A NARRATIVE STUDY ON BLACK AND LATINO SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS IN PUBLIC URBAN EDUCATION WHO INTEGRATE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

Racism and other forms of oppression that intersect with race need to be challenged in secondary social studies school curricula for students to be fully educated. The purpose of this research study was to examine the stories of Black and Latino secondary school teachers’ experiences incorporating multicultural education in their social studies instruction. A multicultural curriculum, one that embodies social justice and diversity, can evoke transformational dialogue on critical issues of race, class and identity. The findings of this research demonstrated the importance of multicultural education in the curriculum, the importance of the Teachers of Color who facilitate it, and their application of culturally responsive instructional practices in the classroom.

Each participant shared their experiences and expressed their common desire of wanting to be a part of preparing their students to thrive in an adverse and socially unjust environment. Their stories reflected the common themes of oppression in background experiences, motivations for teaching in an urban high school, thoughts on a diversified teaching force, integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education, experiences with culturally responsive teaching in the classroom and perspective on the role of social studies in society. The themes that emerged reflected dedication to improving the quality of life for urban youth by serving as positive role models that they could identify with and by providing inclusive and comprehensive educational experiences that were relevant to them.

For the purpose of this research, multicultural education was conceptualized as the curriculum and culturally responsive teaching as the pedagogy. Additionally, the implications of these findings for teaching secondary social studies in public urban education were examined and recommendations were offered.
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Last but certainly not least I would like to acknowledge my mentor Dr. Robina Puryear-Castro, who gave me the freedom, support and confidence as a history teacher to integrate multicultural education in our curriculum. Thank you for inspiring me to be brave, to teach authentically and for giving me the courage to become the Educational Leader I am today.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents Dr. Rafael S. Paz and Mrs. Santa G. Amor Paz for their unrelenting support and love throughout this journey. To my husband Mr. Jose A. Diaz, my rock, for all of those sleepless nights you stayed up with me by my side, encouraging me and pushing me forward. To my beautiful sons Sekai and Kylo for being a constant reminder of why I did this, your sweet smiles and love were my boosts to get to the finish line. To my sister Dr. Windy Paz-Amor and my sister-in-law Mrs. Henrietta M. Paz-Amor for filling me with inspiration and motivation to never give up. I also dedicate this thesis to urban youth and urban educators everywhere; may our plight inspire others to never give up and to always remain true to ourselves.
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Chapter 1: Statement of the Problem

The lack of culturally relevant curriculum, particularly within mainstream social studies courses in public urban education within the context of a racist society, eliminates the experiences, contributions and role models students can identify with and relate to, causing Black and Latino students to feel underrepresented, and excluded and reinforces racist social stereotypes. Furthermore, the lack of diversity within the teacher force itself, in particular public urban education, robs urban youth of the opportunity to connect with positive role models in their school they can racially/ethnically identify with. Glazier and Seo (2005) cited Bigler (1996) in stating that “multicultural curricula have the potential to challenge the willful ‘silences’ that exist in schools around issues such as race and class; positively affirm student identities, empower students, support academic achievement and challenge popular stereotypes in the larger society” (as cited in Bigler, 1996, p. 4). This research involves examining the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies teachers in public urban education who integrate multicultural education in their mainstream curriculum through culturally responsive teaching instructional practices. The research seeks to fill the knowledge gap by exploring their stories and developing a better understanding of how their experiences are reflected in their instruction.

According to Nieto (2004), multicultural education is antiracist education that is important for all students. ‘All’ students refer to a student population that also includes minority youth. Multicultural education enables teachers to be warriors for social justice because it is driven by critical pedagogy and the goal to equip education with the ability to reject racism and discrimination in schools. As a former high school history teacher, I believe that the social studies classroom continues to be the ideal space from which to conduct transformational dialogue, evoked by the integration of multicultural education in mainstream curricula.
Transformational dialogue involves conversations that reflect empathy and challenge oppression and structural inequities. These critical conversations challenge the ‘silences’ by encouraging learning that requires critical thinking and self-reflection.

Silences have a purpose. Fine (1992) stated that the “official knowledge in schools practically necessitates silence because ‘silencing’ removes any documentation that all is not well with the workings of the U.S. economy, race and gender relations, and public schooling as the route to class mobility” (p. 153). In order to address and possibly begin to remedy institutionalized oppression and social exclusion, young people – the next generation – need to be engaged in empowering and transformational dialogue in their schools. Urban youth, like any other, need role models they can identify with – positive adults who look like them and can relate to their experiences. McGrady and Reynolds (2013) explained that students who match their teachers’ socioeconomic or racial/ethnic backgrounds often enjoy more positive behavioral evaluations and grades, perhaps because they demonstrate the behaviors that most teachers recognize as appropriate (Entwisle & Alexander, 1993).

Lynn and Jennings (2009) suggest that the instructional practices of Black teachers are shaped and influenced by their own experiences with race, gender and class subjugation, and that “their indignation about social inequality is fueled by their very personal experiences with hegemony and domination” (p. 153). Sanchez-Huckles (1999) stated that in U.S. society, White skin color confers privilege; hence, People of Color struggle from day to day to achieve the same opportunities that are offered to White citizens who enjoy more opportunities and easier access to resources by virtue of their skin color. These dynamics influence lives and the teachers who live them. These stories of indignation that influence the instructional practices of Teachers of
Color (Lynn & Jennings, 2009) are worthy of research. How do those stories translate in the classroom? And why are these stories important?

Significance of Research Question

Research Question: What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools?

Empowering young people in urban communities through inclusive curriculum that includes social justice, as well as positive role-models they can identify with, can be a powerful tool to uplift these communities. Welton, Harris, La Londe, and Moyer (2015) stated, “High school students who participate in social justice education have a greater awareness of inequities that impact their school, community, and society, and learn tools for taking action to address these inequities” (p. 549). As such, social justice education can have serious implications for poor communities and their school districts – through innovative initiatives aimed at providing relief and resources. In this narrative study, teachers’ stories of using inclusive, multicultural education in multiple public urban school districts across the State of New Jersey will be explored. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics demonstrates demographics in urban school districts as having the distinguishing characteristics of a majority Student Population of Color, and being economically disadvantaged (https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/). Urban youth are also underrepresented in the teaching force due to the absence of teacher role models who look like them; this is why we need to explore these stories.

This topic is also significant to me personally. The urban high school where I initially became a vice principal is especially endearing to me because it is where my leadership as a school administrator evolved into one of advocacy for urban youth and urban education. This particular urban public high school currently has a student body that is 98 percent Black and/or
Latino. Members of the surrounding community belong to marginalized populations, most if not all are economically disadvantaged, and many lack social capital to offer the school community.

This problem of teaching practice is significant because it sheds light on the importance of not only a diverse and inclusive curriculum but also a diverse staff to deliver this curriculum. An inclusive curriculum enables authentic student dialogue on issues that affect them. In addition, a diverse staff that mirrors the student population and is able to facilitate this instruction is equally as important to the process of teaching and learning for urban youth. White teachers are more than likely to have a higher incident of microaggressions against students in urban education. These microaggressions can express themselves in various ways: such as maintaining an exclusive curriculum and instructional practices that discourage minority youth from participating and becoming part of the classroom community; excluding Students of Color in decision making for school events; sustaining a school culture that prevents minority youth from gaining access to AP, honor and other upper grade level classes; handing out harsher school disciplinary actions-including suspensions-to Children of Color for similar infractions committed by White students. According to Torres, O’Conor, Mejía, Camacho, and Long (2011), “Classroom microaggressions include assuming minorities to be unintelligent, invalidating the influence of race, culture or ethnicity in students’ lives and as school topics, or presenting negative stereotypes” (p. 365). Despite being of equal intelligence, microaggressions in the classroom have the ability to have a tremendous negative impact on minority students and their ability to learn and perform academically. Many advocate for increasing the numbers of Teachers of Color in classrooms to reduce microaggressions and provide students with a more culturally responsive experience. However, we do not know enough about how Teachers of Color describe their roles and methods in implementing multicultural curriculum. Smith (2000)
stated that in addition to inexperience with culturally diverse people, members of dominant
cultural groups often view the structure of society from a culturally privileged perspective
(Boyle-Baise, 1995).

As a former high school history teacher, I can personally attest to the impact of
multicultural education on my students and how it helped to bring about dialogue on critical
issues of race and identity. Learning from curricula that my students could identify with raised
my students’ self-esteem in changing how they now saw themselves in relation to the
contributions and experiences of historical role models that looked like them. It helped me to
develop a positive rapport with my students, and created a safe/brave space to host critical
dialogue that transformed my students’ ways of thinking and interpretation of the world around
them. I also believe that their ability to identify with me racially/ethnically helped to facilitate
these powerful conversations. Many urban public schools, specifically those in the State of New
Jersey, have a large influx of newcomer students particularly from Latin America and the
Caribbean; culturally responsive teaching is essential for these students to feel welcomed and
valued. When referencing Latino students who had recently immigrated to the US, Apple (2011)
argued that effective teaching requires that we understand the sum of their experiences before
they came to the US and furthermore, that both teachers and teacher educators need to know
much more about their home countries and about the movements, politics, and multiple cultural
traditions and conflicts from where Diasporic populations come.

Ladson-Billings and Tate IV (1995) stated that multicultural education has been
conceptualized as a reform movement designed to effect change in the “school and other
educational institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and other social-class groups
will experience educational equality” (p. 61). Just as critical is having teachers that racially
mirror the student population, particularly in urban public schools, to ensure minority youth are represented in the staff charged with educating and nurturing them. For this reason my research will be specifically targeting the stories of Black and Latino teachers. According to Ladson-Billings & Tate IV (1995), African Americans represented only 12 percent of the national population, they were the majority in twenty-one of the twenty-two largest (urban) schools districts. Today those numbers have increased, according to the latest U.S. Census information African Americans make up 13.3 percent of the national population while Hispanics make up 17.8 percent for a combined 31.1 percent (www.census.gov/). In a recent statistical analysis report about the characteristics of the 100 largest public school districts in the U.S., Kids of Color remain the majority population in 23 of the top 25 largest school districts (Sable, Plotts, & Mitchell, 2010). In a Nation where “race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity” (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995, p. 48), it is even more crucial that multicultural education permeate all content areas in secondary school, but especially in the content of social studies. Upcoming teachers have a responsibility to become educated in how to address diverse populations; “Accrediting agencies and professional associations for teacher education programs such as the National Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (NCATE) and the American Association of College of Teacher Education (AACTE), have included the need to address the issue of diversity in the preparation of teachers” (Bo-Yuen Ngai, 2004, p. 322). What is lacking in the literature, however, are studies of the stories of minority teachers who integrate this multicultural education in their instructional practices; their personal stories of the impact of racism, and their experiences of integrating multicultural education in their school curriculum, is why this research is important. Teachers who implement a multicultural curriculum in their instructional practices are engaging in culturally responsive teaching, a critical pedagogy. For
the purposes of this study, multicultural education will be conceptualized as the curriculum and culturally responsive teaching as the pedagogy. A curriculum that incorporates multicultural education ensures that all students feel valued and important; it also encourages students to consider the oppression of others even if it does not represent their own identity.

Preparing our students for the global challenges of the 21st century starts with helping them to understand how and why present conditions came to exist and why certain conditions affect particular social groups of people and not others. These critical thinking questions are the sparks needed to inspire the creation of ideas and equitable solutions. They help to foster in students the passion for asking new questions and the skills to become independent thinkers. Welton, Harris, La Londe, and Moyer (2015) defined critical thinking as “the process by which we consider perspective, positionality, power, and responsibilities with respect to content” (p. 551) and to be critical you must acknowledge oppression. An educator who is able to acknowledge oppression and its existence within the institution of education has an obligation to act and advocate for her students. The significance of this research is that it focuses on the stories of minority educators who, through the integration of multicultural education, are able to foster a classroom environment that empowers their students.

This research has the potential to contribute insight into the lived experiences of Black and/or Latino social studies teachers who integrate multicultural education in their instruction. By integrating multicultural education in daily instruction, teachers are not only engaging in culturally responsive teaching but also simultaneously reforming urban education by affirming pluralism. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), culturally responsive teaching is an approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes. The essence of a multicultural curriculum is
antiracist and when taught, has the potential to evoke transformational dialogue that can challenge racism and discrimination. Swartz (1993) described multicultural education as a tool that can be utilized to expose and contest the use of school curriculum as a pipeline of dominant ideology. As such, it has the political potential and agenda of unmasking and unraveling the supremacies upon which this ideology is based.

The integration of multicultural education in daily instruction serves to transform the way young people think, act and feel about themselves and each other. It can help “all students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function in an ethnically and racially diverse nation and world” (Banks, 2003, p. 23).

This problem of practice targets an audience inclusive of educators and all stakeholders that have a vested interest in helping underprivileged urban school students thrive and achieve success. The bigger picture and long-term goal is for these young people to have equitable opportunity to post-secondary education and, with this education, become change agents that will challenge social injustice, structural inequities, and institutionalized racism.

Giroux (1983) stated that radical educators have argued that the main function of schools are the reproduction of the dominant ideology, its forms of knowledge, and the distribution of skills needed to reproduce the social division of labor. I argue that the remedy is to ensure that curricula is inclusive and integrated with multicultural education to nurture self-directed thinkers and courageous individuals who will challenge oppression. Brown (2011) cited Jonathan R. Davis (2007) who stated that high school social studies classrooms provide the ideal space for students to explore race and issues related to racial identity, as well as impacting other intersecting identities an individual may hold. Diversifying mainstream curricula by integrating content that is inclusive of Black and Brown people and their contributions, from multiple
sources to offer multiple perspectives, is critical to sound academic and emotional/social learning. The aim of this research is to examine the stories of Black and Latino teachers’ experiences incorporating multicultural education in their instruction. These untold stories can have serious implications towards efforts put forth to improve urban education.

**Research Problem and Research Question**

The research question is – What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools? This problem directly focuses on Black and Latino social studies teachers in urban public education; these teachers are members of marginalized populations based on their race and as such have most likely experienced and/or internalized some form of oppression. According to Lynn and Jennings (2009), research on Black female teachers’ pedagogies reflect schooling practices that are fundamentally transformative, that are geared towards the cultural, educational, and spiritual survival of Black children. The historical marginalization of Populations of Color continues to be a major contributor to current inequitable conditions for those populations, as such the quest for equity should begin with young people through an inclusive curriculum embedded with multicultural education. Brown and Brown (2010) described the experience of African Americans (and other Groups of Color) in the US as inextricably linked to the pursuit of social justice and equity and agreed that race, as an intervening factor, has played a vital role in creating and sustaining inequitable conditions. Stanfield (1985) discussed the objectification of knowledge as a matter of power and privilege:

The objectification of Euro-American experiences in the United States and their systemic diffusion is related intrinsically to the creation and reproduction of hegemonic racial domination. This is seen in the way everyday knowledge of
Euro-Americans has been validated, formalized, and objectified as the science of experience, thus justifying the promotion of normative conceptions of Euro-American experiences and the distortion of racial minority experiences. (p. 389)

African, Latin American, Asian and Indigenous histories and contributions should be part of mainstream curriculum to ensure that the cultural heritage of all students is included in their learning and that White students learn the truth. For minority youth, this not only reinforces the importance of their cultural heritages but it also validates their cultural identities by contributing to a positive self image that instills in young people a sense of pride in their own diversity.

The current movement towards placing more of an emphasis on both National and State standards, as well as an increase in standardized testing, has taken a huge toll on integrating multicultural education in daily instruction, in effect reproducing white supremacy. As a result of standardized test scores now tied to teacher increments and job security, much of class time is now dedicated to ‘teaching to the test’. Besides this movement, some States have also taken measures to rewrite social studies curricula in an effort to downplay and/or omit particular historical events that focus on the experiences, stories and contributions of marginalized populations. In the State of Texas for instance, the curriculum and texts used for American history have now “replaced the word “imperialism” when referring to U.S. policy during the Spanish-American War with the term “expansionism”; by the same token, “slave trade” became the “Atlantic Triangular trade” (Noboa, 2011, p. 44).

These events also pose a specific concern with regards to new teachers entering the profession, especially new secondary social studies teachers; as many “educators often accept mainstream knowledge and resist other knowledge forms because it reinforces the social,
economic, and political arrangements that they perceive as beneficial” (as cited in Banks, 2006). And their own education left out many key historical facts about race relations.

The purpose of this narrative study is to examine the stories that Black and Latino secondary social studies educators tell about how they embed multicultural education in their teaching practices. In this research I will be conceptualizing multicultural education as the curriculum and culturally responsive teaching as the pedagogy. In addition, the research will examine the implications of these findings for teaching secondary social studies in urban public schools and make recommendations for teaching social studies. According to Brown (2006), the historic marginalization of underprivileged students and the reproduction and perpetuation of the status quo have served to benefit the same students and families for hundreds of years while simultaneously ignoring the needs of low-income, Black, Brown, Native, and Asian students and their families (Apple, 1993; Delpit, 1995; Larson & Ovando, 2201). Furthermore, these Students of Color fall into a predetermined mold designed for school failure and social inequality….they are “left behind” without hope, vision, and equal access to the excellent education that all children are entitled to. Transformational change, or change that reflects empathy and challenges oppression, starts in the classroom through daily instruction that is inclusive and motivates young people to connect, collaborate and create solutions that address the marginalization and social injustices they all share. This instruction should also be guided by curriculum that incorporates the histories and contributions of marginalized populations in addition to those of the dominant society.

The integration of multicultural education in mainstream curricula and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching is a way to disrupt the status quo by empowering youth with the knowledge and tools to address structural inequities in their schools
and communities. Research has not adequately addressed how Black and Latino teachers as members of a socially excluded group can utilize the social studies classroom as a vehicle to engage students in critical self-reflection and as opportunities for students to analyze complex-often controversial ideas and events, and how they relate to those ideas and events.

**Definition of key terminology.**

**Culturally Responsive Teaching** – Teaching that incorporates instructional practices and a curriculum that is culturally relevant, or infused with multicultural education. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), culturally responsive teaching is an approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes. For the purpose of this research, I will be using the terms ‘culturally relevant’ and ‘culturally responsive’ interchangeably.

**Urban Education** – Education that takes place in urban areas where poverty is prevalent and most if not all students are minority, and economically-disadvantaged students. According to Ladson-Billings and Tate IV (1995), Students of Color are more segregated than ever before; although African Americans represent 12 percent of the national population, they are the majority in 21 of the 22 largest (urban) school districts.

**Marginalized Populations** – For the purpose of this study, marginalized populations refer to those who have been historically oppressed; more specifically Black and Latino youth whose experiences and contributions have been excluded or omitted from mainstream knowledge.

**Positionality Statement**

The problem of practice focuses on the stories of Black and Latino teachers in urban education, specifically how these educators integrate multicultural education in their district-mandated curriculum and how this integration influences their teaching and learning experiences.
Takacs (2002) reminds us that only by questioning knowledge – “who produces it, how, and from what positionalities” – can we fully assess the knowledge claim’s validity (p. 174). An inclusive curriculum automatically questions why certain conditions exist for certain groups and why the dominant group is the only group to receive power and privilege. It challenges the status quo and recognizes the economic and social imbalance that exist between the haves and have nots. Historically the have nots have primarily been People of Color and marginalized populations.

When I first started teaching, I realized early on that the texts and resources that were provided for me to plan my lessons did not include the complete histories as well as the countless contributions of People of Color. I also realized that the information and images that were included and representative of People of Color in these materials were negative and derogatory. It was necessary to research and find alternative sources of information to provide a well-rounded social studies education for my students.

As an educator and school leader in urban public education, I believe that only by acknowledging America’s diverse population and asserting this diversity through the integration of multicultural education in mainstream curricula, can we truly begin to uphold an inclusive learning environment in schools that benefits all children and will empower students to challenge racism and advocate for social justice; I also understand that my background as a former high school history teacher impacts my perspective on my problem of practice with specific perspectives.

My background. I grew up in Brooklyn, NY in a very diverse community. However, the Catholic school I attended did not afford me multicultural education, despite our growing diverse population within the school. The end result was a school culture where all of the White
students felt valued and appreciated and students like myself and other minority students felt excluded and unimportant. As an undergraduate I double majored in history and African Studies. This decision came as a result of finding out that African history courses were not included within the history major. I asked myself how could I possibly be an effective history teacher without having a background on Africa, the cradle of humanity? To compensate for the history the program did not offer, I double-majored in African Studies and completed an additional 36 credits. Within the African Studies major, I selected the pathway of African, African-Caribbean and African American history. I appreciated that this pathway included members of the African Diaspora because of my own African Caribbean roots, and that it recognized Black people in areas other than in the US. As a Woman of Color, I also felt a personal obligation of picking up this additional major. I rationalized that I could not possibly teach other people’s histories without having full knowledge of my own. Becoming a high school history teacher gave me the opportunity to integrate multicultural education into my daily instruction and implore teaching strategies directly aligned with culturally responsive teaching. As a current school administrator, I encourage and provide support for my teachers to integrate multicultural education in their daily instruction and learning activities.

As a former high school history teacher and advocate of social justice, I have a very strong passion for social studies education and for integrated and inclusive curricula that include the contributions, role models and voices of historically marginalized populations. I believe this is crucial to developing students into critical thinkers that will question unethical behavior and challenge institutionalized oppression. I understand that my relationship to my research may cause me to have a perspective that is favorable towards an integrated curriculum – especially in social studies, over State-mandated curriculums that focus on high-stake testing to measure
Machi and McEvoy (2009) pointed out that personal attachment to an interest provides the passion and dedication necessary for conducting good research, which is a plus; unfortunately, personal attachment can also carry bias and opinion, causing the researcher to jump to premature conclusions. To avoid this I want to be as transparent as possible with my perspectives and values as an educator, and I also intend to include my participants in every aspect of the research process.

I acknowledge that I am a school leader who is in a position of authority to guide instructional practices. In my position, I can provide support in the form of curricula revisions, texts/resources/supplemental materials and professional development for teachers to facilitate the integration of teaching and learning that encompasses multicultural education. This reaffirms my position towards my problem of practice.

As a Woman of Color whose roots are in the Dominican Republic, I recognize that my passion for my topic is also fueled from a personal place where I understand that I, my ancestors, and my descendants are also a part of those historically marginalized populations, whose voices and contributions have been minimized and/or omitted from history and mainstream curricula. “Understanding positionality means understanding where you stand with respect to power, and essential skill for social change agents” (Takacs, 2002, p. 169). As a researcher I intend to engage in constant self-reflection to avoid allowing my personal convictions and perspectives that favor my own cultural identity, compromise the integrity of my study.

**Theoretical Framework**

Critical Race Theory and Culturally Responsive Teaching will guide the research. The purpose of this research is to focus on the narratives of Black and Latino high school teachers who demonstrate culturally responsive teaching by integrating their social studies curriculum
with multicultural education. In this research I will be conceptualizing multicultural education as the curriculum and culturally responsive teaching as the pedagogy. Through the stories of their lived experiences, I hope to discover ways in which Black and Latino educators of urban public schools can achieve and continue to build capacity towards challenging institutionalized oppression and racism through culturally responsive instructional practices. I have considered multiple intersecting identities; however, for this research the focus will primarily be on the identity of race. Crenshaw (1995) insists on grounding critical race scholarship in a sense of reality, which reflects the distinctive experiences of People of Color. She argues, “Race-conscious experience is a springboard from which we engage in fundamental criticism…” (p. 316).

Critical Race Theory and Culturally Responsive Teaching are similar in their purpose but distinct in their roles. “Critical race theory sees the official school curriculum as a culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a white supremacist master script” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 18) which means stories of African Americans, Latinos and other marginalized populations “are muted and erased when they challenge dominant culture authority and power” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 18). This in turn can manifest itself when “members of minority groups internalize the stereotypic images that certain elements of society have constructed in order to maintain their power” (Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995, p. 57). Culturally Responsive Teaching is a means to address what Critical Race Theory ‘sees’ as the problem through instructional methods that help students to change perspectives.

Critical Race Theory can be applied to better understand educational inequity, that is perpetuated through curricula that negatively impacts teaching and learning experiences for Black and Latino teachers and students in public urban education.
For the critical race theorist, social reality is constructed by the formulation and the exchange of stories about individual situations; the “voice” component of critical race theory provides a way to communicate the experience and realities of the oppressed, a first step on the road to justice. (Ladson Billings & Tate IV, 1995, p. 58)

Culturally Responsive Teaching is an instructional method that can facilitate the inclusion of “voices” that have been historically silenced in mainstream curricula by the voices of the dominant group.

Critical Race Theory will serve as the framework to examine the teaching and learning experiences of Black and Latino social studies teachers in urban public school education who engage in culturally responsive teaching by including multicultural education in their instructional practices. According to Ladson-Billings (1998), critical race theory is an outgrowth of and a separate entity from an earlier legal movement called critical legal studies (CLS), which was a leftists legal movement that challenged the traditional legal scholarship that focused on doctrinal and policy analysis (Gordon, 1990).

Ortiz and Jani (2010) contend that critical race theory assumes that race is a social construction without a fixed or inherently objective definition and exists primarily for purposes of social stratification. They cite Haney-Lopez (2000) in pointing out that race is typically determined by the dominant group using socially constructed mechanisms such as “empirically based knowledge” and law to promote and protect its interests (p. 177). As previously stated, CRT originated from CLS which failed to include racism and emphasize social transformation.

Ladson-Billings (1998) stated that CRT has (4) main tenets:
T1. CRT begins with the notion that racism is “normal, not aberrant, in American society” (p. 11) and because it is so interwoven into our society, it is both natural and normal.

T2. CRT engages in ‘storytelling’ to “analyze the myths, presuppositions, and received wisdoms that make up the common culture about race and that invariably render blacks and other minorities one-down” (as cited in Delgado, 1995, p. xiv).

T3. CRT challenges liberalism, and charges that it is flawed because it excludes racism and the ability to ignite transformational and social change.

T4. CRT charges that the civil rights movement and “that civil rights laws continue to serve the interests of Whites” (p. 12).

Only tenets 1 and 2 of Critical Race Theory will be used for this research. Tenet 1 relates to the research because just as with racism, T1 applies to the norm of mainstream curricula (specifically in social studies) excluding the histories and contributions of ‘the other’; this exclusion is seen as ‘normal and natural’ as a result of institutional racism. Tenet 2 emphasizes the importance of storytelling to counteract myths and stereotypes of People of Color by giving marginalized populations a voice, which will be accomplished through a narrative methodology. In-depth interviews will play an important role in the research as the principle means of gathering information. The interview process will help to create a comfortable and trustworthy environment to facilitate the telling of lived experiences. Crenshaw (1995) reminds us that voice is important – how voice is expressed, how voice is informed, how our voice differs from the dominant voice, recounting our perception and experience.

Culturally responsive teaching will also frame the research, as it is the instructional practice that the research seeks to examine when facilitated by social studies Educators of Color who teach in urban public schools and who integrate multicultural education. According to Ladson-Billings (1994), culturally responsive teaching is an approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart
knowledge, skills and attitudes. The aim of this research is to discover the stories and lived experiences of Teachers of Color who implement culturally responsive teaching through the integration of multicultural education in mainstream curricula in their classrooms. Embedded in this integration is the concept of social justice; therefore culturally responsive teaching also incorporates teaching for social justice. While multicultural education includes the populations and contributions of People of Color, it does not always address economic injustice and the structural inequities of a poor community, or how to fix them. The concept of social justice permeates multicultural education as a constant reminder of the work that remains to be done in order to ‘right the historical wrongs’ of marginalized populations. According to a study conducted at Brown University (1999-2008), practices aligned with culturally responsive teaching include: communication of high expectations; active teaching methods; teacher as facilitator; positive perspectives on parents and families of culturally and linguistically diverse students; cultural sensitivity; culturally mediated instruction; student-controlled classroom discourse; and small group instruction and academically-related discourse.

Culturally responsive teaching then has the potential to encourage and empower students to address in an active manner, the matters of oppression and privilege that affect their community. It involves helping students to recognize “that society is the product of historically rooted, institutionally sanctioned stratification along socially constructed group lines that include race, class, gender, secular orientation and ability (among others)” (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2009, p. 345).

According to Hollins (1999), this link between culture and classroom instruction is derived from evidence that cultural practices shape thinking processes, which serve as tools for learning within and outside of schools. It is imperative that there consistently exist an alignment
between student’s culture/identity and what they are learning in the classroom. This link provides a connection to help the student understand why and how their education is relevant to them, and provides proof that they do not have to compromise their cultural identity to be academically successful. Gay (2013) stated that culturally responsive teaching is contingent on seeing cultural differences as assets; creating caring learning communities where culturally different individuals and heritages are valued; using cultural knowledge of ethnically diverse cultures, families, and communities to guide curriculum development, classroom climates, instructional strategies, and relationships with students; challenging racial and cultural stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and other forms of intolerance, injustice, and oppression; being change agents for social justice and academic equity; mediating power imbalances in classrooms based on race, culture, ethnicity, an class; and accepting cultural responsiveness as endemic to educational effectiveness in all areas of learning for students from all ethnic groups.

Social justice education emphasizes in its curricula the practices, policies, and institutions that have the power to oppress groups of people, but also to liberate through inclusive decision-making. According to Cochran-Smith (2004), working for social justice in education means guiding students in critical self-reflection of their socialization into this matrix of unequal relationships and its implications, analysis of the mechanisms of oppression, and the ability to challenge these hierarchies.

In this research, I hope to discover ways in which Black and Latino educators of urban public schools achieve and continue to build capacity towards challenging institutionalized oppression and racism through instructional practices that incorporate culturally responsive teaching. Because this study will specifically target Black and/or Latino teachers – members of historically oppressed and marginalized populations – a critical lens will be used to conduct this
study. The stories as told by the participants will shed light on their experiences as social studies educators that represent minority populations teaching in urban public schools. Despite the odds, this research will attempt to uncover how Teachers of Color, particularly in social studies, are able to deliver critical curricula that will help prepare urban youth to survive in a racialized society and overcome the obstacles inherent to institutionalized racism that often block the road to their success. Lynn and Jennings (2009) stated that Black teachers in particular work to foster a critical consciousness in their students about race, class and gender oppression so that students do no remain complicit in their dehumanization.

My research will also attempt to distinguish why Teachers of Color may be ‘better-equipped’ to deliver this content. The dynamic of white privilege is a protector that has shielded most if not all White teachers from being exposed to oppression; they are therefore ‘ill-equipped’ to teach about something they have never had to experience or internalize. Discovering this information through the lens of the oppressed and from the perspective of the marginalized is critical to this research because the aim is to emphasize the lived experiences of oppressed people who resist through their courageous teaching and preparation of urban youth for the real world.

**Critics of critical race theory and culturally responsive teaching.** Counterarguments for both Critical Race Theory and Culturally Responsive Teaching resemble very much the counterarguments for the integration of multicultural education. According to Eller (1997), anti-multiculturalists worry that the emphasis on differences over commonalities accentuates or even creates differences and undermines shared knowledge and values; they argue that there is or should be a common American identity and they warn of the intellectual dangers inherent in particularism. Some counterarguments for culturally responsive teaching include questioning its
critical theorists also denounce what they consider to be the current multicultural paradigm, which seems to align closely with 'multiculturalism’. Ladson-Billings and Tate IV (1995) compared the current multicultural paradigm with the civil rights law stating that the latter was “mired in liberal ideology that offers no radical change in the current order” (p. 62). “Multiculturalism came to be viewed as a political philosophy of “many cultures” existing together in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance” (p. 61). Ladson-Billings (1998) also stated that adopting and adapting Critical Race Theory as a framework for educational equity means that we will have to expose racism in education and propose radical solutions for addressing it. In the classroom, this translates to instruction that is inclusive of multicultural education. An inclusive curriculum facilitated through culturally responsive instructional methods has the potential to evoke transformational dialogue on critical issues of race, class and identity. These conversations expose racism by helping to develop awareness, skills to challenge institutionalized racism and active citizenship leading to advocacy and action for social justice.

**Applying theory to research problem.** Critical Race Theory and Culturally Responsive Teaching are directly aligned with my problem of practice and will be used to guide the research. Critical Race Theory will serve as the framework by which to examine the stories of teaching and learning of Black and Latino social studies teachers in urban public school education who
engage in culturally responsive teaching by including multicultural education in their instructional practices. Critical Race Theory will provide the lens to explore teachers’ stories. Only their unique and distinct voices can validate the importance of their experiences as Teachers of Color in urban public schools and the impact of utilizing instructional practices that demonstrate culturally responsive teaching. As front-liners for equitable education, the critical lens will help to highlight the stories of resilience and resistance as told by educational warriors that battle institutionalized racism both in the real world and in the classroom.

**Conclusion**

Expectations for this study include exploring the importance of culturally responsive teaching but also validating the stories and voices of Teachers of Color as qualified contributors to the profession and as the advocates for equitable education for urban youth through transformational and empowering instruction. Chapter 2 will include an extensive literature review that validates the importance of this study through various scholars and their perspectives on multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching. These perspectives will shed light on the impact of culturally responsive teaching through the lens and stories of Black and Latino teachers.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This dissertation will explore the stories of Black and Latino teachers’ experiences incorporating multicultural education in their instruction. According to Creswell (2015) in a qualitative study, the literature serves to justify the importance of the research problem. I intend to demonstrate the importance of the problem of practice through selected literature that examines the impact of an integrated and inclusive secondary social studies curriculum. The literature will support the notion that a curriculum integrated with multicultural education can evoke transformational dialogue on critical issues of race, class and identity in the classroom. Finally, the literature will also reflect the importance of having Teachers of Color who integrate culturally responsive teaching in their instructional practices. There are insufficient studies conducted on teachers’ stories about their experiences with culturally responsive teaching, especially when facilitated by Teachers of Color in public urban schools. This study is significant to all who have concerns about public school systems. It is especially significant to urban communities and urban educators where the majority of student demographics is representative of children from marginalized populations. According to Ladson-Billings and Tate IV (1995), although African Americans represent 12 percent of the national population, they are the majority in 21 of the 22 largest urban school districts. Boschma and Brownstein’s (2016) research indicates that Children of Color represent a majority of the student body in 83 of the 100 largest cities.

Organization of the Literature Review

This literature review will be organized thematically, and will utilize funneling to demonstrate the organizational pattern. The impact of racism in the U.S. section will showcase
literature that will explore racism in the US, especially as it pertains to urban youth. The second strand, the role of multicultural curricula in secondary social studies education is a means for educating all students for racial justice for the historically marginalized, will refer to literature that discusses the role of social studies education in public education and its ability to become a vehicle to begin conversations about change for marginalized youth. Finally the third and final strand, the impact of Teachers of Color on urban youth, discusses the importance of a social studies curriculum enriched with multicultural education as well as the benefits of utilizing Teachers of Color to facilitate this learning.

**The Impact of Racism in the United States**

By describing how racism has impacted Black and Latino youth, I demonstrate the need for multicultural education in curricula and instructional practices that encompass culturally responsive teaching. The section explores the history of racism, the mental and social trauma of racism and the unfair and inequitable practices that impact minority youth.

**The history of racism.** Racism has been ingrained in our society for generations. Torres, O’Conor, Mejia, Camacho, and Long (2011) cited Organista (2007) who defined racism as “the belief in the inherent racial and/or cultural inferiority and superiority of different groups” (as cited in Organista, 2007, p. 44), including the actions or inactions that follow. The near extinction of the Native Americans and the era of African slavery followed by colonization marked the beginning and the makings of racism. As schools continue to hide the truth via curriculum that excludes the voices of the marginalized, the evolution of racism continues. In fact, “much of the growth of the current Capitalist economic system was built through exploitation, the use of inexpensive labor and unfair treatment of people” (Traverso-Yepez, 2005, p. 364). The development of our current capitalist system then is founded on a history of
the subjugation of Indigenous and African people based on their racial and ethnic identities as inherently inferior traits. Sanchez-Hucles (1999) noted that the legacy of slavery and the American racial caste system had perpetuated poverty, abuse denigration and marginality in the lives of African Americans (Allen, 1996). A third of Black Americans say they have been victims of racial discrimination at some point in their lives, denying them opportunities in housing or employment, and more than 4 in 10 (45 percent) say they have at some point been afraid their life was in danger because of their race. A majority of Americans (64 percent) feel that racial tensions have increased and is a big problem in the country, 66 percent of Blacks, 64 percent of Hispanics and 43 percent of Whites agree (Dijulio, Morton, Jackson, & Brodie, 2015).

Historically the stories and events that led to the genocide and exploitation of Native and African peoples in the US have been virtually excluded from mainstream education. As a result, rising youth are being mis-educated in not being able to gain an understanding of how and why current global conditions exist, and why these conditions mostly apply to particular groups of people. According to Stanfield (1985), the creation and reproduction of hegemonic racial domination stems from the objectification of Euro-American experiences in the US; this is seen in the way everyday knowledge and contributions of only Euro-Americans have been validated, formalized, and normalized as the science of experience, thus justifying the promotion of normative conceptions of Euro-American experiences and the distortion of racial minority experiences. The role of race and racism in American history is evident in today’s racialized society and institutions. It is especially evident in the concentration of poverty in public urban school districts where most Students of Color attend. Boschma and Brownstein (2016) discussed in a recent analysis that about in half of the largest 100 cities, most African Americans and Latino students attend schools where at least 75 percent of all students qualify as poor or low-
income under federal guidelines. These factors surely have implications as to the mental and social development of urban youth.

**The mental and social trauma of racism.** Jones (1974) argued that racism is both overt and covert, taking two closely related forms: Whites acting against individual Blacks (and other individual minorities) and acts by the total White community against the Black community (and other Communities of Color).

The root of racism and its crippling effects exist in the basic institutions in this country. These institutions—the schools, the banks, housing industry, and private and public employment sources—assign to and maintain Blacks and other minorities in inferior positions on the basis of race. (Jones, 1974, p. 218)

As a result of racial genocide and exploitation, Youth of Color live in a racist society where the dominant group refuses to share power. Educator and activist Jane Elliot has often stated that racism is not inbred; it is a learned response and therefore can be unlearned. Her solution to ending racism is simply to tell the truth in schools. Sanchez-Hucles (1999) discussed the findings of the Joint Commission on Mental Health in 1970, which decreed that racism is a more pervasive and serious menace to mental health than childhood schizophrenia, retardation, neuroses or any other emotional disorder because its effects cripple the growth and development of millions of people at every age. Torres et al. (2011) stated that minorities who have experienced racist incidents have conceptualized those experiences as persistent stressors in their lives (Moradi & Risco, 2006); furthermore, racism can lead an individual (especially minority youth) to develop a sense of identity confusion and lowered self-worth, feel powerless about their future, and separate from the larger society (Aponte, 1999).
There is also a strong connection between racism and crime as it pertains to minority youth. According to the 2006 Uniform Crime Reports, African-American youth accounted for 51 percent of arrests for violent crimes (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006). In contrast, adolescent Black American males’ homicide victimization rate is about seven times higher than the rate for White adolescents (Baum, 2005). These are factors that both demonstrate Black youth as being largely overrepresented in the criminal justice system and as being largely victimized. Both of these phenomena are largely attributed to structural racism. “Structural racism refers to an array of historical and contemporary conditions that have helped to create inner-city communities characterized by racial segregation, poverty, residential instability, and low levels of social control” (Martin, McCarthy, Conger, Gibbons, Simons, Cutrona, & Brody, 2010, p. 662). Structural racism is the result of a combination of two factors. The first is a concentrated disadvantage that historically developed from negative socio-economic conditions. Elements of these conditions include residential instability, family instability, poverty, and a high unemployment rate and, as a result of these, high crime. The second factor is the concentration of these conditions, in particular locations where Black and Latino communities were established. This contributed to creating a permanent state of generational impoverishment and deprivation in isolation. The making of segregated inner-city communities as a result of these conditions consequently has led to racial isolation. These inner-city segregated communities, better known as urban communities, lack the social capital to nourish their schools subsequently maintaining the achievement gap and the status quo.

According to Torres and colleagues (2011), a deeper look at the vulnerabilities and symptoms associated with racism shows a similarity to those associated with the experience of a catastrophic event (Sanchez-Hucles, 1999), traumatic impact (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2006;
Franklin et al., 2006: Harrell et al., 2003) and complex trauma (Franklin, 2006). Joy DeGruy discusses her theory on PTSS or post traumatic slave syndrome and connects this to the present socio-economic conditions of Black people as a result of hundreds of years of chattel slavery. “It is a condition that exists as a consequence of multigenerational oppression of Africans and their descendants resulting from a form of slavery which was predicated on the belief that Africans were inherently/genetically inferior to Whites” (https://joydegruy.com/resources-2/post-traumatic-slave-syndrome/). Institutionalized racism in its current state has then become an extension of this oppression, continuing to perpetrate harm and even more so for Black and Latino youth who are more vulnerable and have less access to opportunity and mobility. According to Torres et al. (2011), there is an erroneous perception that racism does not exist anymore; however, hate crimes, lack of resources, and social disparities among minorities demonstrate the continuous presence of discrimination. “Though still highly oppressive, the expression of racism has transformed to include a subtle quality, such as covert racism and microaggressions” (Sue et al., 2007; Sue, Lin Torino, Capodilupo, & Rivera, 2009). These forms of racism have largely been ignored by present society, “creating a barrier of fully removing racism and discrimination at all levels” (Harell, Hall, & Taliaferro, 2003, p. 364).

**Unfair and inequitable practices that impact minority youth.** Racism and discrimination leading to unfair and inequitable treatment has a critical impact on minoritized youth. Brown (2006) argued that when compared to their White middle-class counterparts, Students of Color, of low socioeconomic status, who speak languages other than English, and with disabilities consistently experience significantly lower achievement test scores, teacher expectations, and allocation of resources (Alexander, Entwisle, & Olsen, 2001; Banks, 1997; Delpit, 1995; Jencks & Phillips, 1998; Ortiz, 1997). Educational policy such as No Child Left
Behind (NCLB) has too often been used to hold urban youth academically accountable to perform the same as their White counterparts in affluent school districts despite the existence of social inequality and educational inequity. Inadequate funding, historical segregation and the unmet needs of poor urban communities are very real obstacles that impede the academic outcome of urban youth. Moreover, “in inner-city communities, social closure between parents and schools is generally weak or even nonexistent because racial and class differences contribute to a lack of trust” (Noguera, 2011, p. 10).

Latino communities experience racism and discrimination as well. According to Gonzalez, Stein, Kiang, and Cupito (2014), epidemiological research finds that almost 50 percent of Latinos between the ages of 18-24 report experiences of discrimination (Perez, Fortuna, & Alegria, 2008). Experiences of discrimination are stressful and can result in decreased psychological functioning (Potochnick et al., 2012; Umana-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007; Zeiders, Umana-Taylor, & Derlan, 2013), lowered self-esteem (Edwards & Romero, 2008; Szalacha et al., 2003), and diminished educational outcomes (Benner & Graham, 2011). The current student achievement serves as indisputable evidence to attest to these realities. Torres and colleagues (2011) pointed out that regardless of immigration status, Latinos/as in the US still deal with racism. “Factors such as the current U.S. economic situation, perceptions of undocumented immigrants overflowing the workforce, and a sensationalist media have contributed to an increase in negative sentiment toward Latinos/as in the U.S.” (Torres et al., 2011, p. 364).

Structural racism restricts minorities from having access to the same opportunities and resources that their White counterparts have. When it comes to public school education, this is more evident in urban school districts. Banks (1995) clearly depicts the problem, the racial crisis in America, the large number of immigrants that are entering the nation each year, the widening
The gap between the rich and the poor, and the changing characteristics of the nation’s student population make it imperative that schools be reformed in ways that will help students and teachers to re-envision, rethink, and re-conceptualize America.

**Conclusion.** Race and racism have been historically woven in American society and continue to play an intricate role in opportunities and social mobility for People of Color. The majority of Americans agree that racial tensions have intensified, with increasing acts of discrimination and unfair treatment towards minorities. Minority youth are especially at risk for being severely impacted by acts of racial discrimination and prejudice as they are more vulnerable and more easily convinced of the racist stereotypical stigma of Black and Brown inferiority. The literature explored in this section is relevant to the study because it demonstrates how racism substantially continues to play a role in our society and our schools. Culturally responsive teaching can be used as a tool to challenge oppression and racism; when facilitated by educators who are members of the marginalized populations, it can inspire and empower minority students that can now see themselves in their teachers.

**The Role of Social Studies in Education is a Means for Educating all Students for Racial Justice for the Historically Marginalized**

This strand of the literature review will examine the importance of multicultural education in secondary social studies curricula. This section will explore the impact of multicultural education in social studies, multicultural education as a tool for empowerment, and multicultural education and its’ implications for White children.

**The impact of multicultural education in social studies.** Ethnic revitalization movements during the 1960s and 1970s helped to bring about a movement for multicultural education in schools. In most public schools of the US, the current secondary social studies
curricula as well as school structure, school policies, instructional resources/materials and even pedagogical strategies are representative of the dominant culture and only their contributions. According to Bohn and Sleeter (2000), world history in the newest social studies series is chronologically rearranged so that Western civilization’s accomplishments are glorified while Asian, African, and Native American historic contributions to world culture are minimized…European conquests are discussed very matter-of-factly, ignoring all ethical questions.

Secondary social studies curriculum largely focuses on contributions and historical events that personify the European and Anglo-American as hero and civilizer of nations. According to the NJ Department of Education, NJ high school graduation requirements indicate that a student must take World History, U.S. History 1, U.S. History 2 and Economics, (www.state.nj.us/education/archive/aps/info/grad.). The NJ State World History curriculum is centered around events that pertain to European history, and begins with the Renaissance era as if to indicate that this is where civilization began. The curriculum dedicates very little attention and time towards learning African, Asian and Indigenous history. The U.S. History 1 and 2 curricula rightfully focuses on U.S. historical events; however, it fails to thoroughly examine the impact of those events on other nations and peoples. U.S. History is essentially World History because of the impact that the US has had globally; therefore, the curriculum should also include those perspectives. African American History is also insufficiently integrated into American history despite recent NJ Amistad legislation in 2002 that dictates the mandatory integration of African American History in mainstream social studies curricula to provide students with an inclusive social studies education. According to the NJ Department of Education, the Amistad Commission ensures that the Department of Education and public schools of NJ implement
materials and texts that integrate the history and contributions of African-Americans and the
descendants of the African Diaspora (www.state.nj.us/education/amistad/).

Olneck (2001) stated that having a history is a necessary part of the on-going construction
of any collectivity or solidarity. National history testifies to the very reality of a nation in the
present. “Knowing that we have a history is to know that there is a ‘we’. Therefore, constructing
and teaching history contribute to constructing the present ‘we’, which history appears to
presuppose” (Olneck, 2001, p. 335). The author continues, “Challenges to the content of official
history challenge the presupposition that ‘we’ are who we think we are, that we are as we claim
to be, and even challenge the root assumption that we are and must necessarily be” (Olneck,
2001, p. 335). Within teacher education programs, as well as preparations programs for
educational leaders, an inclusive school culture where all staff and students feel valued is
emphasized and is very critical to the success and cohesion of any school. As important is the
school curricula and its ability to validate all of the students it is charged with educating through
its inclusiveness. “When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and
you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and
saw nothing” (Bohn & Sleeter, 2000, p. 156). Fitchett, Starker, and Salyers (2012) argued that
the issue of curricular bias against minority individuals becomes even more complicated by
traditional social studies teacher education, diminishing the importance of race and diversity
(Ladson-Billings, 2003; National Council for the Social Studies, 2010); especially because,
“Social studies teacher candidates often carry misconceptions regarding students’ cultures that
manifests as biases or deficit-model thinking” (Kidd, Sanchez, & Thorp, 2008; Sleeter, 2001;
Essential to a well-rounded curriculum and social studies education is the concept of exploring multiple perspectives from multiple sources to ensure first inclusiveness and the ability to offer students the knowledge that will help them develop skills to understand and navigate the complex world around them.

Today, the West paradigm in American history, and culture is powerful, cogent, and deeply entrenched in the curriculum of the nation’s institutions of learning. As such, it often prevents students at all levels of education from gaining a sophisticated, complex, and compassionate understanding of American history, society, and culture. Students must be taught, for example, that the concept of the West is a Eurocentric idea, and they must be helped to understand how different groups in American society conceptualized and viewed the West differently.

(Banks, 1995, p. 394)

There are several issues with current social studies curricula that impede the process of acquiring an authentic and well-grounded social studies education. One of those issues involves history being told from the dominant point of view while excluding the contributions of countless other minoritized populations. According to Brown and Brown (2010), scholars noted at least three key problems in how historical narratives deal with race in the school curriculum, including: relying on one dimensional, herofication narratives (Aldridge, 2006; Carlson, 2003); positioning race as an essentialized construct (McCarthy, 1990a, 1990b; Wynter, 1992); and presenting partial, inaccurate and/or misconceptions of stories (King, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 2003; Swartz, 1992; Yosso, 2002). Banks (1995) stated that teachers can help students acquire new perspectives on the development of American history and society by reforming the curriculum with the use of paradigms, perspectives, and points of views from transformative
academic knowledge; that is, knowledge that consists of the concepts, paradigms, themes, and explanations that challenge mainstream academic knowledge and that expand the historical and literary cannon. Social studies teachers, especially because of the nature of their content area, have an obligation to seek out alternative and additional resources that will provide their students access to view ‘all sides of the story’. Olneck (2001) stated that “history is selective and that historical stories locate people as marginal or as truly belonging, and they identify who may legitimately exercise power and advance claims by identifying the ‘other’ against which a nation is defined” (p. 335).

In addition, current educational polices that emphasize standardized testing as a measurement of student achievement also discourage deviation from mainstream curricula; passing scores on standardized tests are also tied to teacher increments and job stability. Social studies curricula has an overwhelmingly large number of topics and events that are required to be covered. Many teachers, especially novice teachers, tend to rigidly follow the curriculum for fear of running out of time and being unable to go over all the material. For these teachers, integrating their instruction to include multicultural education would be a waste of instructional time. Yet others demonstrate a cultural bias and unwittingly teach curriculum that will maintain the status quo. The end result of the historical disenfranchisement of marginalized populations is evident today in the poor urban communities that lack the social capital to nourish their schools, and provide equitable educational opportunities for their youth. Boschma and Brownstein (2016) stated that the trends in the patterns of schools experiencing the deepest economic isolation-institutions where at least 75 percent of students qualify as poor further underscore the stark racial divergence in these findings.
It is crucial for social studies curriculum “to foster and engage an inclusive citizenry that challenges acts of inequality, injustice, and hegemony” (Salinas, 2006, p. 20) in order to empower young people to challenge and overcome these forms of oppression. This can only be accomplished by including the complete histories and contributions of marginalized populations. Multicultural education incorporates democratic learning and active citizenship; “multicultural democracy incorporates socioeconomic, cultural and political diversity” (Marri, 2009, p. 12).

Banks (1995) explained that the prejudice reduction dimension of multicultural education relates to the characteristics of students’ racial attitudes and strategies that teachers can use to help them develop more democratic values and attitudes. When it comes to social studies education this factor is especially critical because it enhances the student’s ability to understand the impact of the history of the US on diverse populations living in the US. Banks (2013) stated that the infusion of various perspectives, frames of reference, and content from different groups will extend students’ understanding of the nature, development, and complexity of U.S. society.

**Multicultural education as a tool for empowerment.** Multicultural education can be utilized as a means to empower historically marginalized populations because it focuses on “groups on the margins, groups that have historically experienced racism, discrimination, and exclusion” (Banks, 2006, p. 138). In contrast, there also exists literature to suggest that multicultural curricula may jeopardize the teaching of the importance of having a common American identity.

If written and taught History helps to construct the national ‘self’, and the mode of individual self-hood that authentically incarnates the national self, then ‘revision’ of History becomes revision of the national self, and of the proto-type individual self- challenging not only the conventional wisdom but also the
privileged positions of those individuals and groups who have benefited from
dominant ideologies and prevailing distributions of power. (Olneck, 2001, p. 336)

You cannot revise a history that was never included to begin with. Current taught history has been historically written and is currently taught incompletely and incorrectly, filled with half-truths; therefore, the national self never had an opportunity to truly develop. Until the contributions and unabridged stories of all people responsible for building this nation are included in public school education, racism will prevail.

Banks (2006) stated that educational reform is impeded by the misconceptions and lack of knowledge about ethnic and racial groups that teachers learn/absorb in the wider culture/society. For this reason, Glazier and Seo (2005) discussed the need to develop a curriculum and pedagogy for transformation, one that is characterized by an ongoing effort to create new space for dialogic discourse, to rewrite cultural narratives, and to allow for discussion of multiple literatures and perspectives. A key element in the transformational factor of multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching is the dialogue that transpires as a result. This dialogue encourages critical thinking and student collaboration. These powerful conversations have the potential to politically empower students, and disrupt institutionalized oppression by exposing dominant ideology that sustains social injustice and educational inequity. Glazier and Seo (2005) cited Bigler and Collins (1995) who pointed out that “multicultural curricula have the potential to challenge the ‘silences’ that exist in schools around issues such as race and class” as cited in Bigler & Collins, 1995, p. 3). The dialogic aspect to multicultural education is critical to it serving as a catalyst for transformational change and political empowerment.
Swartz (1993) argued that as a post-critical construct, multicultural education can be utilized to expose and contest the use of school curriculum as a pipeline of dominant ideology; as such, it has the political potential and agenda of unmasking and unraveling the supremacies upon which this ideology is based. Multicultural education can be used as a tool to advocate for social justice and equity in education. “When curriculum is transformed, what is immediately apparent is the significant presence and contribution of a number of different groups in addition to the Europeans; with the addition of these ethnic groups comes the addition of new concepts to assist in the transformation of the curriculum” (Branch, 2004, p. 34).

Current student populations in public urban school districts are composed of mostly Black and Latino students who belong to low-income families; however, the 21st century has been marked by a sharp influx of immigrant children from all over the world, and especially from countries from the region of Latin America. According to Cherng, Sanzone, and Ahram (2017) for example, between 2000 and 2013, the foreign-born population in New York City increased by nearly 7 percent with the largest immigrant group – Dominicans – growing by about 4 percent. In light of this fact, “Effective teaching requires that we understand the sum of these students’ experiences before they came to the United States; teachers need to know much more about the home countries-and about the movements, politics, and multiple cultural traditions and conflicts from where diasporic populations come” (Apple, 2011, p. 223).

According to Shevalier and McKenzie (2012), the point of culturally responsive teaching is to respond to students in ways that build and sustain meaningful, positive relationships (Bergeron, 2008; Brown, 2004); that is, to “care for” them rather than “care about” them. “Education, by its very nature should help people to develop their best selves – to become people with pleasing talents, useful and satisfying occupations, self-understanding, sound character, a host of
appreciations, and a commitment to continuous learning” (Shevalier & McKenzie, 2012, p. 1091).

A curriculum integrated with multicultural and social justice education fosters the development of critical thinking skills and the ability of a young person to reflect on their role or lack of, when it comes to perpetuating oppression and sustaining the status quo. According to Okye-Johnson (2011), the five dimensions of multicultural education developed by Banks (1994, 2004) are content integration, knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social structure. “The major goal of ME [multicultural education] is to see that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups experience educational equality by reforming the school and other educational institutions” (Banks, 1994, p. 1256). The author goes on to discuss Ladson Billings’ (1994) observations of teachers in the classroom and her affirmation that culturally relevant teaching “views knowledge critically, is passionate about knowledge, helps students develop necessary skills, and sees excellence as a complex standard that takes student diversity and individual differences into account” (pp. 91-98).

In a 2015 qualitative study of high school participants, Welton, Harris, La Londe, and Moyer explore the impact of social justice education and what gaining a greater awareness of inequities that impact their school, community, and society can result in. The study illustrated that these high school students acquired tools for taking action to address these inequities. Teachers can use multicultural education to facilitate meaningful discussions about social justice, especially when it comes to issues of race; an important factor of this discussion is that students are compelled to consider the oppression of others, whose identities may not represent their own. According to Brown (2011), these meaningful discussions can be impeded as a result of teachers
who steer clear of teaching about racism, even in subject areas like social studies where the topic is relevant and appropriate (Epstein 2009; Howard, 2003). Fitchett, Starker, and Salyers (2012) discussed the curricular tradition of social studies as having long been critiqued for cultural biases toward non-majority peoples, and avoidance of controversy, and a social reproduction agenda (Apple, 2004; Bohn & Sleeter, 2000; Cornbleth & Waugh, 1995); furthermore the non-White, “other” is represented as subjugated, culturally lacking, or inherently inferior (Chandler, 2010; Willinsky, 1998).

Social studies education serves as a conduit for students to learn about people, history and geography, culture, politics and economics, government and relationships. It also helps students to understand current conditions by examining the past and the events that helped to shape them. Salako, Eze, and Adu (2013) discussed that knowledge and attitudes to multicultural education concepts in social studies are invaluable experiences of analyzing various cultures in today’s interdependent world. The authors go on to state that it increases students’ capacity for intellectual open-mindness and global perspective about issues, and facilitates the academic achievement of students from diverse racial and cultural groups. “Social studies is primarily concerned with the study of people, their activities and relationships as they interact with their physical and socio-cultural environment” (Salako et al., 2013, p. 303).

Social studies education promotes active citizenship and advocacy of humanitarian causes such as human rights, globalization and social justice. Zevin (2011) explained that a major purpose of the social studies context is to promote political activism, including actively working for such goals as social justice, freedom of speech, and assembly, and international peace. This is virtually impossible without including curricula that represents the oppressed and marginalized. Brown (2011) agreed with Jonathon R. Davis (2007) that high school social
studies classrooms provide the ideal space for students to explore race and issues related to racial identity. According to Kaun (2006), the primary source of mis-teaching lies in the way American history is taught – essentially via the textbook. “Half of the texts reviewed ignored notions of social class, stratification or structure, income distribution or inequality; not one textbook offers any data or analysis of inequality within educational institutions” (Kaun, 2006, p. 825).

Castro, Field, Baumi, and Morowski (2012) stated that cultural citizenship as a purpose for social studies acknowledges not only the diversity found in the American context, but also global awareness and world cultures. This kind of citizenship mirrors notions of multicultural education espoused by Sleeter and Grant (2007) in which the focus is not just on cultural knowledge but also on understanding personal and global cultures as well as systems of inequity (and hegemony) that limit democratic participation for marginalized groups.

Research that focuses on the negative effects of the integration of multicultural education argues that maintaining the status quo to foster a “national identity” for the overall good of the US is imperative (Lawrence, 1997). Eller (1997) argues that the last worry of anti-multiculturalists is that the entire cultural and intellectual enterprise is being converted into an enormous political battlefield in which the “weapons of mass destruction” are race and gender and sexual orientation. They warn that, in a worldview where there is no truth but only cultures and power, no knowledge, judgment, or consensus is possible (Lippert, 1991-92, p. 372). I argue that culture is truth, and truth leads to sharing power and creating a more equitable society.

Multicultural education and white children. Multicultural education is just as critical for White children as it is for Children of Color. As the dominant group, most White children enjoy economic and social privileges that are not enjoyed by their Black and Brown counterparts
but can use those privileges to challenge institutionalized oppression and become efficient advocates for social justice. Nieto (1998) argues that although the primary victims of biased education continue to be those who are invisible in the curriculum, those who figure prominently are victims as well. They receive only a partial education, which legitimates their cultural blinders. European American children, seeing only themselves, learn that they are the norm; everyone else is secondary.

Although often few in numbers in urban districts, poor White students can also feel excluded and underrepresented. An important aspect to consider when it comes to White students is that they are just as economically disadvantaged as my Black and Latino students, otherwise they would not be growing up in the same poor community. The ultimate goal as a School Leader is for all students to feel important, safe and valued; measures have been taken to ensure that this minority population within urban school districts is also represented and acknowledged, and feels just as included in their learning. The literature on multicultural education emphasizes the inclusion of education that represents historically marginalized populations; however, “the aim of a multicultural curriculum is not to bolster one segment of our society over another, but to include segments of the population that compose our ‘national identity’, allowing each to learn about all” (Lawrence, 1997, p. 319). As an educator and advocate of public urban education, my leadership aims to promote not only an inclusive curriculum but also an inclusive school culture. According to Nieto (1998), antiracist multicultural education forces teachers and students to take a long, hard look at everything as it was and is, instead of just how we wish it were. The need for a multicultural curriculum is crucial for all students to receive the quality education they deserve.
Conclusion. Multicultural curricula in social studies education can play a critical role as an advocate for historically marginalized populations by becoming a vehicle from which to correct historical inaccuracies and negative stereotypes that formed as a result of institutionalized racism and oppression. I believe that it can also be used as a catalyst for political empowerment through an inclusive curricula that evokes transformational dialogue amongst students and motivates student into active citizenship. Transformational dialogue is dialogue that reflects empathy; love of humanity; cooperation; goals of achieving equity and social justice; consideration and respect. Transformational dialogue also challenges oppression, resulting in collaboration aimed at bringing about awareness and working towards creating positive sustainable change that benefits everyone. Telling the truth in school is the only way to manifest authentic class discussions that can end in increased awareness, collaboration and practical solutions. The integration of multicultural education in schools through culturally responsive teaching practices enables a process of critical self-reflection and transformational thinking, while empowering students with the knowledge and tools to help challenge institutionalized racism. This process is especially crucial in public urban school districts and may be better facilitated by Teachers of Color, as it is most likely that they may have experienced and/or internalized racism sometime in their life. Examining the stories of Black and Latino teachers who implement culturally responsive teaching can help to highlight this phenomena.

The Influence of Teachers of Color on Urban Youth

The final strand of this literature review focuses on Black and Latino educators who use culturally responsive teaching and their influence on urban youth. This thematic strand will take a closer look at the importance of Educators of Color for urban youth with an emphasis on Black and Latino secondary social studies teachers. This strand will examine literature that suggests
that Teachers of Color may be better equipped to educate urban youth. This strand will also examine literature that supports the diversification of the teaching force.

According to Achinstein, Ogawa, and Sexton (2010), nationally People of Color represent 40 percent of the student population in public schools, whereas only 17 percent of public school teachers are People of Color. “An underlying assumption of the demographic imperative is that in a pluralistic society it is problematic that public school students (Students of Color and White students alike) experience a primarily White teaching population” (Achinstein et al., 2010, p. 71). Cultural bias combined with ingrained stereotypes brought about through institutional racism continues to show itself especially in the inequitable manner that disciplinary action is distributed to White students compared to Students of Color. “Substantial scholarly evidence indicates that teachers—especially White teachers—evaluate black students’ behavior and academic potential more negatively than those of White students (McGrady & Reynolds, 2013, p. 3).

A dangerous aspect of racism is the unrelenting ability for stereotypes to take the place of truthful information. According to Torres et al. (2011), discrimination in the education system is also related to the performance of Latinos/as based on the stereotypes and expectations from the teachers. “Research has shown that differential treatment from teachers based on negative stereotypes and expectations of Latino/a students has negatively influenced their performance in school (Mckown & Weinstein, 2008, pp. 364-365). When it comes to Latino/a students, especially newcomers, the language barrier is an additional challenge that inhibits them from overcoming both overt and covert forms of racism. Too often being an English Language Learner (ELL) student is seen as a disadvantage rather than as an advantage in being able to communicate in two languages. “When handled creatively, bilingualism and diversity in a
classroom can serve to enhance the learning experience, as opposed to detracting from it” (Llurda & Lasagabaster, 2010, p. 364).

Urban school districts often lack the diversified staff necessary to mirror their student population; as a result, urban youth have an insufficient number of educators they can identify with as role models that look like them. Milner (2012) argues that historically Black teachers have had a meaningful impact on Black students’ academic and social success because they deeply understood their students’ situations and their needs, both inside and outside the classroom, in no small part because many of them lived in the same communities as their students. These social and economic similarities, in addition to the racial/ethnic similarities, help to create an even closer bond between teacher and student and eases the isolation and loneliness of the students. The student is able to see herself in her teacher and therefore understands that this is someone she can relate to.

Teachers of Color are a symbol of resistance and survival for urban youth because they give them hope that it is possible to overcome oppression and grow up to be successful. “Some assumptions behind this…are that Teachers of Color may be suited to teaching Students of Color because of a potential understanding of the cultural experiences of these learners and the possibility of promoting culturally responsive teaching, supporting cultural synchronicity, and building cultural bridges from home to school for learners” (Achinstein et al., 2010, p. 72). The Black male teacher, for example, is “invoked as a role model and is required to assume individual responsibility for addressing structural inequalities that are manifested in individual Black boys’ disaffection with the education system” (Martino, 2015, p. 64). He is also a living example of the possibilities of what the future holds, as urban youth identify with him as a survivor who ‘made it’, and can also see themselves making it. Noguera (2011) reiterated that
the inability to respond to the nonacademic needs of their students often compromises the ability of schools to meet the academic needs. This creates an even bigger demand for positive role models urban youth can identify with, connect to and interact with, especially in their school.

Castro and others (2012) discussed the increasing demographic differences between school-teachers and their more diverse student populations to impel teacher educators and researchers to seek ways to prepare teachers to be culturally responsive (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). “Effective preparation of multicultural social studies teachers calls for a close look at teacher education programs and their responsibility to bridge the gap between the mainly homogeneous White middle-class pre-service teachers and their heterogeneous students, who come from diverse cultural backgrounds” (Smith, 2000, p. 155). This research problem seeks to underscore the importance of Teachers of Color in urban schools by exploring the stories and experiences of culturally responsive teaching in the classroom. Vickery (2016) discussed scholars who documented multiple ways that African American women teachers understand the political nature of teaching (Knight, 2004) and adapt their curriculum and pedagogy in a way that they believe is best for their students (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2005; Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Gordon, 1985; Thompson, 1998).

Teachers of Color are unique in that they have more likely experienced and survived some form of racial oppression in their personal and professional lives. Educators and “Leaders of Color in the U.S. have traversed, negotiated, and often overcome myriad inequities in education themselves” (Santamaria, 2013, p. 349). As such, their unique and oppressive experience enable them to facilitate the integration and utilization of multicultural education as a means to create change that will create awareness and promote social justice. Educators and
“leaders may reform, align, or expand curricula, making it more accessible or appropriate for target populations” (Santamaria, 2013, p. 355).

Taking into consideration the historical events and trauma People of Color, especially teachers, have endured in the fight for civil rights and equity, it is no wonder that they would be exceptionally equipped to prepare the next generation of urban youth for the institutionalized oppression that awaits them and how to overcome it. Vickery (2016) identified African American teachers as having come from an historic tradition of being able to resist the subjugation that permeated the school and other social structures while simultaneously preparing students to become activist citizens. “Black women teachers have used their experiences of fighting for social justice to inform how they taught activist notions of citizenship to African American youth” (Harley, 1996; Murray, 2012) (p. 31). Milner (2012) stated that Black teachers in general brought “diverse family histories, value orientations, and experiences to students in the classroom, attributes often not found in textbooks or viewpoints often omitted” (as cited in Pang & Gibson, 2001, p. 260-261). The lived experience of a Black teacher in itself is a lesson for learning for minority youth. “Thus, Black teachers in a sense are texts themselves, and the pages of their texts are filled with histories of racism, sexism, and oppression, as well as those of strength, perseverance, and success” (Milner, 2012, p. 30).

The lack of diversification within the teaching force continues to be a disadvantage to urban youth who, like all other children, deserve to have teachers as role models that they can identify with. Smith (2000) stated that pre-service teachers are overwhelmingly White and middle-class (Leming, 1991); many have little knowledge – and even distorted knowledge – about the communities and families from which their students come (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Members of the dominant and subjugated groups have different lens through which they view the
world, and through which the world views them. For members of the dominant group, society is viewed through a culturally privileged lens, “Consequently, pre-service teachers often support ideologies of individualism (student success or failure is seen as evidence of student values, talent, and effort) opposing structural explanations of, for example, chronic poverty” (Smith, 2000, p. 156). The ideology of individualism is often associated with racist, sexist, and classist views (Sleeter, 1995). For these reasons, many White middle-class pre-service teachers do not perceive cultural diversity as a significant goal, and they see little relevance in courses on multicultural education (Garcia & Pugh, 1992). Adequate training and support is essential for White teachers who teach in urban districts to ensure the academic needs of their students are being met; this training and support should emphasize multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching strategies as tools to develop an inclusive learning environment for all students in the classroom. Brown and Rodriguez (2017) stated that many pre-service teachers have significant gaps in the critical knowledge they need to connect pedagogically and personally with children from backgrounds different from their own.

These knowledge deficits derive from school structures, practices, and beliefs that reinforce racial/ethnic and socioeconomic privilege, stratification, and isolation, which impedes the development of valuable cultural, social, and linguistic capital (Brown & Rodriguez, 2017, p. 76).

The lack of awareness and knowledge and experience further prevent White middle-class pre-service teachers from being able to connect with urban youth and engage in critical reflection and analysis of schooling; crucial to ensuring that minority youth receive the quality education all children deserve.
In a study involving teacher candidates Ng (2006) noted that pre-service teachers avoided teaching in urban schools due to misperceived discipline problems and lack of engagement among Students of Color. These erroneous assessments are symptomatic of the cultural dissonance between the lived and schooling experiences of White teachers and the experiences of Students of Color (Bergeron, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2011; Milner, 2011). Someone who has experienced racism does not have to learn about it in a classroom, as such they are able to speak from personal experience because it is something that is very intimate to them. Kohli (2009) pointed out that while research has demonstrated that White teachers often must be taught about the pain of racism in order to not perpetuate it, this may not apply to racial minority teachers – through personal experience, Teachers of Color are likely aware of trauma that racism can cause students.

With the challenges inherent to poor urban communities, urban youth are more than likely to connect to adult role models that they perceive as having endured similar circumstances. McGrady and Reynolds (2013) cited the studies used by the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) to confirm that Black and Latino students fare better with same-race teachers than with White male teachers on evaluations on behavior and ability (Ehrenberg et al., 1995) and that White, Black and Latino students have lower odds of being rated as frequently disruptive when evaluated by same-race teachers (Dee, 2005). Although Teachers of Color racially mirror the student population in public urban school districts, there are factors that may impact the teacher’s ability to achieve better learning in their classroom. According to Kohli and Pizarro (2016), socioeconomic status, geographic upbringing, immigration status, and culture are some of the many factors that impact the cultural connections and engagement between teachers and students (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011). Becoming familiar with the home lives and community of
students from diverse backgrounds can equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to help their students achieve academic success in urban schools. “It would seem that teaching pre-service students something about culturally diverse children and requiring them to work directly with children or their communities would help them to become better teachers” (Saffold & Longwell-Grice, 2008, p. 188).

**Conclusion.** Teachers of Color are more likely to have experienced and internalized racism and social injustice and therefore are more than eligible to be “the frontline civil rights workers in a long-term struggle to increase equity” (Brown, 2006, p. 701). Brown (2006) goes on to state that teaching for social justice, according to Ayers (1998), “arouses students, engages them in a quest to identify obstacles to their full humanity, to their freedom” (p. xvii), and ends in action to move against those obstacles.

This section of the literature emphasized the culminating focus of this study-to examine the role of the social studies Teacher of Color who implements multicultural education in their instructional practices through culturally responsive teaching. The evidence provided in this strand discusses the impact that Teachers of Color have on teaching and learning, when they integrate and implement multicultural education in mainstream secondary social studies curricula, especially within urban education, as a result of being exposed to or victimized by racism, discrimination and social injustice. In pluralizing the teaching force, issues are more likely to:

Make it to the table that would probably be ignored by a predominantly White faculty-faculty members are also more committed to underserved students than is often the case, and there is a rich pool of intellectual and experiential resources for thinking through issues. (Bohn & Sleeter, 2000, p. 158)
With regards to Teachers of Color, Vickery (2016) pointed out that these teachers have found ways to circumvent the curriculum that aid in development of intelligent, critically conscious, and community-centered citizens. This is the quality of education that all public school students should be engaging in to be able to face the challenges of the 21st century; however, this is especially critical to urban youth who are often economically challenged—thus having less resources and educational opportunities, in addition to having to acquire skills and tools to challenge oppression, discrimination and institutionalized racism. This research aims to discover the stories of minority educators who “circumvent the curriculum” (Vickery, 2016, p. 31) by integrating multicultural education in their instruction. In doing so, teachers are providing a space and opportunity for their students to critically think and self-reflect. These missing stories are the focus of my research.

Summary

This research will focus on examining the lived experiences of Black and Latino social studies teachers who incorporate culturally responsive teaching. The integration of multicultural education and social justice education in secondary social studies may lead to transformational dialogue in the classroom that can politically empower students and encourage active citizenship. Teachers of Color in urban education who implement culturally responsive teaching, especially within the content of social studies, are critical for urban youth in forming cultural connections that enable authentic learning, academic achievement and healthy social/emotional development.

It is my expectation that this research will demonstrate that the teaching and learning experiences of high school social studies Black and Latino teachers who integrate multicultural education in their instructional practices is beneficial to both students and teachers in urban education, urban communities and society as a whole. This research is intended to gather and
tell those stories. The integration of multicultural education in secondary social studies curricula may have a positive impact on the teaching and learning experiences of social studies Educators of Color in urban education, and furthermore affirms the need to tell these stories.

In order to capture the authentic experiences of Educators of Color in urban education and their interaction with multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching, qualitative methodology through narrative research will be used as a means to examine the teaching and learning experiences of the participants and bring their stories to light.

This research will contribute towards the evidence linking culturally responsive teaching with positive teaching and learning experiences in urban education. This alignment comes as a result of using an integrated, multicultural curricula that reflects the current diverse student populations in urban public schools. In addition, it will also help to bring awareness to the importance of Black and Latino social studies teachers who serve as role models to urban youth and inspire them to rise through empowering and transformational instructional practices. This study reaffirms the movement to diversify teaching staff, especially within public urban schools.
Chapter 3: Research Design

Introduction

This study will use Narrative Research Methodology to explore the untold stories of Black and Latino high school social studies teachers in public urban schools. As members of marginalized populations, Black and Latino urban educators especially should be compelled to ensure their instruction is inclusive of the students they are charged with educating. The purpose of this research is to explore the stories that Black and Latino secondary social studies educators tell about how they embed multicultural education with teaching practices that reflect culturally responsive teaching.

Research Design and Paradigm

This research will be conducted through a qualitative, narrative study that will focus on the stories of Black and/or Latino educators who teach social studies in an urban public high school. Narrative Research is largely grounded in social constructivist perspectives, where the researcher seeks to make sense of the world he/she lives in by examining the experiences of his/her participants (Stephens & Breheny, 2013). It is through the teachers’ voices and their stories that the researcher hopes to discover stories of resistance and resilience. Guba and Lincoln (1994) identified the Constructivist researcher voice as a “passionate participant” (p. 115) and the Criticalist researcher voice as a “transformative intellectual” (p. 115) to differentiate the aim of inquiry. Ponterotto (2005) stated that constructivists, like criticalists, advocate a reality that is constructed within a social-historical context; however, more so than constructivists, criticalists conceptualize reality and events within power relations, and they use their research inquiry to help emancipate oppressed groups. Criticalists emphasize a dialectic
stance on the researcher-participant interaction that aims to empower participants to work toward egalitarian and democratic change and transformation (Tolman & Brydon-Miller, 2001).

In alignment with critical theory, it is essential to acknowledge and to have an understanding of society’s institutionalized racism and oppression; and that these factors may play a critical role in interpreting the stories of the participants in this study. Through qualitative, narrative research, insight will be gained into the lived experiences of Teachers of Color and their culturally responsive instructional practices. “Telling stories about the events of one’s life is a primary way through which meaning is created and communicated” (Carless & Douglas, 2017, p. 307). The goal of this research is to highlight the narratives of the participants being interviewed.

**Narrative Research**

**Overview and background information.** Narrative Research has been selected as the methodology for this research. This research will rely on in-depth interviews of the participants. Narrative Research methodology will help to guide the processed of exploring the lived experiences of my teacher participants. According to Josselson (2006), Narrative Research, rooted in interpretive hermeneutics and phenomenology, strives to preserve the complexity of what it means to be human and to locate its observations to people and phenomena in society, history and time; the practice of Narrative Research is always interpretive at every stage. “Narrative accounts detail unique experiences and perceptions pertaining to various aspects of humanity and culture-providing insight on human interaction, social moral conduct and other perspectives” (Overcash, 2003, p. 180).

Throughout the 19th century, stories were often used to describe a more vivid picture of history, just as biographical methods were used to enhance anthropology. The use of biographic
methods led by Thomas and Znaniecki (1918-1920) became more popular when it was used to conduct the study of immigration on a single peasant’s biography (Spector-Mersel, 2010). According to Caine, Estefan, and Clandinin (2013), John Dewey’s (1938, 1958) view of experience is cited most often as the philosophical underpinning of narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Dewey’s understanding of experience, continuity and interaction constituted the support behind the three-dimensional model of Narrative Inquiry, which includes place, temporality and sociality. “Within this space, each story told and lived is situated and understood within larger cultural, social, familial, and institutional narratives” (Dewey, 1958) p. 577). Narrative Research facilitates not only the retelling of stories but also the reliving of those experiences, which can create possibilities of self-discovery for both the participant and researcher. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) are noted for emphasizing the difference between the two. According to Spector-Mersel (2010), the quest for alternative methods of inquiry brought the rediscovery of the narrative, also encouraged by the liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s that conceived of personal narratives as a principal channel for listening to silenced voices.

Alignment. Narrative Research was selected as the methodology because of its flexibility and for its ability to use dialogue as a way to identify stories of resistance. “Narrative researchers note that those resistant narratives change others’ beliefs, attitudes, and actions” (Chase, 2011, p. 430). Narrative stories have historically been used as a method to carry down oral history from the ancestors but also as a way to relive those experiences in the telling. It is a vehicle for the oppressed to express their struggles, voices and triumphs. Wolgemuth (2014) explained how a structural model of resistance against dominance is typically used in narrative research to study the ways in which participants’ stories counter hegemonic norms (e.g.,
Fernandez, 2002; Munoz & Maldonado, 2012; Patton & Catching, 2009). According to Chase (2010), Narrative Research often critiques cultural disorders, institutions, organizations, and interactions that produce social inequalities.

Narrative Research methodology directly aligns with this research and the goals. It will involve in-depth interviewing of Black and Latino high school social studies teachers to learn how they incorporate culturally responsive teaching in their classroom and how this incorporation impacts teaching and learning. This factor, their use of culturally responsive teaching in the classroom, will be part of the recruitment criteria. The researcher has knowledge of this through previous interaction with the participants in a professional setting; in-depth interviews will explore the ways in which teachers continue to utilize culturally responsive instructional practices.

Brooks (2016) stated that narrative inquiry is particularly useful to highlight the complexity of understanding education by focusing on experience (Parker, Pushor, & Kitchen, 2011). The value of this approach is that it gives “voice” to the individual teacher in recounting not just their experiences, but how they make sense of that experience. Narrative methodology is appropriate for this study because it centralizes stories as pivotal to human existence, and the stories of Black and Latino social studies teachers in urban education is the essence of the research. “It recognizes and works with the idea that storytelling is a universal practice” (Trahar, 2013, p. xi). Narrative Researchers argue that through it, the possibilities of connecting with others and learning from one another become a reality because of this methodology’s holistic nature. Spector-Mersel (2010) goes on to list the following tenets of Narrative epistemology:

- Narratives are rooted in the narrator’s current situation. Stories of the past and the future are always told from the vantage point of the present. Second, long and
detailed through it may be, no story can contain everything. Thus, every narrative is the result of conscious and unconscious selection from among a range of alternatives lying within our life history (Rosenthal, 2004). Yet another dynamic of narratives is that they are deeply-rooted within three domains of contexts: “the immediate intersubjective relationships in which they are produced, the collective social field in which they evolved and the cultural meta-narratives that give meaning to any particular story. (Spector-Mersel, (2010), p. 212)

Fox (2008) stated that Narrative Research goes beyond decontextualized data or national systems analysis to allow deep and challenging insights to emerge from the discursive construction of reality; the discursive treatment of contemporary contexts provides a lens, or a mirror, for our own greater understanding. This line of methodology allows the researcher to be drawn into the teller’s reality – enabling the researcher to gain an authentic awareness of the teller’s experience. Perhaps it may even allow the researcher to subconsciously transport themselves to the place and time of the teller’s experience, empowering the researcher with empathy and understanding.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) reiterated Dewey’s (1938, 1958) theory of experience to conceptualize narrative inquiry as a three dimensional narrative inquiry space that draws on personal and social interaction; continuity and place. The first criterion of Dewey’s theory, interaction, points out that individuals are always interacting with others, directly impacting their experiences. The second criterion, continuity, refers to the past, present and future: “experiences grow out of other experiences, and experiences lead to further experiences” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 2). The third criterion, place, refers to situation. This refers to the place or particular situation where the interactions will take place. Participants of this study are Teachers of Color who integrate culturally responsive teaching through the implementation of
multicultural curricula in urban public schools. Urban public schools demand a multicultural curricula since the majority of students are Children of Color. The stories for this research will be told in urban public schools within the New Jersey.

**Critique of narrative research.** One of the persisting dilemmas that exist for Narrative Research is “the reliability of narrative knowledge, on the one hand, versus its origin in subjective experience on the other” (Caduri, 2013, p. 38). Caduri (2013) goes on to explain that because of conceptual ambiguity, Narrative Researchers fail to make a connection between personal and practical knowledge, i.e., between the teacher’s life story and his teaching practice. However, a teacher’s personal experiences do contribute to the teacher’s teaching style, educational philosophy, and instructional strategies and practices used in the classroom and may well be the reason they chose the profession to begin with. The choice to integrate culturally responsive teaching, especially for a Teacher of Color in the US, will more than likely be influenced by the teacher’s personal lived experiences that may include past traumatic experiences with racism and oppression. These are the stories that will be examined and explored in this research. In collecting these stories, I hope to show a connection between personal experiences and how that translates into the teachers’ instruction. When it comes to urban education, this research is important because it may have implications for how urban youth are prepared to survive/thrive and transform a racist and oppressive society. “Narrative inquiry enables teachers to organize, articulate, and communicate what they know and believe about teaching and who they have become as teachers; their stories reveal the knowledge, ideas perspective, understandings, and experiences that guide their work” (Johnson & Golobrek, 2002, p. 7).
Fox (2008) discussed challenges to Narrative Research including interpretation, ideological positioning, trust building, potential power inequalities, and sometimes-conflicting theoretical methodologies (Stanley & Billig 2004). Trahar (2009) warns the Narrative Researcher of the dangers of knowing the difference between a storyteller and a story analyst; in this case “your goal becomes therapeutic rather than analytic” (Ellis & Brochner, 2000, p. 745). Presenting Narratives as “truth” was also another criticism of Narrative Research. “A narrative of a personal experience is not a clear route into ‘the truth’, either about the reported events, or the teller’s private experience (Atkinson & Delamont, 2006, p. 166). For this research, Narrative Research continues to be the appropriate methodology despite these criticisms. This method best suits the purpose of examining the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators, exploring how they embed multicultural education with teaching practices that reflect culturally responsive teaching, and considering the possibility of curriculum that promotes educational and societal change.

**Sampling**

According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), qualitative samples tend to be purposive rather than random and are often decidedly theory driven, either “up front” or progressively, as in a ground theory mode. Creswell (2007) also agrees that purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research. He goes on to state that of the techniques used in purposeful sampling, the most popular approach is to ensure maximum variation. With regards to maximizing variation, the participant group represented (three) public urban school districts, were mixed in gender, and racially/ethnically identified as Black and/or Latino. All of the participants were known to the researcher and have also previously interacted in a professional setting with the researcher. Similarly, in Clandinin’s (1985) narrative study of (two) inner-city
teachers, Clandinin served as researcher and participator as an active adjunct teacher in the classrooms of the (two) participants, becoming part of the story. “Clandinin’s work highlighted the teacher’s images as central to an understanding of their knowledge and further emphasized the personal nature of that knowledge” (Clandinin, 2007, p. 360).

Participants

My participants consisted of four Black and/or Latino/a secondary social studies teachers who teach or have taught in at least three different urban public school districts in NJ. The sample size remained small to ensure vivid details of each participant’s story were emphasized and to create a detailed portrait of Educators of Color “doing the work”. “Multiple stories as told dilute the narrative story of any one individual” (Creswell, 2015, p. 518). All three urban public school districts have demographics that represent at least 85 percent of students identifying as Black and/or Latino. In addition, in all three urban public school the majority of students are economically disadvantaged and receive free or reduced lunch. All teachers were highly qualified and had the appropriate NJ standard certification for teaching secondary social studies. Participants were recruited who had already integrated multicultural education in their (district-mandated) curriculum and implemented culturally responsive teaching in their instructional practices. All teachers were contacted directly by the researcher via phone or email and offered the opportunity to become a participant in the study.

The participants were selected on the following criteria:

1. Participants currently teach or have previously taught secondary social studies in a public urban school district in NJ.

2. Participants ethnically/racially identify as a Black and/or Latino male/female.
3. Participants self-identify as a teacher that integrates culturally responsive instructional practices based on previous professional interaction with the researcher.

**Research Site**

Anticipated interview locations varied and took place in neutral locations agreed upon by the researcher and participant; this also helped to ensure confidentiality. Since interviews were not conducted in the school buildings, permissions to use school grounds was not necessary.

**Procedures**

After IRB approval, the researcher began collecting data. Each teacher participated in two interviews and a third optional interview for the purpose of member checking. The initial interview took about 40-45 minutes although interview times varied among participants. The second interview served as a follow-up and took approximately 30-35 minutes. All interviews were in person. The list of interview questions were included in the Appendix section of this study. An optional third interview will provide an opportunity for researcher and participant to review and clarify responses and provide additional information and artifacts. All interviews will be audio recorded with the consent of the participant. All transcribed interviews will be shared with the participant for purposes of checking. Clandinin (2007) reminds researchers that ethical considerations are just as important at the end of the interview as at the beginning.

Hand-written field notes were taken by the researcher during the interviews. Caine, Estefan, and Clandinin (2013) explained that narrative inquirers understand data as field texts that are to be experienced as they are lived and told as narrative compositions. Living is field text, and field texts are co-compositions of lives (Clandinin, Huber, & Murphy, 2011). The services of Rev.com were utilized to transcribe all audio recordings of interviews; in addition, analytic memos, teacher lesson plans and researcher reflections were used as data.
**Data collection and storage.** The main source of data for this research were the in-depth interviews. Interviews took place at various locations and were agreed upon by the researcher and participant via email, and/or phone call. Teachers participated in (two) semi-structured interviews. None of the teacher participants opted to participate in the third optional interview. The interview questions for this study guided the participants to share their stories as ‘active’ rather than ‘passive’ tellers. In retelling their stories, participants had the opportunity to actively re-live them; thus re-shaping their stories during the telling. These stories will aid in understanding why the participants utilize culturally responsive teaching in their instructional practices, how it impacts learning, and how Teachers of Color use culturally responsive teaching as a tool of resistance and as a means to prepare urban youth for challenges inherent of racial oppression. In addition to in-depth interviews, artifacts that included teacher lesson plans, alternative assessments and resources used to facilitate culturally responsive teaching were collected for analysis. All communication and documentation produced as a result of the research process including audio recordings and interview transcripts were saved and stored on a private hard drive belonging to the researcher; the researcher is the only person with access to the data. Pseudonyms were used during the interviewing process to protect the identity of the participants when data was transcribed. They will also be used throughout the entirety of the dissertation process including on any field notes, to ensure participant identity is kept anonymous and confidential. All transcripts and recordings will be deleted and destroyed at the conclusion of the study once the data is no longer needed; in this way the protection and confidentiality of each participant is assured. Clandinin (2007) stated that institutional review boards are often asking researchers to state that the materials be destroyed after five years.
Data Analysis

**Analytic methods.** Chase (2011) stated that although Narrative Researchers have used many sources of data – diaries, letters, autobiographies, and field notes of naturally occurring conversations – in-depth interviews continue to be the most common source of narrative data (Bell, 2009; Hammersley, 2008; Riessman 2008). Transcribing of interviews in single text data is the primary narrative method that is used, however “it limits the recording and understanding of complex experiences in real time” (Keats, 2009, p. 182). Visual texts were used in the study, including collected artifacts such as teacher lesson plans, and other resources used to facilitate instruction.

Keats (2009) also discussed the analysis of artifacts that were used in this research. He stated that determining the authenticity of the objects should not be the key concern, but rather exploring the meaning and value to participants is more central-opening new ways of examining the relationship between the artifact and developing narrative. Questions that touch on the significance of the object or the story behind the object can evoke dialogue that can prove to be very meaningful.

According to Creswell (2013), there exists overall and embedded writing structures when it comes to Narrative Inquiry. In examining the overall writing structures, the three-dimensional space inquiry model is relevant to this study because traumatic experiences originating from racism often continue to manifest themselves on how a person presently views the world. It is also the belief of this researcher that narrative writing should allow for flexibility and evolving processes, as it is unpredictable and capable of emerging unforeseen themes, a good example of this would be Riessman’s (2008) thematic approach.
Coding. According to Miles et al. (2014), coding is also a heuristic method of discovery. Determining the code for a chunk of data was accomplished by carefully reading and reflecting on its core content and meaning. According to Lichtman (2012), evidence is manipulated through the assignment of codes to portions of the data, which in essence are the stories and narratives collected. The initial process of First Cycle Coding involved reading and listening to the interviews several times and summarizing responses.

Deductive and inductive coding were used. The deductive codes were derived from elements related to a critical paradigm inclusive of culturally responsive teaching and are listed in Table 1. It was anticipated that inductive codes would emerge during the analysis process.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEDUCTIVE</th>
<th>INDUCTIVE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Culturally Responsive Teaching/Multicultural Education (CRT/MCE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oppression/Racism/Prejudice/Discrimination (ORPD)</td>
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<td>Sharing Experiences (SE)</td>
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<td>‘The Other’ (TO)</td>
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<td>Empowering Dialogue (ED)</td>
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<td>Urban Education (UE)</td>
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<td>Social Studies Education (SSE)</td>
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‘In vivo coding’, and ‘values coding’ was used to code the data. ‘In vivo coding’ captured the essence of what the participants divulged in their interviews. ‘Values Coding’ was selected because of its ability to categorize data into the three categories of Value, Attitude, and
Belief, complimenting this qualitative data. “Values coding is appropriate for studies that explore cultural values, identity, intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014, p. 75). Consistency and transparency were maintained in coding the data. To facilitate this process the Review/Comment feature on Microsoft Word was used to initially highlight chunks of data to summarize ideas; it is during this initial phase that inductive codes emerged. ‘In vivo coding’ was then be used to identify words and sentences within the highlighted phrases that aligned to the deductive and inductive codes/themes. Deductive codes/themes were derived from the research question and theory, while inductive codes developed during the initial coding process. ‘Value Coding’ assigned a (V), (A) or (B) to each data chunk to indicate a ‘value coding’ category. After reviewing the initial coding process, the second cycle coding conducted an analysis of the first cycle coding to synthesize findings. This process remained consistent for all interviews throughout the data analysis for each participant. Creswell (2013) stated that in Narrative Research, as in all forms of qualitative inquiry, there is a close relationship between the data collection procedures, the analysis, and the form and structure of the writing report. Narrative-based analysis aims to interpret participant’s conversation; in doing so the researcher must thoroughly examine each interview transcript with a careful eye on similarities, differences and inconsistencies.

Information pertaining to the life experiences of my four participants was organized and analyzed during the coding process. Previously developed deductive codes derived from elements related to a critical paradigm inclusive of culturally responsive teaching are listed in Table 2 in Appendix H, along with several inductive codes that emerged during the initial coding process. Several sub-codes also emerged during the ‘in vivo coding’ and ‘values coding’ processes, thirteen in total. These sub-codes included: experiences of oppression growing up,
feelings of exclusion in school, becoming a social studies teacher, experiences of teaching urban youth, oppression within the department, not enough Teachers of Color, working with a curriculum that is not inclusive, experiences integrating multicultural education, teaching about oppression, teaching marginalized students, social studies as a tool to combat racism, social studies to create awareness and sustainable change, social studies for social justice.

The sub-codes were then categorized into six final themes, which will be discussed further in the next chapter. Final themes were established by organizing sub-codes and grouping them together according to related experiences. Experiences of oppression growing up and feelings of exclusion in school were grouped to create the theme: Background and experiences with oppression. Becoming a social studies teacher and experiencing the teaching of urban youth were combined to form the theme: Motivation for teaching in an urban high school. Oppression within the department and not enough Teachers of Color were grouped to create the theme: Thoughts on a diversified teaching force. The sub-codes, working with a curriculum that is not inclusive and experiences integrating multicultural education will form the theme: Integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education. Teaching about oppression and teaching marginalized students were grouped to form the theme: Experiences of implementing culturally responsive teaching in the classroom. Within this theme, I will also be incorporating information about lesson plans submitted to the researcher by each of the participants. The final theme: Perspective on the role of social studies education in society, was created by grouping, social studies as a tool to combat racism, social studies to create awareness and sustainable change, and social studies for social justice.
**Ethical Considerations**

As previously stated, all documentation produced as a result of the interviews including audio recordings and interview transcripts were saved and stored on a password protected computer belonging to the researcher; the researcher is the only person with access to the data. All data related to the participants was safeguarded inside a locked filing cabinet, in a locked office, personal data was kept out of written notes. All notes, transcripts and recordings will be deleted and destroyed at the conclusion of the study once the data is no longer needed; in this way the protection and confidentiality of each participant is assured. The ethics that permeated this narrative study involved negotiation, respect, mutuality and openness to multiple voices (Clandinin, 2006). Confidentiality and privacy are principles that as the researcher I guaranteed the participants of this study. The ability to cease from participating in the study at any time was available to all participants. Transparency in the beginning of the interviewing process in clarifying the researcher’s intent in answering the research question and interpreting and presenting results were made very clear to all participants; this helped to quell worries of how a participant may react after this paper is published. Clandinin (2007) explained that we need to base our ethical practice on our accumulating understandings of how people do respond and under what circumstances.

**Validity and Credibility**

To maintain validity and credibility as is common in qualitative work, the researcher engaged in a member-checking process. The member-checking process allowed for critical examination of researcher interpretations. In the optional third interview, participants would have been able to examine the accuracy of their interview, analysis and themes/emerging themes that surfaced during the process; however, all declined to participate in a third interview. Here
participants would have had an opportunity to include additional information and/or remove any information that they deem inaccurate or inappropriate.

The researcher is held accountable to establish confidence and credibility throughout the process; in this manner the researcher and participant can embark on a collaborative activities that exemplify respect. Creswell (2015) reiterated the importance of actively collaborating with the participants during the research process.

Transferability

Options for transferability include utilizing this study to emphasize to public school educators the importance of culturally responsive teaching and an inclusive curriculum in social studies that is integrated with multicultural education. Stephens and Breheny (2013) described narrative as a pervasive structure with which we convey and comprehend the experiences and meanings of events, account for our own and others’ behavior, or reveal ourselves to others in the way in which we would like to be seen. Another area of concern is the diversification of the teaching force to include more Teachers of Color, especially in public urban districts where the majority student population are Children of Color. The teacher stories depicted in this study can be used as inspiration and encouragement to empower other Teachers of Color teaching in urban public school districts to implore culturally responsive teaching strategies, and to remind them of the importance of teaching from an inclusive curriculum that their students can identify with and see themselves in.

Protection of Human Subjects and Informed Consent and IRB Approval

All participating teachers signed a consent form and were provided an opportunity to ask questions before being interviewed. Participants’ names were excluded from the study and were kept confidential. They were assigned pseudonyms to further assure that confidentiality was a
priority. Of most importance was to maintain trustworthiness and respect throughout the entire process; this meant honoring the relationship and rapport that transpired as a result of teachers sharing their stories with the researcher. Maintaining a clear and consistent flow of open communication between participants and the researcher was key to a sound and credible study.

The main role of the IRB at Northeastern University was to safeguard the rights and welfare of persons who agree to participate in a research study. The researcher adhered to all ethical principles to ensure that participants were respected and protected; this included following all federal and State regulations and privacy laws. The researcher did not encounter any potential risks in conducting this study.

Limitations

Limitations to this study included participants having a prior professional relationship with the researcher. All participants either taught secondary social studies with the researcher at one point, or had their teacher evaluations conducted by the researcher. Another limitation included focusing on participants that identified racially/ethnically as Black and/or Latino, excluding the experiences of other minority secondary social studies teachers. Yet another limitation is that this study focused on teachers in public urban schools, excluding public suburban and rural schools.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to discover the stories of Teachers of Color who integrate culturally responsive teaching in public urban schools. Narrative Research was the qualitative methodology that best suited this research. In-depth interviews was the main method of data collection, followed by coding and analysis. The researcher used purposeful sampling to select the participants. The researcher acknowledges that she had a professional relationship with the
participants’ through previous interaction in a professional setting. All participants identified as Black and/or Latino and all teach or have previously taught secondary social studies in a public urban school. The research targeted teachers from public urban school districts that represented three different urban communities in NJ. Ethical considerations were reflected upon including the assurance of negotiation, respect and mutuality throughout the entire research process. Trustworthiness and transparency guided the research; the researcher also worked to assure that the confidentiality and privacy of all participant identities is guaranteed.
Chapter 4: Findings and Overview

The purpose of this research study was to examine the stories of Black and Latino teachers’ experiences incorporating multicultural education in their instruction. The research seeks to fill the knowledge gap by exploring their stories and developing a better understanding of how the narratives of their experiences are reflected in their instruction. This information was critical in understanding the challenges Black and Latino teachers face as individuals of marginalized populations but also as part of a collective group of Urban Educators working towards the improvement of social studies education. The following research question guided this study: What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools? This chapter discusses the lived experiences of four high school social studies teachers who work in four public urban high schools in the State of NJ. All narratives were gathered through a series of one-on-one interviews. Pseudonyms have been assigned for anonymity and to protect the teachers’ confidentiality. The four teachers will be referred to as: Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Simpson, Mr. Drew, and Ms. Tingo.

Each interview consisted of a discussion of the teacher’s background and schooling experiences growing up, their experiences with oppression, their motivation for becoming a social studies teacher and how they came to work in a public urban high school in NJ. The interviews also highlighted: 1) their reflections on their district curriculum, 2) their commitment to the importance of multicultural education, and 3) participants experiences with implementing culturally responsive teaching in the classroom. Finally, each teacher expressed their perspective on the role of social studies education in society. The final six themes that developed at the end of the coding process were: Background and experiences with oppression, motivations for
teaching in an urban high school, thoughts on a diversified teaching force, integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education, experiences of implementing culturally responsive teaching in the classroom, and perspective on the role of social studies education in society.

The findings for this narrative study were organized by participant. I will be discussing each theme as it relates to each participant’s narrative. While narratives “serve to make sense of other people and the wider community, they are centered primarily on the self” (Viney & Bousfield, 1991, p. 758). It was important throughout the research process that the focus remained on the individual participants, especially as common themes emerged. I also wanted to maintain this emphasis on the individual evident in the presentation of the findings. Trahar (2009) reiterated that not only are narratives gathered by using a variety of methods, they may also be represented in various ways. Presenting the findings in this manner places priority on the experience of the individual and embraces “the particularity and complexity of the individual’s lived experience” (Carless & Douglass, 2016, p. 307). According to Brooks (2016) the value of this approach is that it gives “voice” to the individual teacher in recounting not just their experiences, but how they made sense of that experience.

**Similarities in Public Urban School Districts**

This research explored the narratives of four Black and Latino urban educators who integrate their social studies curriculum with multicultural education. Mr. Drew and Ms. Tingo teach in Central school district, Mrs. Simpson teaches in the Downtown school district, and Mrs. Davis who is retired taught in the Smith school district. While the school districts were not the focus of the research, I felt it was important to explore characteristics of the three public school districts that categorize them as urban public school districts. Each of the school districts reflect a student population that is at least 85 percent Black and Latino; in all three school districts the
majority of the student population are economically disadvantaged and receive free or reduced lunch; all three public school districts are in the State of NJ; all three public school districts are Title I schools. Title I schools are schools where at least 40 percent of the student population is economically disadvantaged qualifying the district to receive federal funds to help those students in achieving their educational goals.

**Development of Themes in the Findings**

**Mrs. Davis.**

*Background and experiences with oppression.* Mrs. Davis retired in 2015 after teaching social studies to urban youth for 38 years. She identifies as an African American woman in her mid-60s and made it a point to state that she grew up in the 60s and 70s during the Black Power Movement. “I call myself Black because there are Black people all over the world, and I am connected to them, and that’s how I feel about it.” Mrs. Davis described her schooling experience as one with almost no Teachers of Color. The Black history club was a safe place for her especially because it was led by a Black teacher advisor. She remembered enjoying learning about the many contributions of Black people to America other than slavery.

We got to learn a lot of self-knowledge, we learned about the importance of ourselves and how we survived over the years, through the oppression. You know, we learned different things and different styles. They taught us about the quilting, how the slaves got around and were able to do different things. It was very enlightening because it was really good and we also went on field trips. We went to Harlem and other places to see actually where the black renaissance was during the earlier years.

Mrs. Davis was very forthcoming about her experience with racism in her high school. With only a 10 percent Black population in her high school, “You get those little covert things
that happen to you which sometimes you can’t really react to because you’re alone by yourself.”
She gives examples of these ‘little covert things’ such as deliberately keeping Black students out
of honor programs and upper level classes despite high achieving grades; harsher punishment for
Students of Color including higher suspension rate; and exclusion from decision making on
school culture events.

The vice principal would give out different harsh punishments to young Black men, and
we would know that when it was dance time or if it was the prom time, we didn’t have
any input at all. We had to go along with the larger culture, and they would dominate
whatever event that we would have.

Mrs. Davis also discussed these same ‘covert little things’ occurring in the school
amongst colleagues and fellow educators. “I can tell them and explain to them the different
experience about different children, and they still ignore it, they have implicit bias, but they don’t
understand that they have it, nobody cares how we feel and nobody cares how we receive the
messages that are in these particular books!” She recalls feeling like nobody cared about what
she had to say and feeling helpless in being able to change what students were learning or to
change her colleagues’ minds. “These teachers that are part of the dominant culture seem to
think that okay, these are the classics, I don’t care how negatively they impact Black people –
these are still the classics and this is what we’re going to do.”

Motivations for teaching in an urban high school. Mrs. Davis was always very
interested in social studies, specifically history because it helped her to learn where she came
from and she wanted to work with students that looked like her. Choosing to teach in an urban
high school was an easy choice because of her own experiences in growing up without role
models that looked like her in school. Mrs. Davis stated, “Sometimes Black and Latino kids do
not see you as the teacher because they haven’t seen any teacher that looks like them.” She knew from very early in her career that she wanted to work with urban youth and to serve as a mentor that urban youth could identify with.

I think they can identify with me through the way that I present the materials, and I think they feel more comfortable asking me particular questions about different things and things that have happened throughout history…they feel more comfortable asking me some questions that they probably wouldn’t ask other people.

When Mrs. Davis stated ‘other people’, she was referring to White teachers and others with whom they were unable to relate to and connect with. Children are like sponges, they absorb everything around them, including behavior that reflects preconceived and racist assumptions about them. Having a teacher – a person of authority – that looks like you, and talks like you makes a big difference in terms of student engagement and participation for urban youth. It creates a pathway for a connection to occur and for positive relationships to develop. These positive relationships in turn create a learning environment conducive to authentic dialogue and meaningful teaching and learning. Mrs. Davis emphasized that students felt more comfortable asking her; I believe they also felt more safe asking her questions. I attribute this to microaggressions demonstrated by White teachers towards minority youth causing mistrust, fear of being oneself ‘too much’ and low self-esteem among Children of Color.

**Thoughts on a diversified teaching force.** Mrs. Davis discussed the importance of having a diversified teaching force and the urgency of urban minority youth knowing the importance of education. She stated, “They will not know and learn the importance of education if they do not see people who look like them in positions of power who can educate them.” As discussed in one of the previous themes, Mrs. Davis also felt excluded within her department
amongst her colleagues, “When I sit there with the other teachers, they don’t really want to hear what you have to say, because they already have it in their minds how they want things to go.” Mrs. Davis discussed how she’s facilitated empowering dialogue in her classroom around sensitive issues of race and identity. When asked if she felt the students felt more comfortable participating in these discussions because she was a Black teacher, she responded yes. “I think they felt that it was accepted better because they didn’t think that they would be insulting me if they asked me particular questions – they felt more comfortable asking them of me, people need to see people who look like them.”

*Integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education.* Mrs. Davis discussed in detail the Amistad Curriculum adopted in the NJ in 2002. She described it as a curriculum of inclusion, one that includes all marginalized populations including Blacks, Women, Native Americans, other Indigenous peoples and “a host of other people who have been left out of the history books.” When I asked Mrs. Davis why she thinks the Amistad Curriculum is not taught even though it has been mandated since 2002, she was very clear about her reason. “The reason it’s not taught is because 85 percent of teachers, even within the very segregated NJ, are White.” Mrs. Davis concluded that there was no real interest or desire in pushing the curriculum forward. She reasoned that focusing on slavery and the Civil Rights Movement and the non-violent image of Dr. King was more comfortable than having to discuss the Black Codes, Jim Crow and the ‘agitator’ image of Dr. King. She also mentioned that many parents did not even know such a curriculum existed. Mrs. Davis goes on to explain why educators in charge of curriculum writing are also unwilling to support curriculum development that is inclusive of marginalized populations, especially if it challenges ‘status quo’ views or the maintenance, production and reproduction of white supremacy culture.
Most who are a part of the school boards are not receptive because most of them have been indoctrinated and not educated, so it makes them nervous and it challenges them if something is a little different even though it’s true. They are unable to handle it because they have not been educated properly to receive views from different types of people. She defines indoctrination as a process of feeding students information with no critical thinking or fact checking involved – “Indoctrination is regurgitation.”

Mrs. Davis had a true passion for teaching history and ensuring that the information was inclusive of the population she was charged with teaching. She discussed her lessons on Reconstruction where she had to implement a discussion on the new Black Senators because there was no mention of them in the textbook, “Man cannot be erased from history,” she stated. She also discussed the Women’s movement and having to incorporate Black women warriors such as Sojourner Truth to give students a different perspective on how the Women’s movement impacted all women, since Susan B. Anthony seems to engulf the entire Women’s movement.

“If we do not tell our children and tell them this is what happened at this particular time, they will be lost.” Mrs. Davis discussed her feelings on the importance of diversifying the curriculum with multicultural education and the challenges to actually achieve it. “When it comes to history and social studies class, why would urban youth want to stick around? Black history starts with slavery and then it shows back up again during the Civil Rights Movement.” Mrs. Davis reiterated how negative it all was. “There is no celebration, nothing to make them feel better about themselves; who in the world wants to hear about slavery and that being the only achievement of a people in life or constantly hearing about the inhumane treatment of Black people everywhere?” When referring to history classes and her Latino students, “They had nothing, no contributions – all they had was the fact that they were conquered by certain people
in history, particularly Christopher Columbus.” Mrs. Davis pointed out that she felt obligated to have to add in the ‘pro’ information for the Black and Latino students and other Students of color. According to Mrs. Davis, multicultural education is just as important for minority youth as it is for White children. “If we’re going to educate our children in a world where they’re going to have to live together, share the same things and compete in the same way, they should both be privy to the positive information about each group and each group’s contributions.”

**Experiences of implementing culturally responsive teaching in the classroom.** Mrs. Davis recalled a lesson on stereotypes she implemented in one of her U.S. History II classes. She drew up categories with the goal of finding out how students felt about the different categories. Each of the categories represented a race: Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans and Whites. For each category students had to write what contributions or accomplishments each group has made to improve society. She noticed that three of the four columns were almost empty. “They only knew about slavery and they only knew about MLK and the water hoses, the whole list was devoid of Black contributions. The Latino kids had nothing, they had no contributions.” At the mention of Native American contributions, her students knew absolutely nothing; some remarked that they thought the Native American people were already extinct?

A common lesson Mrs. Davis liked to use involved studying the world map. As a social studies teacher of 38 years, Mrs. Davis is very familiar with the world map. She insists that the tough part of the lesson was finding a map that was made the correct way. “Lots of times we see a map and it’s made incorrectly. It has the size of the continents, and the people of darker skin, their continents are made smaller, and it’s a whole mind thing.” Mrs. Davis recalled ‘the world map lesson’ was always one of the first lessons she implemented in the beginning of the year and that it never ceased to amaze her how many of her students were not aware of the actual size of
Africa. She remembered showing them different photos of Africa, of its’ wealth and seeing the expressions on her students’ faces, questioning if those photos were of Africa. She said that her students were very surprised at pictures of the expansive Sahara desert in comparison to the constant jungle pictures used to portray all of Africa.

National Geographic now wants to apologize to Africans and African Americans for their portrayal of showing them as being, for lack of a better word, booty-scratchers.” The impact of these negative images on urban youth is detrimental she expressed. “Now after you destroyed a whole generation’s thinking, and you poisoned their minds, it’s hard for them to now change and see Africa as the beautiful place that it is, so everybody went to Africa and everybody raped Africa and everybody took from Africa, but it’s easier for them to say: oh, it’s your fault that your guys were in slavery.

Recalling a lesson on Brown v. Board of Ed., Mrs. Davis remembered how the Latino students were really not interested in the lesson until she implemented the Sylvia Mendez case. The Mendez v. Westminster case took place in 1946. This case helped to desegregate schools in California for Latino youth and would set the stage for Brown v. Board of Ed. eight years later in 1954. Mrs. Davis described the surprised look on her students’ faces once they felt part of what they were learning. “All of a sudden they became more interested once they found out that they were part of the beginning of the Brown v. Board of Ed. situation.” Mrs. Davis did not submit any physical lesson plans as she is retired; however, she did make several references to utilizing the Amistad curriculum resource website frequently for resources and lesson plan ideas.

**Perspective on the role of social studies education in society.** Mrs. Davis focused on two specific roles for social studies education. The first view involves utilizing social studies education to ‘right the wrongs’ taught in history classes through the integration of multicultural
education. “Social studies education can tell them about all the things that happened prior to and after slavery.” She strongly believes that multicultural education is the key to marginalized kids “having a better view of themselves.” Mrs. Davis also views the role of social studies as one of advocacy for the pursuit of social justice. “I think that if more time is spent on history and more stuff is connected to today, I think that we would see a different type of society within our children and within the people who come to this country.”

**Summary.** Mrs. Davis is a retired teacher in her mid-60s who taught social studies in urban public schools for 38 years. The Black history club was a place of safety and inspiration for Mrs. Davis during her schooling and is what inspired her to want to become a history teacher. She wanted to teach in an urban school because she wanted to teach kids that looked like her. Mrs. Davis was very candid about her experiences with oppression both in and out of the work place. Clearly her early experiences with oppression motivated her to want to grow up to be in a position of authority to help youth once like herself, prepare for what living in an oppressive and racialized society entailed. She discussed the importance of a diversified teaching force especially for urban youth. She feels that more Teachers of Color in the classroom would help urban youth to value the importance of education by seeing people that look like them in positions of power. Mrs. Davis values multicultural education and believes it is even more critical for White children who will grow up to be in a position to share power as members of the dominant group in society. She believes that it is through multicultural education and exploring different perspectives from multiple sources that urban youth can truly begin to feel incorporated in the curriculum and understand that they too come from a history of great contributions and accomplishments. Her experiences with integrating multicultural education and implementing culturally responsive teaching demonstrate the educational neglect Children of Color have
received throughout years of learning in their classrooms. Lastly, Mrs. Davis was clear about how she felt the role of social studies education should contribute to society. First by providing for all students a complete and truthful history inclusive of the stories, events and contributions of marginalized populations and secondly, as a conduit from which to carry on the pursuit for social justice. Round two interview questions for Mrs. Davis are attached in appendix D.

**Mrs. Simpson.**

_Be background and experiences with oppression._ Mrs. Simpson is a veteran social studies teacher of 20 years in her school district. She identifies as an African American woman in her mid-40s and has taught a variety of social studies class throughout her teaching career. She considers herself to be “one of the luckier African Americans” due to both her parents being adopted and educated, thus having a better quality of life. Mrs. Simpson shared a rich family history and heritage and considered herself to have had a privileged upbringing because of it. She recalled the story of how her family came to settle in NJ. “My adopted grandmother was a little bit of a spitfire, she had gotten into it with a White man, and was told that they better get out of town before sundown, so they got on a train and came to NJ.” Mrs. Simpson discussed a privileged and proud life where her adopted grandfather belonged to the Union during the 1940s, which was unheard of for a Black man. While her grandparents still lived in the Black neighborhood in segregated South Jersey, they were also the only home in the neighborhood with a bathroom, outhouses were very common in those times.

My grandmother was one of the only Black women in town who could walk into Sears or JC Penney’s and buy anything. Black people weren’t allowed in there, but she was allowed in there because they knew she had money. That made a difference in who I am, and where I am.
Mrs. Simpson lived in the suburbs with her family and did not have any Teachers of Color from kindergarten through sixth grade. Mrs. Simpson always loved history and history classes. “I always loved world history, I would go to class every day and be like, what are we doing today?” Mrs. Simpson remembers the day when she was especially excited for class because the chapters on Africa and India were coming up. When she asked her teacher what they would be learning from those chapters, her teacher replied, “Oh, we’re going to skip those chapters, nothing important really happened there.” She remembers this incident as if it had happened yesterday, because it still hurt. She remembers the embarrassment and humiliation and having to internalize those feelings as a child and in silence.

As a 14 year old girl, who had a father who was educated, I had an opinion and a thought process. At 14, I was reading US News and World Report, Time Magazine, Sports Illustrated. I had a real thought process about this. But my thought process was, I was embarrassed. Because, I said to myself, ‘you mean to tell me in all this time, Black people have never done anything?’ That was what I internalized. That was the way that I internalized it. I never said anything to him about it. I took on this role of just being embarrassed about it. It was a sore spot for me.

Mrs. Simpson moved with her family shortly after that to the city; moving from the privileged suburbs to the city proved life changing for her. She described the city as one of chaos and as a place that she definitely did not want to spend her days in; however, she also referred to this move as one that saved her life. For the first time she had access to Teachers of Color. In the eleventh grade Mrs. Simpson met a phenomenal African American teacher from the south who opened her eyes. “She knew so much history, so many things. And what happened was I became angry. How dare that White man tell me that?!”
Motivation for teaching in an urban high school. “And now I’m walking around with Public Enemy tee shirts on, ‘Fight the Power’!” It is in this moment that Mrs. Simpson knew she wanted to teach in an urban high school, “I’m going to a Black college and I’m coming back to my hood and teaching these Black kids, how dare he disrespect me like that?!” Mrs. Simpson reiterated that she always knew she wanted to be a social studies teacher, but it was in that moment that she knew she wanted to teach social studies to students who looked like her. Mrs. Simpson stressed that when it came to teaching, there was no other choice for her but to teach in an urban school. When I asked her why, she replied that she did not want her students to be embarrassed. Clearly Mrs. Simpson was also reflecting on her own experience as a young student feeling humiliated and being told by her teacher that Africa was not worth studying because there was nothing there. “I didn’t want Black kids to be embarrassed.” She goes on to explain, “They needed to know that they came from some greatness, they needed to know that they had a legacy; they needed to know that if I could get up and do, they can get up and do too.” When I asked Mrs. Simpson why it was so important that they know they came from greatness, she replied “because nobody tells them.”

Thoughts on a diversified teaching force. Mrs. Simpson was never more aware of the need to diversify the teaching force than when she was going through her teacher preparation program. In this particular class, she recalled a very racist and sexist professor who made it a point to exude his power and authority over his class. Mrs. Simpson recalled that he often brought with him to class pictures of nude beaches that he had traveled to. “This one week he gives us this article about the Black woman being the welfare queen and how the average Black woman has five babies.” She remembers feeling so angry, especially as an educated woman who knows that this information was just not true. She decided to confront the professor and asked
him, “How can you say this when statistically Black people only make up 12 percent?” To which he replied, “This is a 100 level course, I lecture and you listen; if you want to have a conversation about this, you wait until you get to a 300 or 400 level course.” As the only Black person in the room once again she felt those familiar feelings of humiliation. Mrs. Simpson stopped attending that class and ultimately received a ‘D’ as her final grade. Eventually she ended up having to retake the class with the same professor. Mrs. Simpson discussed the importance of Teachers of Color in urban education and the importance of role models urban youth can identify with, especially when enduring moments of trauma and oppression. “People of Color have a different understanding of why it’s important to learn about people who look like you.” She goes on to further explain, “We see so many broken cycles and so many broken families that sometimes that Teacher of Color is who they have to aspire to be; I look like their mom and their aunt, and their cousin, it’s just an unspoken ‘I know…I understand.’”

**Integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education.** Mrs. Simpson is a firm believer in that when kids are interested in something in school, it shows in their academic performance, “When you do teach them about things that relate to them, those are the sections and the chapters that they test better on.” Mrs. Simpson insisted that the lack of multicultural education limits the vision of minority youth as to what they can achieve and as to what success can look like for them. She states that a common consequence of an exclusive curriculum is that Children of Color only see themselves in acceptable positions of success such as in the athletic and entertainment industries, just as detrimental, White children are excluded from the contributions and accomplishments of great People of Color and also only learn to see themselves as the norm. “Outside of that, they don’t know about other great Black people; how
many White people could sit down and have a conversation with you about WEB DuBois? Or Booker T. Washington?”

Kids need to learn about things that are relevant to them. You can’t assume that because it wasn’t a part of your education that it’s not relevant. It’s no disrespect to you if you’re a non Person of Color, that you’re teaching about People of Color to get kids to understand that they do matter, and that their story is significant.

Mrs. Simpson believes that a curriculum absent of multicultural education is one that hurts urban youth by marginalizing them even more. “Racism is so institutionalized that many Whites, many caring Whites don’t even get it or understand how disheartening it can be to sit in a classroom and I’m never learning about anybody who looks like me.” She described her own district curriculum as one that is based purely on the State curriculum. She also acknowledged the Amistad curriculum with the understanding that it is not integrated in the mandatory U.S. History classes required for high school graduation, but instead is offered as an optional elective course titled African American History. Mrs. Simpson stated, “Not for nothing but Black history is American history and kids need to know that their story is significant.”

Mrs. Simpson agrees that multicultural education is even more important for White children. White privilege will always prevent Black people and White people from being on an even playing field. That is why we need to have these conversations, even if it makes others feel uncomfortable. “That’s the critical dialogue that needs to happen in the classroom in order to change perspective.”

Experiences with implementing culturally responsive teaching in the classroom. Mrs. Simpson stressed the importance of making the curriculum relevant and implementing teaching strategies that enhanced the learning experiences of her students. Mrs. Simpson mentioned a
variety of supplemental materials that she uses in the classroom including the slave narratives of Frederick Douglass, and other online primary resources. “I try to make sure that ‘the other’ is represented in everything we do, ‘the other’ needs to be infused in the story.” Mrs. Simpson placed greater emphasis on sections of Black history that the general textbook often overlooks. These sections include the Harlem Renaissance, the Great Migration both during WWI and WWII and Black Power Movements in comparison to the Civil Rights Movement. Lesson plans submitted included a lesson on the origin of humanity in Africa with a focus on the accomplishments of the ancient Egyptians of Kemet and the ancient Nubians of the Kingdom of Kush. The lesson objectives for this lesson were: Determining what scientists knew about humanity’s origins in Africa; and examining some accomplishments of the ancient Egyptians and ancient Nubians of Kush. Some of the essential questions included: What have you seen on television about life there? And how might events in Africa affect your life in the US?

The second lesson submitted was on the history of the ‘N’ word. The lesson objectives included identifying the historic evolution of the most vile word in the English language, the ‘N’ word; determining how the word has evolved throughout centuries of use around the world; and examining how various generations perceive the word in today’s society. Mrs. Simpson started this lesson with a roundtable discussion and assigned editorials to students where they had to go out and interview different people on their feelings about that word. “I made them go interview people, and I had some of them go interview some of these White teachers around here and they weren’t happy with what they heard.” After the interviews students had to decide how to write their editorial, “Use the word, don’t use the word, yes I’m going to continue to use the word…it was a powerful thing.” Mrs. Simpson explained that she wanted them to own the word if they were going to choose to continue to use it. “So I started the class off with shouting out students
by name and asking them hey, are you a ‘N’?!” Their reaction said it all, she explained that that is when they got it. Mrs. Simpson addressed her student, “I’m a Black woman asking, I ain’t a White person asking you, so don’t tell me that this word doesn’t have a negative meaning!” After discussing this particular lesson, Mrs. Simpson reflected for a moment and added, “And if you’re internalizing that every day, what is that doing to your being and your soul?” A third lesson submitted was in celebration of Hispanic heritage. The lesson objectives included explaining what the term ‘Hispanic’ meant according to the American government and constructing a poster identifying one of the many Hispanic groups residing in America in order to pay homage to their culture and honor their home country.

Another lesson Mrs. Simpson discussed during her interview was a lesson she incorporates every year with the intention of addressing what she considered to be a big issue amongst urban youth, segregation within themselves. When teaching about the Atlantic Slave Trade, Mrs. Simpson placed an emphasis on the fact that most Africans that were kidnapped and forced into slavery actually landed in Latin American and the Caribbean. “I see my kids do this all the time when they segregate themselves because they don’t want to be identified with other groups.” Exploring the places of the African Diaspora, or places where Africans were taken to as Mrs. Simpson explained, helped to put things in perspective for them. “Like I explained to them, stop breaking each other down, stop segregating, other people don’t segregate us, they see Black people.”

Our kids need to develop a sense of pride and understand their legacy and their history. But everybody needs to be aware of what we’ve done in spite of we go generationally all of the stuff that’s been built on the backs of Blacks. And you don’t feel like you’ve benefitted from it, but that’s because you don’t understand history.
Perspective on the role of social studies education in society. Mrs. Simpson sees the future of social studies education as one that should evoke a revolution. She defines revolution as the act of taking what is there and getting rid of it in order to create something new. That is the whole point of social studies education, to start “the revolution of the free, of the fair, and of equitable education, where we can really see each other as equals.” She understands that given the history of our country, it is unlikely, but that this is the job of the social studies teacher, to keep hope alive and to empower young people with the tools to make those dreams a reality.

Summary. Mrs. Simpson is a veteran social studies teacher in her mid-40s that has been teaching for 20 years in an urban public high school. She identifies as an African American woman who grew up in a mostly middle class environment. Her early love of history inspired her from a very young age of wanting to teach history. Her experiences with oppression at a young age reaffirmed her mission to educate urban youth and to empower them with the knowledge of their rich histories and legacies. Her experiences with racism at an early age made her aware of being a marginalized person growing up and living in America. Both as a youth and as a young woman preparing to become a teacher, these experiences manifested themselves into points of critical self reflection that empowered her to pursue her education even with more determination, while reaffirming the importance of her rich heritage and cultural identity; these battles ultimately prepared her to become an educational warrior for urban youth. Mrs. Simpson understood the importance of having teachers and role models in school to identify with. Not having any Teachers of Color from kindergarten through sixth grade had a great impact on her quest to want to discover her true history. Mrs. Simpson is a firm believer of multicultural education and understands the importance of young people being able to identify with what they are learning. She has used a variety of lessons and culturally responsive instructional practices
that enhance teaching and learning for urban youth and has seen the outcome of this implementation in both improved student achievement and student behavior in the classroom. When it comes to social studies education, Mrs. Simpson sees it as a tool to further drive the education revolution towards attaining the goal of a more equitable society for all. Round two interview questions for Mrs. Simpson are attached in appendix E.

**Mr. Drew.**

*Background and experiences with oppression.* Mr. Drew identifies as an African American male in his mid-40s. Mr. Drew has been teaching social studies for 21 years in his urban public school district. Mr. Drew briefly discussed his experiences growing up; his family originated from the south. “My family came from the south, and I think that a lot of us carry that cultural baggage of understanding the context of keep your eyes down, and don’t talk out loud.” Mr. Drew recalled his first lesson on how to deal with racism; he understood early on that as a Black male, racism would impact him differently and he was very aware of that. “I think that when someone Black walks in the door, the initial perception is that I should fear them or I should be afraid of them, or I should be concerned about my well-being.” Mr. Drew recalls a story that his father told him of an incident at work when his father walked into a meeting and disagreed, someone right away mentioned his physicality. Mr. Drew remembers how disappointed his father was that they did not respect his intellect. Mr. Drew recalled, “He was so offended... he always warned me against it, and so I then transfer that to my students.” He recalls being called the ‘N’ word at a young age and all the feelings that accompanied that experience trying to interpret that as a child, “very, very tough to deal with.” Growing up, Mr. Drew did not have any Teachers of Color and referred to his social studies teachers as “culturally unaware.” His desire to become a teacher was fueled by the constant discovery of new
information that had never been taught to him before; it motivated him to want to learn more and to turn-key that information to young people that looked like him.

Mr. Drew briefly discussed his experience as a Black athlete attending an all-White college and his struggles to get through the program while dealing with the racial hostility. As an athlete, he was always aware that he could not react to racial slurs because it could have cost him his scholarship or worse.

There was a lot of racial hostility on the campus. I’ve been called nigger before and I didn’t know how to interpret it. I didn’t act violently cause I knew that I was an athlete on campus, I couldn’t act violently, I didn’t want to be arrested. I think that culturally man, there are things that we survived historically, there’s a cultural element that kind of survives through generations and generations…the passing on that cultural genetic code of structural racism.

After college he began his teaching career in 1996; he explained that the only reason he was hired was because there were no minorities. As a Black man Mr. Drew was intensely aware with the way he was perceived. He recognizes that historically his physical appearance has been deemed as intimidating and aggressive to White people. Well over six feet tall and a former athlete, Mr. Drew is very aware of how he is perceived. “The cultural context that our people come from throughout history, we can understand why there’s a bit of aggressiveness….having survived so much generationally, I can understand why they want to protect their own.” From a more contemporary context, Mr. Drew describes the impact of media, videos, and movies on the public as a false informant of Black and Brown children. “I think that Black and Brown children are perceived to be aggressive, belligerent, angry, and have a lot of misplaced anger.”
Motivation for teaching in an urban high school. Mr. Drew discussed the relationship between racism and poverty, and agreed that both work hand-in-hand to keep urban youth segregated and separated from other communities. Mr. Drew emphasized the importance of his students being able to identify with him but also discussed the trauma that many of his students have endured and attributes it to conditions created by structural racism and poverty. “Some of the trauma that they may have experienced in their youth may have come from people that look like me, so I have to try and balance that perception and be careful.” Mr. Drew always had a desire to teach urban youth because he identified as one. “I am urban, I was an urban youth.” He goes on to exclaim, “I understand their plight, I understand their background, I understand the language they’re speaking!” Mr. Drew expressed authentic concern for his students and considers it his mission to equip them with the skills to be able to handle any situation that comes their way.

Thoughts on a diversified teaching force. “I’ll never forget the first time I walked into my class as a teacher, and the students automatically assumed I was a substitute.” Mr. Drew strongly supports a more diversified teaching force and understands how crucial it is to the healthy development of urban youth with an emphasis on Black boys. Mr. Drew believes that Black boys especially would greatly benefit from Black male role models in the classroom. He refers back to the perception of African American males historically linked to aggressive behavior and even more specifically, aggressive sexual behavior. “As an African American male, I have dealt with sexuality and the perception of sexuality of an African American, so I try to illustrate that to my young boys.” Historically systematic rape and miscegenation have been a cruel and very real part of plantation life for Africans and Indigenous people enslaved in the Americas. Mr. Drew points out that in the historical cases of the Scottsboro boys and Emmett
Till, in both cases, Black boys were accused of sexually aggressive behavior towards Whites. He also pointed out that historically when Black men were lynched, many times their man parts were cut off.

I try to use things like the Scottsboro case because here you have nine African American males who pretty much were trying to get employment but they were perceived as being sexually aggressive, and that racial climate allowed people to really believe that these young boys, some of which were as old as twelve and thirteen years old were capable of being that sexually aggressive. I try to bring all of these issues to bear, so that my kids can think about sexuality and how they are still perceived by many.

“We need more Black and Brown teachers because the kids need to see people that look like them operate in a professional capacity.” He discussed the connectedness that exists when someone telling the story looks like them. Mr. Drew reiterated that White teachers could also have the ability to connect with urban youth, build a rapport and make learning relevant, but “I just don’t see it that much.” Mr. Drew described the district social studies department as overwhelmingly White. “It’s like a microcosm for a lot of urban districts, where you have mostly Black and Latino students but the majority of the teachers are not Black and Brown.”

**Integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education.** Mr. Drew has a real problem with the district curriculum and does not feel that it addresses the issues social studies education should be tackling. “I think that our curriculum is an extenuation of that same policy, and that same system.” Mr. Drew described the curriculum as one that does not incorporate enough information on Black and Brown people and overemphasizes the slavery and colonial aspects of history while ignoring “the lengths that we had to go through to struggle and to participate in society.” Mr. Drew described resources he uses to integrate multicultural
education in his lessons, including looking at university curricula and using primary source documents such as narratives and photos to tell the stories of the marginalized and to bring in “more constructive dialogue into the classroom.” Mr. Drew makes reference to the GI Bill that was never meant to benefit People of Color, the Tuskegee experiment, the Scottsboro case and the sexually aggressive stereotype that became attached to nine Black teenage boys, Jim Crow, and the murder of 14 year old Emmett Till as examples of important and significant people and historical events that barely get a mention in the textbook.

What was the GI Bill? The GI Bill was affirmative action but it wasn’t affirmative action for us. And so, if you can’t…you have to be able to bring that information to bear in order to give students a full context so they’re not thinking there’s something wrong with them because of the Color of their skin. Why were People of Color treated a certain way for so long? Are we inherently inferior? Is there something wrong with us? No, there’s something wrong with the way that we are educating our kids.

When it comes to urban youth, Mr. Drew believes that as long as history does not reflect People of Color, history will remain everyone’s worst subject. To combat this, he makes it a point to introduce different perspectives from multiple sources, “We as history teachers have the responsibility to attack the institutions that foster racism, we are the cultural crusaders.” Mr. Drew currently teaches in an alternative high school where many of his students have behavioral problems. He was recently given a ‘friendly reminder’ by his supervisor for emphasizing too much African, African Caribbean and African American history, and not enough of any other history. Mr. Drew explained that he was teaching to the population in his classroom and that what he was teaching them was going to help them to address their behavioral problems. “To lift them out of this way of thinking and way of behavior, so that they can reflect on the people that
came before them.” Mr. Drew agrees that multicultural education is critical for everyone and thinks that White children also need to learn it. “I think that Whites need to learn this stuff and I think there have been a lot of progressive Whites that have entered into this space saying, ‘listen, we don’t have it, and we need to learn it.’”

**Experiences of implementing culturally responsive teaching in the classroom.** Mr. Drew recalled one of the most memorable culturally responsive teaching experiences occurred when he took his students on a field trip to a couple of lectures in Harlem and then to a bookstore called *Revolutionary Books* to immerse them in the experience. Mr. Drew remembered his students being very appreciative and impressed with the experience. Mr. Drew made references to the importance of culturally responsive teaching and its impact on urban youth.

Mr. Drew submitted three lesson plans that demonstrated the integration of multicultural education, all three related to the U.S. History I curriculum. The first lesson was on the civil war and the economic and cultural differences between the North and the South. The lesson objectives included discussing the States with at least 50 percent Black populations in the South, analyzing the details of the compromise of 1850 and the fugitive slave law, and examining the Kansas-Nebraska Act and how it nullified the Missouri Compromise. The second lesson was on cultural and historical context of the institution of slavery. The lesson objectives were based on the class viewing of the film, *12 Years a Slave*. The in-depth topics of discussion included the events that led Solomon into slavery, his treatment by his captors and the nature in which he was sold from plantation to plantation. An additional topic of discussion was how Solomon arrived in the institution of slavery and how his spirit of a free man was almost broken. The next lesson focused on the Dredd Scott decision and the presidential election of 1860. The lesson objectives included discussing the Dred Scott case and its relevance to the civil liberties of Blacks in the
US, analyzing the dilemma that Lincoln faced over Fort Sumter in South Carolina, and examining which ‘slave’ States succeeded and which stayed loyal to the union.

**Perspective on the role of social studies education in society.** Mr. Drew views the principle role of social studies education as leading the way in combatting oppression and institutionalized racism. “When you walk into a door or down the street, race matters, and when I see your race, I’m thinking what’s your mindset? What’s your level of aggression?” He discussed social studies education as the developer of critical thinking skills, the builder of platforms and ‘empowerer’ of ‘the other’.

Look, I don’t think that we’re that far away from slavery, Jim Crow, segregation. I don’t think that we’re that far away. I think we mask it, because we’re able to hold up an Obama…or more of us are now owning homes, and renting apartments, and driving nice cars. But we’re not that far away. I think that the legacy of Jim Crow segregation is still very, very prevalent. It just changed its name. It changed its name from Jim Crow to incarceration.

Mr. Drew intends to continue to use social studies education as a means of creating cultural road maps for urban youth to help them reconnect with their pasts and legacies, in hopes of improving their possibilities of a brighter future.

**Summary.** Mr. Drew is an African American male in his mid-40s who has been teaching social studies for 21 years. He shared the trauma of having to confront racism at an early age and understood as a Black male that he would be living a life where he would constantly have to be alert and aware of how he is perceived by others. Mr. Drew is the only male participant in this study, his experiences are unique and emphasize the challenges particular to Black males. His own experiences with racism and oppression empowered him to become an advocate of
urban youth because he sees reflections of himself in the faces of his students. He understands first hand the importance of equipping them with the knowledge and skills to be able to survive and thrive in an oppressive society.

Mr. Drew had no Teachers of Color growing up but was able to discover information on his culture and history that inspired him to become a history teacher. He identifies as a former urban youth and automatically knew he wanted to serve as a mentor and role model to urban youth, particularly Black boys. Mr. Drew understands the challenges urban youth face and supports a more diversified teaching force. He is also a strong advocate of the integration of multicultural education and demonstrated lesson plans that were aligned with culturally responsive teaching. Mr. Drew believes the main purpose of social studies education should focus on preparing youth with the knowledge and skills to combat institutionalized racism and oppression. Round two interview questions for Mr. Drew are attached in appendix F.

Ms. Tingo.

*Background and experiences with oppression.* Ms. Tingo was born in the Dominican Republic and left there at the age of six to live in NJ. She identifies as an Afro-Latina and is in her mid-30s. She has been teaching social studies in an urban public school district for almost 10 years but also taught in a suburban district for a short amount of time. Ms. Tingo considered her culture to be a very big part of her life and commented that growing up, she “wasn’t allowed to speak English in the house.” Although she went through the ESL program and had teachers that spoke Spanish, she still could not identify with them because they were White and no one had curly hair; she believed they were Cuban and Chilean. “I was in ESL so all my teachers spoke Spanish, but they didn’t look like me…I just couldn’t identify with them.” Ms. Tingo remembers feeling even more marginalized and wondering why her teachers did not ever discuss
their heritage or post their flags or “talk about what’s so great to be Latino?” She pointed out that they were probably trying to blend in. Ms. Tingo could relate to trying to blend in, recalling her mother relaxing her hair at an early age to straighten it. She remembers the smell of the chemicals and the burning pain on her scalp and wondered why she did not have the ‘good hair’ that her sister inherited, “my sister never relaxed her hair,” and my mom said that “my sister always had good hair.” When I asked Ms. Tingo what was good hair? she replied, “It’s hair that doesn’t have to be relaxed, and mine had to be relaxed because mine was curly and turned into nappy.” She made references to TV and everyone having straight hair, “even Black women had straight hair.” She recalls a conversation she had with her mother later on as a young adult about why she had to endure this process growing up:

I’m looking at TV, everyone had straight hair. My mom would relax it and I’m like, ‘why would you relax my hair?’ And she’s like, ‘Oh just to make it straighter.’ And I’m like, ‘But did it bother you?’ And she’s like, ‘No but it’s just to help you in school so you don’t have to worry about your hair.’ But it was nonsense.

Ms. Tingo discussed that it was later that she realized that her, her mother and generations before her had been conditioned to think this way; Ms. Tingo expressed that she stopped relaxing her hair a long time ago. As a woman of Afro-Dominican descent, I can relate to Ms. Tingo’s experience. I also recall the monthly ‘sacrificial rituals’ that took place in my home or at ‘El salon’. My mother, grandmother, aunt and sister also endured these rituals – unknowingly masking their true beauty, and in an effort to fit a beauty profile that was never theirs.

Ms. Tingo was always fond of history and took an interest in Horace Mann’s story of being one of the first educational leaders to believe in public education for all. She was also
inspired by Gardner’s theory of intelligence in that everyone learns differently – it was then that she decided to pursue the life of an educator. As a college student she was introduced to the term: FOB, “‘Oh you don’t speak right, you speak like an FOB’, I didn’t know what an FOB was.” Ms. Tingo explained what FOB stood for, “fresh off the boat.” Some of the most hurtful encounters with oppression began when she became a teacher. “My colleagues, they speak frivolously, certain things are said that makes people uncomfortable.” She expressed that she faced racism on a daily basis, “how I speak, or how I look…I’ve definitely come home crying from other students who have called me a ‘wetback’ and an FOB.”

**Motivation for teaching in an urban high school.** As mentioned before, Ms. Tingo did spend a short amount of time teaching in a suburban school before she realized she was meant to teach and empower urban youth. She talked about the level of privilege and arrogance that was prevalent in that school culture:

Students pulling up in their Mercedes and their Audis and all this and the teachers are driving Toyotas and Hondas, and they have the audacity to talk about that the urban schools get everything. And I’m like, ‘If they really only knew what it was like to grow up where free meals and a program was life for some of these kids. I know what it is to see my friends be hungry, or come to school with beat up sneakers, and getting a hair cut because they got gum stuck in their hair or lice…and it’s just things you don’t want your kids to go through. But I went through it and it made me want to teach in an urban school, it’s empowering.

She described those memories as what motivated her to want to teach in an urban school. She did not want another student sitting in a classroom and feeling that no one looked like them.
Ms. Tingo reiterated, “I went to an urban school, and I know what it’s like to not have all the resources.”

**Thoughts on a diversified teaching force.** Ms. Tingo stated that she feels there is a fair amount of Teachers of Color in her district but that there needs to be more. Ms. Tingo explained the significance of having representation in the classroom and of students having a teacher that looks like them, “Having that representation in the classroom, the students can say, ‘Oh, at least she knows what it’s like to be in my shoes,’ especially when you share similar experiences of growing up.” Ms. Tingo believes that students need role models they can identify with, and that is especially critical in urban districts where many students lack those support resources at home. Ms. Tingo discussed the challenges many of her students now face with immigration issues and not feeling reluctant to discuss those sensitive matters with her, “I tell them, this is a school zone, they cannot come in; I will never allow or reveal your status to anyone!” Ms. Tingo reveals that she understands and knows students who are coming from those places, their stories and what they are experiencing, the terrifying thought of never seeing their parents again. Students are able to identify with her and connect on a personal level, allowing her to provide support and relief from carrying the burden alone. “We don’t shy away from talking about real issues and culture and things that are happening and what groups are experiencing oppression right now, and what are we doing about it.” Ms. Tingo finds herself assisting many of her students that identify with her in filling out college applications because they do not confide in others to share their immigration status with them. Ms. Tingo explains that many of these students feel like no one understands their plight,

Being part of and living in an urban district definitely helps me to connect with the kids in a more positive way. They feel like no one really understands them, and when we talk
about certain things that are cultural, especially the Latino experiences, they go, ‘Oh, she knows what we’re talking about’, or ‘she knows what that feels like.’

Creating safe spaces to conduct open discussions on critical issues is a big part of the culture in Ms. Tingo’s classroom.

Integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education. Ms. Tingo explains that the world history curriculum skips over everyone else and starts in Europe; it does not include the histories of the marginalized. “I feel like a lot of our books do not really reflect the real history, or the history of the oppressed, of people like me and I teach kids like me.” She describes the struggle of having to research for additional information and resources to include ‘the other’ in her lessons. “They don’t touch upon the Latin American experience, I have to do that myself; in the curriculum there is a section for other – meaning women, African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans – and you have to encompass all of them.” She explains the challenges with teaching from a curriculum that her kids simply cannot connect to. She discussed the decrease in the level of engagement in the classroom when students are unable to connect to what they are learning. “They are the ones that are marginalized, and these kids don’t know anything about their ancestors or their history, the book is not teaching them, and why are we still teaching about Columbus?!”

As a social studies teacher, chronological order is important to create context for students. Ms. Tingo questions how students can possibly understand the Renaissance without having any background knowledge on the ancient Egyptians and the great kingdoms of Africa?! She supports immediate revisions to the curriculum and regards it as outdated and exclusive. Ms. Tingo uses multiple resources including on-line primary source documents and the *People’s History of the United States* by Howard Zinn. “To make it culturally sound I have to go and look
for information that is not going to be in the book.” Ms. Tingo understands the significance of multicultural education especially for minority youth. “It makes them prouder of their heritage, it makes them aware of other people’s cultures, more sensitive, empathetic, and able to find commonalities in other groups of people.” She also discussed the difficulty of changing students’ perspective and trying to ‘unteach’ the untruths and incomplete half stories of what they have been taught, “to take them out of the cocoon and say no this is really what happened, it’s hard.”

Experiences with culturally responsive teaching in the classroom. Ms. Tingo discussed a specific lesson that she incorporated to make them ‘culturally sound’ as she discussed previously. Currently in her U.S. History II class, they were studying WWII and created a lesson that focused on the war efforts and experiences of ‘the other’ or the marginalized populations. She provided details and narratives of the experiences of African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and women throughout the war. “I use primary source documents to detail what their experiences were like because their experiences were very, very different.” Ms. Tingo drew comparisons between the Nazi camps and the Japanese internment camps to what is happening today on the border. In her world history class, Ms. Tingo compared the torture methods used during the Spanish inquisition to torture methods used today to torture prisoners and prisoners of war. Making teaching and learning relevant is something Ms. Tingo tries to incorporate in the classroom on a daily basis.

We don’t shy away from talking about real issues and culture and things that are happening and what groups are experiencing oppression right now, and what are we doing about it. Because its not just here, its around the world but what are we doing here, in New Jersey to change these things?
She has many Latino students who express their insecurities and fears of deportation to her in confidence. She decided to implement a few lessons on the history of the current immigration caravan to help students understand why so many were leaving their beloved countries. “I explained to them why they left Honduras, and why they left Guatemala and why they left El Salvador, and they learned to be empathetic towards these groups of people.” Ms. Tingo discussed the outcome of those lessons, and remarked that the biggest question that emerged was what they could do to help. One of the lessons that really had an impact on the students occurred when the hurricane hit Puerto Rico. We started a drive to collect materials for the victims but also held open discussions about the Puerto Rican students that would be coming and how to welcome them. Ms. Tingo stated that her students were aware that these children had lost everything and had even less than they had.

Ms. Tingo submitted a week’s worth of lesson plans honing in on WWII. The focus lesson objectives included evaluating the treatment of Japanese and the women’s role in WWII, and examining the treatment of African Americans and Latinos in WWII. Emphasis was also placed on the Tuskegee airmen and the conditions of segregation during the war.

**Perspective of social studies education in society.** Ms. Tingo believed the focus of the role of social studies education should reside with developing change agents that will advocate for social justice and change the way students think. Making students aware of things that are happening in the world and allowing them to become part of the solution. “It’s important for our students to know that they’re capable of making change.” Ms. Tingo stresses the importance of teaching our students how to advocate for themselves and people like them.
Don’t sit down and let someone else make choices for you, you have ideas, you have points of view, just because you are a minority or because you don’t speak English…you have to be able to fight for yourself and people like you.

Ms. Tingo discussed the role of social studies education and the community. She discussed her interactions with a parent who was asking for help to write a referral letter because she believes her child may have a learning disability, “and that’s what social studies does.” She discussed holding voter registration drives and the importance of having students seeing and participating in these kinds of events. Ms. Tingo put it this way, “It’s to change society, the only way to do that is we have to educate them and follow up and show them that social studies is like social justice…you have to make change happen, and that’s what social studies does.”

Summary. Ms. Tingo was born in the Dominican Republic and came to the U.S. at the age of six. She identifies as Afro-Latina in her mid-30s and has taught social studies for almost 10 years. Her experience in a sub-urban school district reaffirmed her calling to teach in an urban school district. Ms. Tingo experienced oppression racially and linguistically; she values and understands the critical role that minority teachers play in the lives of urban youth. Her early experiences as a minority in a new country identified with certainty the struggle and obstacles that would try to impede her success. Ms. Tingo is a strong supporter of multicultural education and integrates her district curriculum on a daily basis with a variety of resources that she researches. She discussed several lessons that honed in on the specific experiences of Black and Brown people throughout different periods in history. She is culturally aware of the fears and trauma many of her students are currently enduring and provides support through her inclusive instructional practices. Ms. Tingo submitted lesson plans that demonstrate culturally responsive teaching and the integration of multicultural education. She is a strong advocate of social justice
and believes that the role of social studies education should focus on creating students that are aware, and promote advocacy of social justice to create sustainable change. Round two interview questions for Ms. Tingo are attached in appendix G.

**Chapter Summary**

The purpose of this research study is to examine the stories of Black and Latino teachers’ experiences incorporating multicultural education in their instruction. The research seeks to fill the knowledge gap by exploring their stories and developing a better understanding of how the narratives of their experiences are reflected in their instruction. This information was critical in understanding the challenges Black and Latino teachers face as individuals of marginalized populations but also as part of a collective group of Urban Educators working towards the improvement of social studies education.

Four teachers from three urban public school districts in NJ were interviewed face-to-face on two separate occasions. Themes emerged throughout the narratives, which emphasized experiences with oppression, feelings about teaching in an urban high school, feelings on a diversified teaching force, the integration of multicultural education and engaging in culturally responsive teaching practices and the role of social studies education.

All teachers agreed on the importance of multicultural education and minority teachers for urban youth. All teachers agreed that multicultural education was important for everyone but especially for White children as members of the dominant society who have more power to create change. All the teachers shared different experiences of dealing with oppression and expressed how these experiences influenced their instruction and relationship with urban youth. All teachers agreed that there is an alignment between teaching that is relevant to students and engagement in the classroom. When it came to the perspective on the role of social studies in
society, the four participants had similar views with slight differences. Mrs. Davis agreed that the role of social studies should focus on the integration of multicultural education and on the advocacy for social justice. Mrs. Simpson thought social studies education should be used to evoke an educational revolution where students have access to an inclusive educational program that is relevant. Mr. Drew believes the role of social studies education should be used as a ‘weapon’ to combat oppression and racism. Ms. Tingo wants to use social studies education to develop change agents that will advocate for social justice.

Lastly, all teachers agreed that multicultural education has a direct effect on the self-esteem of urban youth. The next chapter will discuss these findings more in depth. These findings will also be supported by the theoretical framework and supporting literature.
Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore the stories that Black and Latino secondary social studies educators tell about how they embed multicultural education with teaching practices that reflect culturally responsive teaching. The research seeks to fill the knowledge gap by exploring their stories and developing a better understanding of how the narratives of their experiences are reflected in their instruction. Four teachers representing three urban public school districts in the State of NJ were recruited to participate in this study. All participants were interviewed face-to-face on two occasions, and lesson plans were also submitted as artifacts for the research. The information gathered from the interviews was critical and validated the importance of an inclusive curriculum for urban youth, and its instructional delivery by a teacher they can racially and culturally identify with. The data also provided important recommendations for improved practice within secondary social studies for urban educators.

The following research question guided this research: What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools? The stories collected from the teachers participating in this study reflect lived experiences of oppression and how the impact of that oppression translated in their approach to their classrooms. Each participant reaffirmed that their experiences of dealing with oppression helped to develop them into a stronger educator and advocate of urban youth. This problem of practice sheds light on the importance of not only a diverse and inclusive curriculum but also the necessity of a diverse staff to deliver this critical curriculum. An inclusive curriculum enables authentic student dialogue on issues that affect Black and Latino students in urban school districts. In addition, a diverse staff that mirrors the student population
to facilitate this instruction is equally as important to the process of teaching and learning for urban youth.

**Overview and Discussion of Findings**

**Background and experiences with oppression.** All four participants experienced some or multiple forms of oppression during their schooling and all experienced an absence of teachers they could racially/ethnically and culturally identify with. Mrs. Davis discussed having only one Black teacher in school that was the lead of the Black history club, for her the only safe place to seek out true knowledge of Black people. Mrs. Simpson described not having any Teachers of Color until she moved back to the city for sixth grade. Mr. Drew recalled not having any teachers he could identify with or relate to. Ms. Tingo described similar experiences of not having any teachers she could identify with, despite being in the ESL program and having teachers that spoke Spanish. What follows is a more in-depth discussion of their experiences.

Mrs. Davis’ experiences of growing up in the 60s and 70s as a Black woman brought a different perspective to the research. She was able to share lived experiences of oppression that personified another era of terror for People of color living in America during that time. Mrs. Davis’ story of growing up around oppression during the 60s and 70s exposed her to experiences of advocacy and active citizenship amongst youth. Mrs. Davis grew up during the Black Power Movements and Civil Rights Movement. According to Mrs. Davis, back then Black youth had no choice but be active, remain alert, and provide support for one another. It also taught her at an early age what it meant to be a change agent in society and how costly that could be.

Mrs. Simpson’s most earliest recollection of oppression occurred when she was in grade school. Her White social studies teacher told her he would be skipping over the chapters of Africa and India because there was nothing to learn there. Her reaction was similar to the other
three participants; Mrs. Simpson was traumatized. She had to process this trauma silently and internalized this oppression – translating these experiences into feelings of worthlessness, confusion and helplessness. Those same thoughts and feelings returned when her professor in college, who was presenting a lesson portraying Black women as welfare queens, humiliated her when she tried to advocate. Out of the many experiences with oppression Mrs. Simpson has endured, these two seemed to be very traumatic and painful for her. While school experiences were significant for Mrs. Simpson, gender is significant in Mr. Drew’s story below.

Mr. Drew recalls his experiences of growing up as a young Black man. A significant experience for him was being called the ‘N’ word while being one of the only Black athletes in his college at the time. The process of having to internalize it in silence and not act for fear of losing his athletic scholarship, his livelihood or his freedom were indeed insurmountable. Mr. Drew also experienced intergenerational oppression handed down through witnessing and hearing about his father’s experiences. The experience of seeing a parent, as well as the image of that strong protector guardian being broken down and demoralized by a system of institutionalized oppression is devastating to a child. The question in that child’s mind now becomes, ‘Who can protect me against this now?’ Unbeknown to her at the time, and similar to Mr. Drew, Ms. Tingo was experiencing physical and generational oppression since a very young age, in having her hair painfully relaxed with harmful chemicals in an effort to straighten it and match up to the dominant and dominating European standard of beauty. Not having teachers that looked like her, who shared her image in her early schooling, and being discriminated against in college for her accent and complexion, were very detrimental to her self-esteem. Becoming familiar with racist terminology like ‘fob’ and ‘wetback’ were hurtful and harmful. It is something that scars you for a lifetime, and becomes an unforgettable reminder of the permanent
damage oppression can cause. It also fortifies you, forcing your soul to grow ‘thick skin’ during the healing process, unknowingly empowering you for the next time oppression strikes.

The participants all agreed that their experiences of dealing with oppression, although traumatic and life changing, only motivated and reaffirmed their desires to move forward: towards discovering more ways to challenge it, to educate themselves, and to pursue careers in education to prepare the next generation of minority youth to resist and rise.

**Motivation for teaching in an urban high school.** The experiences of oppression lived by the participants in their early lives was profound. They had a direct impact and intensified their desires to want to work with urban youth, to prepare them how to survive and thrive in a racist and unfair world. Mrs. Simpson expressed not wanting Black kids to be embarrassed and felt a commitment to ensuring that they knew they had a legacy – this legacy so often excluded from the history books to be purposely forgotten – was something Mrs. Simpson was determined to ensure, her students could discover and reclaim. Mrs. Davis expressed always knowing that she wanted to teach kids that looked like her, to make sure they knew they came from greatness. Mr. Drew identified as urban. Being a former urban youth, he had deep empathy for their situation. He understood their plight and their language; for him there was no other choice but to take on the role of teaching and doing so in an urban school district. The trauma of never having a teacher who shared her skin color or hair texture in early schooling motivated Ms. Tingo to become a teacher. After some initial experience in a suburban district, she decided that she was better equipped and would find it more meaningful to deal with urban youth. She expressed the desire to represent students who, like herself growing up, did not have anyone in school that looked or sounded like her. Her early experiences of immigrating from a developing country,
and growing up with friends who endured harsh conditions of poverty, inspired her to want to teach in an urban district.

All four participants knew early on that they wanted to teach social studies and agreed that they all wanted to teach kids that looked like them as a result of dealing with and surviving oppression and racism throughout their lives. They all expressed the strong desire to be in a position to be able to relay the message to Black and Brown kids that they also come from and are capable of greatness! They all agreed that it was important for urban youth to have teachers they could identify with, could see their visible connection to, based on their own previous experiences of going through school with few role models and hardly any Teachers of Color. Mrs. Davis and Mr. Drew reiterated that urban youth are so used to not seeing People of Color in positions of power and authority that they do not even recognize a Black person as a teacher when they see one in their classroom, unless they are directly told.

**Thoughts on a diversified teaching force.** All four teachers believed it was important for urban youth to have role models in the classroom they could mirror themselves in and connect with. Without these role models, urban youth would have no example in their schools, of adults in positions of power that they could see themselves in. All four teachers agreed that there are not enough Teachers of Color and that there needs to be more, especially within urban districts. Mrs. Davis connected the presence of Teachers of Color in the classroom with urban youth, developing an appreciation of the importance of education and their capacity to achieve it. Mrs. Simpson and Mr. Drew made a connection between the importance of Teachers of Color and their knowledge and ability to support youth on how to survive conditions of oppression; both spoke in the unspoken, ‘I know…I understand’ terminology. Mr. Drew expressed that Black boys especially would greatly benefit from a Black male role model in the classroom like
himself. He knows what it is like to be historically marginalized and perceived as physically and sexually aggressive by others and the Youth of Color know he knows, has empathy for them and can help them deal with its’ implications. Ms. Tingo agreed that urban youth especially need role models they can identify with. Many lack the support resources at home and need positive adults in school that understand their situation and can provide that needed support. She expressed how important it was to be present in schools for young people going through similar experiences of oppression, which are deepened and complicated by being a newcomer to the US.

**Integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education.** All four participants agreed on the importance of multicultural education and its integration, especially for urban youth. This integration is crucial to ensuring that the learning of content and skills that occurs in the urban classroom is relevant to its’ audience. Mrs. Davis greatly emphasized the integration of the Amistad Curriculum and acknowledged that this curriculum was often presented in a separate elective course on African American history, rather than as an infused curriculum in mainstream history courses. All teachers agreed that the Amistad Curriculum was not integrated enough in the core history classes required for high school graduation. She argued that curriculum without multicultural education is indoctrination, and “indoctrination is regurgitation.” Without the integration of multicultural education, education becomes the brainwashing of youth with false, un-true information that holds captive the development of their critical thinking skills and programs them to continue to perpetuate oppression and racist assumptions of marginalized populations. All teachers agreed that their district mandated social studies curriculum was not inclusive and did not speak for, nor represent, the voices of their students. Mrs. Davis, in discussing the curriculum, pointed out that only pieces of information that did not make the dominant group feel uncomfortable were included in the history text book,
and referred to the non-violent image of Dr. King. The peaceful and ‘I Have a Dream’ image of Dr. King is one that is acceptable and comfortable for White America. This is very different from the ‘problematic’, anti-Vietnam activist and ‘Mountaintop Speech’ image of Dr. King that brought him closer to the likes of the “agitator” Malcolm X who preached self-preservation and the human right for Black people to defend themselves against violence.

Mrs. Simpson agreed that the choices made by school systems to limit multicultural education, not only maintains white supremacy, but limits the vision of minority youth as to what they could achieve. This consequently marginalizes these youth even more. Mr. Drew concurs. His perspective on his district curriculum is that it is an extension of the system of institutionalized oppression when there is an overemphasis on slavery and colonial aspects of history while ignoring the contributions and legacies of People of Color. Ms. Tingo also noted that the history of the oppressed is not included or emphasized in her district curriculum for social studies. In her district, they start with world history in Europe and skip over everywhere else, implicating to urban youth that civilization originated in Europe instead of Africa.

All four participants believe that the lack of an inclusive curriculum in schools, that includes information relevant to Black and Latino youth, had a direct negative effect on the self-esteem of urban youth. Mrs. Davis was very vocal in her overwhelming emphasis on the inhumane treatment of Black people by the rest of the world being the focus of Black history and how detrimental these negative images can be to urban youth. Mr. Drew assessed that if children were not provided with full contexts of historical events, it may affect the way minority youth see themselves in the world; they may start to feel like something is inherently wrong with them because of their race or culture. Ms. Tingo demonstrated frustration in knowing that Christopher Columbus still gets taught in history as the discoverer and not the invader of the Americas. She
discussed the potential in multicultural education to evoke awareness and feelings of empathy among young people. She also emphasized the positive impact of an inclusive curriculum where all students feel valued and proud of their cultural identities. Ms. Tingo felt frustration in having to ‘un-teach’ and reteach the real history and experiences of Black and Brown people. Mrs. Simpson reiterated the psychological damage caused to minority youth who sit in history class and never hear anything about people that look like them accomplish great things that contribute to society. She also remembered how she felt as a student when her teacher told her that nothing significant ever happened in Africa that was worth spending instructional time on. Clearly the integration of multicultural education is as critical to urban youth intellectually as it is socially and emotionally.

The four teacher participants agreed that when students can relate to what they are learning, they are more interested and thus become more engaged, increasing class participation and inevitably student achievement. Mr. Drew agreed that as long as social studies classes continue to exclude and misrepresent People of color, it will continue to be students’ worse achieving class. Mrs. Davis discussed that when students feel like they are part of something they become interested and demonstrate participation and engagement. Mrs. Simpson reaffirmed that “when you teach them about things that relate to them, those are the sections and chapters that they test better on.” Ms. Tingo expressed the challenges of teaching from a curriculum her kids cannot connect to and as a result, the decrease in the level of engagement in the classroom. Learning must be relevant in order for it to be effective and meaningful.

All four participants are deeply committed to urban youth. They engaged in additional research to secure needed resources and materials to incorporate in their lessons to enhance learning and make learning relevant for their students. These resources included: online
supplemental materials such as documentaries and relevant films; primary source documents such as the slave narratives, photos, speeches, letters, diaries and autobiographies; secondary source texts such as Howard Zinn’s *A People History of the United States*; biographies and other relevant texts; peer-reviewed scholarly articles; and published journals. These are all resources that add to and make the curriculum alive by including the stories and contributions of people urban youth can identify with.

The teachers that participated in this research unanimously agreed that multicultural education is as important, if not more, for White children as members of the dominant group and as the inheritors of the economic and political power of society. Ms. Tingo poignantly recalls the time she spent in a suburban district. Specifically, she remembers the privilege, wealth and more than sufficient resources offered to the children there by the district. She discussed the arrogance demonstrated by the students who were never satisfied and always wanted more than what they needed. Ms. Tingo attributed these attitudes to a lack of empathy and awareness of others, feelings that could be evoked if White youth were introduced to a multicultural curricula. This experience had a deep impact on Ms. Tingo and ultimately led her to leave, to teach and support urban youth. Mrs. Davis stated that she felt that multicultural education was just as important for White children to enable a future where all people can “live together, share the same things and compete in the same way.” Mrs. Simpson’s stance was that multicultural education was even more important for White children because of white privilege and its ability to keep Minority youth and White youth from being on an equal playing field. Due to a system of institutionalized racism, and the historical marginalization of People of Color over centuries, ‘an equal playing field’ is no longer viable to create equitable conditions or a platform conducive to success for Black and Brown people. Today much more is needed to guarantee equal opportunities of
success for minority youth. And it starts in the classroom through inclusive and relevant learning that creates awareness, changes perspectives, and politically empowers youth to engage in active citizenship and advocacy for social justice. Mrs. Simpson believes that multicultural education can lead to critical dialogue, essential for changing perspective. Critical dialogue involves conversations centered around sensitive issues of race, class, identity and gender. Mr. Drew also agrees that multicultural education is just as important for White children and expressed that “they also need to learn it.” His initial confrontation with oppression clarified for him early on in his life that his feelings were irrelevant and did not take precedent over Whites feeling uncomfortable. Multicultural education evokes critical dialogue where the possibilities of transforming perspectives can become a reality. If more White youth were exposed to multicultural education in schooling, the result could be an empathetic ‘next generation’, who would be willing to share power and create sustainable change that reflected a more equitable and socially just society.

Experiences of implementing culturally responsive teaching in the classroom. All four participants demonstrated expertise and experience in the implementation of culturally responsive teaching. Three of the four participants submitted lesson plans to the researcher. Mrs. Davis, who is recently retired, did not submit any lesson plans but spoke of several lessons during her interviews that demonstrated culturally responsive instructional strategies. Mrs. Davis also made reference to the Amistad Curriculum and their resource website where she borrowed many lesson plan ideas and strategies that she implemented in the classroom. Mrs. Davis incorporated a lot of visuals in her instruction such as maps and photos for analysis. During her geography lesson on the world map, Mrs. Davis always used an appropriate map that demonstrated the correct size and capacity of Africa, Asia and South America to help students
draw analysis and synthesis. These analysis would often lead to critical thinking and empowering interactive class discussions. She also discussed her experiences of incorporating history lessons that involved learning about historical court cases such as Brown v. Board of Ed. and Mendez v. Westminster that made a difference in civil rights to make learning relevant. These kinds of lessons helped students to critically question and to ‘show their voice’ in having to debate, justify and defend their positions.

Mrs. Simpson discussed always making it a point to include ‘the other’ in her lesson plan preparation; by ‘the other’ she meant including the perspectives of the marginalized. One of her most significant lessons was the lesson on the use of the ‘N’ word. Mrs. Simpson employed strategies to enhance students’ oratory, writing, and communication skills by encouraging them to go out and interview their families, teachers and peers to investigate different perspectives on the use of the word. The outcome of this activity was empowering for students. Students were pleasantly surprised by many of the responses they received during their interviewing process. More importantly they were able to engage others in critical dialogue about an issue that was very relevant to them. Mrs. Simpson also incorporated lessons that focused on changing certain prevalent behaviors she noticed among her students, specifically self-segregation. Her lessons were designed to help eliminate students’ fears of being identified with other ethnic and cultural groups and helping them to find commonalities amongst themselves rather than focus on their subtle differences.

Mr. Drew discussed his students engaging in a culturally responsive field trip experience that immersed them in hands-on learning and exposed them to resources and information that were not accessible to them through their curriculum. The trip to the Harlem bookstore allowed students to experience being surrounded by numerous books, texts and other sources of
information that captivated their interests because it represented them. The speakers who lectured inspired and empowered them, not only with their words, but also with their mere presence—as representatives of the possibilities. He also delivered instruction that focused on improving critical thinking and problem-solving skills, to address improving community conditions to enable urban youth to reach their full potential.

Ms. Tingo also created lessons inclusive of ‘the other,’ emphasizing the experiences and contributions of marginalized populations throughout different time periods in history. Her lessons incorporated learning opportunities for her students to make connections between historical events of the past and contemporary current events that affect Populations of Color, such as comparing the treatment of the Jews by the Nazis or the Japanese by the Americans during WWII to the current treatment of Latin American people being taken, separated and held indefinitely at the border of Mexico and the US. Ms. Tingo also incorporated a lesson in the aftermath of the hurricane in Puerto Rico, recognizing the number of students of Puerto Rican and Latin American decent in her classroom, to engage her students in social justice learning. Students became emotionally invested in this lesson because they were able to identify with this tragedy. The outcome of this culturally responsive lesson led to greater empathy and involved a student-led drive to collect materials and resources for the families of Puerto Rico. They also came up with ways to welcome incoming students expected to arrive at their schools from Puerto Rico as a result of the devastation wrought by the storm.

All of the lesson plans submitted were inclusive of ‘the other’ and emphasized how certain historical events affected different groups of peoples, especially marginalized peoples, which would have been absent in a typically, non culturally responsive lesson. All lessons utilized mostly online supplemental resources, secondary sources such as alternative texts, and
primary source documents to maximize learning and to make the information relevant to urban youth. In addition, all the teachers used strategies and methods within these lessons that demonstrated culturally responsive teaching. In one the participant’s lessons, Ms. Tingo incorporated culturally responsive teaching strategies that inspired her students to engage in social justice learning and advocacy-her work in culturally responsive teaching made this learning possible.

**Perspectives on the role of social studies education in society.** The main purpose of social studies is to promote civic competence, thus helping to develop young people that will engage in active citizenship in a democratic society that is culturally diverse and part of a interdependent world. All participants expressed in their respective interviews that the role of social studies education should encompass ‘re-educating’ students on the whole history of our country. By integrating multicultural education in the curriculum, it supports an inclusive learning experience for all children but especially for minority youth who have been historically marginalized and virtually excluded from mainstream history textbooks. All teachers agreed that making all children aware of each other’s stories, accomplishments and historical contributions creates a generation that will know to appreciate each other’s experiences, reduce the negative impacts of oppression and create a context where all youth can work cooperatively towards a more equitable society.

Mrs. Davis emphasized that the role of social studies education should focus on the integration of multicultural education to create an inclusive curriculum and to stop the ‘indoctrination’ of urban youth. She also felt social studies education should emphasize social justice and equip students with the skills and knowledge to advocate for it. Mrs. Simpson discussed the role of social studies education should be as one to spark a revolution of “free, fair
and equitable education” for all, in an effort to ensure that everyone can see each other as equals. According to Mrs. Simpson, this can only happen through the continuous and consistent integration of multicultural education in the daily curriculum. Mr. Drew sees the main role of social studies education as a tool to ‘right the wrongs’ in history, challenge oppression and institutionalized racism through inclusive curricula and critical dialogue, and empower urban youth to rise above their circumstances and succeed. Ms. Tingo places a great focus on empowering students to advocate for themselves and for people that look like them. She feels the principle role of social studies education should entail teaching students how to become change agents that will advocate for social justice. She described social studies education as an active body that has the potential to empower young people to make change happen – according to Ms. Tingo, “social studies is social justice.”

**Discussion of the findings in relation to the literature.** For the purpose of this research, I have conceptualized multicultural education as the curriculum and culturally responsive teaching as the pedagogy. There are several goals that multicultural education seeks to achieve. According to Fox and Gay (1995), multicultural education seeks to:

- Develop literacy about ethnic and cultural diversity.
- Address the personal development of diverse students (specifically self-understanding, positive self-concepts and pride in one’s own ethnic identity).
- Achieve personal empowerment.
- Clarify attitudes and values about cultural diversity.
- Help students develop social skills for functioning in culturally pluralistic settings.
- Improve the quality of learning opportunities and academic performance.
The findings of this research point out to the conclusion that the integration of multicultural education facilitated by instructional practices that demonstrate culturally responsive teaching are critical for the healthy development of all young people. Moon (2011) stated that many educators value culturally responsive teaching as a salient approach to increasing teachers’ understanding of racially and ethnically underprivileged students. According to these findings, multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching have a direct link to the positive self-esteem of urban youth. Kenny and McEachern (2009) stated that children from certain ethnic or cultural groups may experience ongoing stressors related to acculturation, racial discrimination, academic difficulties due to language barriers, and other adaption issues related to adjusting (or assimilating) to the dominant mainstream culture (Piers & Herzberg, 2002). The story of Black and Brown people according to most social studies curricula often places an emphasis on their inhumane treatment by the rest of the world; in comparison to their white counterparts, whose stories focus on their accomplishments, contributions, conquests and ‘discoveries.’ White children in the class learn to see only themselves and their accomplishments. Black and Brown children begin to see themselves as less than, as victims whose only strength is survival.

The information gathered from this research also concluded that both multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching have a direct link to student achievement. When children are interested in something (because it makes them feel good about themselves or because they can relate to the information), they take the initiative to engage themselves in their learning. As student interest increases, so does class participation because students are now motivated to learn, they can now see themselves, their identities and their interests in the curriculum, they can identify themselves in a positive perspective within the curriculum. This curriculum would be integrated with multicultural education and include the role models, stories,
accomplishments and contributions of people that looked like them. With an increase in student interest, participation, and engagement, it is inevitable that student achievement will also increase. Davis (2007) discussed the connection between positive racial identities and academic achievement among black youth, “If teachers and schools focus on creating positive racial identities in their students, the students will be more likely to succeed academically” (p. 210). The participants in this study clearly understand this.

This research also included the importance of multicultural education for White children. If we are to change society into one that is more just and equitable for all, it starts in the classroom, and it must include multicultural education for all. Teaching the truth in schools through an inclusive curriculum promotes understanding, tolerance and positive intergroup relations. According to Davis (2007), “Another part of telling the truth in schools is to be realistic about American racial hegemony, teachers need to address the ‘history of systematic oppression’” (O’Keefe, 1994, p. 9) so White students understand that racism is a present-day reality for People of Color, and the civil rights movement did not eradicate racism, but forced it from being an overt action to a more subtle aspect of society” (p. 212). Facilitating dialogue on controversial issues on race and culture brings about awareness and understanding for young people; still today “the classroom remains the most radical space of possibility” to achieve student empowerment (Bell, 1994, p. 12). Multicultural education can help to develop White children who will grow to become White adults who are empowered by knowing the whole story, who are not afraid to share power with others and who are not afraid to advocate for socially just and equitable conditions for all.

Another finding of this research focused on the importance of a diversified teaching force, especially in urban public school districts. Multicultural education and culturally
responsive teaching have the most optimal impact on urban youth when facilitated by a Teacher of Color. This is because through their life experiences, they have acquired an awareness of racism and social injustice. Teachers of Color are better equipped to replenish the self-worth of Children of Color as a result of experiencing and internalizing institutionalized oppression themselves and their commitment to do so.

According to Kohli and Pizarro (2016), Teachers of Color have more positive views of Students of Color, including more favorable perceptions of their academic and learning potentials; also many Teachers of Color often enter the field with an orientation towards social justice and equity. In comparison, Saffold and Longwell-Grice (2008) discussed the documented problems that arise from the mismatch between socio-economically diverse students and their White middle class teachers. These problems included cultural value conflict, miscommunication, ineffective teaching of students resulting in dismal academic achievement, lowered teacher expectations leading to a self-fulfilling prophecy of lowered student achievement, and teacher’s negative racial attitudes towards and beliefs about racially and socio-economically diverse students.

When Black and Brown children can see themselves in their teachers, this research finds that they feel more comfortable in expressing themselves because they understand that their teacher is also a survivor and can empathize with their plight; as one of Ms. Tingo’s student put it, “She knows what that feels like.” The marginalized teacher is a role model and a symbol of hope and success for marginalized youth; youth can look at that adult and realize that there is a way out! That there is a light at the end of the tunnel! That it *is* possible to change your circumstances even if that is all you know.
A final finding for this research surrounds the future role of social studies education. Never has social studies been more crucial for public school education like it is today in our current conditions. Today’s social studies teacher must be prepared to “develop students’ racial identity and foster racial acceptance, tolerance, and interaction…the high school social studies classroom is an ideal place for such inquiry” (Davis, 2007, p. 209). According to the findings of this research, the role of social studies education should encompass teaching for social justice and active citizenship, developing critical thinking skills to challenge institutionalized oppression and racism, and diversifying curricula with multicultural education to provide an inclusive learning experience for all students. Davis (2007) stated that the purpose of a social studies classroom is to allow students to study the past to inform their present and future; however, students need to be prepared to participate in and negotiate today’s racially tense democracy. It is through these negotiations that young people can begin to change the perspective of others. These negotiations create a platform for their voices and concerns about their future to be heard and addressed.

**Discussions of the findings in relation to the theoretical framework.** According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), a researcher’s choice of framework is not arbitrary but reflects important personal beliefs and understandings about the nature of knowledge, how it exists in relation to the observer, possible roles to be adopted, and tools to be employed consequently by the researcher in her work (Lysaght, 2011, p. 572). Critical race theory was selected as the theoretical framework to guide this research because it facilitates a better understanding of educational inequity that is perpetuated through curricula that negatively impacts teaching and learning experiences for Black and Latino teachers and students in public urban education. The theoretical framework also guided the interview questions formulated for this research.
According to Sleeter and Bernal (2004), critical race theory has at least three important implications for multicultural education:

- It theorizes about race while also addressing the intersectionality of racism, classism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. It challenges Eurocentric epistemologies and dominant ideologies. It uses counter-storytelling as a methodological and pedagogical tool, a tool that allows one to tell the story of those experiences that are not often told. (p. 245)

  The findings of this research highlighted elements evident in critical race theory as it relates to tenets one and two. Tenet three of CRT challenges liberalism and tenet four argues that the civil rights movement benefitted White interest, these two tenets were not applied in this study. The criticalness of multicultural education for urban youth as well as for White children, intersects with tenet one of CRT which states that racism is “normal, not aberrant, in American society” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 11). Tenet one describes racism as normal and natural, just as it is normal and natural then to exclude multicultural education from mainstream curriculum and to maintain a teaching force that is predominantly White, despite the rapid diversification of our current student population. The lived experiences of Black and Latino teachers as told by them aligns with tenet two which goes towards engagement in storytelling; and the need for a diversified teaching force especially within urban school districts to satisfy the need for role models that minority youth can racially and culturally identify with also directly aligns with tenet one which points out the normality of racism and the inequity of educational opportunities for Teachers and Children of Color. These role models are essential for the survival and success of urban youth.

  Taylor, Gillborn, and Ladson-Billings (2016) stated that:
Critical race researchers acknowledge that educational institutions operate in contradictory ways, with their potential to oppress and marginalize coexisting with their potential to emancipate and empower. Likewise, a critical race methodology in education recognizes that multiple layers of oppression and discrimination are met with multiple forms of resistance. (p. 129)

All participants of this research experienced and internalized oppression in their lives, equipping them with being ‘appropriately trained’ in serving as teachers and as symbols of hope for urban youth. The internalization of oppression inevitably prepared them for their mission of re-educating urban youth through inclusive curricula, and preparing them to thrive in a racialized society that has historically marginalized them and will continue to throw obstacles in their direction to limit their opportunities for success. Teachers of color, with an inclusive curricula by their side as their weapon, have the “potential to emancipate and empower” (Taylor et al., 2016, p. 129) urban youth; their engagement in culturally responsive teaching symbolizes a form of resistance.

**Recommendations for Practice**

*Teaching preparation that incorporates multicultural education.* Teaching preparation programs need to prepare teachers for the diversity that awaits them in their classrooms. According to Amos (2010), by 2020 Students of Color will consist of 50 percent of the school population (Gollnick & Chin, 2009), while teachers will likely remain predominantly White and female. A valid concern with this statistic is that there are still “many white pre-service teachers who bring negative and stereotypical views of children who come from different backgrounds” (Saffold & Longwell-Grice, 2007, p. 187). In order for teachers to be held accountable for integrating multicultural education in their instruction and working with
culturally and linguistically diverse students, pre-service teachers need to have access to an authentic and cohesive multicultural educational program. Aside from simply infusing content about different ethnic groups, the focus of these programs should also hone in on “critical theory, integration with the core curricula, instructional practice and evaluation” (Huerta, 1999, p. 150). In this way, pre-service teachers can begin to understand that multicultural education is general education for all students. Assaf, Garza, and Battle (2010) stated that creating a coherent multicultural education program requires faculty members to strive for and identify a central focus for teacher learning, to be collectively responsible, and to have opportunity to influence policies and practices.

According to Huerta (1999), the following are basic components to a coherent multicultural education program:

Examining pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards other ethnic groups; Teaching about prejudice and how to deal with it in the classroom; Curriculum design that reflects sociocultural research in language and learning; Learning and teaching about relationship between school and home cultures; Analyzing how knowledge is constructed through multiple perspectives; Teaching a variety of instructional strategies and assessment methods; Providing opportunities for field experiences in diverse settings. (p. 153)

Advocates of multicultural education insist that this education is essential in teacher pre-service programs to help teachers become more responsive to sensitive issues of race, ethnicity, culture and class. The big problem that remains is the continued resistance many teachers, especially in secondary education, demonstrate when taking into consideration its actual integration. This research and its findings argue that the integration of multicultural education is
essential for urban youth and all youth; therefore, teacher preparation programs have an obligation and responsibility to incorporate this critical training as mandatory for teacher certification.

**Aggressive recruitment of Teachers of Color is critical.** As discussed by the findings of this research, Teachers of Color are essential to the teaching force, and in no other school setting is this more evident than in urban public school districts where the racial/ethnic imbalance between urban youth and White teachers is unmistakably clear. More aggressive recruitment tactics are necessary to correct this alarming disparity. Robinson, Paccione, and Rodrigue (2003) reviewed a study of the minority teacher shortage in NJ and learned that 88 percent of the state’s 110,000 teachers and administrators were White, 8.9 percent were Black, 2.4 percent were Latino, and 0.4 percent were Asian; in contrast, 62.5 percent of NJ’s 1.2 million students were White, 18.5 percent were Black, 13.5 percent were Latino, and 5.4 percent were Asian.

As all children, urban youth need role models they can identify with. For this reason, a recommendation of this research is to institute more aggressive recruitment tactics of minority teachers for urban public school districts. This more aggressive recruitment may include: developing direct partnerships between urban public school districts and historically Black universities and colleges; more assistance and access to equitable and financial support for schooling; creating changes in educational policies that empower marginalized college students in historically Black universities and colleges, tribal colleges and Hispanic-serving institutions to become urban school educators; higher paid salaries and additional loan forgiveness opportunities for minority teachers who teach in urban public schools; the development of alternative-route programs that can attract more minority teachers; providing a network of
academic and social support and more accessibility to praxis preparation courses/test review workshops. Gursky (2002) discussed the gap in praxis passing scores between White teachers and African Americans, “Passing rates nationwide for White candidates were 82% versus 46% for African Americans” (p. 29).

The growing number of diverse students in the classroom requires more aggressive strategies to recruit and sustain minority teachers. Their presence is critical to the healthy development of urban youth and their chances of success in the real world.

**Professional development to teach teachers how to teach multicultural education.**

Professional development strongly promoted executive school leadership, targeting the integration of multicultural education and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching is critical to providing teachers with support that empowers them to consistently engage in such pedagogical practices. Sleeter (2011) stated that professional development that is most likely to have an impact on teaching is sustained over time, focuses on specific instructional strategies or content areas, involves teachers collectively rather than individually, is coherent, and uses active learning (Garet et al., 2001; Snow-Runner & Lauer, 2005).

The essence of these workshops should focus on adequately helping teachers to take into account and understand how race/ethnicity, culture and language impact teaching and learning for marginalized youth and helping White teachers know and understand their own histories. The anticipated outcome is that teachers will learn the skills and tools that will allow them to critically self reflect on their own beliefs and values as well as behaviors that may interfere with providing minority youth with a comprehensive educational program. Topics to be covered may include how to incorporate the cultural orientations and language/dialects into the classroom, how to integrate cross cultural materials and themes into the curriculum, how to utilize
alternative assessments that are hands-on and project-based, and how to modify instruction to fit the needs of diverse learners.

**Professional learning communities to focus on teacher collaboration for multicultural education and CRT.** Professional learning communities (PLCs) provide a structure for teachers to learn, collaborate and share best practices that will contribute to teacher growth and student achievement. It is also the ideal time and space for teachers to organize their classrooms in ways that take into consideration the diverse cultures, backgrounds, experiences, values and home-lives of their students. PLCs should follow a set of agreed upon norms and protocols as a teacher-led community. Elements of PLCs may include investigating materials and resources to enhance the lesson, identifying strategies to improve teaching and learning, data analyzing to inform and adapt instruction, lesson planning preparation, and providing assessment formulation.

According to Linton (2017), participation in a PLC allows teachers to engage in ongoing dialogue around issues related to curriculum, instruction, assessment, classroom management, and any other topic of interest or need. By coming together regularly to collaborate, teachers break away from the traditional model of isolation in schools. PLCs, as well as teacher common planning time, gives an opportunity to teachers during the school day to continuously collaborate and plan. The implications of this research support that a significant portion of PLCs should be dedicated to integrating the curriculum with multicultural education and identifying instructional strategies that encompass culturally responsive teaching. The overall goal would be for these ongoing collaborations to transform classrooms, making learning relevant for all students.

**Partnerships with other urban public school districts for solidarity and progress.** A final recommendation of this research is the development of partnerships among urban public
school districts. Urban public school districts have many things in common, among them are high concentrations of minority youth, struggling low-income families, and communities that are crumbling as a result of enduring historical structural inequities. A partnership among schools that share the same marginalization and struggle would greatly benefit urban youth. Urban public schools should be working together to develop solutions that help their students rise above their common obstacles. These partnerships can lead to a wide range of collaboration to formulate common goals and a plan to achieve them. In addition, there is strength in numbers; these partnerships can also lead the way in collectively advocating for authentic changes in educational polices that would positively impact and create educational opportunities for disadvantaged minority youth.

**Limitations of the Study**

During the study one of the limitations encountered was the variation in the duration of time for each interview during round one. The first participant that was interviewed was Mrs. Davis. All of the participant interview times varied; however, in comparison to the other three participants, her interview was shorter than anticipated and had some brief responses. Round two interviews proved to be more consistent with durations of time. Despite this variation, I felt I received more than sufficient data from each of the participants to move forward with the study.

A second limitation noted is the previous professional relationship established with each of the participants. Each participant at one time either taught with the researcher or was supervised by the researcher. This previous professional relationship did not cause any conflict for the teachers to participate in this study and the participants demonstrated enthusiasm to
participate in the study and share their stories. The researcher did not detect any bias on the part of the participants as a result of the previously established professional relationship. A final limitation was the low number of participants. The experiences of four participants may not necessarily reflect the experiences of other Teachers of Color teaching social studies in an urban public high school. Although I anticipate that if the participant pool was larger, similar experiences and stories would be told.

**Recommendations for Future Study**

This research had several implications for future study. The first would be to increase the number of participants to the current study. While four participants sufficed for this research and its findings, having additional participants would have included more minority teachers and their experiences with oppression and urban education. Another implication for future study is including the stories of social studies Teachers of Color teaching in suburban districts where the majority of students and families are White. According to the findings of this research, it is anticipated that the integration of multicultural education in these public school districts would be met with much resistance and reflect profound experiences with oppression and racism. Upsetting ‘the order of things’ to create change that benefits the marginalized ‘have nots’, has historically proven to come at a high cost. The integration of multicultural education unapologetically evokes critical dialogue on sensitive issues of race, gender, class and identity. These authentic conversations would inevitably challenge the perpetuation of white supremacy and white privilege-making those in the dominant group-unwilling to share power, extremely uncomfortable and oppositional.

A third implication for future study would involve widening the scope of culturally responsive pedagogy and a multicultural curriculum into urban public school Teachers of Color
across different content areas including math, science and English literature. The interview questions would focus on exploring their experiences with how they integrate their respective content curriculum with multicultural education and what kinds of culturally responsive teaching strategies do they implement in the classroom.

A final implication for future study would include examining the stories of White social studies teachers teaching in urban public schools. The study would focus on their experiences with integration of multicultural education in their curriculum and develop a criteria to assess if culturally responsive instructional strategies were applied.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research study was to examine the stories of Black and Latino teachers’ experiences incorporating multicultural education in their instruction. The findings of this research demonstrated the importance of multicultural education in the curriculum, the importance of the Teachers of Color who facilitate it, and their application of culturally responsive instructional practices in the classroom. The personal experiences of oppression growing up had a profound impact on their motivations to teach social studies and their dedication towards teaching in an urban public school district. Each participant shared their experiences and expressed their common desire of wanting to be a part of preparing their students to thrive in an adverse and socially unjust environment. These stories reflected the common themes of oppression in background experiences, motivations for teaching in an urban high school, thoughts on a diversified teaching force, integrating the district curriculum with multicultural education, experiences with culturally responsive teaching in the classroom and perspective on the role of social studies in society. The themes that emerged reflected dedication to improving the quality of life for urban youth by serving as positive role models that they can
identify with and by providing inclusive and comprehensive educational experiences that are relevant to them. This study has concluded that multicultural education plays a critical role in the development of urban youth, but is also crucial for the development of White children.

Implications and recommendations of this study included: teaching preparation that incorporates multicultural education; aggressive recruitment and retention of Teachers of Color; professional development to teach teachers how to teach multicultural education; PLCs to focus on teacher collaboration for multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching; and forming partnerships with other urban public school districts for solidarity and progress. Each of the implications and recommendations were a result of analyzing and reflecting on the stories of the participants.

Implications for future study included widening the participant pool in the current study, examining the stories of minority teachers teaching social studies in suburban public school districts, including the experiences of Teachers of Color integrating multicultural education across different content areas and identifying culturally responsive teaching practices, and exploring the stories of White social studies teachers in urban public school districts who integrate multicultural education in their instruction, and assess if they have applied culturally responsive teaching strategies in their classroom.

The foundation of education is to foster and inspire young people who will always ask questions, make well informed decisions, develop solutions to common problems to create sustainable change, advocate for a society that is equitable and socially just; in other words, make the world a better place. To fulfill this immense task, young people must be equipped with an inclusive curriculum that empowers their spirits, develops their critical thinking skills and awakens their sense of empathy, but also enables them to analyze and synthesize information
from multiple perspectives to draw well-rounded conclusions that will empower them to make better decisions.

**Final Thoughts and Curriculum Reminders for the Social Studies Teacher**

In closing, I would like to point out certain topics throughout the secondary social studies curriculum that are often excluded, fast-forwarded or skipped over. These topics are an essential part of the US history curriculum and represents the experiences, contributions and voices of the marginalized, and as such challenge the ‘status quo’ perspective of what American history should look like and personify.

**US History**

- The Native Americans and West Africans, and the truthful stories of their initial encounters with Europeans. (Crow Creek massacre (1325), Acoma massacre (1599), Great Swamp massacre (1675), Apalachee massacre (1704). Atahualpa, Cuauhtémoc, Sundiata, Mansa Musa, Askia the Great, Kingdoms of Mali, Ghana and Songhai).

- Narratives of the colonized under the Spanish (the Moors), French, Portuguese and English empires. Slave ship ‘Jesus’ arrived in Santo Domingo with 200 captives, 1525. How immigration and slavery impacted the shaping of the American colonies.

- The Declaration of Independence and why it only applied to White males. The contributions of Native Americans and Blacks to the American Revolution. The forefathers and slavery (Sally Hemings, George Washington owned over 300 slaves). The Constitution and the Bill of Rights and its’ protection of Black and Brown people under the umbrella of the law. Nationalism and Sectionalism.

- The Age of Jackson and his treatment of Native Americans (Trail of Tears, theft of children, Wounded Knee massacre, Indian Removal Act, Red Cloud, Sitting Bull).

- The Middle Passage (Igbo landing mass suicide, 1803), slavery, genocide, plantation life, Compromise of 1850, Missouri Compromise, Kansas-Nebraska Act, % Compromise; Slave resistance: Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, Haitian revolution of 1804, rebellion on board the *Amistad* slave ship, Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad-‘A friend of a friend’.

• Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth and the First National Women’s Rights Convention 1850-its’ impact on Black women; Abolitionist movement-Ida B. Wells.

• The Civil War and the issue of State’s rights for slavery (Robert Smalls). Black and Brown contributions to the Civil War (Nicholas Biddle). Civil Rights Act of 1866.

• Reconstruction and the Black senators (Hiram Revels), segregation, the Freedmen’s Bureau, sharecropping, the Black Codes (1865-1866). The Emancipation Proclamation, 13th amendment. The Fort Pillow massacre of 1864, Memphis massacre of 1866.

• Black and Brown people during the early labor movement. Colfax massacre of 1873. Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, scramble for Africa, who got what and why?

• Western expansion and its’ impact on the Native American (Manifest destiny, Red River War, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Dawes Act, Chief Joseph and the Nez Percé), current conditions of reservations for Native Americans (Crazy Horse, Pine Ridge Indian reservation).


• Impact of the Progressive era on Black and Brown people (Black Women Suffrage and Temperance groups), 19th amendment did not allow Black and Brown women to vote.

• Imperialism and the annexation of Hawaii. Puerto Rico loses its’ sovereignty-Pedro Albizu Campos, the Philippines is sold for $20 million (Treaty of Paris 1898, the Platt Amendment, military interventions in Cuba, Panama, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti and the Dominican Republic). 80,000 Filipinos killed during the Philippines war (David Fagan). Election of 1912, Wilson’s revival of the KKK (birth of a nation), Angola prison. Black Wall Street & the 1921 Tulsa race riot, 1923 Rosewood massacre.

• Contributions of Black and Brown people in WWI (Native American Code Talkers). US Immigration policy then and now.


• The Cold War in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Role of US and European imperialism on African independence movements, Lumumba and the Congo, Jacobo Arbenz and the CIA-backed coup in Guatemala, the United Fruit Company and the Banana wars, School of the Americas, Mossadegh and the CIA-backed coup in Iran).

• Contributions of Black and Brown people to the Korean War—over 5 million casualties.


• Black and Brown contributions to the Vietnam War (over 1.2 million casualties), the Mai Lai massacre, agent orange, Operation Menu-Cambodia, anti-War protests (Muhammad Ali, Black Panther Party, the Young Lords, assassination of Fred Hampton, Stokely Carmichael, Dr. Huey P. Newton). US supported military coup kills Allende in Chile.


• US foreign policy and global intervention (NAFTA and the Zapatistas, CAFTA, FTAA v ALBA, the IMF, market fundamentalism and neo-liberalization, Metaclad v Mexico, Cochabamba water wars, impact of free trade on underdeveloped nations); US intervention in Afghanistan, Yemen, Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran.


• Racial violence, Islamophobia, anti-immigration sentiment, ICE (separation of families, kids in cages), police brutality, ‘Black Lives Matter’ and White supremacy in the US.
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Email to Recruit Participants/Phone Script

Hello (Participant),

It’s Jeannie Paz, how are you? I am reaching out as a student in the Doctor of Education program at Northeastern University. I am currently conducting a study for my doctoral thesis and am seeking research participants. For my study, I am exploring the stories of Black and Latino social studies teachers in public urban education who integrate multicultural education in their instructional practices.

I am reaching out to see if you would consider participating in this study. My goal is to gain insight and to identify ways in which I can bring more awareness to the experiences of minority teachers who teach from a multicultural and inclusive curriculum in social studies. I believe these experiences are crucial to all stakeholders in urban education and will demonstrate the value of teachers who racially/ethnically represent marginalized populations and who can identify with urban youth. If you choose to participate in this study, I will be asking about your experiences as a Teacher of Color in urban education and of your instructional practices. The expected time commitment will be approximately 1.5 hours for the interviews over the course of two interactions spread about 2-3 weeks apart as well as an optional third interaction for member checking.

If you are interested in learning more about this study, please email me at paz.je@husky.neu.edu, and I will contact you with the next steps. Your participation is entirely voluntary. If I do not hear from you in three days I may call you. If you know that you do not want to participate,
please email me at paz.je@husky.neu.edu with “remove me from your list” in the subject line
and you will not be contacted again.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you in advance for considering to participate in this study.

All the best,

Jeannie Paz
### APPENDIX B
Format for Signed Informed Consent Document

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**Northeastern University, Department**

**Name of Investigator(s):** Principal Investigator, Dr. Cherese Childers-McKee, Student Researcher, Jeannie Paz

**Title of Project:** A Narrative Study on Black and Latino Social Studies Teachers in Public Urban Education who Integrate Culturally Responsive Teaching

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**Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study**

We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the study, but the researcher will explain it to you first. You may ask this person any questions that you have. When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell the researcher if you want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to keep.

**Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?**

We are inviting you to participate in this study because you currently teach or previously taught secondary social studies in a public urban school district in NJ; you ethnically/racially identify as Black and/or Latino; and you self-identify as a teacher that integrates culturally responsive instructional practices in the classroom.

**Why is this research study being done?**

The purpose of this research study is to examine the stories of Black and Latino teachers’ experiences incorporating multicultural education in their instruction. The research seeks to fill the knowledge gap by exploring their stories and developing a better understanding of how the narratives of their experiences reflect in their instruction.

**What will I be asked to do?**

If you decide to take part in this study, I will ask you to participate in two individual interviews and an optional third. The initial interview will be approximately 50-60 minutes; the follow-up interview will take approximately 30-35 minutes.

All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed into writing. All materials will be store securely and your name will be replaced with a pseudonym. The pseudonym will be chosen by the researcher.

**Where will this take place and how much of my time will it take?**

All interviews will take place in person in a general, neutral place agreed upon by the participant and researcher. The initial interview will take approximately 50-60 minutes. The second interview will take place 2-3 week after the initial interview and will take approximately 30-35 minutes. An optional third interview will be available to each participant.

**Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?**

The primary risk associated with this study is the discomfort you may feel discussing your own personal experiences with the researcher.

**Will I benefit by being in this research?**
There will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in this study. However, the researcher hopes that the information gathered through this study might raise awareness and fills a knowledge gap on the benefits of multicultural education and the importance of the experiences of teachers of color in urban education.

**Who will see the information about me?**

Your part in this study will be confidential. Only the researcher will see the information about you. If you decide to participate, a pseudonym will be selected that will be used throughout the study to protect your identity. Additionally, any mention of this study will utilize the participant’s pseudonym and will not include any personal and identifying information. Data about participant age, gender, or race may be included to create rich, detailed descriptions and give background knowledge about the participant. The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed into text by a transcription service. This service will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement. The researcher will then hand code the written transcript to identify patterns and themes within the interview and across interviews with other participants. All physical documents or files related to this study will be stored in a secured file cabinet at the researcher’s home. All electronic files will be stored in a password protected online file storage program. All data will be retained for three years and then destroyed.

**If I do not want to take part in the study, what choices do I have?**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may decide not to participate and you may leave the study at any time.

**What will happen if I suffer any harm from this research?**

No special arrangements will be made for compensation or for payment for treatment solely because of my participation in this research.

**Can I stop my participation in this study?**

Yes.

**Who can I contact if I have questions or problems?**

Please contact me, Jeannie Paz via email at paz.je@husky.neu.edu, the person mainly responsible for the study, or Dr. Cherese Childers-McKee at c.childers-mckee@northeastern.edu, the Principal Investigator, who is overseeing my research.

**Who can I contact about my rights as a participant?**

If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 490 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617.373.4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

**Will I be paid for my participation?**

You will not be paid for your participation.

**Will it cost me anything to participate?**

There will be no cost to participate in this study.

**Is there anything else I need to know?**

No.

**I agree to take part in this research.**
Signature of person agreeing to take part

Date

Printed name of person above

Signature of person who explained the study to the participant above and obtained consent

Date

Jeannie Paz

Printed name of person above
APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol Form

Institution: A New Jersey urban public high school

Interviewee: social studies teacher

Interviewer: Jeannie Paz

RESEARCH QUESTION: What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools?

Part I:

Introductory Protocol

Thank you so much for your time and for agreeing to participate in this research. You have been selected to speak with me today for (2) reasons. First because you identify your racial/ethnic identity as either Black, Latino or both and 2nd because you have been identified as someone who has a great deal to share about culturally responsive teaching and social studies education. My research project focuses on the experiences of Black and Latino high school social studies teachers in urban education. Through this study, I hope to gain more insight into the teaching and learning experiences of Black and Latino teachers who integrate multicultural education into their instructional practices. Hopefully this will allow me to identify ways in which I can bring more awareness to the experiences of minority teachers who teach from a multicultural and inclusive curriculum in social studies. I believe these experiences are crucial to all stakeholders in urban education and will demonstrate the value of teachers who racially/ethnically represent marginalized populations and who can identify with urban youth.

Because your responses are important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? Thank you! I will also be taking written notes. I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed.

This interview should last about 45 minutes. During this time, I have several questions that I would like to cover. If at anytime you feel uncomfortable or would like to stop the interview, you are free to do so at anytime during this process. Do you have any questions for me at this time?
Part II: Interview

Part 1: Interviewee Background (10-15 minutes)

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your background and cultural heritage?
2. Can you share with me your educational philosophy and what made you want to become a social studies teacher specifically?
3. Growing up did you have any teachers that you could racially/ethnically identify with? Were these particular teachers important for you as a student?
4. Can you share an experience with me that you feel really impacted and helped to ground you as an educator?
5. How long have you been teaching? How long have you taught in your current school? What classes do you currently teach and what grade levels?
6. Why did you choose to teach in an urban public school?
7. As a Person of Color, have you ever had to face racism or discrimination? Can you share with me any of those experiences and how you were able to handle those challenges?
8. Do you feel that any of those experiences dealing with oppression impacted you as an educator in anyway?

Part 2: Introduction

One of the things I am interested in learning about is your experiences in the classroom as a Teacher of Color facilitating multicultural education through culturally responsive teaching. In your own words, I would like for you to share with me your perspective on multicultural education and its’ impact on your students. To do this, I am going to ask you some questions about the key experiences you’ve encountered.

1. Do you feel that your race/ethnicity/cultural background helps or hinders your ability to develop positive relationships with urban youth? How?
2. Do you feel that your students, most of which represent minority populations, identify with you more so because you are a Teacher of Color? How does this impact the classroom environment?
3. Are teachers of color important for urban schools? Should there be more Teachers of Color in urban schools? What difference if any would this make for urban minority students?
4. Do you think your district-mandated social studies curriculum is inclusive and representative of your student population? If not what would you change about it?

5. Do you think multicultural education is important?

6. What kinds of instructional strategies, resources and supplemental materials do you utilize in the classroom to diversify your lessons?

7. As a history Teacher of Color do you feel an obligation to include the perspectives, contributions & stories of minority populations in your instruction even if it’s not included in your district-mandated curriculum? If so, can you give me some examples within your curriculum of when you’ve incorporated this inclusion?

8. Culturally responsive teaching incorporates instructional practices that are culturally relevant or infused with multicultural education. Do you think it is easier for Black and/or Latino teachers to implement culturally responsive teaching?

9. Do you think the integration of multicultural education in the classroom has an affect on the self-esteem of urban youth?

10. Is multicultural education more important for minority youth than for White students?

11. Can you share with me a specific experience where culturally responsive teaching led to empowering classroom dialogue that addressed issues of diversity or oppression?

   Follow-up questions to #11:
   - Do you think that your racial/ethnic/cultural background helped to facilitate this process? How?
   - Do you feel that students feel more comfortable discussing sensitive matters of race, class and identity in front of you because of your own racial/ethnic/cultural background?

12. The role of race and racism in American history is evident in today’s racialized society and inequitable treatment towards People of Color. What role if any do you think social studies education should play in helping to combat this problem?

   Thank you so much for participating in my research, do you have any questions for me?
APPENDIX D

Interview Protocol Form for Round 2

Institution:  A New Jersey urban public high school

Interviewee:  Mrs. Davis

Interviewer:  Jeannie Paz

RESEARCH QUESTION:  What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools?

Part I:
Introductory Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me for a second time. Based on your previous responses, I developed an additional 10 questions to ask you. Once again, because your responses are important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? Thank you!

As before, I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed.

This interview should last about 30-35 minutes.

Part II:  Round 2 Interview

1. You talked about a black history club that was very important to you when you were going to school. What kind of knowledge did you gain from that black history club? Did that knowledge include stories or lessons dealing with oppression? How did that knowledge impact your life?

2. You talked about the racism that you experienced in your high school, and also about your school being predominately white, with the percentage of blacks at only 10%, you made a reference to those "little covert things that happen to you". What kind of covert things were you talking about in comparison to covert things you witnessed amongst your peers? Do you see that kind of covertness today, within the teaching profession, in your experience? How so?

3. Have you found yourself, as a woman and as a Teacher of Color, that you've often had to advocate for Children of Color by yourself? In other words, do you find that even though there may be other Teachers of Color, do you feel that they're quick to advocate, or remain silent and go along with the status quo?
4. You discussed in detail the mandated Amistad curriculum. With regard to the Amistad curriculum, why do you think it’s not taught or enforced?

5. How will learning about other people’s contributions make people less ignorant?

6. You said something very interesting when you were discussing children needing to know things about the Senators during Reconstructions, and cemeteries, and teaching civics, and you mentioned a lot of other stuff. But you ended that segment with saying, "Man cannot be erased from history." What did you mean by that?

7. You spoke about indoctrination. You stated, “People who are part of the school boards are not receptive to anything but indoctrination because most of them have been indoctrinated and not educated.” How is indoctrination different from the process of education?

8. When it comes to black history, you talked about kids only knowing about slavery and the Civil Right Movement. Why do you think black history mostly focuses on slavery and the Civil Rights Movement?

9. Why do you think the teachers don’t focus on anything regarding black people before slavery? Why does the world history curriculum start with the Renaissance?

10. This is the last question. I’m just going to re-read an excerpt from our first interview, you said, and I quote, "I think that if more time is spent on history, and more stuff is connected to today, I think that we would see a different type of society within our children and within people who come to this country." How so, and how can social studies impact the society in the way you were speaking of? How can social studies education help to combat that?
APPENDIX E

Interview Protocol Form for Round 2

Institution: A New Jersey urban public high school

Interviewee: Mrs. Simpson

Interviewer: Jeannie Paz

RESEARCH QUESTION: What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools?

Part I:
Introductory Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me for a second time. Based on your previous responses, I developed an additional 10 questions to ask you. Once again, because your responses are important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? Thank you!

As before, I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed

This interview should last about 30-35 minutes.

Part II: Round 2 Interview

1. You said and I quote, “I said to myself, you mean to tell me all this time, black people have never done anything? That is what I internalized”. Based on that response, do you think that sentiment is shared among urban youth in social studies classes today?

2. Okay, on to another excerpt, you stated, "You know, I often wonder if moving to the city really saved my life." Can you elaborate on that? How and why do you think it saved your life?

3. (With regards to teaching urban youth) What do you think is the difference between the white teachers in the suburbs and the white teachers in the city?

4. Why do you think it’s important for black kids specifically, to know that they came from greatness?

5. You mentioned, when I asked you, "Do you think multicultural education is important?" You responded, "It's necessary, it's essential and I think it's more important for white people than it is for us." My question is why do you think multicultural education is more important for white people?
6. You talked about knowing your history and connecting that with a sense of pride. You said, and I quote, "It's for our kids to develop a sense of pride and understand their legacy and their history." How would knowing their history instill a sense of pride in urban youth?

7. Do you think then that there is a lack of support at home for urban youth? As far as helping to build up these students' self esteem, do you attribute that also to institutionalized oppression?

8. The next question refers to the excerpt where you discuss what you were going through when you were being accused of being a racist. The question is why do you think you were accused of this, of being a racist?

9. Okay, this next question goes towards an excerpt when you said, "So that when my kids, whom I see do this all the time, when they segregate themselves amongst themselves because they don't want to be identified with other groups." As a social studies Educator of Color, how can we combat the issue of segregation within our black kids?

10. We talked about the use of the N-word in one of your lessons when you stated towards your student, “I'm a black woman asking you, so don't tell me that this word doesn't have a negative meaning.” The question is how would your students' responses been different if it had been a white teacher asking that question? You then go on further to say, "and if you're internalizing that every day, what is that doing to your being and your soul?". Question: how do you think this trauma impacts your students, their ability to learn and develop life skills?
APPENDIX F

Interview Protocol Form for Round 2

Institution: A New Jersey urban public high school

Interviewee: Mr. Drew

Interviewer: Jeannie Paz

RESEARCH QUESTION: What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools?

Part I:
Introductory Protocol
Thank you for agreeing to meet with me for a second time. Based on your previous responses, I developed an additional 10 questions to ask you. Once again, because your responses are important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? Thank you!

As before, I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed.
This interview should last about 30-35 minutes.

Part II: Round 2 Interview

1. The first question is referring to something that you said, and I quote, "As an adult, did I deal with racism? I don't know. Maybe it was more 'placism', because I was told to kind of play my role, and know my place.” My question, you mentioned 'placism' in the face of racism, when referring to playing your role and knowing your place. Can you elaborate on that? Do you ever feel that that ‘placism’ had anything to do with you being a Black teacher?

2. You stated, "I don't want them to be aggressive, because aggressiveness is not received well among other culture groups." What other culture groups were you referring to, and how does that perception go towards assumptions and stereotypes in racism?

3. In round 1, I asked you about urban education. You talked about being an urban youth yourself and you said, "I think that they are sometimes clouded with a lot of cultural baggage." Are you able to pierce through that cultural baggage more efficiently because you are a Person of Color?
4. You mentioned that you work in an alternative school that deals with a lot of behavioral issues. What do you attribute a lot of those behaviors to? Are these issues prevalent in poor Communities of Color, do you think poverty and race are connected?

5. You previously stated, "We need more Black and Brown teachers, because the kids need to see people that look like them operate in a professional capacity." How important is it for urban youth to see people that look like them in these positions?

6. You discussed the lack of black professionals available to interact with our students, and many of them being instructional aides and not certified teachers. Why do you think that is? Do you think it’s a hiring problem? Or do you think there aren’t enough People of Color going into teaching? What do you think is the problem?

7. When referring to “more of our history needs to be incorporated, not just the slavery or the colonial aspects, but the lengths that we have to go through and struggle to participate in society. The question is, why do you think the curriculum purposely excludes this information? Do you think it’s a way of maintaining the status quo?

8. You were discussing how materials and curriculum that is currently adopted, have been historically against cultural alternatives and how to look at history. And then you said, "So I borrow from what I would say... I don’t want to just say revolutionaries, but I will say people that are progressive." Why were you hesitant to say revolutionaries? Was it safer? Do you consider yourself to be a revolutionary or progressive in the classroom?

9. You talked about, and I quote, "As an African-American male, I have dealt with sexuality and the perception of sexuality with an African-American." My question is, where does this perception come from, and why in the hell is it still prevalent today?

10. You discussed Black life skills on how to deal with oppression and how to deal with the dominant group. Do you think that those Black life skills can only come from a Person of Color that's experienced that trauma?
APPENDIX G

Interview Protocol Form for Round 2

Institution: A New Jersey urban public high school

Interviewee: Ms. Tingo

Interviewer: Jeannie Paz

RESEARCH QUESTION: What are the stories of Black and Latino secondary social studies educators’ experiences with implementing a multicultural curriculum in urban public schools?

Part I:

Introductory Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me for a second time. Based on your previous responses, I developed an additional 10 questions to ask you. Once again, because your responses are important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Do I have your permission to record this interview? Thank you!

As before, I can assure you that all responses will be confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. I will be the only one privy to the tapes, which will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed.

This interview should last about 30-35 minutes.

Part II: Round 2 Interview

1. You spoke about and I quote, "I wasn't allowed to speak English in the house." Why do you think you weren't allowed to speak English in the house? Was it more of a cultural thing or a communication thing, or both?

2. In that same answer, you also said, “so I had to force myself to learn English and Spanish at the same time.” Why do you think you had to force yourself? Did you not want to speak Spanish?

3. All right, referring to this expert about growing up, I previously asked you if you had any teachers that you could racially identify with? You said, and I quote, "No, I mean, I was in ESL, so all my teachers were Spanish speaking, but they didn't look like me. They were Cuban, you know, white." So even though they spoke the language, you still did not identify with them racially, because they didn't look like you?

4. In reference to racism, you discussed being exposed to it on a daily basis and said “even how I speak or how I look sometimes makes people feel uncomfortable.” Do you feel that you get discriminated against twice, because of your race and your accent?
5. This question refers to when you were younger and having your hair relaxed. You stated, “I'm looking at TV, everyone has straight hair, even black women.” Why do you think your mom was relaxing your hair? Why straight hair? What did straight hair symbolize? You discussed your sister having the good hair, what is good hair? What makes it good?

6. You discussed being part of an urban district, “it definitely helps me connect with the kids in more positive ways because they feel like no one really understands them.” The question is, what are some of the things that you feel no one understands about your students? And who is ‘they’?

7. You discussed as a kid always having to select Celia Cruz (Cuban singer) as your ‘go to’ for a role model. How did you feel with always having to look at Celia Cruz as your only choice for a role model?

8. In reference to the curriculum you stated, “they are the ones that are marginalized and the kids don't know anything about their ancestors or their history, It's like it skips all the world's history and starts with European history.” My question is, how does not knowing this information impact student growth and achievement in social studies?

9. When I asked you if you thought it was easier for a Teacher of Color to implement culturally responsive teaching. You stated, “I would think it's the same, it's just the matter of the teacher feeling responsible to do so.” That being said, do you think the motivational factor is the same to want to implement culturally responsive teaching for a white teacher?

10. We discussed the role of social studies education and trying to combat oppression and racism. You said, and I quote, "I think the students felt there was a sense of wrong and we're not doing enough as a country to help people in other areas." The question is, do you feel it's the responsibility of social studies education to teach students about social justice?
**APPENDIX H**

Table 2

*Deductive/Inductive Coding*

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