The Principal Pipeline: A Qualitative Exploration of Strategies for the Recruitment and Retention of Black Male Public School Principals

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The Principal Pipeline: A Qualitative Exploration of Strategies for the Recruitment and Retention of Black Male Public School Principals

Abstract
Given the recent decline in the number of Black male principals, the purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the teacher-to-principal pipeline recruitment process and retention strategies for Black male principals from the perspective of Black male principals in two urban school districts. Nine current and retired Black male principals from the New York City and Washington, DC public school districts were interviewed. Prior to becoming principals, these nine participants worked as teachers and as assistant principals. There were seven major findings: these nine participants (a) were unaware of any specific initiatives used to recruit Black male principals, (b) believed that they were not dissuaded against becoming a principal, (c) expressed that having confidence is one of the important factors necessary for becoming a principal, (d) school districts should develop targeted recruitment initiatives for Black male (and other underrepresented) teachers, (e) believed that there were not any targeted initiatives in their districts to retain the current Black male principals, (f) agreed that there is an overall lack of representation of Black male principals, and (g) school districts should develop and implement targeted retention initiatives for current Black male principals. Implications for future research, training programs, policy development, and practice were discussed.

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The Principal Pipeline: A Qualitative Exploration of Strategies for the Recruitment and Retention of Black Male Public School Principals

By

Stephen Jackson

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

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St. John Fisher College

December 2018
Dedication

First and foremost, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my ancestors who were not afforded an equal educational opportunity. Secondly, I would like to thank my mother and father who are with me in spirit and will always be in my heart and soul. I want to thank my amazing family for the love, support, and constant encouragement I have gotten over the years. In particular, I would like to thank my wonderful wife, Evelyn Jackson and my six children, Malik, Tarik, Assata, Nneka, Akanke, and Sekou. You are the salt of the earth, and I undoubtedly could not have done this without you.

I would like to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. Janice Kelly and committee member, Dr. Byron Hargrove, for your time, talent, and the expertise you have given me. I could not have been successful in this program or through the dissertation process without you. To my friends and colleagues who have always provided advice, guidance, and assistance when needed. To the many schools and districts that I have worked for, and the students with whom I have come in contact, this is for you. Always remember to keep your eyes on the prize. Finally, I would like to thank my professors, my fellow cohort members, research collaborators, and the educators who contributed to this research. I am very grateful to all of you.

Lastly, to myself Mr. Stephen D. Jackson, we have come a long way and there are many more miles to go! Onward and Upward Toward the Light!
Biographical Sketch

Stephen D. Jackson is currently the Chair of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Principals Panel Standing Committee under the U.S. Department of Education. Mr. Jackson earned his bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Howard University, a master’s degree in education from Cambridge College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 2001, Mr. Jackson earned his New York State School District Administrator credentials from the College of Saint Rose. For over 30 years Mr. Jackson has worked in the field of education on the high school level. Mr. Jackson started his journey as a doctoral student in the spring of 2016 in the Executive Leadership program at St John Fisher College, where he explored the principal pipeline: a qualitative exploration of strategies for the recruitment and retention of Black male public school principals, under the tutelage of Dr. Janice Kelly and Dr. Byron Hargrove.
Abstract

Given the recent decline in the number of Black male principals, the purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the teacher-to-principal pipeline recruitment process and retention strategies for Black male principals from the perspective of Black male principals in two urban school districts. Nine current and retired Black male principals from the New York City and Washington, DC public school districts were interviewed. Prior to becoming principals, these nine participants worked as teachers and as assistant principals. There were seven major findings: these nine participants (a) were unaware of any specific initiatives used to recruit Black male principals, (b) believed that they were not dissuaded against becoming a principal, (c) expressed that having confidence is one of the important factors necessary for becoming a principal, (d) school districts should develop targeted recruitment initiatives for Black male (and other underrepresented) teachers, (e) believed that there were not any targeted initiatives in their districts to retain the current Black male principals, (f) agreed that there is an overall lack of representation of Black male principals, and (g) school districts should develop and implement targeted retention initiatives for current Black male principals. Implications for future research, training programs, policy development, and practice were discussed.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Two of the most influential national principal organizations, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) reported in 2013 that there is a shortage of qualified principal candidates (NASSP, 2013). They note that as principals retire or leave the profession for a variety of reasons, qualified teachers are not interested in assuming the role of the principalship (Daresh, 2001). Finding and retaining excellent principals in this era of high-stakes exams, focus on increasing graduation rates, and added responsibilities, new principals may need to be well versed in what has been termed adaptive leadership (Daly & Chrispeels, 2008). The lack of interest in pursuing the principalship by qualified teachers is problematic among communities of color, especially among Black teachers.

Black male principals are vastly underrepresented in public school districts across the United States (Brown, 2005). Prior to the 1954 landmark decision Brown v. Board of Educ., most African American students attended segregated public schools that were led by African American principals and staff (Brown, 2005). One of the unintended consequences of this law was a decline in the number of African American male role models in educational leadership positions. There are concerns that this legal decision may have had an unintentional negative impact on the achievement of African American students in public schools (Putman, Hansen, Walsh, & Quintero, 2016). Another one of
the unintended consequences of *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) was the loss of Black principals (Tillman, 2009). Tillman stated,

The *Brown* decision was intended to remedy the inequities of segregated schooling, and, ideally, the decision would provide a more equitable context for Black principals to continue the important work of educating Black children. But the tradition of excellence in Black school leadership was dramatically changed by desegregation, particularly in the South. While some Black principals retained their positions after the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, desegregation had a devastating impact on the closed structure of Black education and thus the professional lives of thousands of Black principals. (p. 177)

Ethnic inequities in schooling continue to raise serious concerns (Bell, 1987; 1992; Brown, 2004; Edelman, 2016; Nesmith, 2013; Tillman, 2009). Implementation of this law is associated with a demise in the number of Black principals in America, which currently presents a challenge to school districts that do not have these Black role models (Brown, 2005). Prior to *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954), Black schools were segregated and primarily closed systems. These schools were only attended and staffed by Blacks. Black principals had the authority to hire and fire teachers and staff, implement new initiatives, and raise money for much needed resources. However, these principals had no real power outside the Black community (Tillman, 2004a).

Black school leadership represented a tradition of excellence which dates to the 1860s (Foster, 1997; Pollard, 1997; Siddle Walker, 1993, 2001). Tillman (2004a) noted that the work of Black educators during the antebellum period is historically and culturally significant. Black principals were also instrumental in helping to secure funds
and other resources needed to build and operate public and private schools (Tillman, 2004a). These principals worked with the Black community as both educators and activists to ensure Black children received an excellent education. Additionally, Black principals reflected the ethos of the Black community and believed that education was the key to their children’s success (Tillman, 2004a).

The school principal is an instructional leader and is expected to provide effective leadership in and outside the school community (Fullan, 2011). The principal is responsible for cultivating relationships with community members who include: politicians, business leaders, religious leaders, the school board, superintendent, the press, and parents. The roles and responsibilities of principals have increased due to high stakes testing, growing student racial/ethnic and academic diversity, and options for school choice. Public school stakeholders, such as parents, community leaders, religious leaders and business leaders, are demanding school reform (Fullan, 2011). Questions regarding principal leadership often arise during discussions and debates about education reform and school turnaround. An opportunity to examine retention and the recruitment experience of African American male principals could provide meaningful contributions to education reform initiatives and discussions (Tillman, 2007).

Tillman (2004a) argued that the history of African American principal leadership in pre-K-12 schooling is undeveloped in the literature both before and after Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954). She noted that African American principals pre-1954 were dedicated and steadfast in educating Black students, and they worked closely with members of the Black community to set up all Black schools in their communities under inferior conditions. Black principals in the post-Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954) era
helped to integrate public schools and educate children of color despite the hostile conditions they encountered. Today, these leaders work mostly in large urban school districts, where they continue to work in the best interest of Black students to ensure that they succeed and are socially, and emotionally healthy (Tillman, 2004a).

**Problem Statement**

Public school districts across the country have become more diverse, yet diversity among K-12 public school principals across the US does not reflect the changing demographics of America’s public schools (Tillman, 2004a). In *The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce* (U.S. Department of Education, [USDOE], 2016), it revealed the lack of diversity trends of K-12 school educators and reviewed the teacher pipeline from enrollment in college and university educational programs to career entry into the teaching workforce. According to the report, 49% of all public school children are students of color, yet 82% of public school teachers are White, 8% are Black, and 9% of all teachers are Hispanic. The report also shows that even though Black and Hispanic teachers made up 8% and 9% respectively of the teacher workforce in 2014, there was not an even representation across geographic regions. In inner city areas, 12% of the teaching force was Black, and 13% was Hispanic. In rural areas, Black and Hispanic teachers made up 6% and 5% respectively of all teachers. The total number of Black teachers across the country is 8%. Less than 2% of the total teaching force are Black males (National Center for Education Statistics, [NCES], 2016). As schools throughout the country become more diverse this study is significant and fills a gap in the research pertaining to factors that will improve recruitment and retention for African American
male principals and motivate more Black men to pursue education as a career.

In 2007-2008, 10.6% of all U.S. public school principals were Black (NCES, 2016). In 2011-2012, 10.1% of public school principals were Black and of that only 4.2% were Black males (NCES, 2016). In 2015-2016, 10.6% of all principals in the US were Black; of those, 3.6% were Black males (NCES, 2017a). This represents a 7.5% decrease in the number of Black male principals nationally over a 4-year period between 2012 and 2016 (NCES, 2017a). The NCES data shows that there has been a steady decline in the number of Black male principals over the last 10 years. This decline of African American male principals is alarming and clearly warrants reform; by capturing their thoughts, feelings, attitudes, values, and beliefs we can better understand and address how these factors have hampered their ascension to the principalship.

The challenges of Black male achievement in public schools may be attributed to the lack of Black male role models across various educational leadership positions. Dee (2001) wrote: “The conventional wisdom among educators is that minority students are more likely to excel educationally when matched with teachers who share their race or ethnicity” (p. 4). According to the Star Project report, when students and teachers were matched according to race, there were statistically significant increases found in math and reading scores (Dee, 2001). The nation’s urban schools are becoming increasingly diverse, a trend that Dantley and Rogers (2005) referred to as the browning of the nation’s collective student body with a growing proportion of U.S. school children belonging to racial/ethnic minority groups.
Theoretical Rationale

In an effort to effectively capture Black male principals’ perceptions of the recruitment and retention opportunities available to Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions, this researcher examined the lived experiences of Black male principals through the lens of critical race theory (CRT). This study draws on the work of Derrick Bell (1987, 1992), on the elements of CRT that are relevant to understanding educational equity. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), stated that “critical race theory in education, like its antecedent in legal scholarship, is a radical critique of both the status quo and the purported reforms” (p. 62). Coffin (2011) reflects on the essential role that CRT offers in providing a conceptual framework for understanding the inequalities in education as a consequence of race and racism in the pursuit to accelerate the rate of educational reform. CRT was developed by Derrick Bell, an African American professor of law at Harvard Law School in the mid-1970s (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). This theoretical framework examines institutional racism and the role it plays in perpetuating social inequalities between dominant and marginalized underrepresented ethnic groups. CRT is a powerful explanatory tool that can be used to address the sustained disparities that people of color experience in education and to amplify their often-silent voices and perspectives.

Critical race theory. According to Gordon (1990), CRT began during the mid-1970s from the Critical Legal Studies (CLS) movement (as cited in Ladson-Billings, 1998), where they did not address the “effects of race and racism in U.S. jurisprudence” (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004, p. 26). Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that CLS comes from the leftist legal movement that challenged the established legal scholarship which focused on
policy analysis in favor of the customary law that spoke to a group of individuals in social and cultural contexts. Crenshaw (1988) noted that scholars who follow CLS argued against the idea that the civil rights struggle represents a long, steady march towards social transformation.

CRT was established in response to stalled efforts of the powerful civil rights coalition of the 1960s and early 1970s (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Derrick Bell, an African American professor of law at Harvard Law School, initiated and developed CRT along with Alan Freeman, a White scholar teaching at SUNY-Buffalo Law School (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman pioneered the work for a movement that would be called critical race theory which transformed how we would view the correlation between race, racism, and power (Delgado & Stefancic., 2012).

There are five basic tenets of CRT which include: (a) counter-storytelling, (b) permanence of racism, (c) Whiteness as property, (d) interest convergence, and (e) a critique of liberalism (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998). The first tenet is counter-storytelling. This tenet provides faculty, staff, and students of color a voice to tell their stories and to paint a picture of their marginalized experiences in a school where an educational institution is becoming inclusive and not simply superficially diverse (Hiraldo, 2010).

The second tenet is the permanence of racism. This tenet emphasizes that racism is the force that drives the political, social, and economic realms of people in American society. CRT sees racism as an inherent part of civilization, in which White people continue to reap the benefits over people of color in education and where diversity action plans become ineffective when racism is ignored (Hiraldo, 2010).
The third tenet originated from the entrenched racism in American society, where the notion of Whiteness operated on different levels, such as the right of possession, the right to use and enjoyment, the right to disposition, and the right of exclusion (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

The fourth tenet, interest conversion, acknowledges White people as being the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; McCoy, 2006), which is personified in affirmative action and diversity initiatives. The fifth tenet is the critique of liberalism. This tenet comes from the notion of color-blindness, the neutrality of the law, and equal opportunity for all. Color blindness is a mechanism allowing people to ignore racist policies that perpetuate social inequity, which can be found in the lack of inclusiveness in the academic curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1998) and student development theory used by student affairs professionals in higher education. This study used the first tenet which is counter-storytelling.

Donmoyer (1999), argued that leadership preparation programs need to improve their preparation of school-site administrators by adding components of CRT, situational leadership, and leadership for social justice, in order to strengthen the traditional leadership paradigms. Brown (2005), takes it one step further by adding that principal leadership preparation programs should place an emphasis on the social, political, and racial context of schooling and suggests that these factors will have a direct impact on the leadership of African American principals. Counter-storytelling tenet of CRT provided Black male principals in this study the opportunity to tell their stories and to paint a picture of their experiences in a large urban school district regarding the recruitment and retention process for Black male principals.
**Statement of Purpose**

Although the intention of *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) was to eliminate racial inequality and provide educational opportunities and access to children of color, the decision eventually resulted in the near extinction of Black principals throughout 17 southern and border states (Ethridge, 1979). As modern public school districts across the country become more diverse, district school leaders have a responsibility to recruit, retain, and develop principals who are representative of their student populations. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore Black male principals’ perspectives on the teacher-to-principal pipeline recruitment process and best strategies to retain current Black male principals given the recent decline in the number of Black principals. This research study was designed to discover the challenges and strategic opportunities for the intentional recruitment and retention of Black male principals. To date, little is known about the best practices and strategies to attract a greater number of African American males to diversify candidates for public school leadership. Due to the limited amount of research on African American males in principalship positions this study will fill the gap and reap positive benefits to help school districts nationwide recruit and retain more Blacks male educators.

**Research Questions**

A phenomenological approach was used in this study to discover the in-depth perspectives of current Black male principals on the best methods for recruiting more talented Black male teachers to become principals and retaining Black male principals. A phenomenological approach, coupled with the counter-storytelling tenet of CRT, served as the theoretical lens to address the following research questions.
1. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted recruitment opportunities designed specifically for current Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? (Brown, 2005; Jackson, 2007; Richardson, 2014; Tillman, 2007)

2. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted retention strategies designed specifically for current Black male principals within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? (Brown, 2005; Jackson, 2007; Nesmith, 2013; Tillman, 2007)

**Significance of the Study**

The significant shortage of Black male teachers will limit the number of potential Black male principals. Failure to recognize and encourage such teachers to consider school leadership will have serious implications for school districts across the country as they experience cultural, ethnic, and racial student population shifts (Murray, Husk, & Simms, 1993). Brown (2004) stated that “Today, Blacks remain severely underrepresented in leadership preparation programs and in their appointments to administrative positions” (p. 586). Currently, Blacks represent only 10.6% of all school principals (NCES, 2016).

From a pipeline perspective, the shortage of Black male principals can be directly linked to several factors including shortages of Black male teachers who will enter the leadership pipeline, a lack of mentoring of Black male teachers for leadership positions, recruitment, retention, and development of Black male teachers into leadership

**Definitions of Terms**

*African American* – Black people living in the United States who are descended from families that originally came from Africa.

*Black* – having dark skin, hair, and eyes: (a) *often capitalized:* of or relating to any of various population groups having dark pigmentation of the skin *Black Americans*, (b) of or relating to the African American people or their culture (Merriam-Webster, 2017, p. 224).

*Critical Race Theory* – is a movement among activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power.

*Principal* – is a chief or head of a school that leads the day-to-day operations and provides instructional guidance to educators, administrators, and students.

*Recruitment* – the process of finding people to work for a company or become a new member of an organization.

*Retention* – an effort by a business to maintain a working environment which supports current staff in remaining with the company. Many employee retention policies are aimed at addressing the various needs of employees to enhance their job satisfaction and reduce the substantial costs involved in hiring and training new staff (Online Business Dictionary, 2017).

**Chapter Summary**

District school leaders have a responsibility to recruit and retain principals and teachers who reflect the population of their students as the nation’s public schools
become more diverse. The intention of *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) was to eliminate racial inequality and provide educational opportunities and access to Blacks (and other children of color). It eventually resulted in the near extinction of Black principals throughout southern and border states. According to Foster (2004), the lack of sufficient numbers of Black principals in public school across the country today can be attributed to both the historical occurrence, and to a cultural mismatch in the intent and communication systems often used by school districts to employ Black school principals.

Improving principal diversity will benefit all students across the country. Black male principals can be positive role models for all students by changing negative stereotypes and preparing teachers, staff, and students to live and work in a multiracial society. By closing this diversity gap the nation’s public school system can reap positive benefits which include a more diverse principal workforce that can supplement training in the culturally sensitive principal practices most effective with today’s student populations (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2016). Because of the limited amount of research on the Black male educational principal pipeline, school districts could use research findings of this study to recruit, develop, and retain Black male principals in the field of education, (Hobson-Horton, 2000). Chapter 2 will provide a review of the literature. Chapter 3 provides the research methodology. Chapter 4 shares the findings of the research and Chapter 5 discusses implications and recommendations.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to examine Black male principals’ perceptions of a targeted recruitment and retention process, and the impact it has on the number of Black males in principalship positions. As public school districts across the country become more racially and ethnically diverse, district school leaders have a responsibility to recruit, retain, and develop principals who reflect the population of their students. The intention of *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) was to eliminate racial inequality and provide educational opportunities and access to children of color. This study fills a gap in the research pertaining to factors that will improve recruitment and retention for Black male principals and motivate Black men to pursue becoming an educator.

In this chapter a review of the literature will include: (a) an historical timeline of Black principals pre-and post-*Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954), (b) factors that inhibit Black male educators from becoming and remaining principals, (c) motivating factors for principal recruitment and retention, and (d) strategies to recruit, retain, and increase the low percentage of African American male principals’ post *Brown v. Board of Educ.*

**Historical Timeline of Black Principals**

During the antebellum period (1820-1865), Black minister-educators opened schools for the education of Black youth and adults in conjunction with their religious institutions
Franklin (1990) examined African American educators and their community leadership from 1795-1954. Richard Allen and Absalom Jones were among the first in a long line of Black minister-educators who defined their religious calling to include establishing schools and other educational institutions in their churches. In 1795, Richard Allen started a day school for Black children and adults within the Bethel Church. The school provided instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic as well as religion. Findings of Franklin's (1990) research indicated that during the antebellum period African American principals or headmasters were pioneers and were committed to educating Black children. As principals or headmasters, these leaders held a strong belief that while Blacks could be stripped of their money, property, and civil rights their knowledge through schooling could never be taken from them.

Daniel Payne, an African Methodist Episcopal bishop, started a school in 1826, in Charleston, South Carolina, for free Black children and adult slaves. Whites became afraid that Blacks might be influenced by the abolitionist movement or read their literature, so they closed the school in 1834 (Franklin, 1990). Legislators in South Carolina passed a law that prohibited free Blacks from having "any school or another place of instruction for teaching any slave or free person of color to read or write" (Franklin, 1990, p. 43). Payne moved from Charleston up north and became a prominent minister and educator. According to Franklin (1990), he founded Wilberforce College (now the historic Wilberforce University) in Xenia, Ohio, which is the oldest African Methodist Episcopal Church in this country.

In the fall of 1987, Dempsey and Noblit were part of a research team of four who examined the history of Rougemont Elementary School that closed during the mid-
1970s and the relationship with the community in which it was located. The authors argued that desegregation and the decisions to integrate schools ignored the culture that existed in Black schools. On the contrary, what contributed to the success of African American schools was the focus on African American culture. Dempsey and Noblit (1996) stated that “this cultural ignorance led to a loss of important narratives and lessons about education we might have learned from them” (p. 318). In many small southern towns, Black schools were the institutions that reinforced community values and served as the Black community’s important cultural symbol (Dempsey & Noblit, 1996).

Savage (2001) conducted a case study of the agency of Black teachers and principals in Franklin, Tennessee, between 1890 and 1967. He defined agency as “self-reliance, proactive actions, and self-determining philosophies that result from a ‘centeredness’ within one’s community” (p. 172). Savage’s study documented the history of African American principals at four continuously operating Black schools located on the same property in Williamson County, just 15 miles south of Nashville, Tennessee. Savage stated that “although there were few public records of the Black schools, the local school board minutes generally documented the individual testimony. Personal records (diplomas, pictures, and yearbooks) gave first-hand accounts of the life of the schools, students, and teachers” (p. 172).

The research indicated that African American principals "did more with less" (p. 171) for the education of Black children. According to Savage (2001), their creative ability to do more with less epitomized the agency of Franklin’s African American principals. Specifically, the agency of Black teachers and principals across 80 years can be operationalized in three ways: (a) resource development (raising money, supplies, and
other resources to ensure schools are successful); (b) *extraordinary service* (principals maneuvered through district policies to introduce new programs and curricula, instilling academic skills, resiliency, self-reliance, self-respect, dignity, racial pride, service, and faith in Black children); and (c) *ensuring the school as center of the community* (transforming schools into the cultural center of the Black community). Findings of his study indicated that the idea of agency was an effective strategy to foster Black self-reliance and empowerment and to fight against the White power structure which opposed Black schools and educating Black children (Savage, 2001).

Walker (1993) studied the relationships between segregated Black schools and their communities in the south. She conducted an ethnographic case study where she examined how communities supported schools and schools supported their communities, and the effects of their relationships. She documented pre- and post-*Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) eras at Caswell County Training School (CCTS) in rural North Carolina. The school was open from 1934 to 1969. Walker (1993) focused on the work of dedicated teachers who believed that their jobs extended from the classrooms to the community. She found that there was a mutually dependent relationship between the school and the community. The community members supported the school financially and in other ways, and the school worked closely with the community (Walker, 1993). Walker’s findings represented a different view, suggesting that all Black schools were deficient (Brown, 1960; Clark, 1963; Kluger, 1977). Although these portrayals were not completely inaccurate, they did not include the viewpoints of the Black principals and a well thought out analysis of how they operated the school for Black students (Walker, 1993). Additionally, Walker stated that these depictions overlooked “any suggestion that
not all education for African American children during segregation was inferior” (1993, p. 162).

**Displacement of Black principals.** Recently, we celebrated the 62nd anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954, 1955) rulings. Racial inequities in education still continue to raise serious concerns (Bell, 1987, 1992; Brown, 2004; Edelman, 2016; Nesmith, 2013; Tillman, 2004 b). The 1954 *Brown v. Board of Educ.* decision “established a fundamental and unambiguous constitutional principle: separate public K-12 educational facilities are inherently unequal and violate the equal protection provision of the 14th Amendment” (Smith, 2005, p. 115). The *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) decision is widely known for its reversal of the Supreme Court’s *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) *separate but equal* doctrine that legalized segregation and denied Blacks equal opportunities and access to education, most pertinent to the pro-slavery states of the South (Brown, 2004; Nesmith, 2013).

Eleven years after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Educ.* decision, Black teachers, students, and principals remained in constant fear. This period became known as the era of *massive resistance*. The expression massive resistance originated from a phrase used by Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia when 90% of the Congressional delegation from the South created and signed a *Southern Manifesto*. Ogletree (2004) argues that the Southern Manifesto portrayed *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) as a law that represented a misuse of judicial power and declared that all signers would fight against integration by using any means at their disposal.

Hooker (1970) surveyed 11 southern states and found that between 1967 and 1971, the number of Black principals in states such as North Carolina, Virginia, and
Arkansas dropped dramatically. In North Carolina alone, the number of Black principals dropped from 620 to 40 (Hooker, 1971). Hooker (1971) collected information on teacher displacement, using the Race Relations Information Center (RRIC) which helped him survey White and Black teachers and principals, teacher association executives, attorneys, civil rights and community leaders, state and federal officials, and journalists in 11 southern states. The survey was conducted largely by phone. Hooker (1971) noted that one of the participants interviewed stated that,

The Black principal has been desegregation's primary prey. Last spring a Black high school in Louisiana was closed and its student body transferred to a unitary school. The Black principal, who has two master's degrees and 20 years' experience as a principal, was made “supervisor of testing” (later, "supervisor of guidance and textbooks") at the new school. (p. 3)

There were several general conclusions that emerged from Hooker’s (1971) research. First, the number of Black teachers being hired to fill vacancies or new positions was declining in proportion to the number of Whites hired. Second, non-hiring was a form of displacement as serious as dismissal and demotion. Third, displacement was more widespread in small towns and rural areas than in metropolitan centers; in sections with a medium-to-heavy concentration of Black citizens than in predominately White areas; and more so in the Deep South than in the Upper South. Finally, the demotion of Black principals and teachers was more prevalent than outright dismissal. Hooker noted that

The irony of displacement is that it has followed compliance with federal laws designed to end discrimination. In the south in recent years, displacement of
Black professionals, and the diminishing of positions, pay, and prestige have accompanied each newly desegregated school despite legal decisions, the “equal protection” clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, and Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) guidelines. (p. 1)

In 1979, Samuel B. Ethridge studied the employment status of Black educators after Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954). He found that the records on the displacement of Black principals were poorly kept and noted that "the lack of effective data collection throughout the first fourteen years of desegregation will prevent the true impact of the Brown decision from ever being really known" (p.22). According to Ethridge, (1979), the years 1954 through 1965 were the most devastating years for Black principals. During this time immediately following the Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954) decision, Whites believed that Black principals were incompetent and were not effective in educating Black children (Ethridge, 1979).

During a series of post-desegregation legal proceedings, expert witnesses testified and called for the dismantling of Black schools and replacing Black principals with Whites (Ethridge, 1979). For example, in Virginia, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware, integration ceased to exist. These states chose to close the majority of Black schools and fire more than 50% of the Black principals (Ethridge, 1979). Ethridge (1979) concluded in his study that "thousands of educational positions which would have gone to Black people in the South under a segregated system have been lost for them since desegregation" (p. 231).

Abney (1980) observed that all of Florida’s school districts were controlled by all White board members and superintendents and figured prominently in the demotion and
firing of Black principals. He studied the displacement of Black principals in Florida during the school years 1964-1965 and 1975-1976 and found that, in 1964-1965, Black principals had jobs in each of the 67 school districts in Florida. Ten years later, 27 of the school districts had no Black principals, even though the African American school-aged population increased. He also found that Florida added 165 public schools during the 1975-1976 school year, but they fired or demoted 166 Black principals. According to Abney, Florida school districts were arranged according to the percentage of minorities in the state’s general population. Generally, when the percentage of African American students in the school population was compared to the number of Black principals, the Black principals’ numbers were low. This deficit was "alarming when one considers the fact that 27 of 67 school districts in Florida do not have a single Black public-school principal, in spite of a significant number of minority group members in the general and pupil populations” (Abney, 1980, p. 401).

Sixty years later, after the 1954 Brown v. Board of Educ. rulings, research continues to highlight prevalent inequities in education that persist for Black children (Edelman, 2016). Nonetheless, little attention has been given to the same systemic inequalities faced by the Black principal who historically has been victimized and underrepresented in education (Brown, 2005). Researchers claim that Black principals have played a critical role in American public education (Brown, 2005; Fultz, 2004; James, 1970; McCray, Wright, & Beachum, 2007). Additionally, the subsequent historical analysis supports the contention that desegregation had a significant effect on the number of Black school principals. Eleven southern and border states lost half their Black principals and thousands of Black teachers. This loss shook the very foundations of
the Black community and threatened the academic success of Black children (Tillman, 2004a).

During this period, Whites in the south attacked many Black students and legally prevented the implementation of Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954). They created over 3,000 private schools to combat integration (Schofield, 1991). It was not until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 that small, incremental changes began to occur for Black teachers and administrators (Grant, Tate, & Ladson-Billing, 1996). With the passage of those two acts, the federal government issued the power to stop the firings and provided the necessary additional legislation to implement all aspects of Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954) (Grant et al., 1996). Enforcement of the mandate to stop the firings was difficult and, at best, the government’s efforts to protect Black teachers and principals were spotty (Toppo, 2004).

In 2004, Fultz examined the discriminatory firings and demotions of Black principals. Life for Black principals was disastrous during the aftermath of Brown v. Board of Educ. decision (1954-1965). In 11 southern states, researchers estimated that 90% of Black principals lost their jobs. For example, of the 467 school districts observed, 34 districts had dismissed their Black principals, and 386 Black principals (60%) had been demoted (Fultz, 2004). In 1964, there were Black principals in all of Florida’s 67 school districts, but by 1974, that number had diminished to 40 school districts. From 1967 to 1971, the number of Black principals in North Carolina decreased from 620 to 40. Those who remained were fired, demoted, or forced to retire. In some cases, a demotion for the Black principal involved his or her working as a janitor or clerk. In addition, a large number of Black school staff was also adversely impacted.
According to Fultz (2004):

For a period of approximately two decades, from the mid-1950s through the mid-1970s, Black school staff at all levels – teachers, principals, coaches, counselors, band directors, even cafeteria workers – were fired, demoted, harassed, bullied as White communities throughout the South reacted first to the prospect and then to the reality of court-ordered desegregation. No one was exempt. “Displacement” became the phase which subsumed the many policies and practices of southern school boards, school superintendents, and politicians which sought to undermine the employment and authority of Black school staff: dismissals, demotions, forced resignations, “non-hiring,” token 32 promotions, reduced salaries, diminished responsibility, coercion to teach subjects or grade levels other than those for which individuals were certified and had experience (pp. 13-14).

Findings indicate that during the mid-1970s, the patterns of dismissal and demotion that highlighted the displacement of African American educators started to decline. According to Fultz (2004), the turning point in the era of displacement occurred around 1972-1973 when court victories, stricter enforcement of legislative guidelines, and a complete accomplishment of faculty and student desegregation curtailed the tide. Even though there were significant legal and regulatory victories; although important, they came too late, the displacement damage had largely been done (Fultz, 2004). Fultz (2004) stated,

By the mid-1970s, the basic contours of what were called the “unitary” school systems of the South had essentially been established, one-way desegregation through rural school consolidation had mostly run its course and so had the
massive dismissals and demotions, leaving “non-hiring” and “rumors of inferiority” as displacements chief legacy. (p. 34)

**Post-civil rights status (1970s-present).** According to Tillman (2004a), African American principals in the post *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) era experienced different challenges than their predecessors. Rodgers (1967), conducted a qualitative study on Black high schools in the state of North Carolina, where he interviewed 20 former principals of Black high schools and 20 superintendents whose administrative units included Black high schools. Most interviews with the principals were taped and most lasted for 1 hour. Some interviews with superintendents were taped (and these, too, were transcribed in full), but most were not. The interviewer took notes and wrote up the interview as soon as the interview was over (Rodgers, 1967). According to Rodgers, the principals (20) were interviewed on how they managed their schools, on what sorts of duties were required of them by law, and what they actually had to do. Principals were also queried on the role they played, not only in their schools, but also in community life. He also interviewed 20 superintendents, mainly with an eye to putting the role of the Black high school and the Black high school principal in the perspective of the larger community.

Rodgers (1967) revealed that African American principals played an important role in the Black community, including the role of a superintendent, supervisor, family counselor, financial advisor, community leader, employer, and politician. Rodgers (1967) stated that,

One of the most important aspects of the principal's role was the importance he had in the Black community. In many areas, he was the highest paid Black male
and the one with the highest status. He was sometimes referred to as the "Black mayor" and he was often the only link that his community had with Whites.

People would seek him out for advice--marital and financial. (p. 136)

The Black high school was a place with its own dynamic quality and community structure. The researcher was limited by the fact that many of the Black high schools were closed by the time he was able to conduct the research and had to talk to former principals, superintendents, students, teachers, and community members about schools that were no longer in existence (Rodgers, 1967).

James (1970) examined the role of Black principals during the pre- and post-\textit{Brown} era. During the pre-\textit{Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954)} era, Black principals in the south worked in a dual system where they developed what was known as “Negro Education” (p. 21). According to James this “was a system in a system, from elementary school through college and university, both private and public, and to the extent that de jure segregation was southern “Negro Education” was a regional phenomenon” (p. 21). Even though Black schools in the south were separate and unequal, segregated schools made it possible for the development of a Black aristocracy whose origin and substance were rooted in the system of Negro education (James, 1970). Teaching in Black schools in the south offered the largest job market for college and university graduates, and it was the only field where there was an opportunity for unlimited advancement in a system. Black teachers supervised by Black principals and administrators provided a powerful image of authority and respectability to the children and the greater Black community. They also had a better standard of living than most people in their community (James, 1970). According to James (1970) not since the civil war had anything struck the south in
the way that school desegregation had. He contended that Black principals caught up in
the vise created by the transition from dual to unitary school systems suffered
tremendously. The greatest impact of the Black principal was on the Black students who
observed him every day and dreamed of being just like him. James stated that “for the
principal himself, it was a training ground for leadership that, for a Black, was seldom
available anywhere. These leadership qualities are invaluable for the Black community
and the nation, and their loss must be regarded as catastrophic” (p. 22).

Findings indicate that the Black principal post-Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954)
was no longer important and the system which provided jobs to Black college and
university graduates was no longer in place to support Black principals, teachers, and the
school community. James (1970) argues that best Black minds have traditionally become
educators, and that Black educators represent the greatest reservoir of talent and skills
used to change the economic conditions of Blacks in the south. He also noted that the
deliberate annihilation of this valuable talent is one of the catastrophes of our time.

In 1976, Thomas Sowell sought to determine the factors that contributed to
"Black excellence, its sources, and its wider implications for contemporary education and
for social policy in general" (p. 7). Sowell examined six African American high schools
and two African American elementary schools. The high schools were selected from
Horace Mann's (1970) list of Black high schools with the largest number of graduates
who earned doctorates from 1957-1963. According to Sowell, in Horace Mann's Bond
study, 5% of the high school students who earned doctorates attended the following
schools: McDonough 35 High School in New Orleans, Louisiana; Fredrick Douglass
High School in Baltimore, Maryland; Dunbar High School in Washington, DC; and
Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta, Georgia. These institutions produced a long list of Black pioneers. The two elementary schools examined had a long history of academic achievement. In each of the schools studied the principals were key in students' academic and professional achievement. There are two factors that were noticeable in Sowell’s research: a history of academic excellence at each of the schools and strong principals who were committed to the education Black children (Sowell, 1976).

Sowell’s (1976) research is significant because it chronicled a historical look at each school. The study examined each school during the pre-and early post-\textit{Brown} period when they were at their peak academically and he also documented the decline after \textit{Brown}. Sowell noted that the schools examined in the study like the cities in which they were located, were victims of the changing demographics of these urban cities. These cities were once thriving economically, educationally, and socially; now they are depicted as crime-ridden, impoverished, and decaying. Sowell's research showed that the leadership challenges that faced principals in the pre- and early post-\textit{Brown v. Board of Educ.} (1954) period were similar in certain areas and different in others. According to Sowell, Black principals in the pre-\textit{Brown v. Board of Educ.} (1954) era were relegated by \textit{de jure} segregation, and they worked closely with the Black community. Leadership during the post-\textit{Brown v. Board of Educ.} (1954) period evolved over the years amid the changing cities in which their school was located (Sowell, 1976).

Lightfoot (1983) examined six urban, suburban, and elite schools in case studies to define \textit{good high schools}. Lightfoot (1983) noted that good schools were "described as good by faculty, students, parents, and communities; [they] had distinct reputations as fine institutions with clearly articulated goals and identities" (p. 23). According to
Lightfoot, strong, effective leadership is one of the foundations for effective schools. Findings indicated that goodness (or effectiveness) cannot be measured by assessments, but rather by "people, structures, relationships, ideology, goals, intellectual substance, motivation, and will" (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 23). A coherent theme in each of the case studies Lightfoot examined was the important role the principal held in the culture and climate of a good school. The mission, vision, goals and the objectives of a good high school are the responsibility of the principal. Lightfoot emphasized the impact of the leadership philosophy and style of the principal on teachers, staff, students, and the greater school community.

Pollard (1997) conducted a qualitative study on race, gender, and educational leadership. She interviewed 20 African American elementary principals in a large public urban school district. Twelve of the principals were females and eight were men. The school district had 110 elementary buildings. In 1997, 45% of the schools were staffed by African American principals. The principals were randomly chosen from a list of all African American principals in the district. According to the author the principals’ perspectives on the intersections of race and gender were assessed in two ways. First, the interview transcripts were reviewed to see how the principals used their own race, gender, or the intersection of race and gender in their descriptions of their experiences.

Findings indicated that all the principals in this study intersected race and gender in their descriptions of themselves in their administrator roles without any prompting from the researcher. Three related themes emerged from the analysis of their role descriptions: (a) assertions of their own constructions of self while countering and resisting other’s constructions of them as African American females or males, (b)
expressions of confidence in their abilities to overcome barriers they encountered as African American females or males, (c) their understandings of and responsibilities toward African American children, which emanated from the principal’s own experiences relating to race, gender, and, in some cases, socioeconomic status (Pollard, 1997).

Randolph (1997) conducted a historical and qualitative analysis of a northern urban de facto segregated school located in Columbus, Ohio. The school, Champion Avenue School, was built and made into an all-Black school because it was in the heart of a growing Black community. The author focused on three primary factors: the context in which the school was situated, its historical and present-day leadership, and the past and present teachers of Champion. Randolph (1997) stated that

The racial segregation at Champion was de facto, but it accomplished the purposes of placing Black students and Black teachers together. Leadership, in the persons of the school's early principals, made it a significant force in its impoverished community. Profiles of the school's principals from its founding in 1910 through desegregation show the essential role they played. Without the support of an exemplary teaching staff, however, Champion Avenue School could never have been the community force it has been. (p. 3)

The school founding faculty was all Black, by 1997 the school had a White majority teaching staff. The school's teaching legacy is preserved by some dedicated and caring faculty members who focus on the needs of the urban child, and who recognize the role of the school in the Black community (Randolph, 1997).

Findings from Ward’s (1997) study indicated that African American principals played an important role in the legacy of Champion Avenue School since its opening in
1910. The legacy of Champion was that Black children learned there and continued to learn within the urban context. The principal and the staff did not accept any excuses from their students for not learning. Neither the principal, teachers, or parents expected or accepted failure as the norm. In essence, they provided the children with tools to transcend their reality Randolph (1997). They educated them to be worthwhile and productive citizens. Even though the school was created because of the fears of miscegenation and the desire for racial isolation, it was accomplished through the political process in the urban setting of Columbus, Ohio. Randolph (1997) noted that,

While the context and the elite power structure circumscribed the circumstances of learning for Black teachers and students, they were unable to circumvent learning in the all-Black school. Champion has a legacy because of its principals, and teachers. Leadership in urban schools, particularly predominately minority schools, must understand that it is the responsibility of strong leadership to represent the common good-not only because it is right, but because the despair of the weak in the end threatens the stability of the whole (Clark, 1965, 152).

Mitchell, and subsequent principals of Champion, particularly those who taught under him, understood that through their leadership, the economically poor students they taught could succeed. With the support and contributions of the staff and the community, they were able to create something good at Champion. (p. 24)

Morris (1999) conducted an in-depth qualitative study at Fairmont Elementary School in St. Louis, Missouri, from 1994 to 1997. Morris examined the significance of how one all-Black elementary school created and sustained strong communal bonds with Black families from a low-income community. According to Morris (1999), Fairmont
Elementary was reminiscent of the goodness of many all-Black schools before Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954) and sustained strong communal bonds with families and was a stabilizing force for the community. Morris conducted in-depth interviews with residents, business owners, community activists, the principal, the instructional coordinator, two secretaries, nine teachers, and 12 sets of parents. Morris’s findings suggested that Fairmont Elementary sustained strong communal bonds with families and was a stabilizing force for the community. Morris stated that:

The message gleaned from this study of Fairmont Elementary School is that the “goodness” of a school for Black families and students may also be defined by the strength and the nature of that school’s communal bonds with Black families and communities. (p. 584)

Henig, Hula, Orr, and Pedescleaux (1999) examined four urban school districts in Atlanta, Georgia; Detroit, Michigan; Washington, DC; and Baltimore, Maryland, and inquired why the Black leadership of these systems failed to produce significant educational reform. They assembled teams of researchers and deployed them in the following 11 cities: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, San Francisco, and Washington, DC where they collected documentary information and interviewed three groups of respondents: general influential, community-based representatives, and education specialists. The authors did a comparison of the cities in the study concentrating on two issues: (a) comparing the four Black-led cities with the remaining seven cities and (b) comparing the four Black-led cities with each other according to their variation in class composition. Findings indicated that the prospects for school reform in urban areas were not as successful for several
reasons, including the complications resulting from the leading role given the fact that race is a “confounding influence in civic capacity” (Henig et al., p. 291).

Lyman (2000) conducted an in-depth quantitative case study of Kenneth Hinton, a Black male principal of an early childhood education center located in a low-income, racially and ethnically diverse city in the Midwest. Lyman investigated Hinton’s caring leadership and analyzed his contributions to the school environment. The framework for the study was based on four perspectives of caring: (a) caring both gives purpose and is purpose; (b) caring is an ethical orientation; (c) caring is a relational process involving engrossment, action, and reciprocity; and (d) caring leaders make a difference. Hinton’s leadership style is similar to certain aspects of Lomotey’s (1993) ethno-humanist role identity. The only difference is that in Hinton’s ethno-humanist role he focused his caring leadership on all students regardless of racial and ethnic groups. Lomotey’s (1993) principals specifically focused on African American students in all Black schools. Lyman’s (2000) findings suggested that, African American principals who led diverse schools, were successfully able to meet the needs of students, teachers, and parents from all racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Gooden (2005) conducted a qualitative case study on the challenges and triumphs of Thomas Grant, a Black male secondary principal who used a culture-specific leadership style in his quest to raise the standards at an information technology high school. This case study of the principal explored his combining of the elements of traditional notions of leadership with the nontraditional notions of an ethno-humanist role to create a style that complemented the changing climate in a newly restructured urban school.
The study was conducted at Lincoln High School located in an urban neighborhood in the midwestern part of the United States. The neighborhood had been predominantly African American for nearly 60 years, and most of the students came from public housing in the area that was constructed for soldiers returning from World War II (Gooden, 2005). The neighborhood surrounding the school had struggled with drug dealing, drug use, and violence. As a result, it was one of the high crime areas in the city. Gooden (2005) chose the case study approach to understand the principal’s perceptions of his leadership styles and to understand the connections between his perceptions and what actually occurred in the school.

Gooden (2005) interviewed a total of five participants for his case study. They were, (a) the principal of the school, (b) an assistant principal, (c) the senior institute manager, (d) the standards in practice (SIP) coach-teacher, and (e) another teacher. He spent approximately 60 hours observing the participants and studying the school’s environment and collecting field notes. Most of these hours were spent observing the principal in various contexts. Gooden (2005) observed the principal conducting meetings with students, teachers, staff members, his leadership team, parents, and the area superintendent. Gooden’s research is noteworthy because his findings indicated that the principal demonstrated aspects of the bureaucrat-administrator and the ethno-humanist in his leadership style. There appeared to be a blending between these two aspects, with the ethno-humanist clearly providing the foundation of his leadership style.

Brooks and Jean-Marie (2007) examined how race and race relations influence school leadership practice. They conducted an ethnographic study in a high-poverty, African American, urban high school in the Southeastern USA. The study took place over
the course of two academic years (henceforth referred to as the pseudonym DuBois High School). The researchers selected the site because the instructional and administrative staff was divided racially, in a phenotypic sense. The school had 79 teachers, one principal, three assistant principals, one academic dean, and 12 educational specialists to serve approximately 1,300 children in grades 9-12. The district reported that the student population was 85% Black and 12% White (with 3% listed as other). The teaching staff was split almost equally: 37 White, 39 Black. Two teachers identified themselves as Hispanic and one teacher self-described as Arab (Brooks & Jean-Marie, 2007).

The authors used an anthropological conceptual framework called a *moiety*, through which the school’s leadership culture was conceived as two distinct racial leadership subcultures, one Black and one White (Brooks & Jean-Marie, 2007). The authors stated that

> The moiety technique allows for a culture to be conceived of and described as two distinct subcultures. In this case, the over-arching unit of cultural analysis was the school’s culture, and given the unique demographics of the setting, the two subcultures were comprised of “Black” leaders and “White” leaders. Research on moieties suggests certain ways that such subcultures interact, and these concepts also guided our analysis. (p. 758)

According to the authors, there was a Black leadership subculture at DuBois High School. The Black leadership at the school included the principal, assistant principal for curriculum, dean of students, athletic director, several department chairs, and some teacher leaders They suggest that these school leaders had behavioral and attitudinal
expectations of themselves and of other subculture members. Analysis of their data suggested three themes that collectively characterized these dynamics:

1. respect for differentiated gender roles among Black school leaders,
2. a need to serve students and the community as role models and advocates,
3. a fear that the predominantly White district leadership, and White leaders within the school, were not committed to Black students (Brooks & Jean-Marie, 2007).

There was also a White leadership subculture at DuBois High School. The White school leaders included the assistant principal for facilities, assistant principal for attendance and discipline, an academic magnet program coordinator, a few department chairs, and several veteran teacher leaders had a distinctly different set of cultural values than Black school leaders (Brooks & Jean-Marie, 2007). Data collected while exploring members’ behaviors and attitudes among the school’s White leadership subculture suggested the following themes:

1. respect for, and deference to, a patriarchal, male-dominated vision of leadership,
2. a paradoxical sense that institutional rewards, and student achievement, were based on merit and the influence of a preferential good ol’ boys’ network, and
3. a belief that the values and attitudes of Black students and their families would ultimately prevent many of them from finding success in school or in life (Brooks & Jean-Marie, 2007).

Brooks and Jean-Marie (2007) concluded in their study that “the members of each of these leadership subcultures conceived of and enacted leadership in a different manner.
Members of each subculture interacted with one another in a manner consistent with anthropological inquiry focused on moiety cultures” (p. 756).

Patterson, Niles, Carlson, and Kelley, (2008) conducted a qualitative case study in Parsons, Kansas during the 2004-2005 school year. The authors examined the legacy of segregation and desegregation in Parsons, Kansas and its relationship to the racial achievement gap. The research team interviewed a total of 76 adults and children representing a multiracial group of participants. According to the authors, the interviewees participated in either a personal interview or a focus group. They purposefully sampled key informants to participate in their interviews, with consideration given to participants’ gender, socioeconomic status, race, and longevity in the community (Patterson et al., 2008). One-third of the participants were Black, and the other two-thirds were White. Key informants included members of the Board of Education, school personnel, and members of Parsons’ racial majority and minority communities who were not district employees (Patterson et al., 2008). The researchers conducted focus groups with school employees (principals, teachers, and paraprofessionals), students, and parents. They also collected and analyzed student achievement data, brochures, and other school and community documents, and observed the schools and community in field notes.

The authors analyzed the data collected using the constant comparative method (Merriam, 1998). Every interview and focus group was audio-recorded and then transcribed verbatim. They independently reviewed each transcript and looked for patterns in the data and identified categories that were common across transcripts. They developed a coding system to label each piece of data and then examined for
relationships across the codes to identify the findings. The researchers were able to compare their findings with the observations and document the data (Patterson et al., 2008).

The authors concluded that Parsons was a community where the White power structure was in denial that racial tensions existed, and they did not see race as an issue confronting the town. The Whites who were interviewed did not understand why Blacks were still angry over the closing of Douglass School after 50 years. In fact, most Whites did not see race as an issue, they believed Blacks failed to take advantage of the opportunities they had available to them and that were equally available to all in Parsons. In contrast, the Black study participants told a different story. They experienced ongoing discrimination as it concerned housing, opportunities for promotion, and racial stereotypes, which they believed harmed their children who were attending Parsons public schools. The closing of Douglass School almost 50 years ago had remained an open wound (Patterson et al., 2008).

Horsford (2010) examined the perspectives of superintendents who attended all-Black segregated schools and studied how their lived experiences informed their views on desegregation policy, programs, and practices. Horsford conducted an empirical, qualitative study and used critical race theory as a methodological and analytical framework for collecting and interpreting participant narratives that were acquired through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. She also studied their biographical documents and artifacts. Horsford’s study is significant because her findings indicated counter stories to (a) the inferior all-Black school, (b) equal education access and opportunity, and (c) integration, diversity, and inclusion, with implications for the
perceived viability of school desegregation in the post-*Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) era. Collectively, they reflected what one superintendent described as “mixed feelings” about school desegregation (p. 302). The author concluded with implications for educational policy and practice to include support for racial literacy in educational leadership and policy and recommendations for promoting a proper education no matter the school context, separate or mixed.

**Factors That Inhibit Black Males from Perusing the Principalship**

The literature suggests that there are several reasons for the low percentage of Black male educators. According to Toldson (2013), Black males are less likely to graduate from a college or university. Additionally, Black male students are less likely to major in education. The number of bachelor’s degrees conferred to Black students between the academic years 2002–2003 and 2012–2013 increased by 54% from 124,000 to 191,000. The share of all bachelor’s degrees conferred to U.S. residents earned by Black students increased from 10% to 11% (Toldson, 2013). Black females earned 65% of bachelor’s degrees compared to 35% for Black males in the academic year 2012–2013. In 2009, 25,725 Black females graduated from a college with a degree in education compared to 7,603 Black males. Less than 24% of Black men with a degree in education choose a career in teaching in the nation’s K-12 schools (Toldson, 2013). Nearly half of all the bachelor’s degrees conferred to Blacks in 2012–2013 were in the following five fields: business (22 %), health professions and related programs (12 %), social sciences and history (9 %), and psychology (67%). Homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighting were in the fifth largest field of which no data were available (NCES, 2016).
In the 20th century, recruiting teachers to become principals was relatively easy because they saw administration as the next step to a mid-level career advancement (Fullan, 1997; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998; Winter & Dunaway, 1997). Teachers do not see the career path of administration as a way to improve their salaries, status, or respect among other colleagues (Educational Research Service, 2000; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Seyfarth, 1999). There are many teachers who are highly qualified, competent, and talented, yet they do not consider careers in the principalship because they are not interested in sitting in an office all day, aggravating or observing teachers, disciplining students, working with disgruntled parents, or dealing with central office administrative paperwork. All these activities are frequently associated with the stereotypical role of the school administrator (Rebore, 2001; Renihan, 1999).

There are additional reasons for African American males not achieving or attaining the principal position; however, the following have been listed throughout the literature, according to Sanchez, Thornton, and Usinger (2008):

1. Lower career aspirations result if minorities perceive that the values of the educational system are ignoring or conflicting with their community.

2. High percentages of Black major in education, but their aspirations are not encouraged by the educational environment.

3. Black need more support for aspirations but often receive less.

4. Black aspiring for the principalship face conscious or unconscious resistance from the educational system.

5. Few role models and mentors exist.

6. Negative stereotypes continue.
7. There is a lack of research on Black principals and their career aspirations.

**Motivating Factors That Increased Black Male Principalship**

According to Barton (2011), several studies have been conducted with the purpose of ascertaining why teachers choose to leave the classroom and aspire to become principals. There are several motivating factors that some researchers found in which they referred to as encouraging factors (Adams & Hambright, 2004; Cooley & Shen, 1999) while others studied motivations (Bass, 2006; Hancock & Bird, 2006; Howley, Adrianaivo, & Perry, 2005; Malone, Sharp, & Walter, 2001). Expanding on the work of Marsh (1990), Sinclair, Dowson, and McInerney (2006), argued that motivation itself could be categorized as internal or external – internal or intrinsic motivation refers to personal things inside oneself (values, beliefs), and external or extrinsic motivation referring to factors outside of oneself (altruism, calling). Cooley and Shen (1999) surveyed 189 educational leadership master's students on key factors they would consider in making the decision to apply for an administrative job. Among the top 10 factors were: money, location, reputation of the superintendent, and community support.

In 2006, Bass conducted a national study in 28 states on what motivated students to become principals. He asked 860 students who were enrolled in principal preparation programs what would motivate them to become school leaders. Their responses included the chance to make a difference, an opportunity to have an impact, a personal challenge, the drive to initiate change, and salary. In 2005, Howley et al. conducted a study comparing the perceptions of 435 teachers who held administrative licenses to 433 teachers who did not. The study compared incentives and disincentives to becoming a principal, as well as the opportunities and challenges of leading a school. The factors that
teachers anticipated would be satisfying were: making a difference, affecting more children, implementing creative ideas, having a greater impact, and making more money.

In 1987, Lomotey, argued that Black educators who wanted to become principals had a strong commitment to Black students’ education and a deep understanding of, and compassion for, those students. Coker (2003) examined the external factors that affect the lives of Black educators where he argued that many are motivated to become administrators due to racism, sexism, and marginalization.

**Strategies for recruiting and retaining Black male teachers.** The recruitment of Black males into principalship positions begins with examining the shortage of Black male teachers (Richardson, 2014). According to Normore (2004), school districts must identify, recruit, prepare, mentor future school leaders, and create opportunities for future leadership roles. Developing partnerships with universities that have strong teacher and principal preparation programs is key for urban school districts as they seek to recruit, retain, and mentor future Black male principals (Richardson, 2014).

There are programs across the country that play a crucial role in recruitment, development, and support of Black male teachers. First, *Call Me MISTER* (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models), began in 2000 at Clemson University. The program recruits’ students from economically disadvantaged and at-risk communities. The project provides an academic support system to help assure student success, a cohort system for social and cultural support, and assistance with job placement (Clemson, 2016). Second, the Boston Public Schools initiated the Male Educators of Color Executive Coaching Program. This program was created to address the challenges that teachers of color face when entering the field of education. The
program is in its second year (Boston Public Schools, 2018). Third, is the Honoré Center for Undergraduate Achievement program. This initiative is an intensive new program that gives full scholarships to young Black men who show promise despite challenging transcripts. Participants in the program are known as Honoré Men and are studying to become teachers. The program’s founders of The Honoré Center for Undergraduate Student Achievement (Southern University of New Orleans, 2018) believe that, “Promising young men who grew up in tough circumstances are uniquely equipped to connect in classrooms with youth facing similar challenges” (p. 1). Fourth, in 2009, the Thurgood Marshall College Fund supported the Teacher Quality and Retention Program (TQRP). This program has provided training and mentoring to future teachers from publicly-supported Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) across the country. Every Summer TQRP offers a 2-week seminar that focuses on HBCU Males, STEM, and New Teachers (Thurgood Marshall College Fund, 2018).

Fifth, National Education Association (NEA) created a student program that promotes minority teacher recruitment through its Community Learning through America's Schools (CLASS) Program. CLASS projects are designed by their local NEA K-12 or higher education affiliates, or NEA-Retired members (NEA, 2018). Seventh, the NYC Men Teach initiative was created to recruit male educators of color to teach in New York City Public Schools (Sanders, 2018). In order to address the shortage of African American male principals, school districts leaders need to explore nontraditional ways of recruiting quality male candidates of color (Richardson, 2014). School districts’ administrators must develop initiatives that would attract African American male teachers to pursue study in principal training programs (Reynolds, 1995).
Strategies to Recruit, Retain, and Increase African American Male Principals

The pool of Black male principalship applicants is limited and begins with the ostensible lack of minority candidates (Lomotey, 1993; Young & Brooks, 2008). As the Black population increases in school districts across the country, the demographics of the educators in principalship positions have failed to reflect the student population and continue to remain majority White (Hozien, 2016). The significant shortage of Black teachers will limit the number of potential Black male principals. Failure to recognize and encourage such teachers to consider school leadership will have serious implications for school districts across the country as they experience cultural, ethnic, and racial student population shifts (Murray et al., 1993).

Strategies for recruiting Black male principals. Brown (2005) argued that interest in becoming an educational administrator begins with the attraction to the field at the K–12 level. Black students must first enter their postsecondary education with the intent of becoming an educator. Tillman (2004b, 2007) argues that Black educators are the most valuable resource in the struggle to educate children of color, as they were prior to desegregation of public schooling. She defined three important areas vital in creating and sustaining valued Black leaders in the pipeline: (a) recruiting, selecting, and training; (b) mentoring Blacks for the principalship; and (c) retaining Black principals.

The lack of Black males in educational leadership programs reflects the unintended consequences of, the struggles that Blacks have endured in education since Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954, 1955). Educational equality and equity were not core goals of the public education system. Despite the decision of Brown v. Board of Educ.
and concerted attempts to create equality, the achievement gap between racial and ethnic
groups and their White counterparts is still present today (NCES, 2017b).

Aspiring Black educators should be encouraged to participate in programs or
principal’s leadership academies, to increase their competitiveness in the job market
(Brown, 2005). As public school districts across the country become more diverse, it is
critical to have and support recruitment and retention practices in order to increase the
pool of Black candidates (Jackson, 2007). Many potential candidates for leadership
positions in our schools lack the resources to attend graduate school. Black educators
who aspire to the principal position are also burdened by student loans or other types of
debt, as well as family obligations, that present possible roadblocks to their aspirations.
(Sanchez et al., 2008). However, there are leadership preparation programs that have
taken proactive measures to support able and willing participants (Sanchez et al., 2008).
Programs that have proven successful in promoting diversity within public education
have a strong foundation and a clear vision for student success. These programs of higher
education often use, (a) problem-based learning, (b) cohorts, (c) collaborative
partnerships, (d) field experiences, and (e) technology to give students the skills to be
successful in a career in educational administration.

There are several programs throughout the country that prepare, recruit, and retain
aspiring principals for urban school districts. In 2002, New York City initiated the
Aspiring Principals Program (APP). This program was a nationally-recognized,
standards-based program that used experiential learning methods to develop the real-
world skills necessary for effective school leadership (New York City Leadership
Academy, 2017). According to the aspiring principals program model, “The program
helps aspiring leaders become change agents who can inspire teachers and foster educational equity” (p. 1). Since its inception the program has graduated more than 500 principals. The Aspiring Principals Program has been adopted by other states including, Arizona, Rhode Island, Delaware, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Minnesota. Components of the program have been modified by other districts including the District of Columbia Public Schools. The New York City Leadership Academy uses an intentional design and delivery approach that was enhanced to match local context. In 2016, the NYC Leadership Academy closed its doors and no longer recruits aspiring principals for NYC Public Schools (New York City Leadership Academy, 2017).

In 2013, the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) initiated, The Mary Jane Patterson Fellowship, named after the first Black principal in DCPS. Mary Jane Patterson was the principal of the historic Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School, the first Black high school in the country. The fellowship is an internal leadership pipeline created to recruit and retain principals in DCPS. According to the School Leader Professional Development (District of Columbia Public Schools, 2018) article “The Patterson Fellowship has been cited by the Wallace Foundation and the Fordham Institute for its innovative approach” (p. 1). In 2001, New Leaders for New Schools initiated their first Aspiring Principals program with a cohort of 14 students. The program has prepared more than 3,200 educational leaders in more than 30 cities nationwide. Most New Leaders alumni worked in urban school districts with high need students: 78% of students served were low-income; 87% were minority children (New Leaders, 2018).

These programs have helped to recruit aspiring principals in both NYC and Washington, DC, yet none of them specifically recruited Black male principal candidates.
In order to address the precipitous decline of Black male principals, school district leaders need to examine research-based strategies to retain quality male principals of color. School districts administrators must develop initiatives that would keep Black male principals in their districts.

**Strategies for retaining Black male principals.** Retention of experienced principals in school districts across the country is a significant concern due to the shrinking pool of qualified candidates and those who move into principalship positions in schools are coming with less experience (Bloom, Castagna, & Warren, 2003). In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics released a report that said 12% of the nation’s 118,400 principals (approximately 1,421) leave the profession, while 6% move to other schools. Consequently, vacancies are filled by inexperienced principals who are new to the field or new to the school (Sapienza, 2013). According to the National Association of Secondary School Principals there is a shortage of qualified principal candidates. They argue that as principals retire or leave the profession for different reasons, assistant principals and qualified teachers are not interested in becoming a principal (NASSP, 2018). Recruiting and retaining outstanding principals during this era of high stakes exams, drive to increase graduation rates, and added responsibilities, new principals have a difficult time adapting to the overwhelming challenges facing school leaders (Daly & Chrispeels, 2008).

In 2009, Fuller and Young examined the principal tenure and retention rates of newly hired principals in Texas public schools from 1996 through 2008. The Texas High School Project’s Education Leadership initiative was a study that was jointly supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Wallace Foundation and was
conducted in partnership with the Texas Education Agency. This study was initiated and established in recognition of the critical role quality principals and teachers play in the success of new school reform efforts.

The report provided basic information regarding the actual length of tenure and retention rates of newly hired principals. The study examined relationships between personal and school characteristics and the tenure and retention of principals. In their report of the results from this study suggest seven major findings:

1. Principal tenure and retention rates vary dramatically across school levels, with elementary schools having the longest tenure and greatest retention rates and high schools having the shortest tenure and lowest retention rates.

2. High school retention rates are strikingly low for all schools—just over 50% of newly hired principals stay for 3 years and less than 30% stay for 5 years.

3. Principal retention rates are heavily influenced by the level of student achievement in the principal’s first year of employment, with principals in the lowest achieving schools having the shortest tenure and lowest retention rates and the high achieving schools having the longest tenure and highest retention rates.

4. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students in a school also has a strong influence on principal tenure and retention rates, with principals in high-poverty schools having shorter tenure and lower retention rates than principals in low-poverty schools.
5. Principal retention is somewhat lower in schools in rural and small-town districts and somewhat greater in suburban districts whose students tend to be White and not economically disadvantaged.

6. The personal characteristics of principals such as age, race, and gender appear to have only a small impact on principal retention rates.

7. Certification test results appear to have little impact on principal retention rates.

First, principal and teacher retention are inextricably linked. Schools with low principal retention rates tend to have low levels of teacher retention. Research has shown that low principal and teacher retention can have serious negative financial and educational impacts on schools (Fuller, Young, & Baker, 2007; Levy, Fields, & Jablonski, 2006). Second, any school reform initiative is directly linked to the efforts of a principal to collaboratively create a shared school vision and mission that focuses on implementing the reform effort over multiple years (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Heck & Hallinger, 1999; Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). Creating and implementing a shared vision and mission and thoroughly incorporating a school-wide reform strategic plan into the culture of a school takes a sustained effort. Such efforts and plans are clearly derailed with the turnover of a principal. Research has shown that principals must be in place 5 years for the full implementation of a large-scale school turn-around effort (Fullan, 1991; McAdams, 1997).

Third, the loss of teachers and principals is a financial loss to a school district. When a school district loses a principal, they must spend resources on recruiting, hiring, and training a new principal. The district’s investment in building the capacity of the
principal is also lost. This cost is associated with greater teacher turnover and produces lower student achievement (Fuller et al., 2007).

This study by Fuller and Young which examined the principal tenure and retention rates of newly hired principals in Texas public schools from 1996 through 2008 is significant and one of the few studies that researched tenure on the average number of years of newly hired principals. According to researchers, the average tenure for new principals from 1996-2008 was 4.96 years for elementary school principals, 4.48 years for middle school principals, and 3.83 years for high school principals. This shows that the length of tenure decreased as the school level increased (Fuller & Young, 2009).

To address the dearth of Black male principals, principal preparation programs and school districts leaders should incorporate principal mentorship programs in their district and examine nontraditional methods of increasing the tenure of Black male principals and retaining quality male candidates of color (Richardson, 2014).

**Role model theory.** The role model theory (RMT) has been extensively used as a hiring practice to place Blacks in various organizations to remedy structural inequities with regards to race, class, gender, educational, and employment opportunities (Lomotey, 1987; Nesmith, 2013; Stewart, Meier, & England, 1989). Both before and after *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954), Black principals have served as positive role models for Black students (Irvine, 1989, 1990; Nesmith, 2013; Siddle Walker, 2000; Tillman, 2004a, 2004b, 2008). Black educators have long served as role models. Savage (2001) stated that “the work of Black educators is historically and culturally significant” (p. 173). The tradition of Black school leadership excellence coupled with an agenda for the education of Blacks students date back to the 1860s (Anderson, 1988; Foster, 1997; Franklin, 1990;
Pollard, 1997; Savage, 2001; Siddle Walker, 2000; Watkins, 2001). Henig et al. (1999) noted that “by the second half of the twentieth century, Black teachers and principals were important role models and respected leaders in their communities. They also comprised a significant proportion of the African American community’s middle-class” (p. 44).

Many Black principals were demoted, reassigned, and systematically decimated during integration, which lead to a dearth of role models for Black children (Karpinski, 2006). Consequently, many educators, politicians, religious, and Black leaders have called for an increase of Black administrators and teachers to serve as role models based on the shared connections of race and culture (Irvine, 1989; Lomotey, 1987, 1989; Nesmith, 2013; Stewart et al., 1989; Tillman, 2004b).

Stewart et al. (1989) examined Black teacher representation in urban school districts from 1968-1986 after their decimation during integration. Findings from their research showed that a significant shortage existed in the employment of Black teachers in proportion to the population of Black students. They highly recommended that school districts strongly increase the number of Black teachers to serve as positive role models for Black students. In addition, Stewart et al. (1999) suggested that Black teachers have similar cultural connections which were essential for the academic improvement of Black students. They stated:

A Black teacher serves as a role model for Black students, thereby exposing Black students to other Black individuals who have been successful. The impact of Black teachers as role models has been even recognized by the courts as important to the education of Black students . . . Since a Black teacher shares
racial experiences with the Black student, including experience as a Black student, a Black teacher is more likely to be supportive of a Black student who has trouble in class. (p. 143)

Findings from their study suggested that the presence of Black administrators within a district had the greatest influence on the recruitment and increased representation of Black teachers. Black administrators also served as positive role models for Black teachers. School districts that recruit and retain Black administrators would also benefit from the increased presence of Black teachers (Nesmith, 2013).

Lomotey’s (1989) research examined the significance of African American principals in the educational success of African American students. Lomotey sought to determine how the leadership styles of African American principals impacted the academic achievement of Black students. The study was conducted with three African American elementary principals who worked in predominately African American schools. Lomotey (1999) looked at “more successful African American schools” those that “possess the qualities suggested by the research on principal leadership and academic achievement” (p. 6). The schools in Lomotey’s study were "more successful" than other African American schools because the third and fourth grade students performed higher on the California State Assessment over a 2-year period. A key question guided the research: "What kind of leadership do African American principals exhibit in more successful African American elementary schools?" (p. 6).

Findings from the interviews with teachers and principals and from observations of the principals in their work environment indicated that teacher perceptions of the principal were in line with how they implemented the four components of principal
leadership. These components included: (a) developing goals, (b) harnessing the energy of the staff, (c) facilitating communication, and (d) being involved in instructional management. The most significant finding in Lomotey’s (1989) study was that each principal demonstrated a "commitment to the education of African American children, a compassion for, and understanding of, their students and the communities in which they work, and a confidence in the ability of all African American children to learn" (p. 131).

In an article entitled, *Cultural Diversity in the School: Implications for Principals*, Lomotey (1989) noted that:

Minority students need role models. More minorities are needed among the ranks of administrators and within the classrooms of America, not fewer. Caucasian teachers cannot initiate the efforts for Black students to see themselves in the curriculum; they must learn from Blacks. (p. 86)

According to Nesmith (2013), Lomotey argued that vast racial, gender, and educational inequities still exist throughout the nation’s schools and in society. In addition, cultural diversity does not preclude students from embellishing their own culture while engaging in new experiences (Nesmith, 2013).

**Role models are not mentors.** Clutterbuck and Megginson (1999) argued that mentoring encourages self-actualization and growth and is laser beam focused on developing the whole person, rather than training in particular skills. Smith (2007) stated that “Mentoring can thus be described as a particular mode of learning wherein the mentor not only supports the mentee, but also challenges them productively so that progress is made” (p. 277). Smith summarized the following roles of a mentor: advisor, asks questions, catalyst/enabler, challenges productively, critical friend, encourages risk-
taking, guide, helps identify goals, listener, offers encouragement, sounding board, promotes independence, provides feedback, supporter, and shares critical knowledge. The mentor and mentee can benefit from these relationships in terms of increased satisfaction, knowledge, and wisdom to effectively lead a school (Talley & Henry, 2008).

Irvine (1989) interviewed over 50 high and low ability Black high school seniors about their role models. After analyzing the data, two distinct groups of responses surfaced. The high achieving students most often mentioned a family member (parent, aunt, uncle, or older sibling) or a nationally recognized civil rights activist, politician, or writer. The low-achieving students also mentioned family members but substituted entertainers and sports figures for the national civil rights activists, politicians, and writers. Irvine (1989) argued that Black students' role models were either familial role models or celebrity role models. She suggested that familial role models were persons who had long-term intimate, family/kinship relationships with Black students and who advocated, supported, and protected them. Role models who are celebrities are generally revered and recognized by the larger society as powerful, and prestigious. For this reason, Irvine argued that not just Black, but all administrators and educators should be mentors as opposed to role models. She noted:

What seems to be a more appropriate and needed role for Black teachers is that of mentors. Role modeling and mentoring are different. Mentors are always role models, but role models are not always mentors, as in the case of celebrity role models. Mentors are advocate teachers who help Black students manipulate the school's culture, which is often contradictory and antithetical to their own. They serve as the voice for Black students when communicating with fellow teachers
and administrators; when providing information about opportunities for
advancement and enrichment; and when serving as counselors, advisors, and
parent figures. (p. 53)

Delgado (1995) reinforced Irvine’s (1989) theory that Black principals and
teachers should be mentors instead of role models in his explanation of role model theory
(RMT). Delgado (1995) argued that the purpose of RMT as an aspect of affirmative
action was created by the majority group to remediate structural inequities that would
ultimately help society move forward. Essentially, Whites enthusiastically support RMT
because they are the primary group that will benefit most, not the actual minority (Black)
role model. He further argued:

A White-dominated institution hires you not because you are entitled to or
deserve the job. Nor is the institution seeking to set things straight because your
ancestors and others of your heritage were systematically excluded from such
jobs. Not at all. You're hired (if you speak politely, have a neat haircut, and,
above all, can be trusted) not because of your accomplishments, but because of
what others think you will do for them. If they hire you now and you are a good
role model, things will be better in the next generation. (Delgado, 1995, p. 357)

Delgado (1995) offered five reasons why minorities should assume the role of
mentor instead of being a role model. First, Delgado (1995) argued that being a role
model is a tough job that requires the person chosen must uplift their entire race, be a
savior, and a symbol of hope. This responsibility is a heavy load to carry and is an unfair
job assignment for minority role models. His second reason was that the job treats you as
a means to an end. The work of minority role models ultimately serves the majority’s
means and purposes. Delgado (1995) suggested, in the future, that minorities would become the majority and Caucasians would cease to be the largest segment of the nation’s population. Consequently, aging Whites would need trained minority role models to mold the minds of younger minorities to ensure that their social security was not jeopardized by a weak labor market. Delgado (1995) stated that minorities “must be taught to ask few questions, pay their taxes, and accept social obligations, even if imposed by persons who look different from them and who committed documented injustices on their ancestors” (p. 359). Blacks who serve as role models are placed in a difficult position with people in their own race if they are seen as fulfilling tasks that benefit the White majority (Delgado, 1995).

Third. the role model's job description is ambiguous and not clear. Delgado (1995) stated:

If you are a role model, are you expected to do the same things your White counterpart does, in addition to counseling and helping out the community of color when something comes up? Just the latter? Half and half? Both? On your own time, or on company time? No supporter of the role model argument has ever offered satisfactory answers to these questions. (p. 357)

Fourth. to be a good role model, you must be able to fit into the majority’s image. You can never have your own ideas, be a cultural or economic nationalist, separatist, radical reformer, or anything remotely resembling any of these (Delgado, 1995). He noted:

Our White friends always want us to model behavior that will encourage our students and proteges to adopt majoritarian social mores; you never hear of them
hiring one of their number because he or she is bilingual, wears dashikis, or is in other ways like us. (Delgado, 1995, p. 358)

The fifth and most significant reason, Delgado emphasized that the job of role model requires that you lie and tell minority students that they can be successful when those opportunities may not be available. Minority role models are viewed as saviors and represent hope for minority students when in reality, that is not always true (Delgado, 1995).

Based upon the review of research on the recruitment and retention of Black male principals there are a limited number of studies that focused on the recruitment and retention of Black male principals. The study conducted by Richardson (2014) was the only study found after an exhaustive search that is somewhat similar to this study. Richardson’s research served as an anchor for this study. The gaps in the literature according to the literature review are specifically the following:

1. Most studies focus on the recruitment and retention of Black male teachers.
2. The creation of pipeline programs for Black male teachers.
3. Recruitment and retention strategies and programs are not geared specifically toward Black male principals but all principals.
4. There are a limited number of studies focusing specifically on the recruitment and retention of Black male principals.

Chapter Summary

The first part of this literature review examined the historical timeline of Black principals pre-and post-

Brown v. Board of Educ. (1954) and the leadership challenges they faced during segregation and after desegregation. The second part of this literature
review focused on the factors that inhibit Black male educators from becoming and remaining principals. Additionally, the third part of this literature review focused on motivating factors for principal recruitment and retention. However, there is limited knowledge of current research on the recruitment and retention of Black male principals, even more limited are the purposeful studies of the Black male principals’ voices and experiences and what they can contribute to improve the dearth of Black male educators (Richardson, 2014). The fourth part of this literature review focused on strategies to recruit, retain, and increase the low percentage of African American male principals post-
Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and how it can be utilized to inform both research questions (Brown, 2005; Jackson, 2007; Richardson, 2014; Tillman, 2007).

This chapter delineated from a pipeline perspective, how the shortage of Black principals can be directly linked to several factors including shortages of Black teachers who will enter the leadership pipeline, a lack of mentoring of Black teachers for leadership positions, recruitment and retention of Blacks into leadership preparation programs, and the preparation and appointment of Black principals (Foster, 2004). The lack of sufficient numbers of Black principals in public schools across the country today can be attributed to both the historical occurrence (and progress), and to a cultural mismatch in the intent and communication systems often used by school districts to employ Black school principals (Foster, 2004). Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology for the study.
Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

General Perspective

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore Black male principals’ perspectives on the teacher-to-principal pipeline recruitment process and the best strategies to retain current Black male principals given the declining trend in the number of Black principals. The U.S. Department of Education (2016) revealed the lack of diversity trends of K-12 school educators and reviewed the teacher pipeline from enrollment in college and university educational programs to career entry into the teaching workforce. According to the report, 49% of all public school children are students of color, yet 82% of public school teachers are White, 8% are Black, and 9% of all teachers are Hispanic. The report also showed that even though Black and Hispanic teachers made up 8% and 9% respectively of the teacher workforce in 2014, there was not an even representation across geographic regions. In inner city areas, 12% of the teaching force was Black, and 13% was Hispanic. In rural areas, Black and Hispanic teachers made up 6% and 5% respectively of all teachers (NCES, 2016). Although the total number of Black teachers across the country is 8% less than 2% of the total teaching force are Black males (NCES, 2016). As schools throughout the country become more diverse this study is significant and fills a gap in the research pertaining to factors that improve recruitment and retention for African American male principals and motivate more Black men to pursue becoming an educator.
In 2007-2008, 10.6% of all public school principals in the United States were Black (NCES, 2016). In 2011-2012, there were 10.1% Black public school principals, of which 4.2% were Black males (NCES, 2012). In 2015-2016, 10.6% of all principals in the United States were Black, and 3.6% were Black males (NCES, 2016). This represents a 7.5% decrease in the number of Black male principals nationally over a 4-year period between 2012 and 2016 (NCES, 2016). Over the last 10 years there has been a steady decline in the number of Black male principals (NCES, 2016). By obtaining Black male principals’ thoughts, feelings, attitudes, values, and beliefs we can better understand and address how these factors have hindered their ability to become principals.

The challenges of Black male achievement in public schools may be attributed to the lack of Black male role models in educational leadership positions. Dee (2001) wrote: “The conventional wisdom among educators is that minority students are more likely to excel educationally when matched with teachers who share their race or ethnicity” (p. 4). According to the Star Project report when students and teachers were matched according to race, there were statistically significant increases found in math and reading scores (Dee, 2001). The nation’s urban schools are becoming increasingly diverse, a trend that Dantley and Rogers (2005) referred to as the browning of the nation’s collective student body with a growing proportion of U.S. school children belonging to racial/ethnic minority groups. This research study examined the recruitment and retention process as it relates to Black male principals and sought to identify best practices and strategies to attract a greater number of African American males to diversify candidates for school leadership.
The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to explore the in-depth perceptions and experiences of Black male principals on the recruitment process from teacher to principal, as well as the retention of current Black male principals, particularly in diverse school districts. This chapter outlines the research questions, design, research context, research participants, the instruments used for data collection, and the process for data analysis and validity. A phenomenological approach, coupled with critical race theory’s counter-storytelling, addressed the following research questions:

**Research Questions**

The following research questions directed the research:

1. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted recruitment opportunities designed specifically for current Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? (Brown, 2005; Jackson, 2007; Richardson, 2000; Tillman, 2007)

2. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted retention strategies designed specifically for current Black male principals within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? (Brown, 2005, Jackson, 2007, Nesmith, 2013, Tillman, 2007)

In order to answer these research questions, a phenomenological qualitative methodology was used for this study because the researcher wanted to obtain an in-depth personal perspective regarding the thoughts of Black male principals on their personal experiences with the recruitment and retention process in their school district.
Participants were carefully selected to participate in this study because they were able to provide a greater insight into the world of Black males that serve as principals in public schools. Phenomenology centers on the lived experiences of a particular phenomenon and is used as a guide for researchers to examine participants’ experiences and hone in on an essential concept or idea (Creswell, 2014). Researchers use qualitative methods to understand the process by which events and actions take place (Maxwell, 2013). The interviews of the participants were transcribed, and the data were analyzed and coded. This allowed the researcher to discover themes or patterns in the interviews that would assist in explaining African American male principals’ perceptions of the recruitment and retention processes needed to increase and retain African American male principals in K-12 public school systems. After the interviews were completed, the researcher coded the data using open coding (Creswell, 2003) where they were analyzed based on emergent themes.

In this study, critical race theory was used as a methodological and analytical framework for collecting and interpreting participant narratives. Critical race theory is a theoretical framework that examines institutional racism and the role it plays in perpetuating social disparities between dominant and disenfranchised people of color. CRT considers many of the same challenges that traditional civil rights groups confront but views them in a broader perspective that includes education, economics, history, context, group and self-interest, as well as, feelings and the unconscious (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

The researcher used a phenomenological approach in this study to address and explore Black male principals’ perspectives and perceptions on the recruitment, and

Research Context

The researcher is currently the chair of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Principals’ Panel and has served as a principal in both New York City and in the District of Columbia public school systems. The study involved Black male principals from the two aforementioned school districts. New York City and the District of Columbia public school systems were selected given the larger preponderance of Black male principals in NYC and DC public schools.

The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) is the largest school district in the country and is located in the Northeast region of the United States (NYCDOE, 2017). There are over 1.1 million students taught in more than 1,800 separate schools. The school district chief administrator is identified as the Chancellor of Public Schools (CPS). New York City Public Schools operate under mayoral control, which extends over all five boroughs: Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, Staten Island, and the Bronx (NYCDOE, 2017). In 2003-2004, there were 76,320 teachers in New York City Public Schools; 3,600 were Black male teachers. In 2015-2016, there were 74,333 teachers in NYC and the number of Black male teachers fell to 2,750. In 11 years, the Black male teacher workforce dropped one percentage point, from 4.7% to 3.7% (The Research Alliance for New York City Schools, 2018). In 2016-2017, there were 1,619 principals in NYC Public Schools (NYCDOE, 2017). One of the difficulties in obtaining New York City principal data is that desegregated principal ethnicity data is not
available. They only provide the overall number of principals that work in NYC Public Schools.

The District of Columbia Public Schools are located in the Mid-Atlantic region of the east coast and is in the nation’s capital, Washington, DC. There are 48,855 students taught in 115 schools. The lead administrator is identified as the Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). All DCPS operate under the auspices of the mayor of Washington, DC (DCPS, 2017). The Albert Shanker Institute, a research think tank endowed by the American Federation of Teachers, released a report in 2015 stating that they saw a drop in the number of Black teachers in nine cities, including Washington, DC. According to the report, (Bond, Quintero, Casey, & Di Carlo, 2017) the largest drop of Black teachers took place in the district between 2003 and 2011. The percentage of White teachers more than doubled from 16% to 39%. Black teachers in the district dwindled from 77% to 49%. This represents a 28% decrease in the number of Black teachers in a system that has over 67% Black students (Bond et al., 2017). In 2015-2016, 16% of all principals in the District of Columbia Public schools were Black males. In 2017-2018, 12% of principals in DCPS were Black males. In 2 years, there was a four-percentage point drop of Black male principals in the District of Columbia Public Schools. Due to the limited amount of research regarding current and retired Black male principals, this researcher wanted to examine the recruitment and retention process that Black male principals experienced in two large urban school districts.

**Research Participants**

Research participants was drawn from responding Black male principals based on availability, eligibility, and distance from the researcher.
Recruitment procedures. The researcher selected interview participants based on a qualitative sampling technique known as purposeful sampling. According to Creswell (2014), purposeful sampling is a procedure in qualitative research for selecting individuals and sites to study and understand the central phenomenon. For this study, the central phenomenon examined the recruitment and retention process, which explained why there is a low percentage of Black male principals post-\textit{Brown v. Board of Educ.} (1954).

Selection criteria. The selection of each participant was guided by whether they became or served as principals in New York City and Washington, DC Public Schools between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2017. Each participant satisfied the following five criteria: (a) self-identified as Black; (b) identified as a Black male; (c) attained the principalship; (d) was a principal for at least 2 years; and (e) was willing to reflect on and share personal experiences on their school leadership, principal recruitment and retention experiences to explain the low percentages of Black male principals. If, for any reason, candidates retired, took another position, or were terminated during the process they were still eligible to participate in the study.

Prior to visiting campuses, permission to conduct this study was granted from the Internal Review Board (IRB) at St. John Fisher College (see Appendix A). The researcher obtained the names of the participants from their school district’s website, which was public information. Once the list was obtained the researcher e-mailed letters of introduction and invitation, outlining the scope and purpose of the study (see Appendix B and Appendix C). Once standing principals in New York City decided to participate, the researcher submitted a request through the NYCDOE's electronic submission
platform, IRB Manager and obtained permission to conduct research in NYC Public Schools (see Appendix D). Each participant completed the informed consent form. (See Appendix E.) The consent form asked research participants to respond and consent to questions which included: (a) agreeing for quotes to be used in the dissertation under a pseudonym, and (b) agreeing to their transcript and audiotaped interview being deposited in password protected files. All participant interviews will be stored in digital form in a secure location for a period of 3 years. Information containing personal identifiers will be protected to prevent unintentional breaches of confidentiality using a code book. To ensure anonymity, participants were referred to as P1 through P9 (Principal 1-9). Comments attributed to any participant are quoted verbatim. Codes common to most of the interviews that were significant are the key focus of the study.

**Data Collection Instruments**

**Demographic questionnaire.** The demographic questionnaire completed by all nine participants consisted of seven multiple-choice demographic questions. Participants were asked to describe themselves in relation to: (a) serving as a principal during the academic years 2009-2017, (b) their age, (c) their highest level of formal education they completed, (d) the number of years of experience they had worked as a principal, (e) their tenure-status, (f) the number of years of experience they had working as a principal at this school, and (g) the number years they spent as a classroom teacher before they became a principal (see Appendix F).

**Interview protocol.** The primary source of data collected consisted of one-on-one, in-depth, semi-structured interviews (see Table 4.1). In-depth semi-structured interviews are designed and characterized by open-ended questions using a semi-
structured framework (Seidman, 2006). This interview protocol measure was adapted from the interview protocol developed by Richardson (2014) from his dissertation. This study investigated the recruitment and retention strategies of Black male principals. For the purposes of the present study, questions 7 through 9, 11, and 13 were revised to accurately reflect this study on the recruitment and retention of Black male principals. For example, interview question 3 from Richardson’s interview protocol was revised to more accurately reflect the current study on recruitment and retention. The interview protocol was designed to ensure that the questions asked would provoke responses that would establish pertinent data related to the research questions. Permission was obtained to use the Richardson’s protocol. (See Appendix H.)

The researcher conducted in-depth personal interviews with nine Black male principals. The in-depth interviews were used to capture the thoughts and feelings of Black male principals who experienced the principal search and selection process. Interviews are the most basic form used to conduct a qualitative inquiry. The participants’ responses were unconstrained by the writing skills of the respondents; the researcher had the opportunity to probe and encourage participants to elaborate and was not limited by the effort required of the person completing a written questionnaire (Patton, 1990). Qualitative interviews involve semi-structured questions with the intention of gathering detailed and rich information to capture the views and opinions of the participants (Creswell, 2014).

To ensure validity of the adapted interview questions, the instrument was peer reviewed by two independent principals who did not take part in the study. Each participant was interviewed for approximately 1 hour, if possible on the grounds of their
school to get a better understanding of the school culture. If the participant did not wish
to be interviewed at his school, an alternative public venue was selected. The researcher
digitally recorded each interview using the app Rev.com and downloaded it to the
researcher’s computer. The researcher downloaded all interviews to a password protected
file and deleted it immediately from the device. The audio-recorded data was transcribed
by an online service called Rev.com, which offers a 12-hour turnaround time to provide
transcriptions.

**Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis**

The researcher organized and transcribed all participant interviews digitally. Once
the participants’ interviews were transcribed, the data were analyzed and hand-coded.
The researcher organized the transcriptions from the interviews through an open-coding
process (Creswell, 2003) and then analyzed them based on emerging themes. The
researcher transcribed the data to describe, classify, interpret, and classify them into
codes and themes. The researcher organized the themes to establish an overall
understanding of the phenomenon regarding the recruitment and retention of Black male
principals (Creswell, 2014). The researcher used the final themes and prepared a narrative
summary of the essential elements of the recruitment and retention phenomenon of Black
male principals.

The researcher used the following validity strategies: (a) member checking, (b)
rich thick descriptions, (c) clarity of researcher bias, and (d) peer debriefing. To ensure
qualitative validity and data integrity, the researcher shared a copy of the final report with
members of the participant group to confirm that the findings represented an accurate
description of the participants’ articulated experiences.
Chapter Summary

As public school districts across the country become more racially/ethnically diverse, district school leaders have a responsibility to recruit, retain, and develop principals and teachers who are ethnically/culturally representative of their student populations. The intention of *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954) was to eliminate racial inequality and provide educational opportunities and access to Blacks (and other children of color). It eventually resulted in the near extinction of Black principals throughout southern and border states. More importantly, it interrupted and shattered the educational pipeline that helped to produce the majority of Black principals. According to Lenoar Foster (2004) the lack of sufficient numbers of Black principals in public schools across the country today can be attributed to both the historical occurrence (and progress) and to a cultural mismatch in the intent and communication systems often used by school districts to employ Black school principals.

The research design, methodology, research context, data collection and analysis of this study allowed the researcher to apply best methodology practices. Using a phenomenological qualitative study to conduct interviews and gather data was critical in understanding the problem driving this research study, which was to examine the recruitment and retention process of African American male principals in the aftermath of *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954).
Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore Black male principals’ perspectives on the teacher-to-principal pipeline recruitment process and best strategies to retain current Black male principals given the declining trend in the number of Black male principals. The Black male participants in this study served as principals in two very diverse school districts: New York City and Washington, DC Public Schools, between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2017. This chapter outlines the findings and will report the results of the two research questions guiding this study:

1. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted recruitment opportunities designed specifically for current Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? (Brown, 2005; Jackson, 2007; Richardson, 2000; Tillman, 2007)

2. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted retention strategies designed specifically for current Black male principals within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? (Brown, 2005; Jackson, 2007; Nesmith, 2013; Tillman, 2007)

The researcher conducted in-depth personal one-on-one interviews with nine Black male principals. The in-depth interviews were used to capture the thoughts and feelings of Black male principals who experienced the principal search and selection
process. Nine principals, five from New York City, and four from Washington, DC public schools were purposively selected, and each consented to a semi-structured, one-on-one interview that lasted for 60 minutes. These semi-structured interviews were conducted using an instrument (Table 4.1) for guided questioning that contained 12 interview questions. These 12 interview questions were posed to the participants in a chronological order that was aligned with the research questions. The first three preliminary interview questions were provided in order to gather background demographic information which led into research question 1.

The questions gradually evolved from Black male principals’ perceptions of supportive factors that lead to a principalship, to their perceptions of the types of challenges along the teacher-to-principal pipeline. Then they continued on to both Black male principals’ perceptions of the targeted recruitment opportunities available for African American male teachers to advance to the principalship, and their perceptions of the targeted retention strategies for Black male principals, particularly within the New York City and Washington, DC public school districts. Table 4.1 presents the interview questions as they were aligned to the research questions.

**Data Analysis and Findings**

This chapter is an overview of the perceptions and lived experiences of the participants in the study. Chapter 4 is divided into three sections. The first section portrays the profile of each of the nine participants. The participants’ ethnic backgrounds, their assigned professional positions, and personal influences that inspired them to pursue education are described. The second section outlines the findings and participant
responses by addressing the study’s primary research questions. The third section is a summary that unearths the common emerging themes.

Table 4.1

*Interview Questions in Alignment to Research Questions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question 1:</strong> What are Black male principals’ perceptions of the targeted recruitment opportunities available for African American male teachers to advance to the principalship within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts?</td>
<td>1. What factors had (significant) influence on the educator/administrator that you are today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. What factors motivated you to pursue school administration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. In what ways do you feel race factored into your success and challenges in your trajectory through the educational system?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Are there initiatives in your school district to recruit African American male principals? If so, did you benefit from the district’s initiatives? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Along the way, were there factors that dissuaded you from pursuing school administration? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Defining internal inhibiting factors as psychological factors (self-image, confidence, etc.), what internal inhibiting challenges do/did you face as a school administrator?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Defining external inhibiting factors as state and district policies, structures, mandates, etc., what inhibiting challenges have you experienced as a school administrator?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. What strategies would you suggest to your school district to recruit more African American male principals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question 2:</strong> What are the Black male principals’ perceptions of the targeted retention strategies for African American male principals particularly within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts?</td>
<td>9. Are there initiatives in your school district used to retain African American male principals? If so, did you benefit from the district’s initiatives? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. What skills and attributes do you feel are needed to be a successful administrator? How did you acquire those skills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. What do you think are the reasons there are so few African American male principals in your district?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. What strategies would you suggest to your school district to retain more African American male principals?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Participants

Table 4.2 presents the demographic profiles of the participating Washington, DC and New York City Public School Black male principals. One participant was under the age of 40, three were between the ages of 41-49, six were between the ages of 50-59 and one was over the age of 60. Five of the participating principals were from Washington, DC and five were from New York City public schools. Seven participants obtained a master’s degree, one obtained an advanced degree beyond a master’s, and two received their doctoral degrees. One participant had not received tenure, seven participants were tenured and two were retired.

Table 4.2

Demographic Profile of the Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age of Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Degree Beyond Masters</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tenure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-tenured</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenured</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two participants had between 3-5 years of teaching experience, five had between 6-10 years of experience, and two had between 11-15 years of experience as a teacher. Three participants had between 3-5 years’ experience as a principal. Two participants had between 6-10 years’ experience, two had between 11-15 years, and one participant had between 16-20 years’ experience as a principal. Two participants were retired.

Table 4.3 provides information on the participants’ experiences as classroom teachers. All of the principals had been teachers for at least 3 years prior to the move to administration. The majority of them (78%) had at least 6 years of experience as a teacher before taking on an administrative role.

Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Years as a Classroom Teacher</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 Years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Years or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 highlights the participants’ total years of experience serving as principals. There was more variance in the number of years the participants had served as principals with some serving as little as 3 years.
Table 4.4

Total Years as a Principal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Years as a Principal</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 Years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Years or More</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Profile of Participants

**Participant P1.** Participant P1 was an African American male whose age was between 50-59 from Brooklyn, NY. He was a retired principal and served in this capacity in both Queens and Brooklyn, New York. He had served as superintendent for 2 years and high school principal for a total of 10 years. Before attaining the principal position, he served as a high school English teacher for 9 years and an assistant principal for 3 years.

**Participant P2.** Participant P2 was a 40-49-year-old African American male from Indianapolis, Indiana. He had served as a high school principal for a total of 3 years. Before attaining the principal position, he served an assistant principal for 4 years in a high school and 1 year in an elementary school. He taught history as a classroom teacher for 9 years.
**Participant P3.** Participant P3 was a 50-59-year-old African American male from the state of New Jersey. He had served as a high school principal for a total of 13 years. Before attaining the principal position, he served as a high school English teacher for 5 years and an assistant principal for 4 years.

**Participant P4.** Participant P4 was a 50-59-year-old African American male from Washington, DC. He had served as a high school principal for a total of 17 years. Before attaining the principal position, he served as an assistant principal for a total of 3 years and a music and social studies teacher for 14 years.

**Participant P5.** Participant P5 was a 40-49-year-old African American male from Baltimore, MD. He had served as a high school principal for a total of 11 years. Before attaining the principal position, he served a resident principal for 1 year in the program - New Leaders for New Schools. He taught English as a high school teacher for 5 years.

**Participant P6.** Participant P6 was a 60-65-year-old African American male from Washington, DC. He was a retired high school principal and served as a principal for a total of 21 years. Before attaining the principal position, he was a middle school assistant principal for 7 years. He taught special education as a high school teacher for 4 years.

**Participant P7.** Participant P7 was a 50-59-year-old African American male from Brooklyn, New York. He was a current middle school principal in the Bronx, NY. He served as a middle school principal for a total of 5 years. Before attaining the principal position, he served as an English teacher for 6 years and an assistant principal at a middle school for 5 years.

**Participant P8.** Participant P8 was an African American male whose age was between 40-49 and from Harlem, NY. He was a middle school principal in Brooklyn,
Participant P9. Participant P9 was an African American male whose age was between 50-59 and he was from Queens, NY. He was a high school principal and served in this capacity for 3-5 years in Brooklyn, NY. Before attaining the principal position, he served as a high school mathematics teacher for 11-15 years and as an assistant principal for 3 years.

Responses from Participants

The first three preliminary interview questions were designed to gather background demographic information which then led to research question 1. Interview questions 1 and 2 were developed to obtain information on Black male principals’ perceptions of supportive factors that had a significant influence on the participant becoming an educator. Interview question 3 was developed to gain insight on how race factored into the Black male principal’s’ success and challenges in their trajectory through the educational system.

Research question 1: In order to answer research question 1 data were collected. What are Black male principals’ perceptions of the targeted recruitment opportunities available for Black male teachers to advance to the principalship within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? Interview questions 1 to 3 set the stage for the interviews, gathering some demographic information about the participants as well as their motivations for pursuing an administrative role in education. In alignment with research question 1, interview questions 4 through 8 explored Black male principals’
perceptions of recruitment initiatives available for Black male teacher’s advancement to
the principalship in two large urban school districts.

**Interview questions 1 and 2.** Interview questions 1 and 2 asked male participants
to describe factors that had (significant) influence on the educator/administrator that they
were today and factors that motivated them to pursue school administration. Throughout
the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories that the participants
perceived to be supportive factors that had a significant influence on them becoming an
educator. The theme is labeled *reflective*. Table 4.5 displays a qualitative summary of the
codes, categories, and themes that emerged from interview questions 1 and 2.

Table 4.5

*Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Questions 1 and 2 (Factors That Had a Significant Influence on the Participant Becoming an Educator)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This was a calling that God has given me, always wanted to educate Black males, the calling was my internal passion, I felt the calling to jump in and lead.</td>
<td>Calling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A friend of mine, my principal, my last principal, my grandmother and father always emphasized the importance of education, male music teacher, I had a principal with great qualities, parents who were educators, college professor, it comes from a Black male which was my father.</td>
<td>Relationships/interactions</td>
<td>Reflective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My principal, my grandmother and father, male music teacher, junior high school principal, my father a college professor</td>
<td>Role Modeling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take on the mantle of being a principal, spread my bandwidth, I was encouraged to apply for it, they saw something inside of me, I was encouraged to do administration, I was asked to be a dean</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a broader impact on the community, I could use culturally relevant teaching and learning to engage them</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The nine participants were asked the following question: “What factors had (significant) influence on the educator/administrator that you are today? And, what factors motivated you to pursue school administration?”
Table 4.6 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.

Table 4.6

*Frequency Summary of the Categories from Interview Questions 1 and 2 (Factors that had a Significant Influence on the Participant Becoming an Educator)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling</td>
<td>X  X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships/Interactions</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Modeling</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>X  X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The figure illustrates five categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 1 and 2.

When asked the questions, what factors had (significant) influence on the educator/administrator that you are today, and what factors motivated you to pursue school administration? P1 explained:

Well, one factor would be the quality of my teachers, as well as the quality of the administrators who I observed, and when I say quality, I'm not necessarily talking about exemplary qualities. There were some poor examples of teaching and poor examples of leadership that motivated me to say to myself that I could do better, that I could do much better than what I was observing, but I've had a mixed bag when it comes to leadership, particularly about leadership when I observe principals and assistant principals. I've had some exemplary role models, but even
with the role models, I've observed things that I would do and things that I wouldn't do, so I figured I would take the best of all worlds, and that helped shape me as a leader. That was a factor that influenced me to become a leader, and just realizing that children were receiving a poor-quality education from my perspective and my experiences, and I knew that, or at least I felt the calling. I felt the calling to really jump in and lead and make the difficult decisions that need to be made around teaching and hiring and even firing teachers when that was necessary.

Participant P2 also explained:

Wow. It started . . . I've never had a Black male teacher of core content. The only Black male teacher I ever had was a PE teacher. And so, I always wanted to educate specific Black males and give them the perspectives, becoming a history, social studies, government teacher. My principal, my last principal at the time, said that I was a highly effective teacher and that I needed to spread my bandwidth and engage more students, have an effect on more kids outside of the 75 that I would touch with my teaching load.

When asked the question, what or who inspired you to pursue education, P3 explained:

People who have taken an interest in me as a person; who also tried to guide me into a certain direction, even against my willingness. Seems to be, I guess, spot on in where I needed to be in a particular time in my life, which kind of led me towards the education field, and then eventually to the principalship.

Participant P4 also explained:
It really was seeing a role model in a leadership position and wanting to emulate that professionally. I had a music teacher. I had no interest in being an educator, actually, but I had male coaches and [a] male music teacher who I thought their life was golden and said, simply intellectually, "I want to do that," and with their mentorship, was steered toward getting to that. Actually, it would be a teacher I had, Robert Gills, who was my music teacher. Thinking about, really, becoming a teacher, because when I watched what he did day to day, I thought he was the most impactful, cool guy that a kid could have.

Participant P5 also explained:

Yes, sir. My grandmother. My grandmother and my father. Both sides of my family come from countryside Jamaica, that's the most rural parts in Jamaica, and they always emphasize the importance of education. When I became a high school student, I really thought about the way I can contribute back to my community was through education.

I definitely would in a sense that the calling was my internal passion. It was my internal passion. Like I said, my grandmother . . . These people were what other people would call heroes. These people were monumental in my life. When they blessed the career goal of going into education, that's what I put my heart and soul into. Then the opportunity of administration, administration and school leadership wasn't a promotion opportunity for me. I didn't look at it that way. I just looked at it as being able to have a broader impact on the community than what I could do simply in my own classroom.

Participant P6 also explained:
I would have to say growing up with parents who were educators, and also, I had influence from my junior high school principal, who brought me back to be an administrator in the building. So, certainly, through the hands and help of others who've supported me in this role as being an educator. Again, I would have to say family, friends, and just having an opportunity to go into a school and volunteer, which really kind of caught my attention and made me feel like I wanted to be a part of this educational arena.

Participant P7 also explained:

For me, I think that I came in in a role of reversal. I learned what not to do by watching principals do things that I thought should have been done in a different way. You're going to have to pause that for just a second. Hello? In other words, I learned and realized that I wanted to be an instructional leader by looking at other leaders. The way that they were performing their duties, I just thought it should be done differently.

Participant P8 also explained:

Well personally, it comes from a Black male which was my father. My father was a professor at City College in New York. I kind of grew up in the classroom. I was poignantly raised by not just a, what I would consider a very strong Black male, but also very intelligent person who really gave his life to helping others. I was like the little fly on the wall, and I saw everything that he did and like most young men who grow up very close to their father, you emulate them, and sometimes you predispose certain behaviors, but I didn't realize yet. I think everything that I am today is owed to my father.
Participant P9 also explained:

One of the factors that contributed to me going into education is by default. What I mean by that, I was a basketball player overseas, and I broke my ankle and a friend of mine whose wife was a director of a new school asked that I come on and heal as a math teacher. I decided to take on education by default, and for the last 7 months while I was healing, a student came up to me and said that she wishes I never leave. That actually kicked off my career as an educator.

To continue education, because I was in education, just by default. Someone asked me to become a math teacher while I heal, and I thought that, "Okay, after 7 months, I'll go back overseas, earn some money" but it was a student who actually kept me going in the field. I decided that this was a calling that God has given me, and I decided to continue with the education.

*Interview question 3.* Interview question 3 asked male participants to describe ways that race factored into Black male principals’ success and challenges in their trajectory through the educational system. During the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories generated from the participants’ perceptions where race was a factor in their trajectory through the educational system. The theme is labeled *external.* This theme was generated from the principals’ comments that related to various biases they encountered, expectations from others, perceptions, stereotypes, economic gaps in their schools, power structure within the schools, and the sense of being pigeonholed. Table 4.7 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories, and themes that emerged from interview question 3.
Table 4.7

Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question 3 (Race: Success and Challenges)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covert racism, segregated schools, interpersonal racism, school</td>
<td>Biases</td>
<td>prison to pipeline, if we were of any other race we would have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>been listened to the first time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to excel at whatever I do, I’m not going to let anyone say</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>that I can’t do it, do the best that I can and not make any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mistakes, because of racism he had to be the best that he could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>be, unique bond with my Black male students, influence kids,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>support kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They made the assumption that I can only handle discipline,</td>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td>Societal assumption, it was very rare to see a Black man in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>administration, we were looked at as just the managers of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Black and Latino experience, what they didn’t believe is that I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>could do instruction, not many Black males in education,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>culture shock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m a Black male with some size, system manager, school culture,</td>
<td>Stereotypes</td>
<td>De-escalate situations well, recruited to manage the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>most underachieving schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underfunded schools, poverty, the way they fund schools,</td>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Materials and resources, improvised, low student achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gaps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting a system that works against us, somebody that’s not</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>going to challenge them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor schools, put you over school culture, pigeonholed as this</td>
<td>Pigeonholed</td>
<td>Disciplinarian, pigeonholed to school culture climate,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>discipline, I was pigeonholed into being 21st century version of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lean on me, troubled schools in NYC is where the opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lied for men of color, given the schools that were in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>greatest need, never offered a high performing school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The nine participants were asked the following question: “In what ways do you feel race factored into your success and challenges in your trajectory through the educational system?”
Table 4.8 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data, as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.

Table 4.8

Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question 3 (Race: Success and Challenges)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biases</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>X X X X</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotypes</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Gaps</td>
<td>X X X</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Structure</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigeonholed</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The figure illustrates seven categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question #3.

When asked the questions, in what ways do you feel race factored into your success and challenges in your trajectory through the educational system, P1 explained:

I would say by now that definitely that race played a tremendous role in terms of challenges that I faced, because when I was an elementary, middle school, high school student, it's very clear to me that my education was inferior, and I think that it was inferior because probably in addition to race, also socioeconomic, but race definitely played a role in that, being that the regular challenges that any African American has in terms of living beneath the poverty line, living in a
crime-ridden community, going to poor schools, underfunded schools, segregated schools, I believe that all of those played a role in terms of race having a major impact on all those critical elements.

Participant P2 also explained:

Here's what I often say to new leaders that are person of color, particularly a man, or a woman of color, race factors in as it relates to, if you are a person of color and you're in leadership, you are assumed to be incompetent until you prove competency as opposed to other race groups are assumed to be competent until they prove to be incompetent.

Now, how did that motivate me? Because I knew, like in all things, I had to be exceptional to even be average, and that's not only with other races, that's even inclusive of our race, is that people automatically assumed that you are not competent because of your skin color, and you understood that I had to prove I knew what I was doing, or else people were quick to say, with us people of color are quick to say, "They don't know what they're doing," as opposed to, my wife had a principal, and she was going on and on about this principal, who I think was a very good principal, but I had to see her be that effusive about any principal of color.

And I said to her, I said, "If he was Black, would you be talking this way?" And that's when I came up with, "He's assumed to be competent, and when y'all find out that he's competent, he's hailed the greatest. We are assumed to be incompetent, and we have to prove every moment, every day, every year. I felt the
same need to prove it in year 17 that I had in year 1, so that's how race plays in my mind.

Participant P3 also explained:

I think it played a pivotal part because I was a Black male. So, I think race and gender played a part in the trajectory, because there's not many Black males in education. And then you look to the Black girl principalship, there wasn't a lot of us in that role either. So, I think the love of kids, and the passion I have for the job kind of forced me in that direction, and, I guess, had more people supporting me in that direction than anything else.

Participant P4 also explained:

Okay. So, I'll start with the challenges. The initial piece was, I'm a Black male with some size. So, the stereotype says, I could keep the natives from being restless. And so, they immediately put you over school culture. They immediately put you over climate. They never understand that I was a highly effective teacher, so I knew how to move student achievement. But because of my size, because I understood Black culture, and I had a humble beginning, so I understood poverty, and that parents are doing the best that they can. They're sending their children out the door the best way they know how, regardless of how they enter the school building. And I could relate to families. And I could de-escalate situations well.

With parents and students. So, you immediately get pigeonholed as this disciplinarian, school culture, PBIS, all of those different strategies, you get pigeonholed with that.
My first year as a principal, I never talked about school culture at all. I made it a point that every time someone came into my office to speak to me about anything, I would always revert it back to instruction. Every single time. And it was by design. Because they made the assumption that I could handle the discipline. I could handle the culture and the climate. What they didn't understand, what they didn't believe I could do was do instruction. They would try to put people around me that they felt knew instruction. And I would say, no, I know instruction. It's just my focus, my leaders, and I'm a team player, so my leaders have asked me to do school culture because that would help to build it. I'm going to do what's asked of me, when I get into a particular role or on a particular team.

Participant P5 also explained:

Well, the success side is, again, race allowed me to have a connection with people who come from the same cultural and historical experience. It allowed me to build a community and join and contribute to a community within the community. Even when working for DCPS, there was a community of strong, Black male principals that were working to impact the community and the community as a whole. The challenge was I really don't believe that Black male leadership was ever part of the strategy for improvement within DCPS in particular. I think we just happened to be there. I think we happened to get selected to make it appear like it was a diverse staffing population, but there was very little purposeful support of Black male leaders in closing the achievement gap in any sort of way, in any sort of targeted way.
The challenge was a lot of times we were pigeonholed, and I was pigeonholed into being 21st century versions of *Lean On Me*. That principal. That was pretty much what we were expected to be, and we were totally, oftentimes, discredited or ignored, instructional leaders, academic leaders, systems managers, those sorts of things, we were totally ignored in that sort of way.

That, without a doubt, was impacted by our race. If we were of any other race, we would've been listened to the first time. Our ideas would've been considered the first time. The achievement that we were able to make in neighborhood high schools would've been celebrated the first time or celebrated at all, but because of our race, oftentimes, we were looked at as just the managers of the Black and Latino experience, which is unfortunate.

Participant P6 also explained:

I would have to say first of all, growing up in Washington DC, where I didn't have opportunities to go to schools with a diverse group of kids. I think strictly, probably 100% African Americans at most of the schools, and teachers, and staff. There may have been a few White teachers there, but the majority, or the overall interaction between teacher and student was primarily African American. Some of the challenges were, I think once I finished high school and I got an opportunity to go to college, it was a little bit of a culture shock for me to go to a school that may have been a 50-50, or predominantly White. So, I had to absorb and kind of make sure I could take small steps in completing my educational endeavors.

Participant P7 also explained:
I found at the time, and it probably still exists today, but that . . . That answer is multifaceted. In my experiences, in starting off with the Board of Education in New York City, back then I think it was called the Board of Education, if there were troubled schools in the city of New York that's the school or that's where the opportunity lied for men of color. You were always given the schools that were in the greatest need, that were considered dangerous schools, that were considered places where violence and disruption was at an all-time high. You were never offered what would be considered a high-performing, high-achievement school. The motivation came in, going into places that needed fixing, for lack of a better word, and your challenge was to see if you could fix it, to see if you could turn it around.

Participant P8 also explained:

I think race played a huge part of it. I think we're forever fighting a system that works against us. I think the way they fund schools, I think the way they test students. They have this big battle in New York now with these high schools, specialized high school tests. The whole school-to-prison pipeline is built on race. The things that we deal with in the communities, I think race plays a huge part. In terms of my benefit, how I benefited, I believe that's what the question was. I think I benefit from the fact that I have a very special and unique bond with my Black male students. I'm from New York City. Whether it's Brownsville, East New York, South Bronx or South Jamaica, we all basically, and I'm from Harlem, so we're all basically from very similar neighborhoods. Some may do better. Some may be a little worse, but we all grew up on hip-hop.
We all spoke the same slang and the same language. I was just one of the lucky ones who was able to go get educated. When I come back, I think that benefits me greatly in relating to my students. I understand them, because I was once them. I'm going to provide everything from the materials, the resources, the professional development for our teachers in terms of restorative practices. Not just academics, but restorative practices, culturally relevant teaching and learning, so that they in turn know how to deal with our students. They know how to build trust within our students and get them to perform. I put certain measures in place that give us a slightly higher percentage of having success with our students.

Participant P9 also explained:

Looking at racism, interpersonal racism, meaning that what pushed my thinking that I had to excel in whatever I do. Having that inner drive, inner push, yeah that inner push that says that I'm not going to let anything say that I can't do it, and just wanting to be able to do the best that I can, and not make any excuses. Learn from my mistakes, learn from my strengths, learn from other people's strengths and weaknesses. I think that is very important.

Like I said, that interpersonal, that inner drive within me, knowing that I have to be the best that I can, right? That's one drive. That's a type of racism, right? ' Because I can't really just say, "Hey, I want to be mediocre." No, I always had to be better than others and not accept that I'm in a position because I am Black. I'm in the position because I am competent, and that I have been vetted, and that I'm as equally as ready as any other racial identity, if you would.
**Interview question 4.** Throughout the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories that the participants perceived to address initiatives in their school district to recruit Black male principals. The theme is labeled *recruitment*. Table 4.9 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories and themes that emerged from interview question 4. Table 4.10 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.

Table 4.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I haven’t heard of any initiatives to recruit, train, develop, Black males, not that I know of, I can say emphatically, there were absolutely no initiatives, no, not in my 40 years as an administrator, I don’t think there was anything in place, no absolutely not, there are no initiatives to recruit African American males, there are some initiatives to get rid of African American male principals, so no, there really was not a concerted effort to hire conscious community-connected Black male leaders. Leadership programs pop up, such as Relay to try and support leaders, because you have to start with a vision before you can have a strategy, colleges are not going out there recruiting, root causes, think through strategies to see results.</td>
<td>Initiatives</td>
<td>Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was no pipeline, there was no line, the pipeline that does exist is the school to prison pipeline, there is a decline in Black male leadership, leadership academy, Mary Jane Patterson Fellowship, LEAP Program, there is not a pipeline to prepare these male Black teachers to become principals, there was a pipeline prior to 2000 in DC.</td>
<td>Pipeline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In terms of concerted plans, a strategic vision to bring about effective leadership for people of color, it absolutely did not exist, there was not a vision of creating a pipeline, think tank.</td>
<td>Vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The nine participants were asked the following question: “Are there initiatives in your school district to recruit Black male principals? If so, did you benefit from the district’s initiatives? Why or why not?”
Table 4.10

*Frequency Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 4 (Recruitment Initiatives)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipeline</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The figure illustrates four categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 4.

*Initiatives.* Eight out of nine participants acknowledged that their district did not have any initiatives to recruit Black male principals. As P1 stated: “I can say emphatically not. There were absolutely no initiatives.” P2 added:

Let me say it. I'll answer this in two stages. I would say, first, there are no initiatives to recruit African American male principals, and I would follow that up to even believe that there are some initiatives to get rid of African American male principals, because it seems, in my time particularly, in DC public schools, that there was an intentionality about moving African American principals, just in thinking about the last 4 or 5 years.

Participant P3 explained:

At the high school division, the majority of people who lost their job were African American men. Now, was that a result of there were no African American men supervisors? So, they didn't mimic the culture of the language of the behaviors that the folks wanted? But I would say, first of all, there was no intentionality, as I
said, recruiting. The only thing that was ever said, there was an acknowledgement that there was a need to do something with Black boys. Never following that question up with, "Maybe if we have more Black men, we could do something with Black boys," but there was nothing there. In fact, as fast as that was being said in the high school divisions for sure, most of the Black men were leaving in droves and seemingly being pushed out the door.

Participant P9 also explained:

I have never heard of any initiative, and that doesn't mean they're not out there. I'm just telling you, I've been working for the Department of Ed. I'm going on my 19th year, and not to my knowledge, I would say. I haven't heard of any initiative to recruit, train, develop, follow up with Black males in particular. That's something that I'm oblivious to. I'm even oblivious to that happening, not on the administrative level, but also on the teacher level, because you've got to start with the teachers before you get to be an administrator. Obviously, we need to make sure that we're retaining and recruiting or recruiting and retaining Black male teachers, because those numbers aren't looking too well, but no.

P4, P5, P6, and P9 agreed that there were no district initiatives to recruit Black male teachers to become principals in both New York City and Washington, DC public schools. The five participants all agreed that their school districts need to do more to recruit Black male teachers to the principalship.

Strategies. Another challenge that four out of nine participants discussed is that their districts did not have any strategies in place to recruit Black male principals as stated by P1 “So forget about strategy, because you had to start with the vision before
you could have a strategy, and the pipeline would be the example of a strategy, and that didn't exist, and it doesn't exist today.” In addition, P5 added:

There was a handful of Black male school leaders, in particular, that were willing to look at the root causes of the achievement gap that were affecting the Black community, including the absence of Black male or the lack of Black male teachers in the classroom. We began to build our own community, our own think tank, if you will, within DCPS to think through strategies to see results.

A lot of times that was frowned upon by the chancellor, and therefore also the instructional superintendents and the different deputies that were underneath because that was now bringing a thing that they didn't want to face. They didn't want to face the music probably because they contributed to that.

P4 and P9 agreed that their district did not have any effective strategies used to recruit Black male principals. All four participants expressed that their districts need to explore effective strategies to increase Black male principals.

*Pipeline*. All nine participants had strong views regarding the existence of a pipeline as noted by P1:

That's correct. There was no pipeline. There was no line. There was just one or two, that there's no line, literally speaking. It was like one or two at a time. The pipeline that does exist, even though that's not the question, and this goes back to your previous question about race, is that the pipeline that does exist is the school to prison pipeline, so I just want to say that. They're aware of the power of pipelines and what the benefits could be, but it's not the vision of the leadership to create that at that point.
Participant P4 explained:

So, I was a member of the prestigious Mary Jane Patterson Fellowship, which was the initial pipeline to the principalship for DC public schools. There were two Black males in that particular cohort. That's where I found that we didn't get an opportunity to interview for those affluent roles. Because what happens is that as we, the 2-year program, we did a residency and then we did interview in preparation for the principalship. And in that process, we got an opportunity to panel for different schools across the district as vacancies arose. And the two Black males did not get an opportunity to interview for anything but Ward 7 and Ward 8 schools, which is our most impoverished area of the city. And it was eye-opening. We could see the racism with that.

Participant P8 also explained:

No, absolutely not. However, there is a movement to recruit Black male teachers. 100 Black men, 100 Black men of color. But not a pipeline to prepare these teachers, these male Black teachers, to become principals, administrators. I don't even remember a college that's going out there and recruiting Black teachers to become administrators. Not only is this not inside the Department of Education, but the colleges themselves are not going out there and recruiting a cadre from the education department in the schools.

P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, and P9 agreed that there is no pipeline to prepare Black male teachers to become principals or administrators in both the New York City and Washington, DC public school systems.
Vision. Two out of nine participants expressed that the district school leadership failed to create a vision to recruit Black male principals. P1 provided several perspectives about regarding the district’s lack of vision:

The question reminds me of a quote by two gentlemen named Bolman and Deal where they say, "A vision without a strategy remains an illusion," and in this case, there was not even a vision of creating a pipeline for Black male leadership, so forget about strategy, because you had to start with the vision before you could have a strategy, and the pipeline would be the example of a strategy, and that didn't exist, and it doesn't exist today.

Participant P5 also explained:

What they wanted were people that were colored brown but did not have an agenda that would really focus on helping the Brown and Black community directly. Oftentimes, you can see within a matter of 2 to 3 years they methodically got rid of all of these Black school leaders that were taking that community focused approach to helping the Black and Brown community of DC.

Interview question 5. Throughout the interviews, two themes emerged from the codes and categories that the participants perceived to address those factors that dissuaded principals from becoming a school administrator. The themes are labeled dissuading against administration and persuading to become an administrator. Table 4.11 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories, and themes that emerged from interview question 5. Table 4.12 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.
Table 4.11

Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question 5 (Factors that Dissuaded Principals from Becoming a School Administrator)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjected to anonymous allegations, being removed for poor student outcomes, subject to lawsuits, lack of privacy, family, loss of time, time commitment, work-life balance, now we deal with rape, drugs and gangs.</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Dissuading Principals from Becoming a School Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You don’t have support from your district supervisor, union, you’re out there by yourself, under-funded, district, apathy, lack of parental support, no real PD, [professional development] deadlines.</td>
<td>Lack of Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do what your told versus having the kind of flexibility to be creative,</td>
<td>Lack of Respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most challenged students, target of the union, mandates of central office, building level decision, central office was too demanding, discipline the number one challenge.</td>
<td>Constantly Challenged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be honest with you, no, it was something that was a goal of mine.</td>
<td>No Fear</td>
<td>Persuading to Become an Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the first half of the leadership career, it really was a lot of factors that allowed you to want to become an administrator, my first two principals were Black males, so I was lucky enough to be under the tutelage and guidance of two young, Black male principals.</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your thinking is outside of the box and you perform better than not only all, but even the Doctor of Mathematics.</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The nine participants were asked the following question: “Along the way, were there factors that dissuaded you from pursuing school administration? Why or why not?”
Table 4.12

*Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 5 (Factors that Dissuaded Principals from Becoming School Administrators)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Support</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Respect</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantly Challenged</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Fear</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The figure illustrates seven categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 5.

*Fear.* Fear was highlighted by three participants as an important factor that could dissuade Black male aspiring principals from becoming a school administrator. P4 stated that “I was nervous, because I knew there were some gaps. And at the time when I went into leadership, there was no real PD around what a good principal looks like.” P1 emphasized the challenges you may face as a principal:

If you have any knowledge of being a leader, you know that you will be subjected to anonymous allegations. You know that you will probably be leading a school that's going to be underfunded. You know that you will be expected to have higher outcomes than any other school leaders, even knowing that you are under-resourced, but the expectation is still there. You feel that your tenure is likely to be brief because there's more of a likelihood of you being removed for poor
student outcomes than if you were to go to, let's say, a Caucasian where they take a school that's higher performing from the beginning, so you're judged against schools that are recruiting students, not even recruiting, screening and recruiting students who are already higher performing.

Participant P3 explained:

Yes. Time that a principal has to give to the school, or assistant principal gives to the school. Lack of privacy. My own family. I didn't want to lose time with my own child educating someone else's on a 24-hour basis. Then knowing where I would be an administrator. The district I would be in having to deal with the apathy, and the lack of parental support on a level that was needed to garner success for Black and Brown children. So that was all the things that was kind of like weighing on me not to do it.

Lack of support. Three out of nine participants expressed that the lack of support weighed heavily on them when deciding to pursue the principalship. P3 noted that “The district I would be in having to deal with the apathy, and the lack of parental support on a level that was needed to garner success for Black and Brown children.” P6 expressed, Well, after about 15 years, and then I'd say the last 5, 6 years as an administrator I just felt that central office was just too demanding. It's almost like you couldn't do your job as a principal, because you dealt with so many other things.

P1 shared:

One of the things you come to realize too, is that as you're pursuing the mission to educate your children, you don't have the support in place that you need from your district superintendent, nor do you have support from the supervisors' union,
so you're out there by yourself and it's almost tantamount to being asked to go on a suicide mission.

*Lack of respect.* Two out of the nine participants interviewed described that lack of respect was a real dilemma when considering the prospect of seeking the principalship. P2 explained:

In the second half of my leadership experience, I found myself often saying that knowing what's expected now, I would probably never have been an administrator. Because it really morphed from a leadership, creativity, developmental job into one of just simply being that one core middle manager whose job it was to execute the mandates of central and do what they're told versus having the kind of flexibility to be creative.

Participant P6 explained:

So, I would say in the last 5 years, I think it has gotten so demanding on principals, especially from central offices, requiring us to do all these different things. A prime example would be that somebody might call me from the chancellor's office and they'll say, "I'm calling from the chancellor's office. I need this document by 3 o'clock." And I might say, "Well, let me speak to the chancellor, because I gotta hear from the chancellor." So, those are the kind of things that when you've got 30 or 40 people, and some of them are just right out of college, telling you they're calling for the chancellor's office, and demanding us to send in things or to meet deadlines and things. So, its just too many things coming. You could end up reading 200 e-mails a day.
**Constantly challenge.** Two participants communicated that they are constantly dealing with challenges that can influence the decision that Black male teachers make with regard to seeking the principalship or an administrative position in public schools.

P1 stated the following about the constant challenges he experienced as a principal:

So at least from my experience as a Black male principal, or as a Black principal, you're going to get the most challenged students and the most challenged teachers, yet when you try to address those issues, then you may become also another factor as you may become the target of the union, and then as a result of that, you're also subjected to lawsuits because people will claim discrimination whether it be racial discrimination, age discrimination, when the real issue is that they're ineffective teachers, and in some cases as a principal, I've even had to deal with ineffective administrators.

Participant P6 expressed:

Discipline has been the number one challenge, I believe, in schools. And until there comes a time that we can handle and take care of discipline, I think that schools will be probably more successful. And discipline's not just happening in Washington, DC. This is all across the country, people are dealing with discipline. You know, years ago, we used to deal with kids with throwing spit balls, or maybe swearing at times, but now we deal with rape, you may deal with drugs, gangs. I mean, there's just a multiple of things that we deal with now that we didn't deal with years ago.

**No fear.** Principals must be confident and strong when leading schools. Four out of nine participants held this sentiment close to their heart. As P5 stated:
No. When I say that, going in, no. I was as eager as I was going into teaching. I was eager, man. I was driven. I wanted to make an impact. I wanted to learn from these other school leaders. I wanted to carry on the work of people like Malcolm X, and other strong Black leaders, people of that nature. I wanted to make my grandmother proud. I was motivated. Now, to speak to the part of what dissuaded me in leaving DCPS, that's another topic, but I'm not sure if that's addressing another question, but no, I wasn't dissuaded at all.

Participant P7 expressed:

No. Once I decided that I wanted to be a school leader, there was nothing that would or could or did stand in my way. As soon as I finished with the SAS school administrator’s certification, I was an assistant principal the following year, and I didn't look back. The answer to that is no.

Participant P8 expressed:

To be honest with you, no. It was something that was a goal of mine. I realized kind of early on in my teaching career, when I first started teaching, I was lucky enough, this is just what we're talking about.

Participant P9 explained:

No, not really. Because like I said before, I had that inner drive and I had a lot of people before me who set the standards, and a lot of people who actually believe in me. Both White and Black.

Support. Two out of nine participants expressed that support is one of the key components that is needed for principals to be successful. P4 noted that:
I got more of a push to go into administration from district personnel, school leaders. They've always pushed me to go . . . principals. They've always pushed me toward leadership. So, I had the blessing of working for some people who I was able to model myself and my career after. But a lot of people don't get that. But I think that's something that the country is seeing. So, you're starting to see leadership programs pop up, such as Relay and things along those lines, to try to support leaders.

Participant P8 explained:

My first two principals were Black males, so I was lucky enough to be under the tutelage and guidance of two young, Black male principals. They took me under their wing and they might have been slightly older than me, maybe 10 years or so, maybe 10 years older than me. They recognized something in me and seeing them do the job and them inviting me in to learn hands-on how to do the work, it got me excited about it. They kind of took care of me in terms of my development, my professional development. It was something, and then, of course, I was meeting others out there. I was lucky. Even my superintendent was a Black male. At the time, when I first started. I had Black males and look at that. Look how important that is. Principals, Black males. Superintendent, Black males. Here I come down the road. It could have been a totally different story if I would have had [a] White male principal or White female or just non-Black. Could have been Asian, whoever, Filipino, whoever, but I was lucky to be able to look at people who resemble me and see what they were doing and see the effect they were having on children.
Respect. One out of nine participants responded about the notion of respect. P7 articulated his relationship with other professionals on a national level regarding his pedagogical skills:

Throughout my career as an educator, going to different courses, and excelling at that coursework, I remember one time we had this math course that we had to take from the UC Davis, out in California. They came here, and they had a class, and there were some people who had doctorates in mathematics there, and I felt like, "Oh, these guys have doctorates and I don't know if I belong." But I pushed myself and my professor, White professor, at the time, he came to me he says, "I have a project to do" and he was amazed at the project that I put together. He says, "Your thinking is outside of the box and you perform better than not only all, but even the Doctor of Mathematics." I created some algorithm to find out where satellites are out in outer space, so I made a fictitious plan, and I had fictitious satellites out there, and I was able to track the satellites through this program that we were doing. He was like, "Wow, that's outside the box."

Everybody's doing the plain thing, \( A + B + C + D \), but I really wanted to dive into the system and do something extraordinary. Extraordinary is something that people are looking for, just not mediocre. I hope that makes sense.

Interview question 6. Throughout the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories generated from the participants’ perceptions of issues they faced as school administrators. The theme is labeled internal inhibitors. Table 4.13 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories, and themes that emerged from interview
question 6. Table 4.14 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.

Table 4.13

Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question 6 (Internal Inhibitors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem, self-doubt, prove that you were the right person for the job, always trying to validate why you had the job, how did you get the job, how do you manage yourself in an environment that repeatedly says you aren’t competent, defined my success by the success of my students, you might not feel like you have the confidence to want to peruse this work, I think you have to believe in who you are and what you bring to the table, I would say it shook my confidence.</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development, achievement gap, I always came with an instructional game plan.</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No pipeline, then the opportunities are far and few between, I felt like I was almost under attack, it was almost like the he didn’t want the school to succeed, I wasn’t being supported by my superiors.</td>
<td>Lack of Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have always been concerned about failure, failure is the thing that will get you removed, especially from New York City, hey, I got to make tough decisions, I’ve got to make it happen now, that sense of urgency is so great, your window closes, they’re on to the next person, you need to show some results immediately.</td>
<td>Fear of Failure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the few leaders of color, its takes time for the strategies and the culture to take hold, were you willing to risk your career to speak truth to power regarding the root causes of what is affecting the achievement gap, DCPS definitely established a culture where you were responsible for the fire.</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every year you have to think about that 1-year commitment, because at the end of the year you’re on pins and needles wondering if I’m coming back as a principal, we no longer have tenure, I think it can be a lot of wear and tear, where you willing to risk your career to speak truth to power regarding the root causes of what is affecting the achievement gap, and therefore affecting your day to day work.</td>
<td>Stress/Burnout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The nine participants were asked the following question: “Defining internal inhibiting factors as psychological factors (self-image, confidence, etc.), what internal inhibiting challenges do/did you face as a school administrator?”
Table 4.14

Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 6 (Internal Inhibitors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>X X X X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Support</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of Failure</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>X X X X</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress/Burnout</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The figure illustrates five categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 6.

*Confidence:* Five out of nine participants communicated that having confidence was a plus in their success and not having it was a major part of an internal inhibiting factor that they had to overcome. P1 shared:

I guess the initial challenge was probably with self-esteem. That was probably something that . . . Or self-doubt, being one of the few leaders of color. You look around you and you begin to wonder if others were more prepared for the job than you were. It's only after a little time that you realize that, in many ways, if I want to put it in these terms, that I was superior in terms of my preparation for the job because I had both the academic and had the lived experience, and so that gave me a tremendous amount of confidence, but it wasn't that way initially, so there was definitely some self-esteem or some doubt or questions in my mind, because again, it wasn't as if I was able to call upon a lot of people to say . . . Even someone to call and to mentor me, because there were not many people who
could mentor you at the time. That was another problem because if there's no pipeline, then the opportunities are far and few between.

I was fortunate to have a principal who was a mentor to the extent that he could be, because he was busy running the school himself, but self-esteem would've been an initial inhibiting factor, I think, and just because as a leader, particularly a Black leader, and I guess all leaders, but particularly a Black male leader, you're constantly being challenged, your every move. I remember one time I wrote a memo to the staff and there was a single grammatical error in it, and someone came, and they brought it to my attention. "I just want to point this out to you," as if to say, "And you're the instructional leader? And you make a single grammatical error?" And so, what that did to me is actually motivated me to never let that happen again, but then again, as I became even more experienced, those type of things became less important to me. One, excellence is excellence, so you should not have written anything with a grammatical error, but at the same time if I did, I would not let it end my situation.

P9 felt that Black male principals had to always prove that they were qualified for the job and stated,

No, I don't recall anything that even within myself, that says that, "Whoa, I can't do this." Because I went through that pipeline. I was a math teacher, I became a master teacher, then I became a coach, and then all these little things, people saying, "You're good, you're good, you can do this, you can do this." It just piled up. It was like energy that says that I can do it.

Participant P2 explained:
It really was this push to prove that you were the right person for the job, this constant sense that you were always trying to validate why you had that job, versus others, and understanding that many times that had to be done because of racism. It had to be done because all people, not only people of color had this sense of, "How did you get this job?" And so, how do you manage yourself in an environment that implies that you aren't competent? And so, just managing yourself through that internal conversation you had with knowing that, "Hey, I got to make tough decisions, and that I'm going to be criticized for these tough decisions," and in fact, some are actually going to fail, and not losing your confidence when the external factors jump all over you.

Participant P6 explained:

Well, first of all, let me say this. I'm very grateful that I've lasted 20 years as an administrator, because every year, you had to think about that 1-year commitment as being a principal. Because at the end of the year, you're on pins and needles wondering whether I'm going to be back as a principal. And there used to be a time when principals lasted in schools 10 to 15 years. It wasn't this one and done thing. So, I think psychologically on a new principal coming in, and they think about those things, especially if you have not mastered the skills to be a principal, it really can be a downfall for you. Because if you miss out on that first year, you might not feel like you have the confidence to want to pursue doing this work.

Participant P8 explained:

I was always very, what I would call vigilantly confident. I'll say it like that. I wasn't arrogant. I felt I could do the job. I'm talking about when I first got in, but I
knew I still had next steps. I spent 8 years as an Assistant Principal before I even went into the LEAP program. I thought I had all the training that I needed to be successful. I guess the inhibiting factors played when, I had tremendous success when I first started. I went into, they actually placed, I was supposed to graduate from my program in June. By February, they must have saw something in me, because by February, they had already placed me in a school.

*Lack of support.* One out of nine participants expressed that lack of support was a serious challenge that began to question his principal pedagogy. P8 shared:

What actually happened was the school was really doing poorly. The school was doing poorly. The school was actually a D- on a progress report and was falling. A year later, we were an A school, and in terms of progress, we had made the most progress in the district. What happened after that was very odd. Right after that, unannounced, without anyone, the chancellor popped up at my school. He came looking for me. I happened to be team-teaching in a classroom with another teacher. He knocked on the door. He happened to come with my deputy network leader, who just happened to be in the building. They entered my room, and he came in and sat down. I quickly realized, "I'm being observed. I'm being observed here." He sat in that room for about an hour, so I tore that lesson up. It wasn't like he wanted to talk. It was almost like I'm coming to check you out or, I don't know. It was very awkward and uncomfortable. It wasn't like, I wasn't celebrated. He came in. It was odd. It was just very odd. It was almost like we didn't want this school to succeed. That's, I'll be honest, what I took away from it. It was almost as if, we didn't want this school to succeed. You're ruining our plan. We planned on
changing this into a charter school, but now with these new data results that are coming out, what are you doing? That's the way I honestly felt. I'd never felt under pressure as much as I did. You would think, man, you go into this school. You change it around, make a good culture, everyone's working together. You're going to be celebrated. You're going to be a hero in the community. I felt like I was almost under attack.

Fear of failure. Participants P4 and P7 both expressed their fear of failing. Failure could lead to a principal’s dismissal or even more importantly having their reputation tarnished. According to P4, success or failure is based on the success of his students:

So, I always defined my success by the success of students. And so, when you're in high poverty, low income environments, it takes time for the strategies and the culture to take hold. And a lot of time, you don't get that. And so, you don't get 5, 4, 3, years. You need to show some form of result immediately. And so, that internal tug was just that. Like, I've got to make it happen now. That sense of urgency was so great. Because you know you don't get these kinds of opportunities over and over. Your window closes, and then they're on to the next person who they think may be able to do it.

Participant P7 expressed:

I think as a school leader . . . Let me talk about me. I have always been concerned about failure, because failure is a reality. Failure is the thing that will get you removed, especially in New York City. If you don't get this job done and get this job done to the satisfaction of the superintendency, to the chancellor's office, to those regional people, you were in trouble. Failure is always a concern. I think
that you have to believe in who you are and what you bring to the table. I think one of the things that has always motivated me is, if you ask me in an interview, "What is it about Mr. Biggie that makes him the right person for this job?" I tell you that I'm going to make this school better. Wherever we are when I walk in the door, I'm going to make that environment better. Failure is always a reality but understanding that there's a level of success that can be attained, that's my motivation.

Cultural awareness. Two out of nine participants responded about the idea of cultural awareness, and P5 articulated a clear picture of the internal challenges principals face when addressing the root causes of dysfunctional schools. P5 stated:

Now, as I stayed in the principalship at DCPS, the internal challenges were, all right, now as I explained earlier, it was very clear that the overall platform of DCPS was, "Keep quiet and make the numbers look good. Keep quiet and don't speak about the root causes. Keep quiet and don't make this thing more than just simply having a school open that looks good and the kids are happy, and we can do some good photos, get some good numbers at the end of the year and send them home. There's no community or social revolution that you need to do at school." That was the message. So as time moved on and it was like, "Wait, that's exactly what we need," the internal battle was, Well, do we just sit quietly when they start talking about the graduation rate and why it is what it is, and the fact that neighborhood high schools are failing, which are often led by Black males or almost synonymously led by Black males, or do I open up my mouth and say, Well, let's look at the way that our top performing students are systematically
taken away to the application school, and ironically, the lowest performing students for those application schools and charter schools are sent to the neighborhood high schools.

Participant P8 explained:

We deal with low money, fractured communities. In our evaluation, because our leadership is so important, which is we become almost not just school leaders, but almost like community leaders as well. We have to be connected to the parents. We have to be connected to the politicians. We have to be connected to the business leaders as well as run our schools, because we're dealing with so much trauma with our students, with our community, that we have to be a part of the healing. When the Department of Ed doesn't take into account everything that, the role, the entire picture, I get it. You go out to Garden City, Long Island and just do your job. You can just be the principal.

Stress/burnout. Stress was highlighted by two participants as a major, internal inhibiting factor that could lead to principals leaving or losing their jobs. P4 emphasized that speaking out about issues that affect your school can have devastating consequences for principals:

The internal battle was always speaking true to power about what is really causing the achievement gap. Like I said, it's the metaphor of being the firefighter and being blamed for the fire. DCPS definitely established a culture where it was, "You are responsible for the fire because we see you closest to it, even though we're closest to it, because we're trying to put out this fire," of which they have no interest to being close to at all. Definitely the internal battle had nothing to do
with database student challenges or database staff challenges. We all knew we were getting into it for that, but it was were you willing to risk your career to speak truth to power regarding the root causes of what is affecting the achievement gap and therefore affecting your day to day work?

Participant P6 explained:

Principals had tenure at one time in the District of Columbia. We no longer have tenure. So, I think it can be a lot of wear and tear, especially on newbies when they come in, and especially if you don't take the school to a certain level. I'm very grateful that I've lasted 20 years as an administrator, because every year, you had to think about that 1-year commitment as being a principal. Because at the end of the year, you're on pins and needles wondering whether I'm going to be back as a principal. There used to be a time when principals lasted in schools 10 to 15 years. It wasn't this one and done thing. So, I think psychologically on a new principal coming in, and they think about those things, especially if you have not mastered the skills to be a principal, it really can be a downfall for you. Because if you miss out on that first year, you might not feel like you have the confidence to want to pursue doing this work.

**Interview question 7.** Throughout the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories generated from the participants perceptions as they addressed external inhibiting factors in their school district as related to the retention of Black male principals. The theme is labeled *direct external inhibitors* in principalship. Table 4.15 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories, and themes that emerged from interview question 7.
### Table 4.15

**Summary of the Codes/Categories from Interview Question 7 (Theme: Direct External Inhibitors in the Principalship)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policies around disciplining teachers and students, it never was a clear distinction, a clear . . . this was one of my struggles.</td>
<td>District Policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think No Child Left Behind was a mandate that was very inhibiting, we’re talking about a bureaucracy centrally, that is top heavy with mandates, the state mandates provide barriers because every time I have to look at data and students with special needs are factored into your performance when the student has a special need already, that’s an inhibiting factor.</td>
<td>Unrealistic Mandates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t mind the evaluation tool . . . be transparent about how I’m going to be evaluated, teacher evaluations, interns evaluating teachers, we’re talking about IMPACT, which is more about job retention than teacher growth . . . because our leadership is so important, which is we become almost not just school leaders, but . . . community leaders as well, the Dept. of Ed doesn’t take into account everything.</td>
<td>Principal Evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe school environment, in terms of culture, DC intentionally chose youth and inexperience over experience, so many times you end up talking to policy wonks, lack of parental support, parents because they didn’t want their kids to be in AP classes, lack of transparency, graduation rates, lack of courage with the leadership of the district, districts are misaligned and there is no equity with it, heavy turnover of teachers, there are a lot of problems within the community and scholarship is not going to be at the forefront.</td>
<td>Expectation: Culture Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to swiftly terminate ineffective teachers, it was intellectually more easy for them to . . . manage you than to trust you, leadership didn’t have the experience in the environment, so there wasn’t a lot of feedback or professional development, give me the chance to make my own bed, even the instructional superintendent had no strategy, no vision, If I have autonomy to run my school, let me run my school.</td>
<td>Autonomy-Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate funding, budget, state of the art equipment, technology at their fingertips, title 1 schools, low money, they redistrict areas where certain funds are only funneled toward certain populations, while others have to struggle.</td>
<td>Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the change of hands from having a school board and going with mayoral control, it changed something in the district, now, we are talking about a mayor who may be an educator, or may not be an educator, or may not know all the pieces to run a school district, some of those outside influences where people complain to the mayor almost like you complain about your trash service, all of a sudden, here comes the change, one of the big drawbacks is having people who are planning for you, who have no idea how a school should operate.</td>
<td>Relationship with Mayor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on standardized testing, focusing on test prep, bogged down with test scores.</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** The participants were asked the following question: “Defining external inhibiting factors as state and district policies, structures, mandates, etc., what external inhibiting challenges have you experienced as a school administrator?”
Table 4.16 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.

Table 4.16

Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 7 (Direct External Inhibitors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Policies</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrealistic Mandates</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Evaluations</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation: Culture/Personal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy-Vision</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with Mayor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Scores/Assessment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The figure illustrates nine categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 7.

District policies. Three out of nine participants emphasized that district policies were external inhibiting factors that adversely affected their work as a principal. P1 noted:

Discipline in terms of policies around disciplining teachers as well as disciplining students, being limited in terms of being able to really provide a safe school environment, in terms of culture, and when I say safe, safe in terms of students and staff, but also prevent the perpetrators being students and staff.
P4 stated that “There were just different variables, and it never was a clear distinction, a clear, this-is-what-we're-doing, until you had already established your plan for the year. I think that was one of my struggles with the district policy specifically.” P7 discussed policies that were unattainable and could affect the principals’ rating:

The district office sometimes has these policies that, in your situation, are unattainable. Unattainable at the level that they are perceiving at those targets that you should be able to hit, because if you're in a school where 60% of your population are level ones, how are you going to become proficient?

*Unrealistic mandates.* Several participants expressed concerns over city, state, and federal mandates that were unrealistic. As P1 expressed: “I think No Child Left Behind was a mandate that was very inhibiting.” P2 noted:

Whether we're talking about a bureaucracy centrally, that is top heavy with mandates, or whether you're talking about an idea, like one that you came up with that then is appropriated and bureaucratized, such as ninth grade academy, it's always trying to get permission from people who aren't responsible for the results to do what you think is right to be done.

Participant P7 explained:

The other piece is the state. The state mandates provide barriers because every time I have to look at data and students with special needs are factored into your performance when the student has a special need already, that's an inhibiting factor. That's an inhibiting factor when you look around the city and most of the proficient schools in the city do not have high special needs populations, or high ELL populations, or high student populations where the Black student population
has poor attendance. You start out behind the eight ball and there are a series of inhibiting factors.

Principal evaluations. From the participants’ responses, principal evaluations, both from the principal evaluating teachers, and the district instructional superintendent evaluating principals, were considered a major direct external inhibiting factor. P1 stated:

Another inhibiting factor external was the teacher evaluations, interns evaluating teachers. That presented its challenges. A major inhibiting factor is the inability to swiftly terminate ineffective teachers, because students who have high needs and you have students who are poorly performing, those children are doomed for failure, so that's a major inhibiting factor.

Participant P2 explained:

I'll use it like this. I once said to a superintendent of DC schools, back my first iteration as the principal. I said to him, "I could be the Michael Jordan of principals and be mediocre in this system." And he, "What do you mean?" I said that the external factors will dictate how successful you will be, and many of the external factors of DC public schools, you have to be successful in spite of them, not because of them. And so, whether we're talking about IMPACT, which is more about job retention than teacher growth.

Participant P4 explained:

I think, so, for me, I don't mind the evaluation tool. Just tell me, be transparent with me about how I'm going to be evaluated. I think the lack of transparency, I think part of the problem with DC was that they were flying the plane and they
were building it at the same time. And because of that, it was a consistent moving
target as to what we were being evaluated on.

Participant P5 explained:

The thing is, when talking about that, the metrics that we were measured by . . .
Now, okay, there's a rubric of the evaluation system, but the rubric doesn't tell you
"what are the percentage numbers you need to hit?" Quote, unquote. You're
looking at the rubric and you say, "Okay. Yeah, that's fine. All right. I'll work
towards it. Rubric's a rubric," but then at the end of the year, you may see the
metrics a week before you have to sit down to be evaluated by. If this was based
upon any best practice of evaluating business or any sort of program, that metric
would've been established from the beginning of the year. Professional
development would've been aligned to it, and then monthly if not quarterly, you'd
be meeting to discuss where you are according to the progress of that metric. That
never was the case. Again, because we had such a volatile fluctuation of student
achievement given our student population, it affected neighborhood high schools.
I refuse to look at that as an oversight. That was an intentional system put in place
to continuously keep the foot on the neck of predominantly the Black progressive
male school leaders in DCPS. The rubric was okay within itself. The issue was
how the metrics that should've been connected to the rubric was used. There was
no alignment. There were a lot of times things that we were being measured by,
there was never any professional development aligned to it. Even the instructional
superintendent had no strategy, no vision, or a memo. How did he even choose or
meet those targets? What sort of strategy is that? That is totally counterintuitive to
what we teach the students when we say, "You design the assessment first, and then you backwards map from that assessment." They don't even do that as a district, and then they want to punish the students' leader, which is the school leader, for not meeting the mark. This is completely opposite of what we call good instructional planning on a student level, but yet we totally fail as instructional leaders when doing it for school principals.

*Expectation: culture/personal:* Four participants shared their perspective on challenges they faced regarding expectations. P2 stated:

The other external factor is DC intentionally chose youth and inexperience over experience, and so many times, you ended up talking to policy wonks, where you ended up talking to interns, or you end up talking, in the case of even the chancellor, who had never done a thing they're asking you to do, and it's so much more difficult for them to understand, intellectually, why you did it when they'd never done it.

Participant P3 explained:

Like I said, for me I think mainly [it is] the lack of parental support in the area where it's needed most. It's more than just coming to a PTA meeting it's about following up on where your child is. I would get phone calls from parents because they didn't want their kids to be in AP (advanced placement) classes, or anything that was harder they didn't want to do. I kind of felt that, that was a detriment because we wouldn't put the kids in the class if they couldn't do the work, but the fact that the kids didn't want to do the work was cosigned, sometimes, at home.

And I think maybe I could have done better at communicating the importance, but
at the same time we just didn't think the parent didn't want what was best for their child at that particular moment in certain instances.

Participant P9 explained:

Let's talk about hiring and longevity even in hiring. Let's talk about the community where these schools are found or placed. Do they have a community that is pushing education? We're looking at family support, we're looking at all these other resources.

*Autonomy-vision.* The findings revealed it was important for a principal to have autonomy. P4 stated: “I think leadership didn't have the experience in the environment that I served. So, there wasn't a lot of feedback or professional development they could give me. I had to do it on my own and lean on my mentors.” P9 also expressed that district level leadership did not have the experience of running a school, therefore a principal should have control of who comes in and out of their building: “That's where that external piece comes in. You have all these different things moving at the same time, controlling who comes into your school, and the data.” P6 noted: “If I have autonomy to run my school, let me run my school. But if I don't have autonomy now, I gotta start almost punishing staff for things that I shouldn't have to.” P2 also felt that the district hired inexperienced personnel over experienced people, and principals must find ways to work around them:

The other external factor that made that hard in DC, is DC intentionally chose youth and inexperience over experience, and so many times, you ended up talking to policy wonks, where you ended up talking to interns, or you end up talking, in the case of even the chancellor, who had never done a thing they're asking you to
do, and it's so much more difficult for them to understand, intellectually, why you did it when they'd never done it. And so, many times, it was intellectually easier for them to try to manage you than to trust you. And so, that's just an utter inexperience and an utter lack of patience that the external factors had along with their kind of system, with impact being one of them as an example, made it so much harder to do the job, because the value in the system externally were put on the systems, and not on the people, much less the students. And so, when you would try to talk to them about people and the impact of this on people, or the impact of this on students, most of the policy wonks didn't get it, and they would take no responsibility for their bad systems, or for their systems that hadn't been well thought out.

Funding. In terms of funding, three out of nine participants discussed the importance of having the necessary funds to effectively run a school. P9 was direct and expressed his dissatisfaction with how the district allocated funds: “Well, let's talk from the beginning on how they redistrict areas where certain funds are only funneled towards certain populations, while others have to struggle.” P8 also referred to the status of his school and the lack of funds allocated and stated: “We're a Title I school. We deal with low money and have fractured communities.” P3 added to their story and noted:

Budget. There's never enough, as always. For instance, if you want your kids to be competitive they should have state-of-the-art equipment. If you want them to be well-read, they need to be able to have technology at their fingertips, and not have to wait for a class to be done with the set of laptops for them to get the
laptops. Just exposure to being able to experience cultural events on a regular basis. The outside classroom learning.

*Relationship with mayor.* In addition to principals expressing their frustration with the lack of available funding, the findings revealed that having a working relationship with the mayor and the political machine was critical to the survival of principals in both cities where the school system was under mayoral control. P6 stated:

You try to build relationships with your community. And as you build relationships with your community, but when the change of hands from having a school board and going with a mayor control, it changed something in the district. Because now, we are talking about a mayor who may be an educator, or may not be an educator, or may not know all of the pieces in order to run a school district. So, it comes under one of her cabinets, so she is the supervisor over the superintendent, or now we call it a chancellor. We no longer have a superintendent, but we call it a chancellor. But some of those outside influences that people can complain to the mayor almost like you complain about your trash service. And all of the sudden, here comes some changes. So, a lot of time changes are influenced by people who live in this district, and also by politicians. When they believe that a school should look a certain way, or they should do certain things, it's a pressure that's put back on the mayor. Because the mayor usually has to answer to the council. And then you have council members who have expressed certain issues and things that they would like to see done in our schools and know nothing about education.
Test scores/assessment. Two out of the nine participants interviewed described that test scores were a major distraction in educating children. P1 states: “Focusing on test prep, or a lot of focus on standardized testing, is a major inhibiting factor.” P3 noted:

The other big external prohibitor for me was test scores. When people get so bogged down on test scores you're liable to lose out on teaching and trying to figure out a way to teach the individual child and meet them where they are. At the same time, you got to worry about if they aren't where they need to be on the tests that impacts you as a leader. So, trying to find that balance, because I think if . . . I really believe that if kids aren’t tested for progress the way they do, I think we can get a lot more done educationally. I think the tests prohibit us from really reaching each individual kid where they are, then move along successfully.

Interview question 8. Throughout the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories that the participants generated as suggestions to recruit Black male principals to their school district. The theme is labeled recruitment strategies. Table 4.17 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories, and themes that emerged from interview question 8. Table 4.18 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data, as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.
Table 4.17

**Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question 8 (Recruitment Strategies)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting them with development and mentoring with the right mentors not just, someone who said they had available time, and they're going to do it for a few dollars. You don’t have to be another principal to mentor a principal, especially someone who I think could be a good leader, I would have leaders who are in the current role speak to potential candidates. And have a Q&amp;A session with them about what it potentially entails.</td>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td>Recruitment Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look at your current demographic of teachers within the district, and create a program sort of like an AP academy, start with teachers, and prepare them for the assistant principal role and then have what’s called a principal academy to create a front line, tap into current students that you have in your school district, the pipeline has to start with teachers, I would say look internationally where there’s a large population of people of color, particularly if we’re talking about Black males, we don’t have to reinvent the wheel the wheel has already been created, we just gotta change the target, and the target needs to be African American males, as opposed to Ivy League, privileged people being recruited, we would intentionally recruit people of color, I also think that I’m a pipeline, establishing your pipeline of leadership, who can we tap into that’s ready?</td>
<td>Pipeline</td>
<td>Recruitment Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would look at district to university partnerships, district to college partnerships, recruit specifically from Black colleges and Universities, I would probably target it more at historically Black colleges and universities.</td>
<td>University/College Partnerships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think those different things, mindset shift, intentional training and work with the district level folk, making sure that it’s a targeted recruitment not only of academic best practices.</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayoral control, the message or the vision should come from the mayor to the chancellor, the school board should set the tone at the top, they should be evaluated on their ability to be able to recruit Black male teachers, to simply mimic some of the stuff they did to recruit more White people, don’t have to reinvent the wheel, we have programs such as Teach for America and Troops to Classrooms, there’s any number of systems that have already been created to recruit others, make the target audience African Americans, are districts having leadership seminars, are you preparing your future leaders? The district itself.</td>
<td>District/City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. The nine participants were asked the following question: “What strategies would you suggest to your school district to recruit more African American male principals?”*
Table 4.18

Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 8 (Principal Recruitment Strategies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
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<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Pipeline</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>College Partnerships</td>
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<td>District/City</td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Note._ The figure illustrates five categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 8.

*Mentorship._ Mentorship was noted as an essential strategy to recruit Black male principals by three out of the nine participants interviewed. P4 discussed the importance of current principals speaking to aspiring principals: “I would have leaders who are in the current role speak to potential candidates and have a Q&A session with them about what it potentially entails, what the role potentially entails.” P3 noted:

Then, when they get here supporting them. Supporting them with development and mentoring with the right mentors, not just someone who said they had available time, and they're going to do it for a few dollars. You don't have to be another principal to mentor a principal, especially someone who I think could be a good leader. So, leadership practices and strategies are far more valuable sometimes than someone who has been a principal that could tell me how to get my budget. I just think it involves veterans in leadership positions that can . . .
Whether it's the business world, the religious world. My biggest supporter is a minister. So, [it] had nothing to do with him being a school principal, but more or less a vision, and helping me tap into a vision of what I think kids need more than anything else, and how to support that vision. I think that no matter what . . . And this isn't having a person, you need more than one. I don't think we can be successful with having only one person to talk to.

Participant P8 explained:

There should be certain organizations out there, almost synonymous with the way a fraternity works, so that when you get [a] Black male, young Black male administrators or young Black male teachers, they get to be a part of an organization that meets periodically for support. They have people come and visit them in their school. They should really be organization that, to me, a real organization. Maybe they have an office up in Albany. Maybe they're fighting. I'm talking about a real state-led organization.

*Pipeline.* Four out of the nine participants interviewed described that creating a pipeline was essential for their district to recruit Black male principals. As P3 stated:

I also think that I'm a pipeline. Establishing your pipeline of leadership. Who can we tap into that's ready? Are districts having leadership seminars, and are you preparing your future leaders? I think they need to get into that role as well as opposed to just waiting for someone to leave, and say 'Well, who got their admin degree?' I don't think that's going to work anymore.

This strategy was very important for P1:
One strategy I would think of is to look and see, look at your current demographic of teachers within the district, and create a program sort of like an AP academy, an assistant principal academy, but start with the teachers, and prepare them for the assistant principal role and then have what's called a principal academy where you can work with your current assistant principals, so in other words, one strategy is frankly to create a front line. That would be a strategy, if you will, for lack of a better description. I would say look internationally where there's a large population of people of color, particularly if we're talking about Black males, and I would look to recruit from there as well.

P2 explained:

To simply mimic some of the stuff they did to recruit more White people. We don't have to reinvent the wheel. We have programs such as Teach for America and Troops to Classrooms, and there's any number of systems that have already been created to recruit others. Simply make the target audience African Americans.

P9 stated:

If we were able to at least get a large percentage of Black male teachers, and then from them, getting them to master pedagogy, giving them the opportunity to coach other teachers, to mentor other teachers. Because there's no line that I see that goes from teacher, straight to administrator. There's got to be someone saying, "Hey, yes you are a teacher, but can you take on this initiative for the school? Could you be a mentor for this teacher?" And then giving them the little steps, and then grow them if you would, into the profession. It's just not, "You're a
good teacher. Okay, you had to be a good principal." It doesn't happen that way. You have to give them those steps in order for them to gain. It would really have to start with recruiting Black male teachers and making the profession an honorable profession with a lot of support, so that they can get the pedagogy, the content down, and getting them to move from within the classroom, but giving them other experiences outside the classroom. And then moving it outwards that way.

**College partnerships.** Three out of nine participants expressed the importance of partnering with colleges and universities to help train and prepare future Black principals. P1 noted:

> I would look at a district-to-university partnership, district-to-college partnership, where the colleges have a program in place where they're educating these children, or these students I should say, in a cohort, knowing that eventually, "Here's the cohort. You're going to go undergrad to graduate school and then to the school system." Another strategy I recommend would be to recruit specifically at historically Black colleges and universities. Trying to look at their schools of education, and also look outside the schools of education because you can look at any, whether it be a business school, these individuals become business teachers, etc.

Participant P2 explained:

> First of all, I would probably target it more at historically Black colleges and universities. I think they produce probably the most number of Black teachers in the country; I think somehow, we need to start with teaching and leading as
synonymous so that knowing they want to be teachers they can aspire to one day lead their own schools, or become administrators, which I think the process doesn't really . . . You learn how to be a teacher, they don't teach you to be a principal. So, they're just really teaching you how to follow, they don't teach you how to lead, and I think targeting these schools, or schools where you have a diverse population of people who are interested in education. It might not have been in an education background, or studying education, but really enjoys working with children as supports. So, I think targeting those universities.

Participant P8 stated:

Colleges that would offer reduction in tuition, sometimes even free tuition for those who want to, for those who commit to a certain amount of years working in the system upon graduation. Can you imagine a system where you have all these Black men who are out here, who would probably love the opportunity to go to school for free, to give back to their community that they live in, to play a role in their community.

_District/city._ Six out of nine of the participants interviewed communicated the importance of their school district administrators leading the effort to recruit Black male principals. P8 stated the following about the importance of the district’s involvement in recruiting Black male principals: “It needs to be something that, obviously, the chancellor, the mayor, or the governor puts into place. It needs to be something where they're fighting for culturally relevant teaching and learning to be mandated across the city.” P1 stated:
I guess that would depend on the structure of the school system, so for example, in New York City, I would say that the responsible person would be the mayor because you have mayoral control, so I think that the message or the vision should come from the mayor to the chancellor in terms of responsibility and districts outside of New York City, I would think that the school board should set the tone at the top, that they should be evaluated on their ability to be able to recruit African male teachers.

Participant P2 explained:

In most urban school districts, they're flooded now with new leaders for new schools, and they're flooded with second alternative pathways to leadership. So, we don't have to reinvent the wheel. The wheel has already been created. We just gotta change the target, and the target needs to be African American males. So, that's what I would recommend. The blueprint is there, as opposed to ivy league, privileged people being recruited, we would intentionally recruit people of color.

Participant P3 stated:

Smaller and in a particular district, cause one of the things about being in a district you know the challenges already. You know the kids, you know the parents, you know the community, and you kind of figure out how your kids learn best. Then from that I think tapping into principals to help support a leadership academy in that district is probably more viable than a big district initiative.

Participant P5 explained:

Intentional training and work with the district level folk, making sure that it's a targeted recruitment, not only of academic best practices, but people that have had
a history of working in the community building a panel of diverse community leaders that have targeted the Black community and the Latino community.

Participant P6 noted:

Well, let me just say during my time, there were opportunities that principals made recommendations to pull a teacher up, or to pull a gym teacher or somebody who knew how to control kids. Because at one time, PE teachers used to be the biggest part of our administrative staff. When people became administrators, it was usually someone who knew how to control kids. So, your PE instructors, your band instructors, those people became administrators. But the district has put some things in place where they've allowed us to empower some teachers, and you may have to look at your LEAP Program that they have. You may have to look at this principal program called Mary Jane Patterson Program, which it has been a program that has selected people to become principals.

Professional development. One participant communicated that in order to successfully recruit Black male principals, district administrators will need professional development to deal with their own biases. P5 explained:

Well, the first thing I think they have to do is understand that they're going to need people to help them deal with their own biases, the district itself, the people in charge themselves, because until their biases are dealt with and they are forced to deal with more cultural competence and be able to understand that diversity is not just a picture of different hued skin people, but diversity is acknowledging the different communities that are served within a district and how those communities have very unique challenges and needs, and very unique leaders that are needed to
help that community. Until that mindset shift is addressed, you can bring in all the progressive Black leaders and you're just going to have a repeat of what occurred with the loss of Black male principals. I think that is step number one.

**Research question 2**: In order to answer research question 2, data were collected. What are the Black male principals’ perceptions of the targeted retention strategies for Black male principals particularly within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? In alignment with research question 2, interview questions 9 through 12 explored Black male principals’ perceptions of retention initiatives available for Black male teacher’s advancement to the principalship in two large urban school districts.

**Interview question 9**: Throughout the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories that the participants perceived as initiatives in their school district used to retain Black male principals. The theme is labeled *retention*. Table 4.19 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories, and themes that emerged from interview question 9. Within this theme of retention numerous categories were defined. The participants spoke of various strategies and initiatives, churn with the schools, issues with leadership and a lack of respect.

Table 4.20 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories. The majority of the participants (eight out of nine) highlighted strategies and initiatives as an area of concern.
Table 4.19

Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question #9 (Retention)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are no initiatives that intentionally, specifically says, &quot;We're here to retain African American folks,&quot; that I'm aware of, I think there may actually be some initiatives to the opposite, they don't see Black principals as principals, hell no, and then the second part is no, I actually saw the opposite, I saw a very methodical approach to get Black male school leaders, particularly ones that are conscious and community focused out of DCPS, Black male principals are virtually invisible even in current positions within schools.</td>
<td>Strategies/Initiatives</td>
<td>Retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There's a high turnover of principals, principals are not staying long, they're waiting for their 55/25. &quot;I'm out of here.&quot; Or, &quot;I can't do this anymore, I'm going to go into central&quot; they move out of the building leadership, you've got 1-year appointments, it takes 3 to 5 years in order to really turn a school around, I just do my job every year to make sure that I can stay, there's a 1-year contract, if you make one mistake, you immediately go to the top of the list of potential chopping block.</td>
<td>Churn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one wants to stick their neck out there for good reason, because then they put their job at risk, I think that there is a cultural misunderstanding of the leadership styles of that subgroup, when men of color don't mimic the behavior, tone, language, body style, does not mimic any feminine version of the majority culture, unless you do that, then you are not going to be welcomed.</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism is there, it exists, we'd be fools to say it doesn't exist, we know when it comes to races, it exists, the constant harassment by the various deputies at the district, the chancellor had never been to one of my graduations in all 5 years that I had been there, there's a running joke among many other people that says if you want to be retained in D.C., you have to meet four criteria you have to be light, White, gay, or a feminine man, that seems to be who's promoted and retained in D.C.</td>
<td>Lack of Respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The nine participants were asked the following question: “Are there initiatives in your school district used to retain African American male principals? If so, did you benefit from the district’s initiatives? Why or why not?”
Table 4.20

Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 9 (School District Retention Initiatives)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies/Initiatives</td>
<td>X X X X X X X X</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churn</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Respect</td>
<td>X X X X</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The figure illustrates four categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 9.

Strategies/initiatives: Eight out of nine participants communicated that their district did not have any strategies or initiatives in place to retain Black male principals. P1 noted: “There was not and there is not an initiative to retain Black male principals.”

P3 also chimed in and stated: “There are none.” As P6 explained:

I haven't seen any initiative for African American male principals, at least not for me, anyway, and I'm an African American principal. But I haven't seen anything. It's just that I just do my job every year to make sure that I can stay.

As P2 stated:

There is nothing in DC. Public Schools that I'm aware of that advertently emphasizes an interest in recruiting any person of color. In fact, I think if you accentuate that you are a person of color, the probability of you coming into DC public schools at this time is lowered. There are no initiatives that intentionally,
specifically says, "We're here to retain African American folks," that I'm aware of. I think there may actually be some initiatives to the opposite, does the opposite of that.

Participant P4 explained:

No, not that I know of. No. It's just a, like, it's a popularity contest. It was whether they like you or not. In my opinion. It had nothing to do with performance. In my opinion. Because I know some people who didn't perform well, who went to happy hour, and I know some people did perform well who didn't go to happy hour.

Participant P5 noted:

I'm going to give two answers. One I don't think you can use. The other one, I'll explain. Hell no, and then the second part is no. I actually saw the opposite. I saw a very methodical approach to get Black male school leaders, particularly ones that are conscious and community focused out of DCPS. I saw that not only with school leaders. I saw it with people at the district level. I'd give some specific examples. The chancellor’s visits to neighborhood high schools led by Black school leaders were far less frequent if at all compared to the application schools or the schools led by White school principals. That's just a fact.

Participant P8 explained:

There are none. I believe because no one wants them in place. There’re not enough people, the people, we the people, coming together and create them. You know how it is. No one wants to stick their neck out there for good reason, because then they put their job at risk.
Participant P9 explained:

No. I guess because they don't see Black principals as Black principals. If they view everyone as a principal, then there's no need to have this initiative to retain them. Cause principalship is very difficult, and there's a high turnover of principals anyway. So why would you want to put your initiatives for one group of people, if everyone is getting tired, burning out?

*Churn.* Four out of nine participants communicated that they were concerned with the number of Black male principals leaving their school district every year. P2 stated:

There's a running joke among many other people that says if you want to be retained in D.C., you have to meet four criteria. You have to be light, White, gay, and under 40. That seems to be who's promoted and retained in D.C.

P9 explained:

If we look at the principalship, why principals are not staying long, they're waiting for their 55/25. "I'm out of here." Or, "I can't do this anymore. I'm going to go into central" or, "I'm going to do some other administrative job, probably in the district." They move out of the building leadership part. I think it's why there’s a turnover of principals.

Participant P4 explained:

Well, first, there's a 1-year contract. So, every year, around February, March, you're waiting on a letter to come via e-mail to say whether you're reappointed or not. So, the level of nervousness. One wrong move. You're leading where, if you have one bad conversation with someone, or if you make one mistake, or somebody does one thing, I mean, you're immediately . . . Go to the top of the list
of potential chopping block. Whether it's true, false, or indifferent. So, they don't even take the time, because they have to make decisions quick. They don't even take the time to see or give you an opportunity to defend yourself or say this is what the reality is. With the 1-year contract, you can't plan long-term. You can't. It's just difficult. And a high-need environment, you're constantly turning over teachers. You're constantly turning over your staff. Which then makes it difficult to be consistent with the overall vision of the school. Because you're constantly in PD mode. Where you're bringing people in, you're onboarding new people, in the middle of the year. So that particular team has to be very strong. And they have to know your plan of action and vision inside and out.

Participant P6 stated:

Well, first of all, let's go back. You've got 1-year appointments, which is a killer. It takes 3 to 5 years in order to really turn a school around. And most of the time when these principals take these jobs, and sometimes the money is good in the District of Columbia, without no doubt. But sometimes, it's a risk, because here, you take a job and you figure that, "Hey, I'm getting paid a substantial amount of money to run a school," and a lot of times it hurts principals because they are asked to do things that they might not normally would have done. If I don't look good, then staff don't look good. And that's the way the district looks at it sometimes. And I feel like this, if I have a school, I'm always going to have a valedictorian and a salutatorian. So, why can I have, or why can't I have an outstanding teacher, even though my test scores weren't good? So, if test scores,
and grades, and things are going to drive the school, it's going to certainly drive principals out, because they cannot, it's a pace that you just can't keep up with.

Leadership. Two out of nine Participants identified that the lack of involvement in decision making opportunities made it difficult to retain Black principals. The perception was that the Black principals were ignored by district leadership. P5 explained:

I remember specifically the initiative that they were trying to figure out was how to deal with gangs in the different schools, and that's where all the Black principals were, but those same Black principals were not part of the chancellor's major think tank, think group as it relates to academic achievement and graduation, being able to create more career focused opportunities. It wasn't that. We were just handed down the initiative. Again, there was no inclusion of our ideas, even though we often had far more experience than our other counterpart, far more credentials than our counterparts, academically, but again, total disregard of what we could bring to the table.

Participant P6 stated:

I've seen situations where I came off a highly effective school year, and I was pulled out of my building to work at the Chief of School’s office. But it was a place that I did not want to be. I would rather have stayed at the school and continued to do the work that I was doing. And some people may see it a little bit differently. But there was no pipeline, or any place that I could say, "Hey, let me get in this lane right here, and this will put me in position to be the next chancellor or something of that nature." There was nothing in place for that.
Lack of respect. Three of the participants mentioned that the district did not acknowledge the accomplishments of their work. P1 noted:

In many ways, there's almost a lack of acknowledgment of Black male principals as a group or an entity of individuals, so your question brings to mind Ralph Ellison, The Invisible Man. Black male principals are virtually invisible even in current positions within schools, so there's definitely no initiative in place, in short, to retain them.

P2 stated: “When men of color don't mimic the behavior, tone, language, body style, does not mimic any feminine version of the majority culture, unless you do that, then you are not going to be welcomed.” Participant P5 explained:

The other thing was simply the constant, the constant harassment by the various deputies at the district. This was admitted and confided in me by a number of them, the conversations that were held. It was even admitted to me by one of her top three people that they wanted me out of the district and they wanted a number of other people out of the district that she wasn't, quote, unquote, "feeling." I mean, this was the thing. There was absolutely not only no attempt, but it was actually the opposite. It was a very methodical approach to getting people out.

Interview question 10. Throughout the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories generated from the participants’ perceptions of the skills and attributes principals needed to be successful administrators. The theme is labeled leadership. Table 4.21 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories, and themes that emerged from interview question 10.
Table 4.21

Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question 10 (Leadership Characteristics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to communicate, communication is critical, the ability to listen, focus on active listening, people detector, listening, communication, strong writing skills, always listening, articulate, speak publicly, public speaking, clearly understood, tools, communicate effectively.</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to diagnose, culturally aware, struggled with middle aged Black women, get the tone, figure out skillset, your community, empathy, good community relation, courage, that community, mindset, it's a skill.</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to handle conflict, leadership is conflict, the ability to deliberate, people skills, high quality relationship building, the school leader has to be able to establish good business sense, leveraging partnerships, people person, empower people, help you, walk you through this process, broad understanding, understanding that the term &quot;we&quot; is greater than &quot;I,&quot; team build, build trust within your troops, within your soldiers, a collaborative leader.</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic-planner, have a vision, my vision, the next principal, not only have a mission, but be effective at getting people to buy into it, overarching big picture, that vision, and be able to lead people to it, well read, leadership initiatives.</td>
<td>Vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional acumen, instructional leader, know instruction, best practices, content areas, system's manager, driven instruction cycle, your team, looking at data, being able to relate to students, need to know instruction, management, good instructional leader, come up through the ranks, understand the operation of a school inside out. master at being a pedagogical leader.</td>
<td>Structure/Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective decisions, decision-making, my principal taught me, trained me, I watched, but a lot of it came back to me, people can't teach you decision-making, you have to make those on your own.</td>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The nine participants were asked the following question: “What skills and attributes do you feel are needed to be a successful administrator? How did you acquire those skills?”

Table 4.22 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.
Table 4.22

*Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 10 (Leadership Characteristics)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure/Organization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The figure illustrates six categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 10.

*Communication.* Four of the nine participants felt that communication was an essential skill that principals needed in order to be successful. P3 noted: “Listening skills, problem solving, communication, and I think it’s strong writing skills, and most importantly people skills.” P7 stated: “You need to be able to articulate and be able to speak publicly” P8 explained: “When it comes to communication, you have to be able to communicate effectively.” P1 articulated that communication was one of the most critical skills all administrators must possess:

Communication is critical in terms of a skill, and of course, you can break down communication, and a subset of that would be the ability to listen. Particularly I like to focus on active listening, so that's important. In terms of even the ability to
deliberate, these are skillsets or attributes. If someone asks you a question and you have a challenge before you, you need to think about it before you actually act, and so you need to be able to focus on that.

*Cultural awareness.* Three of the participants mentioned the significance of cultural awareness as an important skill needed to effectively run a school. P1 stated:

Some of my skillset came from even as a child, being able to navigate tough situations in the community, from one community to the next. You had your intra-community issues and you had your intercommunity challenges from neighborhood to neighborhood, and so really, just, I think the key way that I've learned things was through observation. Observing what I would consider being positive behaviors and observing negative behaviors, and then being able to determine which yielded the best outcome, and so yes, some of it was by trial and error.

P2 was able to tell a story on the importance of understanding your staff and being culturally aware of their situation and circumstances. If a principal wasn’t culturally aware of the challenges of their staff, then it could affect the culture and climate of the building. He shared the following:

I'll use an example. I struggled when I first became a principal with middle aged Black women. That was my struggle group. I somehow had a pattern of the people I had a problem with, most likely tended to be middle aged, middle career, Black women. I had to take some time and reflect, "Why am I having this?" Because I wasn't relating to them. I wasn't aware of what they needed. I was having them to have to adjust to me, and that adjustment took many of them out
of their comfort level, until some mentors simply said to me, "Have you studied this group? What are the characteristics of the people you're struggling with the most?" I said, "Most of them are 40-ish, 40 to 50-ish." And my mentor asked me, "Well, what else are the characteristics of them?" And I said, "Most of them have been teaching about 10 years," and kept pushing me, kept pushing me. He said, "What else?" And I said, "Well, most of them are divorced." Most of them are divorced, and he said, "Yeah. What does that mean for you as the school leader? So, think about your behavior, too? There's most of them divorced recently, or was most of them." I said, "Most of them had been divorced over the last 2 to 3, 4 years." He looked at me, said, "So, the divorce, what other men did they have in their life?" And the light bulb went off that for that subgroup, and we talk about being culturally aware, I was the most significant man in their life. And half of that anger wasn't at me, it was what I represented. And then I was treating them as indifferently as they possibly were coming out of. And so I was triggering their anger point. I pushed back on my mentor and I said, "Well, why am I responsible for that?" He said, "Do you want them to produce or do you want them to keep fighting with you?" I said, "No, I want them to produce." He says, "So, from the time they get out of their car to the time they get back in that car, you are going to have a relationship that's so strong with them, that when they get on the phone to talk about you, it's going to be in glowing terms." I agreed with having to do that or not, that was necessary for that teacher to be okay to do what I needed her, mostly, to do in that classroom for kids. (P2)

Participant P5 expressed:
We have to be able to know how to build good community relation. The bottom line, like I said, when a district is not supporting you, a lot of times the unofficial district is the sum of all the community institutions and how they support you, all the way from the grandparent at home to the local rec centers and everything in between. Going back to being an instructional leader, being able to break down payment and set up without a driven instruction cycle, so your team is actually looking at data in a live way, and ultimately being able to be relatable to students.

Collaboration. Collaboration was reported to be another leadership skill that was necessary to be a successful administrator. As P1 stated: “I definitely believe in looking at people who are doing the job and then learning from them.” P4 identified three essential skills all administrators must have in order to be successful: “Instructional acumen. High quality relationship building. Empathy. You have those three things, you can go a long way.” P8 stated: “You have to be able to team build. You have to be able to build trust within your troops, within your soldiers. That's why we say a lot of this is so relational.” P6 explained:

You have to be a people person. If you're not a people person, if you can't interact with the staff that you have and the people that work with you, you're never going to be successful. And then the other thing is, is that you have to empower people within your buildings. And that's why I said when we used to empower people years ago, we knew who we wanted to be our next counselor, our next administrator, or the next principal, even in your school.

Participant P9 explained:
Being a collaborative leader is very important. Then, willing to say, "I just don't know." That's what a collaborative piece is. Being a leader is someone who says, Hey, I'm going to be in the front, but I'm also going to be in the middle with you, I'm also going to be at the end and I'm learning as we go on.

Vision. Two out of nine participants throughout the interviews emphasized the importance of a principal having a vision. P2 stated: “a principal must be a really intentionally strategic planner.” P8 explained:

You have to be able to have that overarching big picture, that vision, and be able to lead people to it. You have to be able to not only have a vision, not only have a mission, but be effective at getting people to buy into it. Having that vision is vital, and getting the right people, the right people on board and getting them to go all out for the cause.

Experience. During the interviews, three of the participants expressed the importance of having experience and coming up through the ranks and paying your dues. P2 noted:

I would say just through trial and error, actually, that I came through at a time where you could belong in a job and make mistakes, and your supervisors would not fire you if you made a mistake. I don't know if that's the case in today's principalship.

Participant P3 stated:

I should say that I came up through the ranks. So, a lot of that was just learned experience. It wasn't like I just came out of classroom and they made me a teacher. So, for me, it was in the classroom, in the district office, assistant
principal, then a principal. So, I went through the chain as opposed to what some are often able to do today. So that for me helped being in an AP role, seeing the job, being able to do the job, and especially having all the demands of the job I think also helped prepare me.

Participant P7 explained:

First of all, in order to be a good instructional leader, you need to come up through the ranks. For me, I think that, coming from another venue, I don't care if you've been the president of a bank for 30 years. To think that you can come to a school and be a principal is a misnomer. It's not that easy. I think that when you come up through the ranks.

Structure/organization: In addition to communication, cultural awareness, collaboration and vision, four out of nine participants saw how structure and organization is a critical skill to have in order to be a successful administrator. P6 notes: “Well, first of all, I learned two things. First of all, you need to know instruction. And you need to know management. Without those two things, a successful school can't happen.” P4 explains:

I sought some things out myself. I went and got some professional development myself. Like I said before, I was very strong in school culture and climate, and things along those lines. But to be able to go into a calculus class, an English class, a history class, and a science class, and provide meaningful feedback, bite-size feedback, was a skill that I had to acquire. And I worked on that craft, to where now I'm able to do that pretty easily.

Participant P5 stated:
One, you have to be an instructional leader. You have to know instruction from the lens of best practices with all the content areas. Two, you have to be able to be a system's manager. When I say a systems manager, really a system's leader. You have to be able to know how to make the connections between the teachers, the department chairs and the instructional coaches, to whichever you have aligned with instruction to make sure that the deans and those that deal with the climate and culture of the school can see the connection to the academic and understand that they are treated as equals and not just disciplinarians and categorized that way.

Participant P7 explains:

You need to understand the operation of a school inside out. You need to know what the maintenance staff does. You need to know about the food and nutrition services and what their role might be in the school. You need to know what the TA does, the school aid. You need to know what the parent coordinator needs to do and the special ed coordinator and your ELL persons and your people who do PT and ... what's the other one? PT, physical therapy, and speech and language. You need to know all of these things. You need to know what the secretaries do, and you need to know what the pupil personnel people do, and what happens in human resources. You need to know what security does. You need to understand the entire organization from top to bottom.

Decision-making: Two of the nine participants discussed during the interviews the importance of having the skill of making a decision. P1 notes:
Another critical skill is the ability to handle conflict, because the nature of leadership is conflict during the day, in that area, so being able to ... Another critical skill or attribute is the ability to make effective decisions or decision-making, being able to make decisions. It's critical because you have people say, "Well, I'll get back to you," and they don't get back to you.

Participant P6 explains:

So, a lot of decision-making comes with being a principal, as well. And that may have to go back to what we just answered. And sometimes, people can't teach you decision-making. You have to make those on your own. But you watch how people make decisions, and you watch how people model certain behaviors with staff, and with community members. And I had to learn that. And once I learned it, it became very valuable to me.

*Interview question 11.* Throughout the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories that the participants perceived to address lack of representation of Black male principals in their school district. The theme is labeled *lack of representation of Black male principals.* Table 4.23 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories and themes that emerged from interview question 11.
Table 4.23

Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question 11 (Lack of Representation of Black Male Principals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More Black females than males, a larger group of White females</td>
<td>Gender Bias</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not wanted . . . a problem with our system . . . not recruiting,</td>
<td>Recruitment/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>retaining, and supporting Black male teachers, they cannot possibly</td>
<td>Retention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go on to be principals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A national narrative of what . . . Black male hood is, they've taken</td>
<td>Role Model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>down Cliff Huxtable, Black male professional leadership.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break stereotypes, fear is real, there's a thing about the Black man</td>
<td>Stereotypes</td>
<td>Lack of Representation of Black Male Principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that people fear, portrayal of Black men in the media, constant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>negative images, the White man's fear . . . help dispel the stereotypes,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>narrative that's been churned about who and what Black men are, their</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>own personal perspective, stance on Black males into the workplace, all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you do is management . . . discipline, the mindset is at the top.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding that we're only given these positions when . . . schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are troubled.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of trust of the Black man, union or an association that can</td>
<td>Lack of Support</td>
<td>Lack of Representation of Black Male Principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support principals, caught without a voice, you're not wanted, you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>get the picture, they're not supported, undermined, it's important</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>that we form organizations, because when organizations are formed,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>then it may not have to be me speaking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect the Black man, lack of respect, powered people, the power</td>
<td>Lack of Respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structure, non-people of color, have the relationships, establish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respect and trust, vicious cycle, African male principals don't have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the instructional know-how, not looking at you as that instructional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>leader, Black men have it hard all the time, no matter what you do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The salary you're often given, the sole bread winner, teaching may</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not be the move, financial piece, you may leave, take a pay cut,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who wants to take a pay cut, quality of life, peace of mind, there's</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no dollar you can put on it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not wanted, we're pigeonholed, school culture and climate, mere</td>
<td>Gate Keeper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumptions, anything can hinder or stop the progression of someone's</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>career, any type of an assumption, unfair, those in power, those in a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>position to hire, they don't believe Black men can do this job, we're</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not intelligent enough to do this job.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The nine participants were asked the following question: “What do you think are the reasons there are so few African American male principals in your district?
Table 4.24 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.

Table 4.24

*Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 11 (Lack of Representation of Black Male Principals)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Bias</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment/Retention</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Model</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotypes</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Support</td>
<td>X X X</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Respect</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>X X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The figure illustrates seven categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 11.

*Gender bias.* Throughout the interviews, two participants described how female principals were respected as instructional leaders more than their male counterparts and that number of female principals in high schools has increased while the number of Black male principals has decreased. P2 explained:

If you think about leadership now, where 20 years ago, a teacher at the secondary level, the imagery that came to mind was a male leading the high school. Now, the majority of the leaders of our high schools are females. And imagery of an instructional leader, you don't come up with an image of an African American male. It is kind of an English teacher or a math teacher, and so, when folks are
looking for their prototypical leader now, the first thing that doesn't come to mind is African American men unless it happens to be a challenging school. Then, we become part of that.

Participant P9 stated:

No. We're also looking at Black females, which makes up a larger number of principals. There’re more Black females than Black males. And then there's even a larger group of White females. In my area, Hispanics are now, because of demographics in Brooklyn is changing. So now you're having more Hispanic and Latino principals coming in.

*Recruitment/retention.* One participant believed that the challenge for his school district was that they were not recruiting or supporting Black male principals. He believed that it was a systemic issue that created a toxic environment that district administrator failed to see. P8 described:

We have a problem with our system. Our system is not recruiting, retaining, and supporting Black male teachers, so they cannot possibly go on to be Black male principals. It's a systemic problem. It's a systemic issue that we've yet to unravel, we've yet to find a solution for. I think we're great at giving speeches, meaning Black people are great at giving speeches. We can identify the problem, but no one's stepping up and doing anything about it. We all know what the issues are, but it's so risky to often do anything about it.

*Role model.* Role models can be a powerful strategy that is used to recruit and retain Black male principals. During the interview one of the participants expressed how
important having a role model was in his life. He further went on to say that if it were not for his teacher he would not be an educator. P2 explained:

I mean, I got into this because I had a role model as a teenager, when I was in 10th grade, had a teacher who I thought what he did was the coolest thing in the world, and then I spent my formative years trying to mimic what I saw him do.

**Stereotypes.** From five of the nine participants’ responses, they indicated that stereotypes can negatively impact the number of Black male principals in a school district. P1 strongly suggested that Black men have been portrayed negatively in the media and because of the negative images they are not given opportunities or options. P1 stated:

Frankly, fear. Fear is real. I think that people will talk about, "I work with Black people or Black men," but there's a certain thing about the Black man that people fear, and that may have something to do with the portrayal of Black men in the media, the constant negative images that are pushed out there every single day, and not to justify the White man's fear, but that is still a fear that they have.

P2 and P4 suggested that Black male principals are placed in the most difficult schools or challenging positions in a school district because they feel that they can handle major behavior problems. P2 explained:

When there is an intentionality of doing that, it's mostly to the most troubling positions within the school district. So, when you look throughout the school district where there are African American men, that's where there tend to be major behavior problems. It really is how do you change that perception that African American men can do more than just be managers of behavior? Because we have
a national narrative of what male hood, particularly Black male hood is, and since they've taken down Cliff Huxtable, who used to be the national model of what Black male professional leadership [is], we have to break stereotypes. Even in 2018, and I'm sure you've experienced this, I'm still getting what I called backhanded compliments about things like, "You're so intelligent," and I really want to counter with, "What would you expect me to be?" I kind of already know what the answer is, is that's not the imagery you have about people who look like me, and so Black male leadership in schools with kids that are totally different, that would go so far into help dispel some of the stereotypes and some of the narrative that's been churned about who and what Black men are.

Participant P4 stated:

We're pigeonholed. We get pigeonholed into school culture and climate. And once you get good at something, they don't want to let you go. So, if you're in a school in Ward 8, in Ward 7, and you're decreasing suspensions, and you're decreasing violent acts, for you to be the principal of a school, you've got the leave that school. So why would they ever let you go anywhere? They're going to keep selling you a dream, and you're going to stay there because you're comfortable. And then you'll get disgruntled. And then something will happen, and you'll leave. Because people bring their own personal perspective or stance on Black males into the workplace. Whether they want to or not. You walk into an elevator, and even if you're at work, and that six-foot-one, six-two Black male with some size walks in, your first initial is to either clench your purse or . . .

Well, no matter what. And so, until we attack the assumptions and the
preconceived, how I want to say, the preconceived judgment of Black males, we're going to continue to be in this position.

P7 believed that those district administrators in the position to hire do not believe that Black male principal are intelligent enough to be instructional leaders. P7 stated:

I don't know if people, if those in power, those in a position to hire, I don't know if it's they don't believe that Black men can do this job. I don't know if they think that we're not intelligent enough to do this job. Or I don't know if they're fearful of the fact that we can be overly successful at this and reclaim the number of leaders who are in positions of authority.

Lack of support: Three out of nine participants felt that their school district did not support Black male principals. According to P2, the District of Columbia Public Schools provide principals with a 1-year contract. He felt that principals were not going to stay in a system that could not guarantee them longevity. P2 stated:

There's a systemic limitation that doesn’t support that being a career path, and some of those systemic limitations are, as a provider, the 1-year contract. Who's going to put their family in that kind of economic jeopardy if they don't have to? The second thing being no intentionality on the part of the system to promote African American men.

P5 explained:

The question is what do I think? I think they are not wanted. I held that observation for the 5 years that I was there with endless examples, and there were multiple principals that also agreed with that observation. I think in any circumstance, when you're not wanted, you get the picture kind of quickly. I think
they're not supported. I gave a lot of examples of how they're not supported and actually undermined that this is people's careers. People see their children and send their kids to school. They keep a roof over the house through this. This is not volunteer work. People have to make career decisions for their family, and they want to fight the battle, but they also have to keep in mind the well-being and the welfare of their family.

Participant P8 noted:

This is why I think it's important that we form organizations, because when organizations are formed, then it may not have to be Principal Red speaking. Someone else could speak on his behalf, to keep me clean, but if everyone's going to be out there operating within a vacuum, then they're going to keep us on life support.

*Lack of respect.* From the perspective of one of the participants, lack of respect seemed to be the main cause for the lack of Black male principals. P1 stated:

I think that there are three areas that cause for a lack of presence of African Americans. One is respect of the Black man, or the lack of respect. The second is the lack of trust of the Black man. The third is that the powered people who are in the power structure, non-people of color, don't necessarily have the relationships that are necessary to establish respect and trust, and so it's a vicious cycle. If we don't have a relationship, then I'm not going to be able to trust you and I'm not going to necessarily respect you, and so in that way, it's a vicious cycle, so I think lack of familiarity. People recruit who they know and that goes into relationships.
Finance. Two participants communicated that finance, especially for new hires, may be challenging if they are the sole provider. P3 noted:

The salary you're often given to do the job. So, I think that's often a situation that hurts us. When you have to be the sole bread winner, you may not be the one . . . Teaching may not be the move. So, I think that's part of the problem, and then you don't become a principal or educator until you move up through those ranks.

P4 expressed that his district pays well, yet there are challenges that you constantly have to deal with if you want to keep that salary. P4 stated:

DC pays well. So, you get caught into the financial piece, too. So yeah, you may leave, but you may take a pay cut to leave. Well, who wants to take a pay cut when your quality of life is a certain way? So, it's all those different variables too. But peace of mind, there's no dollar you can put on it.

Interview question 12. Throughout the interviews, one theme emerged from the codes and categories where the participants suggested recommendations to retain Black male principals. The theme is labeled recommendations. Table 4.25 displays a qualitative summary of the codes, categories and themes that emerged from interview question 12. Table 4.26 displays a quantitative (frequency) summary of the categories that emerged from the data as well as the participants who contributed to these categories.
Table 4.25

*Summary of the Codes/Categories/Themes from Interview Question 12 (Recommendations to Retain Black Male Principals)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coaches in place, coach principals, supporting, mentors, who are the mentors, assigning to the schools, Black male principal, White female mentor, White male mentor? strategically and overtly assign a Black male principal, role models and mentors, outcomes, we want is to retain these folks, principal coaches would be helpful, thought partner, mentors and the role model, mentorship is extremely important, creating relationships, fraternity feel.</td>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnout, seminars, health, how to stay healthy, professional development is aligned, you can't expectations, achieve, the model that has been established, look at, kind of support and professional development, Black male principals, achieve success.</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School that was 70% Hispanic, intentional, recruit Hispanic professionals. recruit a Hispanic counselor, math teacher, science teacher, English teacher, kids could see, professional jobs, looked like them, saw precipitous jumps in achievement, cultural growth.</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black male administrators, analyze, address those challenges, professional development, make them feel important, acknowledge their successes, support them, acknowledge the hard work, feel valued, feeling valued, no one there, help you anyway, context of the school, so we're taught to take it on, figure it out ourselves, real expectations, allowing that school leader to focus on those targeted areas, providing the support, the support, sense of support, district to support that principal, supported with data, make it fair, embattled principals, embattled role models, treated like royalty. important that they do succeed, evaluation of the Black male principal, overwhelming majority, certain types of communities, certain types of schools, work five times as hard.</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive structure, if you stay past 5 years, steps up on the pay scale, stay past 10 years, have to incentivize, we live in a capitalistic society, strategy is to incentivize, working conditions, economic perks, intentional around incentivizing, incentivizing up and down the pipeline, recruitment directors, bonus strategy tied to recruitment and retention, finances.</td>
<td>Incentives/</td>
<td>Opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The nine participants were asked the following question: “What strategies would you suggest to your school district to retain more African American male principals?
### Table 4.26

**Summary of the Categories from Interview Question 12 (Recommendations to Retain Black Male Principals)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>X  X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Support</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentives/Opportunities</td>
<td>X  X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The figure illustrates five categories that emerged during the interviews of all participants for interview question 12.

**Mentorship.** Five of the participants communicated that mentorship was critical to retain principals in their district. P1 stated the following on mentorship:

Look at the way you are, or are not, supporting them in terms of mentors. Who are the mentors that you're assigning to the schools? For example, if you have a Black male principal, do you assign a White female mentor? Do you assign a White male mentor? Or do you strategically and overtly assign a Black male principal?

P2 explained:

Well, I think, if the role models and mentors are clear that the outcome we want is to retain these folks. Again, I think that's an individual strategy, but none of those strategies work if they're just in the intentionality from the district around. This is
a certain group that we know that it's something that we don't have a lot of, so
we're going to put the additional resources.

Participant P4 explained:

I think there needs to be coaches in place to come by and actually sit and coach
principals. So, I think principal coaches would be helpful. If nothing else, to be a
thought partner in the work.

Participant P5 stated:

I definitely think that the mentors and the role model definitely have their place,
and there's more than enough of them available. I definitely see the value of
mentors and role models, but quite frankly, the district needs mentors and role
models, too, that have the same understanding of the mentors and role models that
will be working with the principal.

Participant P9 explained:

I'll go back to the strategies and how to retain me. I think it's just the same thing
as the pipeline. First, hiring Black male teachers, and then noticing or being able
to pick that out of this group, that with all the resources and systems to give them,
which one do we believe can take on a coaching position or mentoring position?
Then, from that mentoring position, from that group, move them on to not only
mentoring other teachers, mentoring students or whatever, but also being a part of
the community.

Professional development. Two of the participants believed that professional
development can be an effective strategy to retain Black male principals if it is
meaningful and part of an incentive. P2 stated:
And how do you do that? You say to someone, "Here's an incentive structure, here's a professional development structure we're going to give to you. We're willing to, if you stay past certain points, if you stay past 5 years, we give you two steps up on the pay scale. If you stay past 10 years, here's what we do. If you move into this, here's what we do."

Participant P8 explained:

When you get a Black male principal, they should almost be treated like royalty. The fact of the matter is, they're not. They're not. You have to look at this on several levels. You first have to look at, what kind of support and professional development are you giving these Black male principals so that they can achieve success? It's important that they do succeed. It would be great if there was some just support group out there. When I mean support group, I mean only Black male principals led by former Black male principals. Mentorship is extremely important. Creating relationships is extremely important, so almost that fraternity feel. When one is being sought after or someone's coming after one for a negative reason, they have a team to step up for them and say, "No, this isn't going down," especially if it's not deserved.

*Cultural awareness.* One participant expressed the importance of using cultural awareness as a strategy to entice Black male principals to stay in the district. P2 explained:

So, particularly in our most needed areas, where you have an African American male leadership, that person represents so much, but it represents as much when kids are coming from single parented households led by mostly women, that they
come to a school and the majority of our teachers are women, the majority, now, of our leadership is women. When do they have a healthy relationship that is non-sexual or non-sensual with a man?

District support. Four participants shared that district support is necessary in order to retain more Black male principals. P1 shared,

The so-called White power structure has to acknowledge the problem first. Without acknowledging the problem, you won't have any energy or any effort to reach any type of solutions, so the first strategy, really, is to acknowledge the problem. Acknowledge it. Once you acknowledge it, then analyze it, and once you analyze it, address it. Address the findings of your analysis and put the money necessary in place.

“P3 stated:

Make them feel important, acknowledge their successes, support them through their lows, and I really think you have to . . . Not just African American males, but I think with principals in general, you have to acknowledge the hard work that they do so they feel valued, and not feeling valued is often a situation where you may want to look to do something else. Then preparing them for burnout, seminars, and things about your health, and how to stay healthy.

Participant P4 explained:

I think there needs to be some form of a union or an association that can support principals. Because right now, we get caught without a voice. And you know, the mere assumption of anything can hinder or stop the progression of someone's
career. Based off a like or dislike, or any type of an assumption, which is completely unfair.

Participant P5 stated:

I say that to say when you hire somebody to lead a school that is historically, quote, unquote, "failing" according to your metrics, the first thing is be very specific about what you want them to target first. What are the three to five things that you want them to target? Best practices on school change and school reform has said that once you get beyond three targets, three to five, they're hard to do. I think being very clear on what the game plan is and what the rules are, in other words, "What are you real expectations for the school in year 1?" And allowing that school leader to focus on those targeted areas and then providing the support, the support in the sense of support and leveraging the different departments in the district to support that principal when it's identified by the instructional superintendent or when it's requested by the principal and supported with data. Making sure that the professional development is aligned to what you want that principal to achieve. You can't expect him to achieve everything in the first year. That's kind of the model that has been established.

Incentives/opportunities. Two out of nine participants communicated that the district should offer incentives as a way to retain Black male principals. P1 shared, “You may have to incentivize to keep some of these individuals in your district but make it so that the environment is conducive to them being able to do their jobs effectively, and that's a great way to retain people.” P2 stated:
So just being intentional in that regard around incentivizing the retention of Black males, incentivizing up and down the pipeline, where you're saying to recruitment directors, "Your bonus strategy is tied to recruitment and retention.” Well, again, we live in a capitalistic society, so the first strategy is to incentivize it in a way that makes people hesitate before they leave, and that starts with what are the working conditions, what are the economic perks? You say to folks, "Hey, if you finish your doctorate or if you do this thing, we're going to underwrite that." I mean, it's the same thing that companies do to retain CEOs, it's the same thing that companies do to retain anything they value. You treat it like you treat your ‘64 Chevy, with care. If you want to keep something, treat it with care. And if you don't, you won't. Seems pretty easy to me.

**Summary of Findings**

The purpose of this chapter was to gain an in-depth perspective regarding Black male principals’ perspectives on the teacher-to-principal pipeline recruitment process and best strategies to retain current Black male principals, given the declining trend in the number of Black male principals. The researcher summarized data obtained from the participants to present the thematic findings that answered the research questions. The first three preliminary interview questions were provided in order to gather background demographic information which led into research question 1.

In response to the first two preliminary interview questions (describe factors that had [significant] influence on the educator/administrator that you are today and factors that motivated you to pursue school administration); the findings revealed participants’ views on five supportive factors that had a significant influence on their becoming an
educator. Within the theme of reflective, five categories emerged: calling, relationships/interactions, role modeling, recommendations, and cultural awareness. The third preliminary question (In what ways do you feel race factored into your success and challenges in your trajectory through the educational system?), all nine participants had experienced some form of racism in their trajectory through the educational system. Within the theme of external, seven categories emerged: biases, expectations, perceptions, stereotypes, economic gaps, power structure, and pigeonhole.

The first research question was: What are Black male principals’ perceptions of the targeted recruitment opportunities available for Black male teachers to advance to the principalship within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? With regard to recruitment opportunities, six themes emerged from five interview questions: recruitment, dissuading against administration, persuading to become an administrator, internal inhibitors, external inhibitors, and recruitment strategies. The findings revealed that participants viewed recruitment strategies as being the most important theme to increase the number of Black male principals.

Within the theme of recruitment, four categories emerged: initiatives, strategies, pipeline, and vision. The findings revealed that participants viewed initiatives as an important category because they did not see any initiatives to recruit Black male principals in either New York City or Washington, DC public schools. Within the theme of dissuading against administration, four categories emerged: fear, lack of support, lack of respect, and constantly challenged, were discovered to be the most critical categories. Within the theme of persuading to become an administrator, three categories emerged: no
fear, support, and respect. The findings revealed that participants viewed having support from the district as an important category for a principal to be successful.

Within the theme of internal inhibitors, six categories emerged: confidence, professional development, lack of support, fear of failure, cultural awareness, and stress/burnout. The findings revealed that participants viewed fear of failure as an important category. Within the theme of external inhibitors eight categories emerged: district policies, unrealistic mandates, principal evaluations, expectations, autonomy-vision, funding, relationship with the mayor, and test score assessment. Within the theme of recruitment strategies four categories emerged: mentorship, pipeline, university/college partnerships, and district/city. The findings revealed that participants viewed district/city as an important category.

The second research question was: What are the Black male principals’ perceptions of the targeted retention strategies for Black male principals particularly within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? With regard to retention strategies, four themes emerged from four interview questions: retention, leadership, lack of representation of Black male principals, and recommendations. Within the theme of retention, four categories emerged: strategic initiatives, principal churn, leadership, and lack of respect. The findings revealed that both districts – New York City and Washington, DC, did not have any initiatives in place to retain Black male principals. Within the theme of leadership six categories emerged: communication, collaboration, vision, structure/organization, and decision-making. The findings revealed that being a collaborative leader was critical for a principal’s success.
Within the theme of lack of representation of Black male principals, eight categories emerged: gender bias, recruitment/retention, role model, stereotypes, lack of support, lack of respect, finance, and gate keeper. The findings revealed that participants viewed stereotypes as the most important category associated with this theme. Within the theme of recommendations five categories emerged: mentorship, professional development, cultural awareness, district support, and incentives/opportunities. The finding revealed that the participants viewed mentorship and district support critical to retain Black male principals in their district.
Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore Black male principals’ perspectives on the teacher-to-principal pipeline recruitment process and best strategies to retain them given the recent decline in the number of Black male principals. This chapter includes a discussion of major findings pertaining to the literature on principal recruitment opportunities, principal retention strategies, and internal and external inhibitors. This chapter concludes with a conversation on the limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and a summary of the chapter.

This study attempted to collect data to answer the following two research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted recruitment opportunities designed specifically for current Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? (Brown, 2005; Jackson, 2007; Richardson, 2014; Tillman, 2007)

2. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted retention strategies designed specifically for current Black male principals within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? (Brown, 2005; Jackson, 2007; Nesmith, 2013; Tillman, 2007)
The researcher conducted in-depth personal interviews with nine Black male principals. These semi-structured interviews were used to capture the thoughts and feelings of Black male principals who experienced the principal search and selection process. There were nine principals in total, five from the New York City area and four from Washington, DC public schools. Each participant consented to a semi-structured, one-on-one interview that lasted approximately 60 minutes, using 12 semi-structured interview questions (Table 4.1) to guide the discussion. These 12 interview questions were posed to the participants in a chronological order that was aligned with the research questions.

The first three preliminary interview questions were asked to gather background demographic information. The next group of interview questions focused on exploring the Black male principal participants’ perceptions of (a) specific supportive factors that lead to a principalship, (b) the types of challenges encountered along the teacher-to-principal pipeline, (c) any targeted recruitment opportunities available for Black male teachers to advance to the principalship, and (d) any targeted retention strategies uniquely designed for Black male principals particularly within two highly diverse and urban school districts on the east coast – New York City and Washington, DC public school districts.

Summary of Findings

Research question 1. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted recruitment opportunities designed specifically for current Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions within the New York City and
Washington, DC school districts? Based on the nine interviews there were five major findings that emerged.

**Recruitment major finding 1:** The nine Black male principals reported that they were not aware of any specific district initiatives or any special pipeline in place to recruit Black male principals. The qualitative categories that emerged were: initiatives, strategies, pipeline, and vision. In addition, the nine participants all expressed their school district’s inability to create targeted opportunities for Black male teachers to ascend to the principalship. Although both school districts had principal preparation programs, to their knowledge, none were specifically targeting Black male educators. This data supports the need for school districts across the country to develop more visible and targeted initiatives to attract African American male teachers to pursue study in principal training programs (Reynolds, 1995).

**Recruitment major finding 2.** The nine Black male principals also reported that they were not dissuaded against becoming an administrator. They further elaborated being fearless was important in pursuing the principalship. Throughout the study, several categories emerged: fear, lack of support, lack of respect, constantly challenged, no fear, support, and respect. This finding suggests that principals are successful when they are determined to succeed, goal-driven with an internal drive, and feel the need to serve their community.

This idea of Black male principals being dedicated and committed to reaching their goals supports Savage’s (2001) research on the agency of Black teachers and principals in Franklin, Tennessee, between 1890 and 1967. Savage (2001) defined agency as “self-reliance, proactive actions, and self-determining philosophies that result from a
‘centeredness’ within one’s community” (p. 172). Additionally, he indicated that Black principals performed an *extraordinary service* where they maneuvered through district policies to introduce new programs and curricula, instilling academic skills, resiliency, self-reliance, self-respect, dignity, racial pride, service, and faith in Black children (Savage, 2001).

**Recruitment major finding 3.** The nine Black male principals reported that they did not allow internal inhibitors to prevent them from achieving their goal of becoming a principal. The participants discussed their high level of confidence as a critical factor in pursuing the principalship. The categories that consistently emerged were: confidence, lack of support, fear of failure, cultural awareness, and stress/burnout. These nine Black male principals consistently discussed the role of being confident as a key trait for navigating obstacles placed before them. The participants stated that they had to prove to others that they were qualified to do their job.

All nine Black male principals started their career as a teacher, followed by an assistant principal position, and finally as a principal, which gave them the experiences and the confidence they needed to overcome any internal inhibitors. The study’s findings strongly align with Richardson’s (2014) research on creating internal and external support systems for African American male aspiring principals when he discussed the notion that Black male aspiring principals should believe that they are confident and capable of being a principal by having experience, knowledge, and the skills to the job.

**Recruitment major finding 4.** The nine Black male principals all expressed the strong need for school districts to develop better recruitment initiatives to increase the number of Black male principals in their own school districts. The categories that
emerged from the research were: mentorship, pipeline, college partnerships, district/city, and professional development.

In fact, the nine participants stressed the importance of their school district leading the effort to recruit Black male principals. Participants believed that urban school districts, in particular, have a responsibility to recruit Black male principals in order to reflect the existing diversity. Their stories in the interviews aligned with the conclusions stated by Tillman (2004b, 2007). Black educators are the most precious resource in the struggle to educate Black children, as they were prior to desegregation of public schooling. She defined three important areas vital in creating and sustaining valued Black leaders in the pipeline: (a) recruiting, selecting, and training; (b) mentoring Blacks for the principalship; and (c) retaining Black principals (Tillman, 2007).

**Research question 2.** What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted retention strategies designed specifically for current Black male principals within the New York City and Washington, DC school districts? There were four major findings that emerged.

**Retention major finding 1.** The nine Black male principals shared that they were not aware of any initiatives in place to retain current Black male principals. The categories that emerged were: initiatives, churn, leadership, and lack of respect. All participants expressed that their school district did not have any significant initiatives to retain Black male principals in their district. Participants communicated that they are concerned with the number of Black male principals leaving their school district each year, which they referred to as churn. Participants from Washington, DC discussed the 1-year contracts offered to principals and suggested that many of their Black male
counterparts have left the District due to a lack of job security and a lack of appreciation. Seasoned principals across the country are being replaced with less qualified candidates and with less experience (Bloom et al., 2003). The question is: how can school districts retain outstanding principals during this era of high-stake exams, increasing graduation rates, and surmounting administrative and community outreach responsibilities (Daly & Chrispeels, 2008).

**Retention major finding 2.** The nine Black male principals consistently reported a lack of representation of Black male principals in both the NYC and DC school districts. The categories that emerged were: gender bias, recruitment/retention, role model, stereotypes, lack of support, lack of respect and finance. The interviews revealed that the nine Black male principals believed that stereotypical views of Black males held by White administrators impacted the (limited) hiring of Black male principals in their districts. The participants expressed that Black men in general, are negatively portrayed in the media and those images affect how (White) school district leaders see Black male principals. Many of the participants expressed that they were never given an opportunity to be placed in a specialized school which are high functioning schools with fewer students with behavioral and academic challenges. These findings are consistent with previous studies who found that Black principals tend to be placed in schools where the majority of students are Black. (Brown, 2005; Foster, 2004; Tillman, 2004a, 2004b).

Participants also discussed that some (White) district leaders believe that Black male principals aren’t knowledgeable enough to be instructional leaders. This finding was consistent with Richardson’s (2014) research on creating internal and external support systems for the advancement of African American males. The nine Black male principals
identified four specific external barriers: (a) racial and ethnic stereotyping, (b) lack of African American mentors, (c) attitudes of White teachers towards African American male principals, and (d) perceived lack of ability.

**Retention major finding 3.** The nine Black males principals believed that their school districts should develop and implement retention initiatives to increase the number of Black male principals in their school district. The participants repeatedly stressed the importance of their school district developing strategies and efforts to retain Black male principals. The categories that emerged were: mentorship, professional development, cultural awareness, district support, and incentives/opportunities. The participants also expressed that mentorship is critical to retain principals in their district. Most of the participants were mentored as principals by retired principals; others had family members and one had his pastor. The participants were very clear that their mentors should be former Black male principals to whom they could personally relate.

The stories and views shared by these nine Black male principals are consistent with the conclusions of Nesmith (2013) on the vestiges of *Brown v. Board of Educ.* (1954). The greatest impact of the Black principal was on the Black students who observed him every day and dreamed of being just like him. James (1970) discussed the importance of having Black administrators who serve as positive role models for Black teachers in the Florida public schools, and school districts taking the lead in the recruitment and retention of Black teachers and administrators.

**Implications for Practice**

The findings of this study can be used to expand the literature on recruiting and retaining Black male principals. As an educator for over 32 years, I can recall the day I
got the call to accept the offer of the principalship. I worked hard for this position since my mentor, colleague, and former principal, Dr. Bernard Gassaway, encouraged me to consider becoming a principal. I often imagined what it would be like to lead a school. I worked with my colleagues to positively influence the practices within our school by chairing several committees and leading school-wide initiatives for desired results. I also had a great example to follow in Dr. Frank Mickens, my school’s principal.

Finally, it would be my turn, but my excitement was overshadowed by self-doubt. Tasks and initiatives such as safety, security, student achievement, school climate, change, instructional best practices, finances, staffing, and community relations all came to mind. I thought it would be a bit daunting in accomplishing it all at a high level. My mentor principal reminded me that the principalship is like a lab or a classroom. This lab or classroom provides opportunities for learning and growth. Also, the skills I developed as a teacher and an assistant principal would be important in my new role. With this advice, I have developed, over the years, a clearer plan of how these habits can help teacher leaders transition from the classroom into effective principals.

One of those most important habits which are supported by the research and revealed in my study is the role of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment. The principal participants in my study discussed their high level of confidence as a critical factor in pursuing the principalship. The categories that consistently emerged were: confidence, lack of support, fear of failure, cultural
awareness, and stress/burnout. This finding suggests that confidence was the number one trait for principals to overcome the obstacles placed before them. Participants stated that they had to prove to others that they were qualified to do their job.

All of the participants followed a similar path starting their career as a teacher, followed by an assistant principal and finally as a principal. Collectively, the participants stated that their experiences gave them the confidence they needed to overcome any internal inhibitors. The study’s findings strongly align with Richardson’s (2014) research on creating internal and external support systems for African American male aspiring principals, when he discussed the preconceived notion of how White teachers view Black male principals as incompetent and being more of a disciplinarian than an instructional leader.

These experiences revealed by the principal participants made me recall my rise to the principalship and the most important characteristic I possessed which is the belief that I could positively influence high levels of learning in my new role. Due to my experience as a principal and those principal participants in my study, a sense of efficacy and deep commitment to student learning is perhaps the critical trait that classroom teachers can possess as they ascend to the principalship. As a principal, you understand how research supports your desired results and that teachers have an influence on student outcomes. The research also implies that the influence of the school principal also impacts the school. To create a high-performing school, all must believe and have confidence in their ability to positively affect student learning and school outcomes.

A novice principal questions their decisions and their confidence and competence to lead. This is normal but has the potential to cause tremendous growth, as time passes
and it gets easier! An efficacious principal is a role model for continuous learning and positive influence, by supporting and encouraging their colleagues, faculty, and staff to focus on the core mission of teaching and learning. Principals and teacher leaders always think that the glass is half-full. They are positive, optimistic, and enthusiastic in seeking solutions for desired results and next steps. Their success is benchmarked, and they have a strong willingness to collaborate and share their knowledge to help others improve their practice.

However, they might not always succeed and face resistance to change; their courageousness and ability to take risks propels them to success. Their strong sense of confidence and positive attitude encourages their colleagues to follow them and, in turn, steers the ship in a positive direction. The most important responsibility of every educator is to provide the conditions under which people’s learning curves go off the chart. “Whether one is called a principal, a teacher, a professor, a foundation official, or a parent, our most vital work is promoting human learning ... and above all our own learning. (Barth, 1996, p. 56).”

Several states and districts across the country acknowledge that there is a serious shortage of principals and teachers and some have created support systems and programs that recruit aspiring principals, and mentor principals from underrepresented ethnic groups (Erlandson & Zellner, 1997; Garza & Wurzbach, 2002). In 2013, the District of Columbia Public Schools in Washington, DC initiated, The Mary Jane Patterson Fellowship, named after the first Black principal in Washington, DC. Mary Jane Patterson was the principal of the historic Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School, the first public Black high school in the country (District of Columbia Public Schools, 2018). The
fellowship is an internal leadership pipeline established to recruit and retain principals in DCPS. Although this program recruited aspiring principals, they did not specifically target and recruit Black male aspiring principals. Given the dearth of Black male principals in Washington, DC and other major cities throughout the country, school districts could use programs like this one to target and recruit Black male aspiring principals. School districts can also partner with organizations like New Leaders for New Schools that has prepared more than 3,200 educational leaders in more than 30 cities nationwide to specifically target and recruit Black male aspiring principals (New Leaders, 2018).

School districts can also take a more proactive leadership role in the recruitment and retention of Black male principals by partnering with colleges and universities to create an Educational Career Academy in one or more of their high schools. There are several high schools throughout the country that prepare students for careers in education. North Hollywood High School in California, Dunbar High School in Washington, DC, and St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES in Canton, NY, are examples of schools with successful educational career academies in which two have partnered with a university. Programs such as these are a direct pipeline that will allow students from high school to enter college and ultimately transition into the classroom.

The purpose of these academies is to train highly effective future educators by providing rigorous educational course offerings specifically designed to expose students to a wide variety of careers in the educational field. The objective is to graduate college bound students who will matriculate into a school of education. Once the students graduate from college or a university they can come back to their communities to teach
and prepare for future administrative positions. Colleges and universities that partner with school districts can offer students that enroll in educational career academies full scholarships upon their graduation from high school as an incentive to study education.

**Limitations of the Study**

**Bias.** The researcher is currently the Chair of the Principals’ Panel for NAEP and a former public school high school principal with more than 30 years’ experience as an educator. The researcher has worked in both districts as a principal. There is a chance that he unknowingly added his own views, prejudices, and biases into the research.

**Inability for generalizability.** The researcher limited the participants in the study to Black male principals in two large urban school districts. Rural and suburban large school districts were not considered. Because of the small sample size of these two urban school districts in this study, the findings cannot be generalizable.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Following are several recommendations for future research studies.

1. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers related to the targeted recruitment and retention opportunities designed specifically for current Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions? Replicate this study in other states, to assess recruitment and retention opportunities for Black male principals.

2. What are the long term effects on Black male principals who are displaced due to district, or state accountability mandates? Conduct a study on the long term effects of Black male principals in New York City and Washington, DC
who have lost their job or were forced to be relocated to a different school due to district, or state accountability mandates.

3. What are the perceptions of Black male principals related to the targeted recruitment and retention opportunities designed specifically for current Black male principals to advance into new superintendent positions? Replicate this study with Black male superintendents to assess recruitment and retention opportunities.

4. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers related to the targeted recruitment and retention opportunities designed specifically for current Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions in public charter and private schools? Replicate this study for public charter, and private schools in New York City and Washington, DC to assess recruitment and retention opportunities.

5. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers related to the targeted recruitment and retention opportunities designed specifically for current Black male teachers to advance into new principal positions? This study can be replicated with a larger sample of standing and retired principals throughout the United States to study recruitment and retention strategies.

6. What are the perceptions of Latino male principals related to the targeted recruitment opportunities designed specifically for current Latino male teachers to advance into new principal positions? Replicate this study to assess recruitment and retention opportunities for Latino male principals in New York City and Washington, DC.
7. What are the perceptions of Black female superintendents related to the targeted recruitment and retention opportunities designed specifically for current Black female principals to advance into new superintendent positions? Replicate this study with Black female superintendents to assess recruitment and retention opportunities.

8. What are the perceptions of Black female teachers related to the targeted recruitment and retention opportunities designed specifically for current Black female teachers to advance into new principal positions? Replicate this study in other states, to assess recruitment and retention opportunities for Black female teachers.

9. What are the perceptions of Latino female teachers related to the targeted recruitment opportunities designed specifically for current Latino female teachers to advance into new principal positions? Replicate this study in other states, to assess recruitment and retention opportunities for Latino female principals.

**Conclusion**

Despite the struggle for equality and justice, the findings of this study raised serious concerns and criticisms regarding Black male principals’ inequitable recruitment and retention process despite 64 years after *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Educ.* (1954). Essentially, by understanding the challenges Black males face on their ascension to the principalship in traditional public schools, school district leaders and policy makers might be able to suggest alternative ideas to the ongoing practice of recruiting and retaining Black male principals to serve in schools primarily where Black students comprise the
majority of the student enrollment. In the absence of a coherent and comprehensive recruitment and retention initiative in the school districts studied, Black male principals have been resilient in acquiring their professional goals and dreams.

The results of this research are timely, particularly because of the ongoing initiative in New York City to recruit men of color to become teachers (New York City Young Men’s Initiative, 2016). According to the former Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives, Richard Buery, male students of color (Black, Latino, Asian, Native American) make up 43% of New York City’s public school student population, but only 8% of male teachers of color are New York City public school educators (New York City Young Men’s Initiative, 2016). Although NYCDOE is looking to diversify its teaching staff to reflect the population of its student’s body, attention should be given to developing initiatives to recruit and retain Black male administrators to mirror the diverse student enrollment.

In addition, the results of this study answered many questions about recruitment and retention and the successful strategies that should be used and already are being used by aspiring principals, standing principals, and are currently used by retired principals. Furthermore, the results highlighted and identified valuable strategies that can be used by all aspiring principals, regardless of race and ethnicity that, hopefully, will prove useful in helping to create internal and external support systems for aspiring African American male principals, as well as inform school districts on how to successfully recruit, retain, and mentor aspiring and standing African American male principals. Researcher Michael Fullan suggests that developing and promoting others is essential and building a pipeline for future leaders is the work of school districts in their ongoing approach to solving
complex problems and making continuous improvement and progress (Fullan, 2010). This type of professional development creates a pipeline synergy of leaders who are “constantly cultivating themselves and future leaders who can go further” (Fullan, 2010, p. 14). Therefore, it’s essential that school districts create and sustain pipeline programs that are specifically targeted toward Black male principals.
References


from https://www.brookings.edu/research/high-hopes-and-harsh-realities-the-real-challenges-to-building-a-diverse-teacher-workforce/


Appendix A

St. John Fisher College IRB Approval

June 28, 2016

File No: 3855-051718-04

Stephen Jackson
St. John Fisher College

Dear Mr. Jackson:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Institutional Review Board.

I am pleased to inform you that the Board has approved your Expedited Review project, "The Principal’s Perspective: Exploring Strategies for the Recruitment and Retention of African American Public School Principals."

Following federal guidelines, research related records should be maintained in a secure area for three years following the completion of the project at which time they may be destroyed.

Should you have any questions about this process or your responsibilities, please contact me at irb@sjfc.edu.

Sincerely,

Eileen Lynd-Salta, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

ELB jdr
Appendix B

Letter of Introduction for DCPS Principals

Dear Principal:

My name is Stephen Jackson, and I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College. This letter is to request your permission for participation in a qualitative research study to explore the in-depth perceptions and experiences of African American male principals, in New York City and Washington, DC public school systems, on the recruitment and retention process for African American male principals post-Brown v. Board of Education. My research study is entitled: The Principal’s Perspective: Exploring Strategies for the Recruitment and Retention of African American Male Public-School Principals. The research will be conducted concurrently in both New York City and the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS).

It is my hope to conduct a qualitative study to gain the firsthand perspectives and perceptions of African American male principals on recruitment and retention. This study will help to fill a gap in the research pertaining to factors that will improve recruitment and retention for African American male principals and motivate African American men to pursue educational administration careers.

I received your name and email address from your school district’s website or from the Department of Education. Participating in the study involves filling out a user-friendly online demographic questionnaire to make sure you are eligible for the study. The face-to-face interviews will be semi-structured, and the researcher will ask each participant twelve questions. The researcher will schedule a convenient location (school, office or library) to record each interview using a Sony ICD-PX440 4GB PX Series MP3 recorder and download it to the researchers’ computer. Each participant will be interviewed for approximately for 45-60 mins. Potential participants will be presented with an informed consent form as part of the online demographic questionnaire. Participants will be asked to sign future correspondence if they agree to participate by June 30th, 2018.

If you have any questions regarding my research or the nature of participation, please feel free to contact me by email at to sdj02832@sjfc.edu. Thank you for your time, assistance, and interest in my research topic!

Sincerely,

Ed. D. Candidate, St. John Fisher College, 2019
Appendix C

Letter of Introduction for NYC Principals

Dear Principal:

My name is Stephen Jackson, and I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College. This letter is to request your permission for participation in a qualitative research study to explore the in-depth perceptions and experiences of African American male principals, in New York City and Washington, DC public school systems, on the recruitment and retention process for African American male principals post-Brown v. Board of Education. My research study is entitled: The Principal’s Perspective: Exploring Strategies for the Recruitment and Retention of African American Male Public-School Principals. The research will be conducted in both New York City and the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS).

It is my hope to conduct a qualitative study to gain the firsthand perspectives and perceptions of African American male principals on recruitment and retention. This study will help to fill a gap in the research pertaining to factors that will improve recruitment and retention for African American male principals and motivate African American men to pursue educational administration careers.

I received your name and email address from your school district’s website or from the Department of Education. Participating in the study involves filling out a user-friendly online demographic questionnaire to make sure you are eligible for the study. The face-to-face interviews will be semi-structured, and the researcher will ask each participant twelve questions. The researcher will schedule a convenient location (school, office or library) to record each interview using a Sony ICD-PX440 4GB PX Series MP3 recorder and download it to the researchers’ computer. Each participant will be interviewed for approximately for 45-60 mins.

Potential participants will be presented with an informed consent form as part of the online demographic questionnaire. Participants will be asked to sign future correspondence if they agree to participate by June 30, 2018. If you have any questions regarding my research or the nature of participation, please feel free to contact me by email at sdj02832@sjfc.edu. Thank you for your time, assistance, and interest in my research topic!

Sincerely,

Ed. D. Candidate, St. John Fisher College, 2019
Appendix D

New York City IRB Approval

Dear Mr. Jackson:

I am happy to inform you that the New York City Department of Education Institutional Review Board (NYCDOE IRB) has approved your research proposal, “THE PRINCIPAL’S PERSPECTIVE: EXPLORING STRATEGIES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE PUBLIC-SCHOOL PRINCIPALS.” The NYCDOE IRB has assigned your study the file number of 2036. Please make certain that all correspondence regarding this project references this number. The IRB has determined that the study poses minimal risk to participants. The approval is for a period of one year:

Approval Date: August 15, 2018
Expiration Date: August 14, 2019

Responsibilities of Principal Investigators: Please find below a list of responsibilities of Principal Investigators who have DOE IRB approval to conduct research in New York City public schools.

- Approval by this office does not guarantee access to any particular school, individual or data. You are responsible for making appropriate contacts and getting the required permissions and consents before initiating the study.

- When requesting permission to conduct research, submit the informational letter to the school principal summarizing your research design and methodology along with this IRB Approval letter. Each principal agreeing to participate must sign the principal informational letter. A completed and signed letter for every school included in your research must be emailed to IRB@schools.nyc.gov. Principals may also ask you to show them the receipt issued by the NYC Department of Education at the time of your fingerprinting.

- You are responsible for ensuring that all researchers on your team conducting research in NYC public schools are fingerprinted by the NYC Department of Education. Please note: This rule applies to all research in schools conducted with students and/or staff. See the attached fingerprinting materials. For additional information click here. Fingerprinting staff will ask you for your identification and social security number and for your DOE IRB approval letter. Researchers who join the study team after the inception of the research must also be fingerprinted. The cost of fingerprinting is $135.
• You are responsible for informing all participants (e.g., administrators, teachers, parents, and students) that their participation is strictly voluntary and that there are no consequences for non-participation or withdrawal at any time during the study.

• Researchers must: use the consent forms approved by the DOE IRB; provide all research subjects with copies of their signed forms; maintain signed forms in a secure place for a period of at least three years after study completion; and destroy the forms in accordance with the data disposal plan approved by the IRB.

Mandatory Reporting to the IRB: The principal investigator must report to the Research and Policy Support Group, within five business days, any serious problem, adverse effect, or outcome that occurs with frequency or degree of severity greater than that anticipated. In addition, the principal investigator must report any event or series of events that prompt the temporary or permanent suspension of a research project involving human subjects or any deviations from the approved protocol.

Amendments/Modifications: All amendments/modification of protocols involving human subjects must have prior IRB approval, except those involving the prevention of immediate harm to a subject, which must be reported within 24 hours to the NYC Department of Education IRB.

Continuation of your research: It is your responsibility to insure that an application for continuing review approval is submitted six weeks before the expiration date noted above. If you do not receive approval before the expiration date, all study activities must stop until you receive a new approval letter.

Research findings: We require a copy of the report of findings from the research. Interim reports may also be requested for multi-year studies. Your report should not include identification of the superintendent, district, any school, student, or staff member. Please submit a final report with a closure form through our electronic platform.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Mary Mattis at 212.374.2913.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Mary C. Mattis, PhD
Director, Institutional Review Board

cc: Barbara Dworokowitz
Appendix E

Informed Consent Form

St. John Fisher College

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of study: The Principal’s Perspective: Exploring Strategies for the Recruitment and Retention of African American Male Public-School Principals

Name(s) of researcher(s): Stephen Jackson

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Janice Kelly  Phone number for further information: [redacted]

Purpose of study: The purpose of this proposed phenomenological qualitative study is to examine the recruitment and retention process, and the impact it has on the number of African American males in principalship positions post-Brown v. Board of Education.

Place of study: Public High School  Length of Participation: One Hour

Method(s) of data collection: Interviews

Risks and benefits: The expected risks and benefits of participation in this study are explained below:

The benefit of participating in this study will fill a gap in the research pertaining to factors that will improve recruitment and retention for African American male principals and motivate African American men to pursue becoming an educator. The risks associated with this study are minimal, however, you may feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions. You may choose to skip any questions that make you uncomfortable.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy of subjects: Your personal information will be maintained as no identifying information will be used to link you to the study.

Your information may be shared with appropriate governmental authorities ONLY if you or someone else is in danger, or if we are required to do so by law.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy of data collected: The researcher will remove all identifying information and create pseudonyms. All data will be stored in digital form in a secure location. Information containing personal identifiers will be protected to prevent unintentional breaches of confidentiality using a code book.

Your information may be shared with appropriate governmental authorities ONLY if you or someone else is in danger, or if we are required to do so by law.

Your rights: As a research participant, you have the right to:

1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.  
3. Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.  
4. Be informed of the results of the study.  

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the above-named study.

Print name (Participant) ______________________________ Signature ______________________________ Date ____________

Print name (Investigator) ______________________________ Signature ______________________________ Date ____________

If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher(s) listed above. If you experience emotional or physical discomfort due to participation in this study, please contact your personal health care provider or an appropriate crisis service provider at (1-888-692-9355 Crisis Services/Mental Health New York City).

The Institutional Review Board of St. John Fisher College has reviewed this project. For any concerns regarding this study/or if you feel that your rights as a participant (or the rights of another participant) have been violated or caused you undue distress (physical or emotional distress), please contact Jill Rathbun by phone during normal business hours at (585) 385-8012 or irb@sjfc.edu. She will contact a supervisory IRB official to assist you.

All digital audio recordings and transcriptions of interviews will be maintained using a private, locked, and password-protected file and password-protected computer stored securely in the private home of the principal researcher. Electronic files will include assigned identity codes and pseudonyms; they will not include actual names or any information that could personally identify or connect participants to this study. Other materials, including notes or paper files related to data collection and analysis, will be stored securely in unmarked boxes, locked inside a cabinet in the private home of the principal researcher. Only the researcher will have access to electronic or paper records. The digitally recorded audio data will be kept by this researcher for a period of 5 years following publication of the dissertation. Signed informed consent documents will be kept for 5 years after publication. All paper records will be cross-cut shredded and professionally delivered for incineration. Electronic records will be cleared, purged, and destroyed from the hard drive and all devices such that restoring data is not possible.

Appendix F
Principal Demographic Questions

1. Were you a principal at any time during the academic years of 2009 to 2016?
   _Yes
   _No

2. What is your age?
   _Under 40
   _41-49
   _50-59
   _60 plus

3. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?
   _Bachelor
   _Masters
   _Advanced degree beyond a master’s degree
   _Doctorates, law or medical degree

4. How many years of experience do you have working as a principal?
   _First year
   _1-2 years
   _3-5 years
   _6-10 years
5. Do you have tenure?
   __Yes
   __No

6. How many years of experience do you have working as a principal at this school?
   __First year
   __1-2 years
   __3-5 years
   __6-10 years
   __11-15 years
   __16-20 years
   __20 years or more
   __Retired

7. How many years did you spend as a classroom teacher before you became a
principal?

__ 1 year

__ 1-2 years

__ 3-5 years

__ 6-10 years

__ 11-15 years

__ 16-20 years

__ 20 years or more

Appendix G

Dr. Richardson Permission Email

Jackson, Stephen <sdj02832@sjfc.edu> Feb 11
Dear Dr. Richardson,

I hope all is well. I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College, in New York, enrolled in the Executive Leadership Program. I am conducting a study focused on African American male principals. The purpose of this proposed phenomenological qualitative study is to explore the in-depth perceptions and experiences of African American male principals, in New York City and Washington, DC public school systems, on the recruitment and retention process for African American male principals post-Brown v. Board of Education. My research study is entitled: The Aftermath of Brown v. Board of Education: Examining the Impact on Recruitment and Retention of African American Males Principals.

As a former principal of three different high schools, two in New York, and the first African American high school in the country, Dunbar, in Washington, DC, like you, I too was disappointed by the lack of African American male principals in the largest school system in the country, NYC and in the nation’s capital, Washington, DC. After reading your well-written dissertation, I am writing you to request your permission to use your work as my anchor study.

If you have time in your busy schedule I would love to have a conversation with you regarding your research and dissertation.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best,

Stephen Jackson
St John Fischer College
Doctoral Student
(917) 604-4498

Ronald Richardson <ronrichardson@slusd.us> Feb 12

to me

Good Evening Future Dr. Jackson,

It was honor and pleasure speaking with you today. You definitely have my permission to use my dissertation as your anchor study.

I look forward to connect with you soon. Please don’t hesitate to call me if you need anything. My cell number is (925) 399-2102.

Best,

Ronnie
Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 12, 2018, at 7:51 AM, Ronald Richardson <ronrichardson@slusd.us> wrote:
Good Morning Future Dr. Jackson,

Thank you for your email. I

Jackson, Stephen <sdj02832@sjfc.edu> Feb 13

to Ronald

Good Morning Dr. Richardson,

It was my pleasure as well to speak to you this morning. I want to personally thank you, for allowing me to use your work as my anchor study.

I definitely look forward to speaking to you soon as I take this journey to complete my dissertation. Let’s connect soon!

Best,

Stephen Jackson