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**What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators hamper rather than further black educational progress?**

Donald W.R Allen II  
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In what ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? To what degree and how do the current treatment and deployment of black educators hamper rather than further black educational progress?

Donald W. R. Allen, II

A Capstone Project submitted in fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)

Hamline University

2018

Capstone Advisor: Dr. Michael Reynolds

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“Nobody cares, work harder.”

-Unknown (2017)

We set out on our daily mission to create a better world for ourselves and those around us, and plenty of times we will get feedback from others on our progress. Sometimes this feedback is worthless and other times it's priceless.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research to all the Aspiring Teachers of Color that have found that teacher training programs in Minnesota and across the United States are separate and unequal when it comes to Black students, professors, and administrators. It's time for us to change the dynamics and make sure teachers of color are represented in the K-12 systems as well as higher education. I also dedicate this Capstone to Chasen Crowson from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs; Ms. Crowson is a true advocate for education, veterans, and successful measurable outcomes. To my boys, Jacob and Grayson...it is for you that I show commitment to excellence, integrity and the well-being of the black boy and the many rewards that accompany having a good education. I would also like to dedicate this to my brother Winston; my sister Frances and my mother and father may they rest in peace, along with my extended family: Dr. Shirley Logan-Ph.D.; Dr. William "Pop's" Logan-MD, Malcolm, Monica, Youlanda Logan and the girls, Chandler and Harper. To my heart-of-hearts and best friend for life - my wife Dr. Enid Logan (Allen) University of Minnesota Sociology Department, thank you for being the pillar of support during this project.

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## Table of Contents

<b>CHAPTER ONE</b>	9
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	9
<b>Why better system designs are needed</b>	10
<b>Laura Ingalls Wilder Syndrome</b>	11
<b>The Teachers Don't match the Student Population</b>	12
<b>SUMMARY OF RESEARCH</b>	16
<b>Purpose of the Research: The situation I wish to change or improve</b>	17
<b>Rethinking Evidence</b>	18
<b>Critical Factors that Affect area of Focus</b>	20
<b>Guiding Research Question</b>	21
<b>Summary – Chapter One</b>	22
<b>CHAPTER OVERVIEWS</b>	24
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b>	25
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	25
<b>Evaluation of the American Education System</b>	26
<b>Overview of the American Educational System</b>	27
<b>The Deficit Educational System</b>	29
<b>Context of Teacher Education</b>	30
<b>The Potential of Teacher Education</b>	33
<b>Diversification of the Teacher Workforce</b>	35
<b>Evaluation of Minnesota's Teacher Workforce</b>	35
<b>The Segregation of the People of Color</b>	36
<b>Why Diversifying the Teacher Workforce Matters?</b>	38
<b>Why we are losing Teachers of Color?</b>	39
<b>The Negative Impact on Students of Color</b>	39
<b>Taking a close look at the Teacher Workforce</b>	46
<b>Major Arguments on the Diversification of the Teaching Workforce</b>	46
<b>The Teachers of Color: Role Model to All Students Especially to The Children of Color</b>	52
<b>THE TEACHING WORKFORCE RATIONALE</b>	53
<b>RATIONALE FOR RESEARCH</b>	56
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	56
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b>	58
<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	58

<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	59
<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	59
<b>LOCATION/SETTINGS</b>	59
<b>Interview control-groups:</b>	60
<b>DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES</b>	60
<b>Investigative Summary Outline</b>	60
<b>ETHICS</b>	62
<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b>	64
<b>RESEARCH DATA: IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS</b>	64
<b>Research Data from in-person interviews</b>	64
<b>Participant Interview #1</b>	64
<b>Participant Interview #2</b>	66
<b>Participant Interview #3:</b>	67
<b>Participant Interview #4</b>	68
<b>Participant Interview Summary</b>	70
<b>CHAPTER FIVE</b>	71
<b>PROJECT REFLECTIONS</b>	71
<b>How I feel</b>	71
<b>Changing generational failures in Educational Cultures is Difficult – Can we?</b>	73
<b>Why Black Boys can be better – if taught better</b>	75
<b>Why Black Male Teachers Matter?</b>	78
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	80
<b>What is the future for Black Educators? Are we disposable Products?</b>	83
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	85

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This research approach I became of real interest when this researcher participated in the requirements of a Minnesota-based university master's degree in teaching; MAT program (May 2018). As a non-traditional student that understands student-institutional relationships, it shocked me that I had been told *no* over 97 times for reasonable requests. The one time the institution did say *yes*, it became an interesting journey for knowledge by examining the inner-workings of an academic institution in real-time, meeting with talking heads, extracting relevant information via human-contact that made me even more skeptical about what I was getting into. Even during graduate school, finishing the Master of Arts in Education program with a 4.0 GPA at this institution, I was still rejected for the university's Doctoral program - which I appealed and won – but the price of participation is damning when a system purges complexity for antiquated policies that reproduce? the hierarchy of that system. I clearly and humbly recognize that without being a veteran, I would have never been able to attend this college, and if I did, what it took me to complete in seven-years, would have taken 10. Still, for the first time in education, on a college campus, I met organizational, structural and institutional racism in what I would call a pure form, governed by an unreliable comprehension of policy, interpreted as needed to fit the argument - whenever needed. A significant challenge at many universities that might have organizational design flaws and with blind spots in approach that prohibit forward and upward growth. It shuts down normal businesses in less than one-cycle (for academia, that's four] years). For this introduction narrative, I must exemplify by using the metatheoretical approach meaning using this project to look at a type of system (graduate student point-of-view)

that describes the structure of some other system (teacher training programs, or what I interpret via participation), in simple clarity, but also in theory when looking at possible solutions.

### **Why better system designs are needed**

In most cases, university systems are not set up to give credits for what you might know, so credit(s) for experiential learning could not be acquired because of the university-systems designs in place. This researcher, currently teaching seventh and eighth-grade core subjects, and 9-12 English was mostly overlooked in any creative organizational design construct to provide credits for work experience in the field. Their systems - broken if best, rejected the best practice of giving credit(s) for having their trainees in classrooms teaching, even more so, recruiting black-male teachers at this university seems to need better systems in outreach, retention and the human touch. Secondly, as a non-traditional learner, an older student, with practical experience in organizational design and business models, it was clear to me that really smart people might have Ph.D.'s but sometimes are not business-minded. The physiological-social boxing gloves during this time were exhausting, I constantly found myself in MAT classes as the only Black-male.

My observation in these classes were that instructors could relate to the content of positive expectations for black boys and girls in public schools. Conversations about black boys became surreptitious, mostly at break, in one-on-one conversations that would have been beneficial for all but threatening to some; I get the historical and social implications of the black body being successful, but the need to address the issues of black boys in the classroom by professors and students isn't politically convenient, nor prepared for that kind of leadership in conversation, but the biggest fear not feared is the absence of cultural and linguistic cohesion inside many schools of education. It is my contention here that the main challenge in educating black bodies

(especially black boys) in the K-12 public school system might have to do with the perceptions of those black bodies by educators that train teachers at the undergraduate and graduate schools of education. In some cases, most data-driven, we see that black learners plummet well below 70-percent in their proficiencies in math, reading, science and social studies, this is just a well-known fact in the Black community (MDE 2017).

The programming and course might make a student feel like being bombarded with politically correct, liberal courses in social justice, race and multiculturalism for not, knowing that most future teachers look at teaching in K-12 systems will more align with their own cultures and backgrounds - meaning the suburbs might provide a better experience than the inner-city or urban area; this is where the disconnect in reality about that first teaching job starts to manifest. I feel education programs should thrive in the areas inquiring about race, class and socioeconomic systems within poor minority communities, but is there a way to do this without making the mainstream uncomfortable? While I felt some peers performed for the grade with no intention of working with people, students or colleagues outside their culture-race comfort level, many did a better job. For me, the expectations of a well-rounded diverse graduate student-teacher faded quickly because after I start teaching in the public-school system, only one professor's class (out of many), gave me the tools to survive but in reality, I was unprepared. The school of education missed the mark in teacher training.

### **Laura Ingalls Wilder Syndrome**

The new student teacher is ill-equipped to teach other people's children. Consumed by political correctness and social rituals leave little room for mainstream academia society to see the black body inside teacher training programs, student, and professors. Is this intentional, or just the status quo? At my current institution, if it had not been for one black professor in the

school of education (the only one) fought for me to be in a cohort of the Aspiring Teachers of Color Program, facilitated by a state grant, Black American men - potential teachers in that cohort would have been nonexistent. The schoolhouse, that one-room, the multi-grade classroom was never intended for black American students, let alone black teachers. The teacher tasked to stand in front of students and teach them with kindness, wisdom and teach the things each student needs never had dark skin, or a kinky afro. The pristine pureness of the *Laura Ingalls Wilder Syndrome*, parallel to the white-savior complex, simply states that teaching students in the United States is clearly a white-females position, with white-male administrators. If I am looking in the mirror and seeing black boys and girls viewed as the widest non-functioning group of people with generational educational gaps in reading, writing, and arithmetic; not to forget the lowest graduation rates, highest dropout statistics, it would be smart to have black American male and female instructors inside a teacher training program that could articulate the challenges inside and outside the black experience, this might be one possible explanation as to why many schools of education have cannot engage communities of color and bypassed black-males as instructors.

### **The Teachers Don't match the Student Population**

The profile of current and future students in the United States is very different from that of future teachers. In the 1980s, approximately 25 percent of the United States school-aged children lived in poverty; 15 percent were physically or mentally handicapped; 15 percent were second-language learners; 14 percent were children of teenage mothers; 10 percent had poorly educated parents; and 25 percent to 33 percent were latchkey children (Constantine, 2002). "Current school populations in Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas are already

majority-minority” (Cushner, 2007, p. 10). Immigration and birth rates will cause the population of students of color to increase (Constantine, 2002). By 2010, 38 percent of the United States school-aged children will be of a non-European background. According to the United States Department of Education in 2020, about 46 percent of the K-12 school population will be students of color (Education, 2016). We must also explore, investigate, and solve the racial awareness of White pre-service teachers and the reasons why it seems that many are apprehensive about teaching racial minority students, keeping in mind that the burden of responsibility rests on schools of education -- who instead sideline critical conversations that would bridge the gap in teaching students of color by non-black teachers.

The challenge I have is difficult; my objective is not only to expose not-so-healthy learning environments for both undergraduate and graduate students but also come up with solid recommendations based on my experience as an authority on understanding what cultural competency necessitates. I think educators inside a college school of education must be qualified to train today’s new teachers - a doctorate degree does not always denote any qualification. One might argue the evidence is very clear, after so many years with the various “gaps” for children of color, there seems to be another gap created from inside the university classroom where if any competencies are taught, they are not retained nor transferred from theory to practice. Training people we rely on to make sure our children learn and graduate from high school is tough already. Understanding cultural competence and debunking perception and historical assumptions combined with low expectations become needed reality in the classroom. Non-white learners can become the casualties of education – a place that is unbalanced, shaming and classist to those who are trapped in violent economic circumstances. My hypotheses hold true for Native American, Asian, Somali and Hispanic-Latino learners as well; you cannot be what you

do not see; if there is not a clean or defined path to success, the continued downward spiral of educational mistakes become more evident the farther away we move from critical adjustment of those that train-the-trainers.

The professors and instructors who train-the-trainers must put aside their personal convictions and stop the segregation of cultural competence. This will put an end to demanding silence on issues of the black body. The evidence of my concern is that some professors will talk about race, color, and class via the platform of *Brown v. The Board of Education* because it's safe; a wide range of people understand the historic value of that case, but I am finding out the subject of educating black boys is becoming tabooed; or if I bring up the topic, eyes roll and heads bow as if to say, there goes the black guy talking about racism in education, again! This alone represents a challenge that needs to be addressed because if schools of education and their students are obstructed from having these important conversations on educating black boys, then how will the real story of education be taught in a multi-faceted, fact-based platform that is open to relevant and timely concerns?

Novelist Gail Godwin (2005) wrote, "Good teaching is one-fourth preparation and three fourths pure theatre" (Goodwin, 2005). Minnesota's educational theater is absent of important players who should have starring roles in the elementary school classroom. When I tighten the focus and look at black men teaching in the public school systems – in the United States, the numbers are even fewer; in Minnesota it is almost nonexistent unless you count the instructors who double as a sports coaches or hall monitors, which I attest is glass ceiling created by a social construct that obstructs opportunities for the supply of the demand meaning there are competent black male teachers, but the variables to obtain licenses, especially in Minnesota are based on testing from Boston, MA (Minnesota Teachers Licensing Exam). The disparity comes at a time

when more school districts in Minnesota are actively trying to diversify their teaching ranks by hiring more men, minorities, immigrants, and teachers with different educational backgrounds (McGuire, 2015). In most cases, cash, rewards and cultural resources are not delivered past the university's front door when graduate students complete the grueling task of missing the finer points in cultural learning expectations. In my current position as a high school English teacher, I read reports that say out of an estimated 200-student, 133 fails to earn more than two-credited in semester. These important facts are discussed in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) become social cabals where teachers talk about the political adjustments versus the systemic casualties associated with a gap, behaviors and classroom management.

The words "diversify the teaching ranks" as it pertains to the educating, licensing and hiring of black male teachers has created a catastrophic downward spiral for children of color in the public schools. If black school children in the K-12 system do not see a black role model, as in a black teacher, it duplicates the social and economic rhetoric that black men are unemployed, in jail, absentee fathers, and do not care about education. In my opinion, the lack of black male teachers is partly responsible for the wide gap in education between black and nonblack students.

This problem I am reflecting on is growing out of the gender, race and color inequity in the teaching corps as I see it at the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) and the Master of Arts in Education (M. A. Ed.) program classrooms in Minnesota and across the United States. This also reflects on the lack of male teachers of color, not only in public school systems but also at the university level. Some local universities' Schools of Education do not have any black, or Black American, African heritage male professors or instructors. This translates to a gap in cultures when the teacher from one culture confronts many cultures at once. In Minnesota, we have seen the in-classroom failures first hand. Minnesota universities continue to produce proportionally

fewer teachers of color than K-12 student demographics would predict. At this point, there are many solutions that would address the issue of cultural competence in classroom instruction at the university levels, but who will listen? Addressing the segregation of classroom instruction is a social justice and equity concern that pays zero. The pushback, especially in Minnesota can put a person in a very difficult position. My goal in this reflection is to let you know that I am out here; I see what's happening and I will not remain silent.

### **SUMMARY OF RESEARCH**

Minnesota's teacher training programs are missing star players in the K-12 classrooms. Black male teachers in public school classrooms are almost extinct; this phenomenon is not limited to the K-12 system, this challenge also appears in colleges and universities that have unspoken policies about recruiting, hiring and retaining black professors, adjuncts and senior lecturers to teach new teachers in training. This Capstone Project will deconstruct areas of focus to show the awareness of intersection between graduate students in teacher training programs and the organizational design of classes predetermined by administrators that lack racial-competency by not facilitating the training of new teacher with the experience of the black male body. In the article "Back to School or back to hell? In, "Why America's education system continues to fail Black students," Starla Muhammad (2012) explains that structural racism is a major contributing factor to why the public education system is failing Black children. The fact that there are not enough Black male teachers is a huge problem and the number one institutional issue that is breeding the crime, dropout, suspensions and enormous referral rates to special education (Muhammad, 2012). Master of Teaching (MAT) programs cannot develop teachers successfully if historical assumptions about teaching children of color are looked at as teaching

to the “Wounded Child” (Barlow, 2013). How do teaching and research universities reset educational and cultural malfeasance in the training of new teachers? This also leads to questions about the future of teacher training in education, already extended, politicized – left-leaning, generational low proficiencies can continue to be forecasted for K-12 scholars from a continued back-woods process by teacher training programs, sometimes shrouded in institutionalized racism that is purposely maintained as a structural yard-stick of failed improvements. This research is not meant to provide all of the solutions, just to draw attention to the few that will actually read it, education is missing “Education,” and the fact the United States education model was meant to create future factory workers, it seems an upgrade is in order – this starts inside of teacher training programs.

**Purpose of the Research: The situation I wish to change or improve**

In this Capstone Research Project, I wish to change the way multiculturalism, race, color, class and structural racism are taught at universities inside of their schools of education. The second-tier change I would make is to make sure the cultures inside of the schools of education have not gotten stagnant or have failed its graduate students by refusing to be creative in experiential learning goals and providing timely and relevant teaching that parallel with real-world events (achievement gap, poverty, unemployment, poorly performing schools in ghettos, and black on black crime). Teaching new teachers recommends the creation of an informed teacher education curriculum with the common elements that represent state-of-the-art standards for the profession. Written for teacher educators in both traditional and alternative programs, university and school system leaders, teachers, staff development professionals, researchers, and educational policymakers, they must address key foundational knowledge for teaching and discusses how to implement that knowledge within the classroom. Preparing teachers for a

changing world recommends that, in addition to strong subject matter knowledge, all new teachers have a basic understanding of how people learn and develop, as well as how children acquire and use language, which is the currency of education (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

In contributing to any new theory, the theory must be seen or currently be practiced. In my teaching experience, I have seen in real-time and have been in classrooms that push me to focus on the theory that something might be wrong in the educational process of how teachers are developed and interact with students of color, especially those urban students who have to deal with the distractions of poverty. I have also experienced with other schools of education that have systemic challenges in the discussing of race and its educational disparities (or reasons) that one set of children have exponentially bad outcomes while others do not is rejected.

### **Rethinking Evidence**

The evidence that schools of education need to rethink the teaching of the teachers is as follows:

#### **Teacher Training programs in Minnesota are not meeting the needs of graduate students nor the school systems**

In my teaching experience, I have seen in real-time and have been in classrooms that push me to focus on the theory that something might be wrong in the educational process of how teachers are developed and interact with students of color, especially those urban students who have to deal with the distractions of poverty. I have also experienced with others in schools of education that systemic challenges in the discussing of race and its educational disparities (or reasons) that one set of children have exponentially bad outcomes while others do not is rejected.

The evidence that schools of education need to rethink the teaching of the teachers is to follow jobs that teachers will actually compete for when they graduate.

The reality is, they teach them not to value those jobs - and in extreme cases, not to even want them at all. When graduate schools teach students to disrespect the jobs that they can get, they are teaching students to be unhappy - and that's the worst kind of bad teaching. These practices stem from a university culture that rewards research and treats teaching as a necessary sidecar (Levine, 2015).

### **Teacher preparation system is broken**

Across the country – in New York, Texas, and California – fewer candidates are enrolling in teacher preparation programs. Members of the millennial generation express little interest in becoming teachers. And baby boomer teachers are retiring in record numbers. If current trends continue, America's public schools could struggle to hire the teachers they need (Mead, 2015). In 2017, Minnesota was forced by the legislature to terminate and reset the teacher licensing system sunsetting the MN Board of Teaching and the name, changing it to the Professional Educators Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB), and creating a tiered-teacher licensing system free of some bureaucratic interpretations via Senate File #4 (Pratt, 2017). It was because of the Board of Teaching's slow policies practices, and the challenges teachers from out of state were having inside of the licensing processes. In most cases, teacher's licensed in another state were required to take as much as \$25,000 in additional classes to be a licensed teacher in Minnesota - many felt it was unfair to seasoned veterans of teaching.

### **If schools of education don't see the importance black males in the recruiting of undergraduates for MAT programs, there will not be a competent representation of professors or adjuncts teaching new teachers**

My findings, supported by personal experience and interviews in chapter four, view public school and teacher training programs as organization, management, and leadership as inept policymakers. Their practices, policies, characteristics, and conditions—are related to their lack

of ability to staff classrooms with minority teachers. The data suggest that poor, high-minority, urban schools with improved working conditions will be far abler to do so. To be sure, altering these conditions would not be easy. However, unlike reforms such as teacher salary increases and class-size reduction, changing some conditions, such as teachers' classroom autonomy and faculty's school-wide influence, should be less costly financially—an important consideration, especially in low-income settings and in periods of budgetary constraint (Ingersoli, 2011).

### **Critical Factors that Affect area of Focus**

I would like to put forward as a hypothesis that many graduate schools of education have suffered from an undisrupted culture skewed to one race and gender therefore inadvertently, or purposely ignoring the need to have black-male professors, adjuncts, and senior lecturers. This has caused a lack of the development of critical theory by suppressing personal living educational theories (McNiff, 2011) from a group of potential MAT graduate students on track to be public school teachers. In the case of this Action Research, Black American males and other diverse-male populations could be the juggernaut behind fixing many of the disparities of race in education with culturally competent curriculums and experiential learning credits for their experience and the knowledge they already have.

From my experience, schools of education have fallen into being living contradictions; they say one thing but do another. If the job of administrators is to create diversity, a firm message is sent to students, staff, and faculty, but diversity is dependent on how deep the administration wants to go outside of their own personal comfort zones and culture. In short, diversity is only more politically correct theater. If the objective (of diversity) is to recruit undergraduate students to route them into the school of education, there must be a system of

incentives in place that would make the SOE an attractive engagement. Rather than saying the SOE trains the best public-school teachers, which in fact based on the current data and state of the public-school systems for children of color, the best have missed their target audience. What they could present is a cohesion and willingness to say that schools of education or teacher training programs are looking for problem-solvers in education to learn, develop and create new avenues of teaching learners in urban settings.

### **Guiding Research Question**

In this research opinion, the boutique engagement via teacher training programs and non-cultural competency along with ineffective teaching of race, racism, social justice, and equity by rejecting a real formative curriculum leaves many teachers, parents, public school administrators and more importantly, potential black educators outside of these closely privileged and protected circles wondering: *What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators hamper rather than further black educational progress?*

This is actually an important educational challenge that needs to be researched, addressed and reset in most graduate schools of education to ensure success for school systems, students, and families in urban areas. The New Deal for Urban Families (Wolfgram, 2016), tells us the constraints and institutional racism are a major factor when looking inside of teacher training schools and the obstructions embedded in a system that will not collaborate with black male academics (Wolfgram, 2017). My research question has the potential to change graduate-level teacher training programs if it is taken seriously and the attraction of cultural relevancy is considered. Some say if they cannot see it - it does not exist; while I feel professors, students,

and program staff know the challenge of inserting and maintaining a top-of-mind social justice agenda when training new teachers is important, the fact is most policies on learning about issues outside of one's culture do not stick to MAT graduate students being culturally competent, or even wanting to work with diverse, poor populations or cultures. The agenda in this research question to affect potential change; admit there is a problem; let the public know the university has discovered a challenge and is working on fixing it; and then finally, come up with a plan, implement that plan and announce to the student body what the plans are to correct generational malfeasance in training new teachers.

Again, my role is to become a constructive disrupter that will analyze, reset and take steps to create new and real classroom-pathway options to deal with the many layers of how multiculturalism is taught and retained by students in graduate programs. In today's society, we are connected to each other twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, speed in communications, public relations, and interpersonal connections means teachers must be willing to step into the theater of all-inclusiveness and practice tools to interact with a potential educational threat: low expectations and historical assumptions.

### **Summary – Chapter One**

One factor of this research question: *What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators? What political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators hamper rather than further black educational progress?* - is to look at hundreds of reasons why schools of education are failing both undergraduates and their own graduate students. In my defense, three timely and relevant pieces of evidence show that a lack of common-sense and putting first-things-first have been applied in a process of organizational

design that will lead to an absence of any successful measurable outcomes. Hence, if black boys are failing in school systems around the United States and have tremendous behavioral issues, you would think current schools of education with all of their lettered degreed administrators would have researched the issue and come to the conclusion they need to recruit, train, retain and continue to develop teachers who look like the problem that could start to fix it by having black American male instructors; this is not racial profiling - but more of having a racial-rising of conciseness. In scanning many sources on the topic of teacher training program, I find my concern valid and supported.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

**Chapter One:** A brief overview of my personal experience and statements about the challenges of a black educator and how historical and media assumptions are damaging to most black educators; while there are sellouts, they still remain black educators and suffer the same outcomes at some point in their careers.

**Chapter Two:** Literature Review using the most current and important research that will provide exclusive data with compelling evidence that Teacher Training programs must be immediately retooled.

**Chapter Three:** Describes the methodology for this study, guiding questions and participant demographics.

**Chapter Four:** Delivers the results of the research from interviews participants and detailed reflections on this Capstone Project. Also, my personal and professional thoughts as well as possible solutions that can have a legacy impact on local and national teaching-training programs.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to provide an overview of previous works related to the lack of diversity in American institutions specifically, Minnesota's *K-12* Teacher Training Universities. In this chapter, we use the research question: *What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators?* - to evaluate the present state of the Teacher training universities, the seclusion of teachers of color, and to analyze previous related works. The American educational system has failed in terms of the diversity of its educational administration. There is no doubt that this deplorable situation has led to the segregation of the people of color. This unfortunate condition has placed the populace, especially the teachers of color at a disadvantage when compared to their White counterparts.

This chapter is divided into three sections, which are also divided into a number of sub-sections. The first section evaluates the American educational system. In this section, we look at the overview of the American educational system and how it operates. We also discuss the defective education system and the gap evident in our system. In the first section, we go further to discuss the context of teacher training and the potential power of teacher education. It is important to discuss these topics in order to enable us to have a better understanding of the American educational system and the ongoing problems evident in the educational system. This is followed by the second section, which analyzes the diversification of the teacher workforce. We can research further by evaluating the Minnesota teacher workforce, and the segregation of the people of color and its effects on students, specifically the students of color.

We go further to discuss why the diversification of the teacher workforce matters. We also discuss the reasons why we are losing the teachers of color instead of retaining them. This section is important as it sheds more light on how the people of color are segregated in the teaching force. This situation has not only failed the people of color, it has also failed the students of color. The third section goes on to point out the major arguments from various scholars and studies concerning the diversification of the teaching workforce. This argument focuses on the importance of the teachers of color and how these teachers can contribute significantly to the educational system. This section is important because, in teacher training universities like Minnesota's *K-12* teacher training universities where the presence of black teaching candidates is almost non-existence, it is crucial to look at studies which shows why there should need to recruit and train more teachers of color. This argument gives us a deeper understanding of the potentials of the teachers of color and their undisputable benefits.

All sections and sub-sections in this review have been clearly written in order of importance. This review starts from a broad angle and overtime, it is narrowed to enables us to get a clearer view of the topic and to be able to understand the context on to which the research question is developed. The review ends with a conclusion that summarizes the main context and a preview of Chapter Three that gives insight into the next chapter.

### **Evaluation of the American Education System**

This section gives an overview and analysis of the American educational system. In this section, we discuss how the educational system operates and the underlying issues the system is experiencing. This section contains four related topics that not only discuss the process of the

educational system but also how the teaching workforce functions. The objective of this section is to enable us better to understand the context of the American education.

### **Overview of the American Educational System**

The U.S educational system is quite different when compared to the educational system of other countries. However, U.S educators try to improve the quality of schooling, especially public schooling, yet, the system is still lacking behind. Unlike many other countries, education is the primary responsibility of the state and local government. The U.S Federal government allocates around 10% to the education budget. In Minnesota, around 80 percent of the public educational funds are gotten from various local sources while not more than 5 percent comes from the Federal government. (Antonella Corsi-Bunker, 2015) Previous statistics reveal that 46 percent of the school funding came from the State level, 47 percent of the funding came from the local level, while 5-7 percent of the funding came from the Federal level (USDE 1995) However, in the American educational system, each state has its own education department and individual laws that regulate finance, the recruiting of the school personnel, the curriculum and the student attendance. The state decides the stipulated number of years required for education; in most states, education is compulsory from five /six to sixteen years of age. However, in some states teenagers have to be in school until the age of 18. All states have control over their respective schools with laws on what is taught and the requirements a student must attain.

For students with special educational needs, most of the states provide schools or special classes for these students. This also includes students with emotional and behavioral problems, communication problems, learning difficulties, partial hearing and so on. Furthermore, there are schools that cater to gifted and talented students. The public schools of the state most times have

gifted and talented programs for such students. A NELS study in 1988 revealed that 65 percent of the public schools had limited opportunity for gifted and talented students; for example around 9 percent of the 8th-grade public high school students participated in these programs (USDE, 1993)

The U.S Educational structure starts with newborn to children of five years who go through the early childhood education. The children of 5- 18 years follow this pattern. This set is referred to as the *K-12*. The term, K12 education mostly refers to all the primary and secondary education. This includes Kindergarten, prior to the child's first year of formal schooling which starts at around age 5, through secondary education. The educational system can be broken into three namely; elementary school (for Grades K-5), middle school (for Grades 6-8) and high school for Grades 9-12 (Antonella Corsi-bunker, 2015). For the *K-12* students, they stay in the classroom for an average of 7.5hours and they are required to obtain a certain number of credits in order to graduate and be given a high school diploma. The number required, and the combination classes needed depends on the school district and it depends on the type of diploma desired. It is compulsory to obtain a high school diploma in order to be able to pursue post-secondary education. Most universities require certain high school credits for admission. Tests like SAT are usually needed. 12th Grade students mostly take the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT's) or American College Tests (ACT's). "The American College Testing (ACT) Assessment is designed to measure educational development in the areas of English, mathematics, social studies, and natural sciences. College-bound high school students take the ACT Assessment. The test results of these students are used to predict- how well students might perform in college' (Web Site June 21, 1996). These tests are the second principal tests used as a criterion to gain admission to a university or college.

Standardized testing in schools has become a questionable issue because it has never been able to truly A study from the Council of the Great City Schools suggests that students sit for around 112 standardized tests between the kindergarten and 12th grade. Looking at the Every *Student Succeeds Act* (2015), which was signed by President Obama in December 2015, pledged to provide the same standard of education to every child in the country ‘regardless of race, income, background, zip code, or where they live’. The act, which replaced the No Child Left behind Act of 2002, is an attempt to provide some control with the recommendation of fewer tests but of higher quality (Obama, 2015).

### **The Deficit Educational System**

There is certainly no doubt that the 21st century reiterates the problem diagnosed by W.E.B DuBois a century ago: the color line divides us still. In recent years, the most obvious proof of this in the public policy sphere is the persistent attack on affirmative action in higher education and employment. From the mindset of several Americans who believe that the residue of discrimination has vanished, affirmative action tends to provide an unfair advantage to the minorities. From the viewpoint of others who regularly experience the consequences of continuous racism, affirmative action is required to protect certain opportunities that are likely to disappear if an affirmative obligation to act does not really exist. For Americans, irrespective of one’s background, the provision of opportunity in a society that is becoming more dependent on knowledge and education is a cause for serious concern and attention.

The gap between the white students and the students of color, when measured by the standardized test scores sometimes brings about a conversation that equal opportunity exists, therefore, it is viewed that the low achievement of the minority students may be a result of genes, lack of effort or even culture. The assertions that support this tends to miss the vital fact;

educational outcomes for the minority children or the children of color are more of a function of their uneven access to the key educational resources which includes skilled teachers, and quality curriculum than they are as a result of the race. Indisputably, the U.S educational system is one of the most unbalanced in the modern world. Students regularly receive different learning opportunities based on the students' social status. This is in contrast to the Asian and European countries that fund their schools equally. However, in the U.S the wealthiest ten percent of U.S school districts spend around ten times more than the poorest ten percent. The despicable spending ratios of 3 to 1 are common within states (Hammond).

Irrespective of the obvious differences in funding, the curriculum, teacher quality and class sizes- the dominant view is that if the students do not perform well, it is their fault. Due to the problem of the color line, it is sad to know that inequalities like these still prevail. A report to Congress stated that the biased systems of school finance inflict unreasonable harm on the minority or economically deprived students. On an inter-state ground, these students are placed in states primarily in the South, which has the lowest capacities to finance public education. On an intrastate ground, various states with the largest disparities in educational expenses are the large industrial states. In these large industrial states, the minorities and financially disadvantaged students are usually located in poor urban districts, which have the least educational expense.

### **Context of Teacher Education**

The past two decades implies a significant amount of policy aimed at teacher education and a serious debate about whether different approaches to preparing or training teachers make a difference. Starting in the mid-1980s with the report of the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as

a Profession, various persons and organizations including teaching practitioners argued for the centrality of teacher's expertise to effective practice and the significant need to develop a more knowledgeable and skillful professional teaching force. The importance of teachers in student performance is undeniable, to an extent that teachers are viewed as the most important factor within a school for effective student learning (Hannaway & Mittleman, 2011). Significantly, the education policy in the United States puts serious attention on the issue of teacher training. Due to this, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 connected teacher competence to content knowledge, verbal skills and student achievement (Hill & Barth, 2004). The first two elements are directly associated with teacher preparation, an issue that has evolved due to the landmark legislative piece (Brown, 2010). Although appeals have been made to disassemble the teacher education system and reanalyze teacher qualifications (Darling-Hammon & Youngs, 2002) - various states follow the same path in the accreditation of teachers.

The assumptions that undergird this debate miss an important reality: educational outcomes for minority children are much more a function of their unequal access to key educational resources, including skilled teachers and quality curriculum, than they are a function of race. In fact, the U.S. educational system is one of the most unequal in the industrialized world, and students routinely receive dramatically different learning opportunities based on their social status. In contrast to European and Asian nations that fund schools centrally and equally, the wealthiest 10 percent of U.S. school districts spend nearly 10 times more than the poorest 10 percent, and spending ratios of 3 to 1 are common within states. Despite stark differences in funding, teacher quality, curriculum, and class sizes, the prevailing view is that if students do not achieve, it is their own fault. If we are ever to get beyond the problem of the color line, we must confront and address these inequalities (Hammond, 1998).

Teaching certificates are given by the states' education agencies for certain academic subjects and grade levels. Before requesting a teaching certificate, aspiring teachers need to obtain a bachelor's degree with coursework in their subject of interest hence, the subject that they intend to teach as well as pedagogy and teaching methods. Student teaching is also required just as passing series of examinations in content knowledge and pedagogy is required. (Ingersoll, 2007). The dominance of the local governance in the public education system in America (Wong & Farris, 2011) is as a result of the direct consequence of the 10th amendment of the United States Constitution, which conferred the powers not regulated by the constitution, such as education to the states (Dennis, 2000). However, the independence from the higher levels of government has been seriously limited in the last half-century. Schools today are a subject to a high degree of inspection at the state and federal levels (Ingersoll, 2007), an example is the Common Core Standards for the mathematics and English Language arts subjects. Nevertheless, it can be ascertained that the educational system in America is still highly decentralized. The importance of this decentralization is the fact that every state in the union sets its own unique certification requirements that regulate the teaching profession.

As English language learners continue to be the fastest emerging group of students in *K-12* schools (Palmer & Snodgrass Rangel, 2011), it is important for schools to adapt to the increasingly diverse student population. This requires training teachers with intercultural understanding required to teach. The second half of the twentieth century in the United States observed a fundamental change in the training of teachers. During this time, multiple certification systems emerged, and this effectively ended the monopoly of universities (Mitchell, 2011). These pathways to teaching are regarded as alternative certification programs. The duty of the universities and alternative certification programs is to suggest candidates for certification in

one or more fields. Regarding the admission to a teacher preparation program, the candidates to the teaching profession are required to be enrolled in an accredited institution of higher education. For candidates for an alternative certification or the post-baccalaureate program, they are required to have a four-year degree obtained at an accredited institution of higher education. Candidates are required to have a certain grade point average and in addition, students applying for admission to a teacher-training program need to have taken 12 U.S credit hours (24 ECTS) in their subject of interest, which is the subject that they intend to, become certified in. Candidates also need to have basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. The coursework of the training program is based on both the educator and the state standards.

### **The Potential of Teacher Education**

Irrespective of societal uncertainty about preparing teachers, there is sizeable proof that teacher education can be powerful, and the impact of teacher education can be large. In the early 1990s, a seminal study by Ronald Ferguson of 900 Texas districts discovered that teacher expertise as determined by the teacher scores in licensing examination, experience and education had a significant effect on students' achievement than the socioeconomic status (Ferguson, 1991). Ever since then, various studies have confirmed the importance of teacher's access to knowledge about teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Wilson, Floden & Ferrini- Mundy, 2001). A study on North Carolina, which estimated the impact of various kinds of teacher qualifications on the learning gains of high school students, discovered that teachers are more effective mostly if they are certified in their specific field that they teach. It also noted that they tend to have higher scores on the teacher-licensing test and they are always fully prepared when they begin (Clotfelter et al., 2007). In addition, the combined significance of having teachers with these

qualifications is greater than the impact of race and parent education combined. The strongest negative effects on the student performance were shown by teachers who were inexperienced and those who entered as “lateral entry recruits” without any initial teacher training.

Another research conducted using teachers in New York City also discovered that teachers’ certification status, teaching skills, graduation from highly competing colleges and math SAT scores were also important in determining teacher effectiveness especially in elementary and middle-grade math (Boyd et al., 2007).

Students’ achievement and performance are mostly developed by having a fully certified and experienced teacher. Students’ performance was negatively affected by mainly having inept teachers who were operating on a temporary license. This is a teaching profile, which is mostly found in high-minority schools with low expenditure. Other analyses of the New York City database noted that some teacher education programs have more positive effects than others (Boyd et al, 2008). This study found that certification is an important predictor of student achievement and performance. However, some training programs produce graduates who support stronger value-added learning gains for students than other teachers. Effective training programs tend to provide powerful teacher training programs with a clinical and didactic curriculum. They teach candidates how to turn analysis and evaluation into action by applying what they learn in curriculum plans, teaching applications and other forms of performance assessments that are created around professional teaching standards. These attempts bring about comprehensive feedback with opportunities to retry and to continue to improve. They are also followed by precise reflection on student learning as regards to teaching. This section gives an overview of the American educational system and the context of teacher training in America. It sheds light on the educational process in America and how students are placed in their various classes, which is

done according to their age. This section also discusses the deficit system where the disparity is evident among the Whites and people of color. The perception that is held against the people of color and the unbalanced state of the educational system. In the section, we go further to discuss the training process of teachers and the potential benefit of teacher training or teacher education. Though some may have argued for the removal of the teacher training programs, there is no doubt that these training programs provide immense benefits to the teachers especially the children who get to learn from these trained teachers.

### **Diversification of the Teacher Workforce**

This section narrows down to the background of the teacher workforce in America specifically in Minnesota. In this section, we discuss the segregation of the teachers of color and how it has affected the teaching workforce. The aim of this section is to expatiate on the research topic “What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators ?” This section goes further to prove that the lack of diversification of the teaching workforce has had a negative toll on students.

### **Evaluation of Minnesota’s Teacher Workforce**

The data are unappealing. It is saddening to know that the teacher workforce is delving to a population of new teachers who do not stay in the profession hence creating instability among schools and students, increasing costs for districts and leading to a deficit of experienced professionals to develop newer teachers. Nationally, more than 30% of new teachers leave during their first three years of teaching and over 50% leave within their next five years of teaching (Educators4Excellence, 2015). When comparing the turnover rates in 2004 to 2009,

teachers of color turnover was 18% and 24% higher than the white teacher turnover (Ingersoll & May 2011). Furthermore, the men of color were most likely to leave the teacher workforce than the women of color, therefore reducing the population (Ahmad & Boser, 2014). Several factors lead to the decision of teachers to leave the job and this includes lack of professional and financial support (MetLife, P.6), the decline in training, budgets and time also contribute to a high level of stress and dismay which results in teachers deciding to leave.

According to Minnesota Education Equity Partner (MNEEP), research shows that efforts to increase representative teachers of color will lead to higher academic achievement for all Minnesota students. This achievement will benefit Minnesota, as it will increase the state's workforce to compete internationally. To create an effective and sustainable change towards increasing Minnesota's teachers of color, stakeholders must be committed to playing an active partnership role in order to achieve this goal. Certain efforts require legislative shifts, in-depth programs, cross-sector collaborations, and adaptive solutions to the changing educational environment in Minnesota.

### **The Segregation of the People of Color**

However, it is unfortunate to know that the numbers of blacks teaching in the public-school system in the United States are less; in Minnesota, it is sadly almost nonexistent unless a person begins to count the number of instructors who functions as sports coaches or even hall monitors (Don Allen, 2018). The disparity happens to be at a period when school districts try to diversify their teaching ranks by recruiting more immigrants, men, and teachers with other educational backgrounds (Kim McGuire, 2012)

In other words, if black school children in the *K-12* system do not see a black teacher who is capable of being their black role model, it tends to double the social and economic

assertion that blacks, especially the men are unemployed and do not care about education. The lack of black teachers tends to be partly responsible for the wide gap in education especially between the black and non-black students. According to Dr. Umar Abdullah-Johnson, a certified school psychologist noted *“Institutional racism is a major contributing factor to why the public education system is failing Black children. The fact that there are not enough Black male teachers is a huge problem. That is the number one institutional issue that is breeding the crime, dropout, suspensions and enormous referral rates to special education. I often argue that if you want to eliminate half of the dropouts, Special Ed (education), ADHD, drugs, gangs, give every Black Boy a heterosexual, culturally competent, Black male teacher. You will eliminate half the problems in school,”* (Abdullah-Johnson, 2012).

The problems expand out of the gender injustice in the teaching corps as observed in the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) and also the Master of Arts in Education (M. A. Ed.), in the course classrooms in Minnesota and beyond the United States. This not only reflects the lack of teachers of color in the public-school system but also at the university level. In addition, some local universities school of education has no black or Black American professors or instructors. This results in a gap in cultures as the teacher from one culture are left to confront various cultures at once. It is unappealing to know that Minnesota universities continue to graduate fewer teachers of color than the *K-12* student demographics predict (Don Allen, 2018).

According to the Minnesota Board of Teaching, for the past two years, approximately 13 percent of Minnesota students who wrote the teachers’ licensure test were not white.

Additionally, statewide, 26 percent of students were also not white. Perplexing, many of the teachers of color who took the test did not pass. Seventy-five percent of all candidates who took

the test passed the basic math test. However, only 26 percent of Black testers and 45 percent of Hispanic testers actually passed.

Most times, Americans forget that back in the 1960s, various African-American, Latino, and Native American students were taught in different schools that were funded at rates that were seriously lower than those in the schools meant for whites were. It is also to be noted that the blacks were also excluded from various higher education institutions. Since 1970, the end of the legal separation, which was accompanied by the struggle to equalize expenditure, has made a great impact on student achievement. On the national test then, the gap between the minority and white students test scores narrowed substantially most especially between 1970 and 1990.

Nevertheless, the educational experience for the children of color and minorities has continued to be unequal and separate. Presently, some of the minority students still attend predominantly minority schools that are funded far below those in the suburban districts. Recent analyses show that schools serving students of color have fewer resources than schools serving mostly white students. In a report to Congress, it was noted that the unfair management of school finance inflicts inordinate damage on financially disadvantaged and minority students. Such students are mostly located in the South where the schools have the least financial capabilities. (William L. Taylor and Dianne Piche, 1991) On an intra-state basis, many states with the largest disparities or inequality in educational finances are large industrial states. (William L. Taylor and Dianne Piche).

### **Why Diversifying the Teacher Workforce Matters?**

The Supreme Court of Minnesota in 1993 held that the Minnesota Constitution provides the fundamental right to a “general and uniform system of education.” It noted that it required the state to create adequate funding to make sure that every student receives an adequate

education. In addition, the Center for American Progress report noted that one important component required to increase the success rates for the students of color is a representative teaching populace that is not only effective but also diverse.

A research examined suggests that the students of color amass academic benefits when taught by a same-race teacher or when exposed to a teaching workforce that is racially or ethnically representative of the student population (Irvine & Villegas 2010). Irvine and Villegas argument results to the need to establish culturally relevant pedagogy that encompasses the basic tenets of critical race theory. The critical race theory analyzes the way in which laws are interpreted and how the interpretations emulates and normalizes racism within the United States. However, culturally relevant pedagogy is central to the success of people of color (Gloria Ladson-Billings 1995)

### **Why we are losing Teachers of Color?**

A report from E4E Minnesota (2015) noted that the main reasons new teachers leave the profession is due to the lack or wrong type of support. New teachers of color tend to face more obstacles including feelings of isolation because of cultural incompetence in the education environment, challenges in staff schools and so on. Teachers of color also report that their white counterpart believe they have less expectations for students of color. Most times they are often asked to handle the behavioral issues with students and their parents due to their race (Ingersoll, 2015) Therefore creating a culturally responsive and friendly environment within districts will not only be of benefit to the teachers of color but also to the whole school community.

### **The Negative Impact on Students of Color**

The segregation does not just affect the teachers of color, but it also affects the children of color. Attendance in most public schools is an almost ubiquitous experience for American

youths. The quality of experience varies greatly along the socioeconomic class lines. Schooling is different for white students than it is for adolescents of color. The difference is tailored by the relationship between the school environment, and the students. Nevertheless, the people of color and the culture inherent in American public schools are incompatible (Pollard, 1989).

This conflict is reflected in the treatment, real and perceived that people of color receive from teachers and school administrators. It portrays systematic racism that lies at the root of the school's culture that influences the policy-making process, instructional programs and interpersonal relationships (Oakes, 1982).

Racism in public school is shown in the prevalent approach, behaviors, rules and culture that are retained to assist the unequal distribution of resources and application of equality/justice. This aide the sanctions against the less privileged groups (Barbain,1981). It is reflected overtly and covertly. In the overt perspective, it allows the teachers and administrators to freely abuse their status, power and prestige, which enables them to control and exploit the people of color. This further provides an advantage to the students from favored backgrounds in the competition for grades, recommendations, awards and entry to the higher-level job opportunities. It classifies the white (both the upper and middle class) culture as superior. Therefore, the school encourages ethnocentric opinions (Mack, 1968).

In the covert perspective, it is hidden from observation and criticism. This brings about a seemingly rational argument that companies embrace fairness and equality. However, this attributes accusations to the students of color for not succeeding. Racism, both in the covert and overt sense is an abuse of power. The exploitation of power in a subtle form could be expressed as the hostile verbal behavior mostly experienced as a put-down. In an extreme way, it is reflected by a combative behavior whereby physical violence is used as an instructional tool.

Due to this, the children of color tend to come to school predisposed to defend themselves against the malicious threats of those who are supposed to look after their best interest. The urge to survive influences their outward perspective, performance, and achievement. In addition, the academic achievement of the people of color may not be really related to the teachers' knowledge or the school's curriculum than it is to the polarized relationship with the school.

Amusingly, various researchers have not really considered the hostile impact of racism on the performance and achievement of the people of color. Instead, researchers have attributed various reasons for the low performance among the students of color to the teacher actions. This is mostly in terms of the way of instruction, the tutoring quality, student motivation and engagement in learning, time convenient instruction (Bloom, 1987), socioeconomic status (Fetler, 1989), and the significant differences in the teacher and student culture. Other factors include the level of the school standard, inadequate teaching curriculum, poor teaching conditions (Ornstein & Levin, 1989), the extensiveness of the school's academic program and the student behavior (Ekstrin, Goertz & Rook, 1988). Researchers have recommended schools with a high academic performance that are likely to go beyond cultural and ethnic problems hence, focusing the students' attention on their academic programs with few differences in their program of study (Lee & Brky, 1989).

Teachers and school administrators who are unwilling to admit the existence of racism often hinder the focus on these issues. In various schools, the principals and teachers tend to have an unwritten alliance that recommends an arrangement whereby the teacher support of the principal lies on the principal's support of the teacher at all times. In effect, teachers are given more power over the living of these children. (Corwun, 1967) This accepted arrangement encourages the caste-like system whereby status is determined by the position and economic

power. This model copies the caste structure that is commonly found in certain societies (Bates, 1987). Sadly, this is replicated in classrooms where the school curriculum, teaching method, and rewards are often used to place students in their respective role in the society. (Calabrese, 1988) These circumstances bring about an environment where there is the constant struggle for control between the student and the teacher. Hence, instead of a school to become a place for intellectual stimulation, it becomes more of a testing place to see whose agenda receives more priority. In this case, intellectual stimulation is usually not an attractive replacement for power and societal games that happen outside the school curriculum (Sprinthall, 1988). In other words, this type of environment becomes more violent and uncomfortable for students of color as they move from grade to grade and from elementary to secondary school (Sprinthall, 1988). Nevertheless, the school environment tends to alienate the child of color from the immediate moment they start the education process until they finally leave (Calabrese, 1988). This type of environment creates specific demarcation that brings about a polarity between the children of color and the school establishment. In this case, control is the center of the policy. However, there seems to be fear among teachers and school administrators, which borders on hysteria as regards the education of the children of color. Adolescents from most of these ethnic backgrounds are usually put in special education programs thus, they receive more corporal punishment and they are also placed in lower vocational classes (Jennings, 1988).

For the children of color to succeed they have to be able to cross the pre-existing cultural barriers (Pollard, 1989). This is because these barriers require them to deny their heritage, reject their peers, environment and perhaps, their family. Unfortunately, when children of color reject their culture and accept the prevailing culture, then this means that they have agreed to succeed based on the terms set by the whites in the society. This, however, puts the child of color in an

unfortunate role of risking rejection by both cultures. Most children of color are normally aware of this risk. Their various friends may interpret success as capitulation hence they risk being branded as 'Brainiacs'. In addition, they also risk being rejected by the white culture (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986).

Achievement and performance by the children of color could be influenced by the type of relationship they have with their teachers. This is to show that the children of color, who may have succeeded, could have only done so because they were engaged with teachers who had a personal interest in their well-being. Hence, their success relates closely to the feeling of a positive community with teachers who show a little form of racism. (Pollard, 1989). However, school-generated racism is ignored or denied, it is evident in stories that are carried in hearts of the people of color. Their respective stories reflect acts of emotional or physical violence and they are nearly universal to the minorities. These stories reflect and influences their perspective of the whole schooling process which aides their innate feeling that schools are in fact, racist institutions (Calabrese, R., & Underwood, E. 1994). The story-telling process has proven to be a powerful tool in helping one understand the human experience. It puts events in specific contexts and gives them meanings, which the reader can understand. The use of stories could be seen as valid and highly reliable (Merriam, 1988, Tappan & Brown, 1989).

Racism is dangerous. It attacks from various perspectives. It is violent in such a way that it is capable of destroying both the self-image of the attacker and the person attacked (Barbain, 1981). When students of color are attacked because of their SES standing, which is determined by their clothes, odor or perhaps, their hairstyles, they are usually made to follow different cultural expectations, which are viewed to be superior as opposed to theirs. These actions are

mostly approved, sanctioned and protected by the school authorities. Due to this, teachers tend to have a variety of strategies for maintaining control (Corwin, 1967).

Most times, the relationship between the teacher and students, especially the students of color is abusive. The abuse is often kept within certain limits to make it easier for the principal to defend the teacher. In effect, the abuse is an indication of racism. Teachers as agents of racism may be as a result of a structure that is broken. This structure promotes racist values through the rejection of cultural diversity. It is often obvious in the hostile attitude or behavior of teachers in charge of maintaining control. Amusingly, racism in schools is seldom when attributed to school administrators or perhaps, the teachers. In a situation, where violence or abuse is used, it is usually justified by the adequate need to discipline for higher academic standards. Most times, violence in schools is usually attributed to the students of color. Ironically, the use of violence as a racist policy is most times easier to use with students of color whose parents may feel powerless to confront the school's district. It tends to promote a cycle of abuse that maintains the caste-like system thus, it has the tendency of generating violent reactions.

Nevertheless, racist policies often protect the advantaged students. A threat towards an advantaged student is usually an attack on the school's image and value structure. Due to this, teachers are required to defend the traditional values against the value structure of different cultures. However, this brings about the little risk to the teacher. In this case, the parents of color often interact with the school as a result of a deep sense of distrust (Calabrese, Miller & Dooley, 1987). In addition, racism tends to lead to violence. Racist policies often teach children of color certain important social lessons. It teaches that certain things like power can be abused and sanctioned by the society. It also teaches that power is shielded when used against the children of color. Thus, it establishes a racist image of the school (Calabrese, R., & Underwood, E. 1994).

Children of color are usually 'fair game' to be emotional, mentally and physically abused by teachers. The lack of power that is usually felt by the community of the minorities when dealing with the school bureaucratic structure often makes the minority parent and students become vulnerable and compliant in exchange for the entrance into the marketplace. Surprisingly, those in the lower SES levels are taught to understand power relationships. Therefore, they are taught from small that questioning the authority is not allowed as social status bestows a sense of authority. Hence, young people most especially from lower SES backgrounds are trained not to challenge. If there is an issue, the parents are either allowed to support the authority position or are left helpless to confront or challenge the authority. (Calabrese, R., & Underwood, E. 1994). Sadly, it has become a norm to blame the children of color for academic failure. Here, the blame of the educational sector is transferred to the student of color. This, in turn, leads to a feeling of hopelessness in the student of color. In addition, it brings about sanctions in the educational system in order to maintain the current culture. (Calabrese, R., & Underwood, E. 1994). The blame on the student of color has earlier being a tool or way for school districts to deflect any charge of racism (Calabrese, 1988). In this situation, the student of color often has to take on the responsibility for the school failure and low economic status to which they have no control. This leads the student of color to be helpless and be unable to influence their environment to fit the cultural expectations of the school community. When the student of color fails to meet up with the cultural expectations of the school, their rewards tend to be withheld, thus they are given punishment and less access to important career tracks (Apple, 1982).

Nevertheless, schools should not be places where achievement or performance is driven by racism. Schools can become humane institutions that follow policies created to include and not exclude people. However, the current culture of schooling which encourages the latent form

of racism should be exorcised. Nevertheless, there is no alternative, as the problem of racism, which exists among various types of people associated with the education industry, should be confronted.

### **Taking a close look at the Teacher Workforce**

This section evaluates the teaching workforce and it discusses the segregation of the people of color in the teaching profession. Recruiting teachers of color has its own benefits, which is briefly discussed in why the diversification of the teacher workforce matters. This section goes further to discuss why the educational system is losing the teachers of color. This, however, is an issue on its own because it goes a long way to show how the system along with the teacher training universities is failing the teachers of color including the new teachers who are supposed to contribute to the well-being of students.

In addition, all these definitely have its effects and these issues tend to affect students specifically, the students of color. In this section, we expatiate on how these issues affect students. This further means that the ethnic/racial bias in our educational system and teacher training universities not only affects teachers but it also affects the students of color who are at the receiving end.

### **Major Arguments on the Diversification of the Teaching Workforce**

The lack of teachers of color in teacher training schools is saddening. Due to the almost non-existence of people of color in these teachers training schools, having a teacher of color in the *K-12* system is almost impossible. Nevertheless, the need for these teachers of color to take part in the *K-12* system is highly important. This section provides relevant arguments to support the assertion for the urgent need of more teachers of color.

The lack of teachers of color in the educational system has attracted the attention of policymakers as well as educators. To solve this problem, there have been a variety of recommendations and initiatives with the purpose of employing the people of color to teach in schools. However, less attention has been paid in reviewing all the major arguments of scholars and educators as regards the diversification of the teaching workforce. These days, emphases are placed on research-based evidence therefore, it is important to review previous studies to help ascertain how the teachers of color could be beneficial to our educational system most especially in states with a low percentage of teachers of color.

From a comprehensive review of the literature, we noted three main arguments for diversifying the teaching workforce. The extent to which these arguments were validated was carried out by using empirical research. Over the past two decades, several policies have been adopted and many works have been written as regards the need to diversify the teaching workforce. (Villegas and Davis 2008). Those policies were created based on the lessons that were learned during various teacher diversity programs that were launched in the late 1980s. Some private foundations such as the DeWitt Wallace-Readers' Digest Fund and the Ford Foundation (Clewell and Villegas 1998) supported these programs.

The non-existence of racial diversity among teachers has attracted certain empirical attention. Most studies that were conducted to date as regards the lack of diverse teaching workforce concentrated on the strategies or plan to employ more people of color into teaching (Villegas and Lucas, 2004). Amusingly, there has been little attention on reviewing previous studies and arguments to enable us to articulate a research-based approach for increasing the number of teachers of color in the teaching workforce. This work reviews empirical-based evidence by going through various literature looking for arguments based on the diversification of the

teaching workforce. Several works were used, and this includes online journals, books, reports etc. We identified three major arguments based on the diversification of the teaching workforce.

- 1) Teachers of color have the potential to improve the academic achievement of the students of color.
- 2) Teachers of color serve as a role model to all students especially to the children of color
- 3) the teaching workforce rationale.

### **The Potential of the Teachers of Color to Improve the Academic Achievement of the Students of Color**

One of the arguments for the diversification of the teaching workforce is that the teachers of color have the capability to improve the academic achievement of the students of color because of their comprehensive understanding of the ethnicity of the children of color. This ‘cultural synchronicity’ is said to provide an advantage to the teachers of color over their white counterparts in improving the achievement and performance of the students of color (Irvine 1988). The impact of creating cultural relationships between home and school for students is aided by landmark investigation, which evolved around intellectual anthropology and cognitive science (Heath 1983; Moll 1986; Tharp and Gallimore 1988; Vygotsky 1978). This part of research reflects that learning happens in a cultural context, which involves the creation of ideas. It goes on either to further show that this could occur the school or outside of it. In their attempt to reflect the new learning format, students continually try to link their prior knowledge and experiences. This includes their individual, cultural experiences and the new ideas, which they learned. To be highly effective, it is important for teachers to help students build relevant connections using what is familiar to them, their skills, their experiences both within and outside the school and the new content learned. This sort of teaching and learning provides a standard

theoretical rationale for growing the racial diversity of the teaching workforce (Gollnick 2008; Villegas and Lucas 2002).

Further from this theoretical groundwork, the belief that teachers of color are a better fit to improve the learning of the students of color receives support from a limited but ongoing research. The Handbook of Research on Teacher Education examined 11 studies that evaluated the impact of teachers of color on several achievements for students of color (Villegas and Davis, 2008). Below we expatiate on these investigations. Several factors were used to measure outcomes, which includes standardized test scores, the rate of school dropouts, enrollment rates, absenteeism, etc. Dee (2004) re-evaluated test score data gotten from Tennessee Project STAR class size experiment. This experiment was originally carried out in the late 1980s. However, in the study, several students were assigned randomly to teachers in the participating schools. Dee discovered that racial combination of teachers and students significantly increased both the reading and math scores of the Black American students by three-four percentage points. This was significantly strong mostly among the poor Black American students who were in racially segregated schools. Nevertheless, Clewell et al. (2005) asked; ‘does the exposure to a same-race teacher increase both the reading and math achievement scores of Black American and Hispanic students in schools?’ Their findings indicated that the fourth and sixth Hispanic graders who were taught by Hispanic teachers had higher test scores than when they were taught by teachers who were not of the same race with them. This effect was also discovered in the reading section but at the fourth grade. Even though the black students' scores were weaker, when taught by a same-race teacher, they immediately had significantly higher score gains (Hanushek, 1992).

The study also analyzed the effect of same-race teachers on the performance of black students in vocabulary and reading. Here, the standardized test scores were used to measure the

dependent variables. The result revealed that Black teachers were highly successful than the White teachers in terms of improving students outcomes in both areas (Evans, 1992). It was discovered that Black American students who were taught by teachers of the same-race scored higher on economic literacy test than those who were taught by teachers of a different race. Interestingly, another study showed that the same-race effect brought no academic benefit for the students of color. In this study, by (Ehrenberg, 1995) students between the eighth and tenth grades had their scores evaluated in reading comprehension, history/social studies, mathematics, and science. No significant effect was identified for the same-race teaching. Applying another method (Ehrenberg and Brewer, 1995) found that increasing the concentration of black teachers in a school led to a higher score for most Black high school students.

Likewise, Pitts (2007) noted that students of color had a greater passing rate for high school exams most especially the graduation exams. This usually occurs in certain school districts that had a racial circulation of their teaching populace when estimated with that of the student population. It was discovered that school districts with a significant number of Latino teachers were more advantageous at making Latino students to pass their graduation exams (Pitts, Meire 1993). Similar results were also reported in various studies that focused on the effects of teachers of color on student achievement rather than test scores. For instance, other researchers also decided to identify the effect of various district variables, which includes the distribution of black teachers (England and Meier, 1986). The indicators for this variable included the admission into enriched classes, the rate of suspension from schools, the level of high school dropouts, placements in special education, the level of matriculation in vocational schools and colleges. They discovered that as the rate of the black teachers in schools with significant black enrollment rose, incidents such as the ‘second generation discrimination’

decreased greatly among the student population. Another study by Meier et al. (1989) which served as a follow-up study also confirmed the original findings. Another study also discovered that an increase in the rate of Hispanic teachers in large urban school systems also reduced the dropout rates of Hispanic students hence; it helped to increase the college-going rates of the Hispanic students (Fraga et al. 1989). Furthermore, Meire (1993), noted that by increasing the circulation of Latino teachers in a school district teaching workforce, this lessened the work of the Latino students to special education, it improved their placement in classes for the gifted and it reduced the percentage of suspension and expulsions from schools. Another report also discovered that after determining for helpful factors, urban school districts with a high distribution of teachers of color had a significant college matriculation rate (Hess and Leal, 1997).

Conclusively, the empirical works above indicates that students of color tend to benefit more when taught by a same-race teacher. They also accrue more academic benefits when they are taught by a teaching force that is racially representative of the student population. In sum, the studies above indicate that diversifying the teaching workforce is indeed necessary. The studies above aides the validity of the first rationale stated in the literature for the diversification of the teaching workforce. There is no doubt that the teachers of color have the potential of improving the academic achievement of students. This is because these teachers of color tend to use their knowledge about the language, culture, and experiences of the students of color hence, they tend to relate with them at a better pace using this as a way to greatly improve their academic performance and overall school experience. The studies also indicate that the students of color are prone to benefit better when exposed to same-race teachers. This is evident

in the test scores mentioned, the high completion rates of high school and college, school attendance and enrollment in classes, less suspension or expulsion from school and so on.

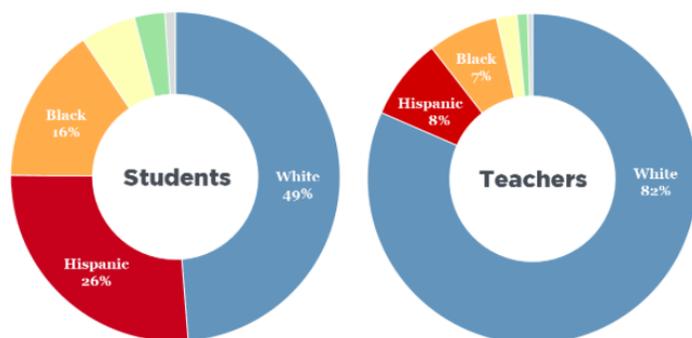
### **The Teachers of Color: Role Model to All Students Especially to The Children of Color**

Another argument as regards the diversification of the teaching workforce is that the teachers of color serve as a role model to students especially to the students of color. The need to diversify the teaching workforce initially received national attention in the early 1980's when educators, professional organizations, and scholars identified the need for diversification hence, they warned about the large cultural gap that existed between the students of color and their respective teachers. They noted that this was a serious issue with high social and education implications (Cole 1986, Graham 1987, Irvine 1988). Various critics asserted that without important interference, the cultural split, which was obvious in several classrooms, would become more conspicuous in the coming years. They also argued that it would bring about claims that all students including the students of color and white students, would hardly be taught by a teacher of color. Various initial teacher workforce diversity advocates insisted that school is not just a setting where academic knowledge is developed and disseminated but that schools are also a place where certain values are modeled in profound but effective ways. With the influence of schooling on the development of children's values, they found it unacceptable for a pluralistic

society to expose students to an overwhelming white teaching workforce (Graham 1987). Mercer

### **Black teachers matter. Read the research**

Here's what students and teachers in American public schools look like.



“Why are there so few black male teachers?” (Hanford, 2017)

and Mercer (1986) also noted this concern.

These authors claimed that the racial structure of the teaching workforce passes across compelling messages to students. It noted that the message involves the circulation of power in the American society. They explained that if students do not see adults of color in certain professional roles such as in school teachers, students can implicitly learn the impacts of the participating teachers on their students. This is likely most especially if they see the adults of color over-represented in the non-professional roles. In such cases, they tend to be unable to explain the ways in which the deduced role model function works in reality specifically in the classrooms and schools. Researchers, who have pondered on the impacts of teachers of color on various academic achievements for the students of color most times, mentioned role modeling as one of the impacts (see Dee 2004; Evans 1992; Hess and Leal 1997; Pitts 2007; Stewart et al. 1989). In summary, the role model impact for the diversification of the teaching force is imperative.

## **THE TEACHING WORKFORCE RATIONALE**

Teachers of color have been proven to aid the education of students of color by lessening the discriminating shortage of educators for most high-minority urban schools. By doing so, they help alleviate a serious workforce issue (Elfers et al. 2006; Horng 2005; Jonsson 2003; Kirby et

al 1999; Murnane et al.1991; Scafidia et al 2007; Willett et al. 1991). Nevertheless, this is the third main argument stated in the literature for employing more people of color into the teaching workforce mainly for school systems that cater to large numbers of students of color. Another study, which focused on the high poverty school districts (Scafidia et al. 2007), discovered that due to the rise in the Black American students' enrollment, retention was higher for the Black American teachers than it was for the White teachers. It was also reported that the exits of White teachers from those districts were as a result of the students' race rather than their poverty status. The follow-up of this study showed that the White teachers in Georgia were most likely to leave schools with a large number of Black American students irrespective of their financial backgrounds (Jonsson 2003). Other data, such as a study on North Carolina and Michigan, showed that teachers of color stayed longer in their teaching profession than the white teachers (Murnane et al. 1991). Another data also showed that among the cohorts of teachers who entered the teaching profession between 1987 and 1996, the Hispanics has the lowest early attrition rates. Similarly, in another study, it was shown that the Latino teachers were likely to remain in low-performing, high-minority schools than their white counterparts.

The different reasons for entering the teaching profession could explain the focus of teachers of color in urban schools and their significantly higher retention rates in these schools. A pre-service study showed that working with students of color and helping them by improving their educational achievement and personal experiences were one of the primary reasons teacher candidates of color give for entering the profession (Belcher 2001; Kauchak and Burbach 2003; Horng 2005; Rios and Montecinos 1999; Su 1997; Wilder 1999).

Research asserts that people of color make their decision to enter teaching in a predetermined and thoughtful manner. Irvine (2002) found that Black American teachers in her

study tended to view teaching as a “calling,” re-collective of the historical “lifting as we climb” philosophy. Irvine also reported that study participants viewed their work as having a religious and spiritual purpose. Similarly, Casey (1993) reported that for the Black teachers teaching meant “raising the race,” a type of work that requires the acceptance of personal responsibility for the well-being and education of Black students. Another report also noted that Black American teachers in their findings intentionally enter the teaching profession as a way to “give back” to the community (Dixson and Dingus 2008). This community-oriented perspective, however, is not astonishing that several teachers of color return to their community of origin to teach the students of color there (Lynn 2006; Su 1997). However, if these teachers of color reside in poor urban communities just as various paraprofessional educators of color who eventually become teachers; they often remain teaching at those places (Villegas and Clewell 1998). In sum, this shows that educators of color tend to be highly committed to teaching students of color when compared to the white teachers. They are attracted to teaching in difficult to staff urban schools and they are more suitable to persevere in those settings. Hence, employing and training more people of color to join the teaching workforce has a great potential to not only increase the supply of teachers for most demanding schools but to assist in alleviating the increased rate of attrition in these settings (186 Urban Rev, 2010).

### **SUMMARY**

In summary, this section identifies the main arguments noted in the literature for the diversification of the teaching workforce. The review brought to light three of such arguments; the potential of the teachers of color to improve the student's achievement, the teacher of color as a role model to the students of color and the teaching workforce rationale. These arguments were backed by various researchers and studies, which were cited.

## **RATIONALE FOR RESEARCH**

The above research shows that the teachers of color are highly important to the teaching workforce. In states where the rate of teachers of color is quite low, there is no doubt that the students of color are likely to be at a disadvantage. The studies reported prove that we need more teachers of color most especially in the teacher training universities such as Minnesota's *K-12* Teacher Training Universities where it seems that the meaning of education has been forgotten.

In these training universities, there is need to encourage and embrace the teachers of color to enable them to contribute significantly to the educational system most especially, to the lives of the young and innocent students. In addition, the research reported clearly points out the benefits of recruiting more teachers of color irrespective of the state; thus, the advantage of having more teachers of color cannot be disputed and the above research proves it.

## **CONCLUSION**

According to the previous studies reported, most of them identified the need to recruit more teachers of color. However, in certain institutions where the percentage of teachers of color is relatively low, it takes a whole redefining of the system to be able to attract the teachers of color. In a profession where it seems as if teaching is for the Whites alone, recruiting teachers of color would require a good amount of support to be provided for these teachers. Our educational system currently needs more teachers of color because the White teachers cannot handle the large diverse students alone. There is a need for diversification of teaching workforce whereby same-race teachers will be able to understand their students who may be of the same race. This helps to foster better learning and it teaches the child about equality and not the opposite.

To enable us to recruit more teachers of color, it is important for the states to see the potential of these teachers of color and how useful they can be to the achievements of students. There is a need for Minnesota's *K-12* teacher training universities to encourage and promote diversity in its training universities. It is important for Minnesota's *K-12* teacher training universities, which is known to graduate low numbers of teachers of color to embrace intercultural teaching.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

The methodology for investigating the concepts and focal points of my research question titled, *What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators?* - is grounded in personal interviews with several post-graduates of three Master of Arts in Teaching programs located in the Twin Cities. I have also completed interviews with two people that hold Ph.D.'s who are also department chairs at two major Minnesota universities asking them about best-practices in MAT and M.A. Ed programs and how other teacher training programs can benefit from being proactive and creative. I wanted to go into these conversations by introducing my research questions as hot topics, but also to let participants know, that I am working on a big picture piece and this is only a prelude to a widening missive. My department heads, at two universities, extended me an invitation and we talked about the challenges with experiential learning for advanced students and why it is taken into consideration and how the challenges to "speed up" the process of translating experiential learning sometimes slows it down. Finally, I interviewed four (4) local teachers working in two of the toughest high schools in St. Paul, Minnesota for suggestions about what makes a well-rounded new educator and how teacher training universities can evolve with the times; this information will be covered in chapter four.

## DATA COLLECTION

### PARTICIPANTS

Research participants are based on recent meetings and interaction with students (some enrolled in Master of Arts in Teaching programs, and others that have graduated and are currently in the classroom teaching. Two organizations that are invaluable when it comes to constructive critiques are *Minnesota's Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color*; the *Minnesota Chapter of the Alliance for Black School Educators (MABSE)*, who allowed me to presents an abstract of the research at two separate meetings and ask for volunteers to meet away from their academic institutions and have real conversations about organization design, what they learned and the appropriation and historical assumptions about teaching and the current teacher training and licensing systems.

*For this research project, I interviewed two graduate students that completed the master's in teaching (MAT) program; a public-school district representative; and one university department chairperson from a MAT/MAED program.*

### LOCATION/SETTINGS

- A. It has been predetermined that each graduate student interview will take place away from their place of employment or campus and a location to be determined after approval of research methodology; all interviews were conducted in downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN.
- B. The other goal of this research, was anonymously interviewing, by their request, two university department heads, who have agreed to meet anonymously for the purpose of

assisting me in an administrative-viewpoint of teacher training programs and the internal working mechanisms that sometimes impede evolution.

- C. All four teachers for this research project are employees of a local public-school system that were interviewed for this research.

**Interview control-groups:**

- A. Student Interview
- B. University MAT program department leadership
- C. Current Classroom Teachers and Professional Development Facilitators

**DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

The face-to-face interview, also called an in-person interview, is probably the most popular and oldest form of survey data collection. For this candid research, it was “the best” form of data collection that maximized the quality of the data I collected. I understand you cannot Photoshop personality, but it was always important for this research to have face-to-face interviews because to solicit information in projects that can be considered to be very sensitive, for example, data collection on sexual behaviors, institutionalized racism, stratified-failing systems, etc. By far, the main advantage of the face-to-face interview is the presence of the interviewer (me), which actually made it easier for my participants to respond to either clarify answers or ask for clarification for some of the items on questions about best practices. This was very uncomfortable for some, yet diplomatic and cordial.

**Investigative Summary Outline**

The questions in this investigative study will cover teacher training programs and be based on questions about best practices for students in those programs. The goal is to study the effects

of teacher training programs as it relates to training new teachers, then to find out if engagement by universities has been effective in providing adequate training from this study and the interviewing of graduate students, department chairpersons and stakeholders who design and implement professional development in St. Paul and Minneapolis Public Schools. Each participant was given a sheet with the questions below and asked to answer them one-at-a-time, or provide a narrative summary, based my Capstone question.

Below are the guided, top-of-mind narrative questions for participant review:

- 1) What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators Education? If so, how?
- 2) Do you think the achievement gap between white students and "minorities" is decreasing because of the quality of new teachers your university is training? Why? (chairperson)
- 3) Question for all interview participants: In your opinion, how does your university and it's teaching, and leadership programs maintain success with its student teachers? What do you think institutes of higher learning do better in teacher training programs?
- 4) Does (or did) your university give you credit for experiential learning? (Credit for experience that is equivalent to three-years of teaching) in your MAT program? Did you ask? What happened...why?
- 5) How many professors of color did you directly learn with (courses, capstone advisors, peer reviews, department chairs). Do you think the lack of opportunity from experiencing educators of color at your university will make your graduate experience less?

- 6) Are you in good-standings with your current teacher's license? If so, can you share the experience? If not, why? What happened?

### ETHICS

During this study, I employed the following safeguards to protect informant's rights:

Research objectives were shared with participants, and:

- a. No written permission is needed - all research participants are 21+ and have agreed to meet away from their academic institutions;
- b. Transcriptions will be made available for review by all participants, if requested;
- c. Anonymity of all participants is guaranteed;
- d. All data (recordings and notes) were secured in a locked in a personal file; and
- e. All research participants (4) requested they remain anonymous.

### CONCLUSION

My research project: *What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators in Education?* - is an intersection between students in teacher training programs (future teachers) at universities that in this researcher's opinion have suspended best practices in favor of boilerplate practices and curriculum that ignore the importance of the demographics of the students' race, color, and socioeconomic status as it pertains to advising potential teachers on expectations, outcomes, and behavior challenges.

This system-failure usually obstructs the success of gifted and talented graduate students and their demand for high-quality collaborations with professors, staff, and administrators in

higher education. The study is the beginning of a series of inquiries about teacher training programs, the licensing process, and local district hiring procedures. Many unanswered questions remain - a mystery for many graduate students in education as well as college and university staff, faculty and admissions departments. If systems are in place and successful, then students in teacher training programs should demand academic success be inserted and race-based personal and historical assumptions are expunged. The final goal of this study is to create a platform to continue this research inside of an Ed. D. program while developing new programs and curriculum that focus on successful engagements with teacher training programs, benefiting the students in K-12 systems.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH DATA: IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS

#### Research Data from in-person interviews

The in-person interviews and research data for this capstone: *What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators?* are published below - approved by participants, then deleted from electronic recording devices. Each participant agreed to meet at a place other than their place of employment. Each participant was presented with the questions and asked to review them and answer them one-by-one, or as a narrative; each participant responded. All participants requested that interviews be reviewed after transcription and that all interviews are to remain anonymous.

#### Participant Interview #1

Department Leader, Female, Caucasian - Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) and Master of Arts in Education (M.A. Ed.) Programs | St. Paul, Minnesota | Setting/Location: Downtown Minneapolis coffee shop. Graduate Population: 3000+

“Yes, we have not done well in the recruitment and retention of people of color in education; there are some important points to consider...Schools of education in Minnesota as well as all across the United States have failed at updating or systems to match or keep up with the changing times and outbound communications to potential teachers – especially in undergrad population. The million-dollar question is how do we fix a system originally meant to teach students to work in factories? Everything is challenging today – technology, soft-skills, and the high cost of college and how some candidates drop out right before the student teaching phase.

I know what you're trying to get at the challenges in teacher training programs...I have to tell you there is plenty of haphazardness and missteps inside our teacher training programs, but even more so, the way we train some novices (meaning someone with a B.A. that we convince to join the leadership courses and the school of education) - including how to retain potential teachers of color, not just students from East Africa, China, or South America that end up in university teacher training cohorts because they are 'different.' Currently, I don't have any Black males (American) in my current MAT program; we do have one Black male in the Education Specialist program and that's it! We are also losing great teachers who have been in the field over 20-years, and the reason these teachers are leaving range from being tired of their administrations, to being fed up with the student population. I've been to several conferences over the last two years; I've attended several professional developments, leadership training, panels and local staff collaborations where the questions of experiential learning credits, retaining potential black-male teachers (keeping them in school); and the deepest wormhole - the Minnesota State licensing requirements that seem to change with Minnesota weather. Yes, we have issues that will continue, but at some point, per your thesis, we need to create better outcomes for Minnesota families by making sure teachers can create new experiences and new deals inside of training programs that benefit all." To answer your thesis question, *What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators in Education*— currently yes...but very slowly. With more research (published) like this, we can use these focused reports to see there are challenges and address those challenges in a bottom-up solution matrix.

**Supplemental Question 1A:** *You said, that your institution hires “the best quality professors and instructor’s,” but you do not have any Black-male professors on staff or used as adjuncts in your school of education and leadership programs. Do you follow me?*

...yes, there is a challenge. All I can say is that we are working on it.

**Supplemental Question 1B:** *Does this mean you cannot find “qualified” professors to work here (participants university), or that your university is actively practicing in structural violence toward Black Academics – hoe diverse is the teaching staff?*

...I don’t feel comfortable answering that question at this point.

**Interview ended.**

### **Participant Interview #2**

Graduate Student, Female, Black American (33-years old) – graduated with a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in 2015. Setting/Location: Golden Valley, MN – Personal Home of Participant (**Note:** Displease Graduate Student)

“My experience was great, but I did not expect to student teach for 12-weeks for free and when I got done, I could only get my initial license because I owe \$6100.00 to the university. To add insult to injury, a lien for the above-mentioned amount was put on my mother’s home. This was a serious setback for my family that has been stuck in this house for over 10-years.”

**Supplemental Question 2A:** *Were their other students in your class with the same experience?*

I don’t know, I kept to myself because I went one-year without seeing another black-female and the white girls and boys really didn’t associate with me. One thing I will say, teacher training (at my university), was treated as a white-only profession, lacking black-male professors and older white female professors and instructors that have been less than diplomatic and cordial with me and my situation.

**Supplemental Question 2B:** *Why do you think there are no Black-male professors at your university in the school of education?*

Is this a rhetorical question? It’s the historical effect of fear, racism, hate, and jealousy. You know yourself the last thing any white-leadership at any university wants is to have educated black men as peers – especially in Minnesota where the gaps in wealth, education and

finance are so far apart that no one seems to answer the call for change. I remember when I went to talk to a professor about a grade on a paper I did; she actually hides her purse in the draw when I walked in and asked me, “Are you upset,” as if I was going to do something to her. All I wanted was to let her know, that I emailed the wrong file and wanted to apologize and turn in the correct copy. That’s the last time I decided to visit that professor. My student-teaching supervisor was totally worthless. All she did was go through the motions – no input, but I was expected to do all of this stupid busy work for the university and my supervising teacher, work full-time, come to meetings and listen to the rhetoric about teaching in an urban school from these antiquated racists that would not even step foot in a level-four institution. I almost lost my mind at this time and was actually going to drop out.

**Supplemental Question 2C:** *Do you feel you have been prepared to teach in Urban schools?*

Lucky for me I’m a black woman; strong and wise...I understand you can never be schooled correctly by people that do not look like me. My white professors did not see the value from understanding student of color in the K-12 system. It seemed like, even in academia, Blacks are second class citizens.

**Supplemental Question 2D:** *Would you recommend your teacher training program to others – does institutionalize racism exist in the teacher training construct (from your experience).*

There is some racism, but not just from the program staff; I think the students provide a lot of energy. No, not even my worst enemy.

**Interview ended.**

**Participant Interview #3:**

Elementary Teacher - Caucasian Female, pre-M.A. Ed. (Fall 2018), holds a MAT with a concentration in Elementary Education, 29-years old; teaches in the Twin Cities.

(**Note:** *Teacher reviewed all of the questions and chose to answer in a narrative format.*)

There is no “New Deal” as you put it...most teacher training programs are not concerned with doing anything to better the life’s of black boys and girls in the K-12 system by teaching new teachers (white), about how to be relevant in the classroom full of children of color – for the most part, most schools of education (I attended three before I got my first graduate degree – I had two children during this time too), professors hold themselves to some kind of higher order of bulls\*\*t, and haven’t figured out they can complete successfully by addressing the elephant in the room: building capacity for race by building bridges directly within the community of color...this is why there are no Black-male professors, or few in most schools of education because the administrators do not value the voice or academic careers of these men. Don, you have to understand, the most fearful thing in Education is the Educated Black Man. The irony continues.

**Interview ended.**

**Participant Interview #4**

Twin Cities School District Human Resource and Professional Development Planner (for Teachers), Male, Caucasian; holds Principal and Superintendent License (current).

*(Note: This participant preferred to answer a list of pre-reviewed questions.)*

**Question 1:** What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators Education? If so, how?

Since I don’t work inside of a teacher training program, it would be unprofessional for me to answer this question – but there needs to be a new deal, for sure. What that “New Deal” looks like is unknown other than to make sure new teachers are up to the challenge of a less-than-perfect classroom setting, family engagement and peer professional development.

**Question 2:** *Do you think the achievement gap between white students and "minorities" is decreasing because of the quality of new teachers your university is training? Why?*

The Achievement Gap is tricky; personally, I feel as if it's a way to "tag" a certain group of students without proper investigation. If anything, the "gap" has spun out of control and we are letting some students accidentally slip through the cracks. The new teacher must be prepared because students in today's classroom are savvy, calculating and can see right through that unprepared educator. I'm not saying in any way that students are "bad," but what I am saying is the current education system, unions, etc., have made it tough just to get students the customized education they need. As far as quality, as you already know, you get out what you put in.

**Question 3:** *In your opinion, how do university's and their teaching-leadership programs maintain success with its student teachers currently placed in your district? What do you think institutes of higher can do better in teacher training programs?*

I don't like the current student-teaching format that universities put their graduate students in, it seems too boiler-plate and doesn't take into account that new-times require new pathways to teacher training. Along with the ever-rising behavioral problems (challenges), we have issues keeping teachers, especially new teachers in urban schools – they are recruited out in numbers that affect us disproportionately. While we have great success, and sometimes hire after we post positions from word-of-mouth referrals based on their student teaching performance; it seems the teacher-training schools want to drown the student(s) in classes and don't take into account they've been hired by one of the largest school districts and ignore the fact that it was the graduate students work and experience that landed him/her the job, not the university in-and-out practices. In most cases when I look at applicants, I look for not only the education listed in the transcripts but also an individual that can handle students that might not be the perfect student.

One thing I've noticed is that very few are truly prepared, and as we discussed earlier, I think that all student teachers in training programs should have a minimum of 25-hours in a

Federal Level 4 setting, and function successfully in that setting, which would make urban teaching a breeze, in my opinion.

**Interview ended.**

### **Participant Interview Summary**

The fluent answers are given in this research project parrot add to the researchers' conclusion that a problem exists with the construct of teacher training programs. It also exists inside of any university teaching model in existence. We must look precisely at systems that would negate a group of humans based on their otherness, is, in fact, a one-form of institutionalized racism. To devalue a person's earned academic achievements because of the controlling cultures policy interpretations, right, or wrong may inhibit any forward progress. In this project, the researcher sought out participants who have had less than pleasant encounters because, at this time in Minnesota's educational history, those voices seem to be the loudest. This research project could have taken the direction of interviewing students and administrators who have had worry-free experiences with little to no drag with expectations meeting their realities. In Chapter Five, I will explain why antiquated programs play an important part in why fleecing the Black body out of education via policy interpretation is a cleaver and organized attempt for institutions to be politically correct.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PROJECT REFLECTIONS

#### How I feel

Since January 2018, I have reflected on this project looking into dark rooms that did not want any lights turned on. I'm even reflecting on the fact that I'm lucky to be here – if it wasn't for the Department of Veterans Affairs, I would have never gotten the chance to live my dream of earning two master's degrees from a university and earning an Ed. D.; but yet, it's bittersweet. I'm pleased to announce I could smell both the good, and 'bad' reasons for the rejection of one's culture, I don't know the motives, but I have to question them. Lacking research, asserting an outreach/engagement gap in universities; missing the mark, then claiming "We know the culprit!" is not going to help. Teacher training programs are in the dark. There's zero prospect that some kind of equal opportunity will occur anytime soon, but yet, the enrichment inside of differences are rarely deciphered for the benefit of new teachers and more frequently turned away. My disdain for this blanket of suffocating academia-whiteness does not, under any reality, absolve me from choosing to invest my meager resources and scant intrinsic motivations for recognizing and cooperating. Minnesota didn't provision for a statewide system of elementary and secondary education until 1862 when the legislature enacted a comprehensive scheme providing for public schools supported by taxation under local control (Johnson, 1994). The origin of the divide between K-12 and postsecondary education in the United States stems, in part, from the laudable way the nation created education systems to deliver curricula for both K-12 and higher education. In the late 1800s there were no common standards for college admission, nor was there an organized national system for college entrance examinations. Nearly half the colleges had either low entrance requirements or none at all (Ravitch 2000, p. 41). Some

colleges accepted students from preapproved secondary schools or used their own exams. High school educators wanted a more uniform and less haphazard system (Kirst, Usdan, n.d.). Teacher training programs in Minnesota at best were a thought. The Laura Ingalls Wilder Syndrome school-house format was that a white-female, usual a wife of a well-to-do townspeople, like a mayor, or store owner was the town teacher for the multi-grade classroom. In this equation, the Black teacher, male or otherwise was considered property, teaching, or being a teacher – to even our own, could bring death to both the teacher and the classroom. I had no intention on writing this Capstone because I thought that the teaching university would have been impressed by the first published Capstone at the university and be more creative with an interactive assignment to assist me in my role as a classroom teacher. By reading this, you can obviously see that no creativity by the university was ever considered, nor were systems in place to deal honor a G.P.A. of 4.0 per semester, all during graduate school. I guess the most hurtful and bothersome thing was the more I pointed out the inconsistencies, the more invisible and non-connected I became. This is the plight of teacher training programs, not just at my university, but at other universities in Minnesota and across the United States that have antiquated programs, based on some curricula that have failed every student of color. Yes, there does exist an unintentional institutionalized racism that has permanently set up house in major teaching universities, and to try and remedy this will take a lot more than the authoring of a Capstone by a sometimes disgruntled graduate student. But as we know, racism, in its purest form, hidden, is here - in teacher training programs, where it never was supposed to be - so it needs to be identified and addressed all because the puzzle of education is missing pieces, big pieces, that sit right before our eyes, in college, but intentionally ignored... the Black man. To see with my eyes the challenges, you wonder what a difference a race makes?

### **Changing generational failures in Educational Cultures is Difficult – Can we?**

The challenge I have is difficult; my objective is not only to expose not-so-healthy learning environments for both undergraduate and graduate students but also come up with solid recommendations based on my experience as an authority on understanding what cultural competency necessitates. I think educators inside a college school of education must be qualified to train today's new teachers - a doctorate degree does not always denote any qualification. One might argue the evidence is very clear, after so many years with the various "gaps" for children of color, there seems to be another gap created from inside the university classroom where if any competencies are taught, they are not retained nor transferred from theory to practice. Training people we rely on to make sure our children learn and graduate from high school is tough already. Understanding cultural competence and debunking perception and historical assumptions combined with low expectations become needed reality in the classroom. Non-white learners can become the casualties of education – a place that is unbalanced, shaming and classist to those who are trapped in violent economic circumstances. My hypotheses hold true for Native American, Asian, Somali and Hispanic-Latino learners as well; you cannot be what you do not see; if there is not a clean or defined path to success, the continued downward spiral of educational mistakes become more evident the farther away we move from critical adjustment of training- the trainers. The professors and instructors who train-the-trainers must put aside their personal convictions and stop the segregation of cultural competence. This will put an end to demanding silence on issues of the black body. The evidence of my concern is that some professors will talk about race, color, and class via the platform of *Brown v. The Board Education* because it's safe; a wide range of people understand the historic value of that case, but I am finding out the subject of educating black boys is becoming more taboo; or if I bring up the

topic, eyes roll and heads bow as if to say, there goes the black guy talking about racism in education, again! This alone represents a challenge that needs to be addressed because if schools of education and their students are obstructed from having these important conversations on educating black boys, then how will the real story of education be taught in a multi-faceted, fact-based platform that is open to relevant and timely concerns? Novelist Gail Godwin (2005) wrote, “Good teaching is one-fourth preparation and three fourths pure theatre,” (Goodwin, 2005). Minnesota’s educational theater is absent of important players who should have starring roles in the elementary school classroom. When I tighten the focus and look at black men teaching in the public school systems – in the United States, the numbers are even less; in Minnesota it is almost nonexistent unless you count the instructors who double as a sports coaches or hall monitors, which I attest is glass ceiling created by a social construct that obstructs opportunities for the supply of the demand meaning there are competent black male teachers, but the variables to obtain licenses, especially in Minnesota are based on testing from Boston, MA (MTLE). The disparity comes at a time when more school districts (MN) are actively trying to diversify their teaching ranks by hiring more men, minorities, immigrants, and teachers with different educational backgrounds (McGuire, 2015). In most cases, cash, rewards and cultural resources are not delivered past the university’s front door when graduate students complete the grueling task of missing the finer points in cultural learning expectations, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) become social cabals where teachers talk about the political adjustments versus the systemic casualties associated with a gap, behaviors and classroom management.

The words diversify the teaching ranks as it pertains to the educating, licensing and hiring of black male teachers has created a catastrophic downward spiral for children of color in the

public schools. If black school children in the K-12 system do not see a black role model, as in a black teacher, it duplicates the social and economic rhetoric that black men are unemployed, in jail, absentee fathers and does not care about education. In my opinion, the lack of black male teachers is partly responsible for the wide gap in education between black and nonblack students. This problem I am reflecting on is growing out of the gender, race and color inequity in the teaching corps as I see it at the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) and the Master of Arts in Education (M. A. Ed.) program classrooms in Minnesota and across the United States. This also reflects on the lack of male teachers of color, not only in public school systems but also at the university level. Some local universities' Schools of Education do not have any black, or Black American, African heritage male professors or instructors. This translates to a gap in cultures when the teacher from one culture confronts many cultures at once. In Minnesota, we have seen the in-classroom failures first hand. Minnesota universities continue to produce proportionally fewer teachers of color than K-12 student demographics would predict. At this point, there are many solutions that would address the issue of cultural competence in classroom instruction at the university levels, but who will listen? Addressing the segregation of classroom instruction is a social justice and equity concern that pays zero. The pushback, especially in Minnesota can put a person in a very difficult position. My goal in this reflection is to let you know that I am out here; I see what's happening and I will not remain silent.

### **Why Black Boys can be better – if taught better**

It troubles me that in 2018, in the United States, we still have a challenge with the teaching of language, reading, literacy and critical thinking to boys of Black American heritage; to be very clear, there are some items we need to explore. First the public schools, it's curriculum and classroom designs was never meant to house, teach or output black boys; secondly, the

people who control identity are the same who control language, wealth and education in the United States. It's unfortunate we have to live by rules that were never meant nor updated for us (sans the victim mentality). For example, a study (1990) of more than 105,000 students in Maryland's Prince George's County, where Black Americans made up about 65-percent of the enrollment, showed that black male pupils performed comparably to boys and girls of all races on first-and second-grade standardized math and reading test. But by *fourth grade*, Black American boys experienced a sharp decline in their scores. More recent national studies have shown similar findings: In 1994, fourth-grade reading scores of Black American boys lagged behind those of all other groups at the same grade level, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (Bennett-Alexander, 1997). This becomes problematic because we know that prisons use a grade four model do create an anticipatory set on how many prisons will be needed. We know that our private prison systems are calculating how many new beds (they will need) based on the third grade, number of third graders, and that's just wrong." I think waiting until kids are ready for kindergarten to begin to intervene is too late (Ford, 2013). If you really look at the challenge of educating Black people in general, one of many positions held by linguists and many anthropologists *locates the problem not in the children, but in the relations between them and the school system*. This position holds that inner-city children do not necessarily have inferior mothers, language, or experience, but that the language, family style, and ways of living of inner-city children are significantly different from the standard culture of the classroom, and that this difference is not always properly understood by teachers and psychologists. Linguists believe that we must begin to adapt our school system to the language and learning styles of the majority in the inner-city schools. They argue that everyone has the right to learn the standard languages and culture in reading and writing (and speaking, if they are

so inclined); but this is the end result, not the beginning of the educational process. They do not believe that the standard language is the only medium in which teaching and learning can take place, or that the first step in education is to convert all first-graders to replicas of white middle-class suburban children (Labov, 1972). Even after decades of research on Black American English (AAE), there is still no consensus as to exactly how it has developed. Although there are several theories, the two most prominent are featured in *Do You Speak American?* One theory suggests that when slaves of different language backgrounds were transported from Africa to America, they developed a pidgin—a simplified version of a language used for communication between people or groups who do not have a common language. This language subsequently developed into a full-fledged creole language that children acquired in their homes. (Some creole languages—languages that have developed out of pidgins and have acquired native speakers—have the word creole in their names—for example, Hawaiian Creole—while others do not—for example, Gullah.) It is believed that the Gullah spoken to this day on the sea islands of South Carolina and Georgia closely resembles the language used by slaves on plantations. Because plantation slaves were not taught English and had limited contact with English speakers, some features of this creole were passed from generation to generation. These features have survived post-slavery because as AAE developed, it became more than just a means of communicating between groups: It is a source of solidarity among people who use it. A second theory is that slaves in the South worked alongside indentured servants who spoke non-mainstream varieties of English. Black American slaves learned English from these indentured servants (often of Scots-Irish descent). People who believe this explanation for the beginning of AAE say that it explains similarities between AAE and other non-mainstream varieties of English (such as Appalachian English, which shares some linguistic features with AAE), (PBS, n.d.). The fact is, *Black boys in*

*public school settings are not learning language, the use of, or anything else.* The major challenge points to teacher training universities (current), and curriculum that has been surreptitiously void of all cultural responsive content-in-context. The challenge of Black boys and their education now becomes a part of a racial-political paradigm that is still controlled by the people who designed the construct in the beginning. If educators look at the model of first-things-first in urban education, they would understand that until all gaps are gone, there can be no success for the Black boy, nor the black in the federation in education. By recognizing these challenges, we're also acknowledging the responsibility we share to bridge the race, language and color divide in our country. No doubt our Black Boys are smart enough, spirited enough, and genuine enough to meet the challenge. The question is, are we?

### **Why Black Male Teachers Matter?**

Teachers are essential in our society: they represent one of the first formal role models children experience in their lives; a living example of how human beings should interact with each other and the environment they live in. They accomplish many multi-faceted parts: professor, psychologist, counselor, mediator, and entertainer; sometimes even the friend role. Teachers are the basis of society because, in their hands, the minds and the values of millions of human beings are going to be molded and defined, something we sometimes take for granted. As a multicultural civilization, our goal is to open the mind of every student and allow them to understand and embrace all the differences, the particularities and the unique features of each culture. Black American culture and its legacy probably represent one of the biggest cultural heritages in our country and the inclusion of more Black American teachers, particularly male ones, in our elementary schools is definitely one of the many things we still haven't done in order to make sure this happens. It is very common to see female elementary school teachers, but

when we talk about the male Black American version of this job, we find ourselves in a very, very worrying position. Why is this something we should be really worried about? Aren't female teachers just perfect for children? Consider the following: we are talking about giving our children, especially our Black American childhood, a genuine role model they can relate to. Humanity is filled with lots of prejudices and racist mindsets towards Black Americans, some of them reinforced by the media and the authorities, which usually relate them to crime, street gangs, and drugs. This is an extremely sad picture kids get from their own people in a daily basis, one that shows them as incapable of doing great things and gets ahead in life; one that creates the ill-formed idea that they will never be able to achieve their dreams just because of their race and their origins. Once the Black American youth have the chance to see a black male teacher leading their class, a change will occur: They will acquire the incredible opportunity to see a person who is just like them doing a positive deed, defending constructive values and giving them the advice and the confidence needed. It is about feeling represented: realizing that in most of the times, the stereotypes established by our biased ways of thinking are completely wrong and that they have a real prospect to attain greatness and live a full life because they finally had someone to look up to. Those kids, who are being tempted by the wrong things in their difficult neighborhoods and sometimes their difficult home circumstances, will finally have a reference to follow, a ray of light to guide them in these modern times of uncertainty. Once we show them that in our nation every person, no matter what race or opinion they might have, has a true chance of being treated like a respectable citizen and build their life and ideas, we will be giving them the precise representation they crave for. Black American male teachers in elementary schools should be a breakthrough we should all be fighting for, because it means fighting for a much more equal and tolerant world; a world where Black American young people

will have someone to look up to, and everyone else realizes they have to stop looking down upon something so natural and human: diversity. The example is not only for Black Americans, but for everyone in our country.

## CONCLUSION

I considered myself a Black Nationalist, and my point-of-view is simple: Now is the time for Black educators, parents, and communities to take control of their children's education. Cultural continuity is maintained by educating children in the ways of their culture. And they are educated in the ways of their culture to MAINTAIN their culture, to advance its interests, and ultimately to try to maintain its very survival. That is the fundamental reason people are educated. What does it matter if you learn physics and computer science and everything else and you cannot defend yourself against a military assault by Europeans or a germ warfare assault? A knowledge of computer science, a knowledge of the law, a knowledge of all of these other things matters not at all if you are unable to use that knowledge for your self-defense (Wilson, 2015). The challenge with attempting a full-frontal attack on teacher training programs hiding behind privilege is that the privileged are in charge, and many don't like being uncomfortable in their urban utopias. It can be argued that the enemy is teaching our Black boys and girls, but the system of higher education has partnered with a 1930s antiquated process of training - to concur this will permanently redesign economic value for communities of color, the New Deal.

This Capstone Project is very accusatorial - it's meant to be. The facts are damning at best - if you do not think that teacher training programs are antiquated, culturally unresponsive and basically white, I invite anyone to take a deeper look into this process and you will find out that there is a challenge from the teaching school programming to the people that and run the teacher

licensing systems. To back up my argument, it only takes a minute to look at Hamline-Handcock Elementary, a school accessed by Hamline University for teacher training, internships and clinical experiences. While the elementary school located across the street from the university, it ranks 745th of 848 Minnesota elementary schools – with an estimated 270 students and a racial breakdown of *African American:50-percent Asian:15-percent; White:12.2-percent; and ‘in poverty’ with free/discounted lunch recipients at 85.2-percent.* You would expect better from a school that is connected to a teacher training university and this is the start of the nucleus in the challenge of not having enough trained teachers of color. Besides that, logic dictates that any “public school” associated with any university teacher training program should be doing much better and without an achievement gap. It is pure racism that has trapped these programs in a silo that excludes people because of how they look. If teacher training schools want better, they need to do better. There is no reason that an elementary school that collaborates with a university should be in the bottom of state rankings, if anything, this school should be a model of excellence for Urban communities and future teachers in training – to have anything less is uncivilized. In an effort to build capacity for these programs (a waiting list), it might be necessary to be competitive. While most of Minnesota’s teacher training programs have insufferable whiteness and continue the denial of people of color (especially Black males) to enter into schools of education as adjuncts, and professors, they take away the rights of not only students in higher education, but students that need a demanding amount of cultural responsiveness. The way most teacher training programs are operating, some of our children will "have to" be fry cooks and janitors. I'm not saying those are bad jobs if you need to survive - but what happens to a child's dream and vision when a system of built for education has turned into a system that rejects people based on a skin-color? How do our children reach their dreams

of piloting an airplane, flying a helicopter or even going into space? If teacher training programs cannot fix one school (Hamline Elementary), by returning to the community passing test scores and individual as well as collective student success, someone must step in and hold many programs accountable.

I would like to bring the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into this conversation, adopted by the UN General Assembly (1948). It set a standard for all who were included when it was drafted. It's unfortunate because if many have the 'rights' to an education, that 'right' has been corrupted by procedures that exclude participants. I feel it important to review Article 26 and its standards because some might feel threatened by this research, but taking a human rights position, as it pertains to education might enlighten people who feel threatened the most:

*(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.*

*(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.*

This capstone project: *What are the ways do K-12 public school systems and teacher training programs contribute to the exploitation of black educators; what political, cultural and economic ends does this serve? How does the current treatment and deployment of black educators hamper rather than further black educational progress?*- is the first step in researching, changing and retooling a generational challenge bound in structural violence from ignoring Black academics, to the lack of cultural responsiveness inside of teacher training programs - meaning to make an attempt to form a cognitive cohesion with the whiteness and boilerplate rejections, while boldly making it publicly known it exists. The next phase of this

research is to directly (and publicly) confront the people, organizations and university programs that have become antiquated programs of mediocracy, where mediocracy is rewarded for maintaining the status quo.

### **What is the future for Black Educators? Are we disposable Products?**

After teaching at the same school for over two-years I received a letter from the principal telling me the program I work with is being cancelled. Since I am the only black teacher in the school (English teacher), I assumed they would transfer me to the high school English department – but this was not the case. The letter stated: June 11, 2018 would be my last day. I've seen different outcomes when it comes to program-shifts, transfers, and new opportunities in my building, but when it comes to me, again, the only black teacher in an all-black school, the need to have a black teacher in this student population disappears with the words, budget and deficit. I asked the union to assist me in re-tooling the 1950 tenure laws (updated in 1976), but these laws, according to some veteran black educators protect the Laura Ingalls Wilder Syndrome by keeping white teachers in place, tenured and using black educators as fill for school settings outside of the normal range of behaviors. From this researchers experience, if you look inside schools with large populations of black students, you find education assistants, behavioral intervention specialists and coaches are for the most part, men and women of color; but when looking at seasoned, multi-degreed black men, there are none. In the next 14-months, with the assistance of a local nonprofits, Education Explosion, Respectful MN-TORS™, the University of St. Thomas (Doctorate in Education program) - my research and dissertation will bring mainstream fixes to the issues of cultural competency, race, and racism in education. This Capstone research only touches the fringes that even in the 21st century, a very real color line still divides all of us. In an industrialized country like America it is appalling to

know that our educational system is unbalanced, unfair and unequal for black boys and girls – not to mention black educators who are almost non-existent. Nevertheless, with the right strategies, it is still possible to resolve the discrepancy in our educational systems.

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