating schools but instead use these results to inform teachers and parents about student achievement relative to their peers (p.108). Educational policy makers should understand how cultural diversity may help students learn from an array of perspectives. Educational policy makers should allow for flexibility in curriculum implementation so that school leaders and educators can adjust and respond proficiently to their culturally diverse learners while responding to changing or newly introduced policies (Ford, 2013 p. 109).

Results from this study can be used to help educators and policymakers reset the current perspectives and priorities related to African American students. Many stories shared by participants provided detailed accounts of how they felt their teachers perceived them, and how that influenced their educational experiences (Postell, 2011 p. 103) A further base can be developed for further professional development programs to improve teacher and cultural congruence. Building leaders can design and implement diversity-training, professional development seminars that emphasize teachers who may be culturally insensitive or unaware that their world is not the "normal." Finally, for all educational stakeholders it is imperative that we help novice and experienced staff members to utilize their combined expertise to find and

implement effective strategies that are geared at enhancing increased school achievement for culturally diverse students from both high and low socioeconomic groups (Ford, 2013 p.107).

According to Strange (2011), an implication for educational practice could be that it is more beneficial to staff at-risk, high minority schools with teachers that are the most skilled to facilitate academic achievement, regardless of their race, rather than exclusively focusing on the race when hiring and recruiting future teachers.

5.4.2 Implications for the Educators

Teachers can play a critical role in how students engage, conduct themselves, learn, and achieve in urban classrooms (Milner, 2011 p. 88). Schlosser (1992) discovered how important it was for teachers to avoid distancing themselves from their students by developing knowledge about the students' home lives and cultural backgrounds and by developing knowledge about the students' developmental needs. In her words, ''…the behaviors of marginal students are purposive acts…their behaviors are constructed on the basis of their interpretation of school life…relationships with teachers are a key factor'' (p. 137). By not giving up on students, in any of their situations, a teacher can begin to fill in the cultural congruence gap with minority populations. Students can recognize when there is unnecessary distance between themselves and their teachers, and the students' actions are shaped by such disconnections (Schlosser, 1992).

Teachers cannot be culturally responsive if they do not acknowledge cultural differences among students. Many future teachers use human "sameness" (a colorblind approach) to resist the need to be culturally responsive. We must do thorough examination of our understandings and terms that contextualizes "same" and "different" that may better assist pre- service teachers in conceptualizing cultural complexities. Additionally, discussion of the relationship between the "sameness" of human experience and cultural factor "differences" (expressed by groups and

individuals) could help foster teachers' socio-cultural consciousness and lead to an understanding that our cultural identities, which are flexible, socially constructed, and complex. We have to acknowledge that our individual life circumstances shape how we interpret the world. Thus, we must learn how to deconstruct notions that culture does not matter in the classroom (Potts, 2011, p. 16).

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The research on African-American students' perspectives of their learning environments is limited yet increasing (Howard, 2001). Coinciding with these studies has been the emergence of scholarship on culturally responsive instructional strategies for African-American and other culturally diverse students (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lee, 1995; Lipman, 1995; Shade, Kelly, and Oberg, 1997). Unfortunately, little of the research on culturally responsive teaching practices has examined students' perceptions and interpretations of these pedagogical practices (Howard, 2001). Further research is needed at different school levels to provide more empirical evidence of the relationship between socio-economic status and the academic achievement of culturally diverse students. During my research, I discovered that many variables were not considered such as English Language Learners, English as Second Language, Hispanic, Latino, Asian and other predominant cultures. More research need to be developed on the academic performance of those students that have parents with higher levels of education with regards to teacher perception and overall academic performance.

5.6 Personal Practices and Reflections

Over the past 20 years, I have seen a shift in our educational policies and how we as educators relate to our students. As a pre-service teacher, I was instantly thrown into the urban school setting. I found that many of the students that I taught were from low income, chaotic

households where education was not the first priority. As a young child growing up in Delaware during the middle years of implementation of Brown (1954), I was shifted to many schools within my school district. I could relate to the children from the perspective that I was poor, and from a divorced, single parent household. I understood how it felt to be hungry. I understood how it felt to have a teacher call you everything but my name. I could not understand why my Caucasian teachers felt and said "I would never amount to anything because I was a little black child". However, you see, I too was not completely congruent with my students. I had a warm bed, books, a family that supported me, and most of all high expectations from teachers and my mom who could see the best in her daughter. Which as I have taken this journey learned that Ladson-Billings (1992) research describes this same feeling. Ladson- Billings (1992) described successful teachers of African-American students as teachers "that empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p.18).

What was not known at the time was my teachers' were following Bandura's (1977) philosophies of instilling incredible personal self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-regulating, the "I can do it" attitude to develop me as a student and person. They had begun the process of learning how to adapt to a new frontier in education- racial integration. They were practicing Rosenthal's (Pygmalion) Theory (Rosenthal and Jacobsen, 1968) and changing the landscape of who we were.
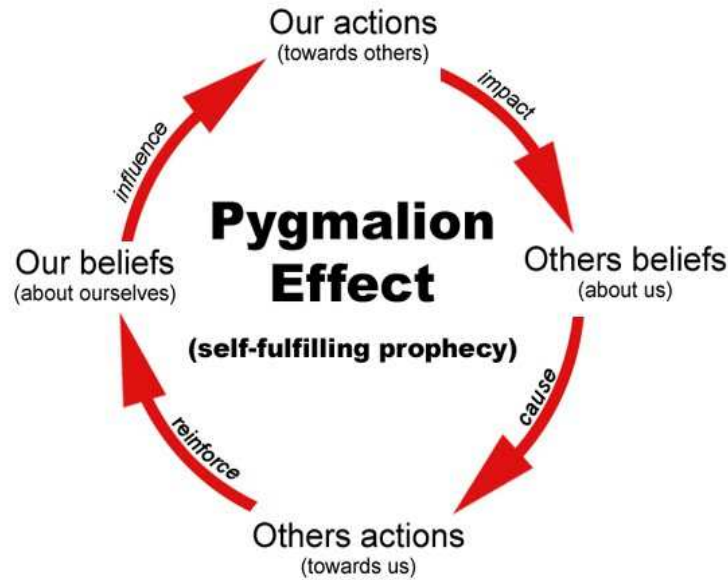
Figure 5.1: Rosenthal's (Pygmalion) Effect

From all of my educational experiences,' I have learned that conviction, and cultural awareness are an ever-changing paradigm. We as educators must constantly use introspection to understand the ever-changing population of children that walk into our classrooms. We must constantly challenge status quo and boundaries of societal norms to relate to the 21st Century students. Furthermore we must train and develop novice teachers in strategies that the classroom will never teach them. We must constantly review current trends and learn about our students' lives outside of the classroom. Educational norms such as school days and hours must be revisited to help those students, and parents that do not have a typical 9 to 5 working schedule. We must look at our role in how we relate to the world around us, only then will we face our misperceptions about people, and places. Teaching is an ever-evolving profession that requires brave, loving, and committed individuals to help increase the academic success of all students in the 21st Century classroom.

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