

Female Teachers' Perceptions of African-American Male Elementary School Students Who Misbehave: A Narrative Inquiry

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Introduction

- ▶ Negative experiences of female teachers toward African-American males can affect their perception of African-American male students (Glock, 2016).
- ▶ Disruptive students affect the learning of classmates and can establish a negative teacher-student relationship.
- ▶ Entire lifetime patterns of academic and social failure, starting in elementary school, affect many African-American males (Watson, Washington, & Stepteau-Watson, 2015).
- ▶ Exposure to violence in the home and community tend to influence behavior in the classroom (Bell, 2015).
- ▶ Teachers in public education at the elementary level in the United States consists of largely female teachers, who may have beliefs and expectations different from their students of color (Zion, Allen, & Jean, 2015).

Problem Statement

- ▶ Known and unknown biases and perceptions female teachers have toward African-American male elementary school students who misbehave, based on teachers' past experiences, and the effect this has on current teacher-student relationships (Larson, 2016).

Purpose Statement

- ▶ The purpose of the study was to investigate the beliefs and perceptions female teachers harbor toward African-American male elementary school males who misbehave.
- ▶ This study focused on relationships and interactions between female elementary school teachers and African-American elementary school male students perceived as misbehaving in the classroom.

Research Question

- ▶ How do female teachers perceive African-American males who misbehave during teacher-student interactions in the classroom based on their beliefs and perceptions in connection with their experiences toward African-American males?

Theoretical Framework

▶ Interpretivism (Matta, 2015)

- ▶ Seeks to make sense of people's actions.
- ▶ Explains why individuals believe the actions they performed lead to the right solution based on that situation.
- ▶ Emphasizes an individual's character and their social and cultural participation.
- ▶ Motives and meanings behind the behavior of peoples' actions and the interactions they have with others in society (Chowdhury, 2014).
- ▶ Learn through observations, patterns, modeling, experiences, hidden and spoken rules, and reflecting, affecting how they view the world (Weiglhofer, 2015).
- ▶ Carries personal experiences into their environment, affecting interactions they may have with others (Johnstone, 2016).

Additional Theories

▶ **Social Learning Theory**

People learn and believe they can do very little to change their situation, rather than recognizing individual adoptions (Sirois, 2016).

▶ **Pygmalion Effect**

The self-fulfilling prophecy refers to a prediction based on beliefs (Trusz & Bibel, 2016).

▶ **Deviant Peer Affiliation Theory**

Peers often influence behaviors, and academic effects and achievements of friends and others of the same age group (Armah, 2015).

▶ **Low-Income Family Socialization Theory**

Single-parent home often display deviant behaviors (Murray, Kosty, & Hauser-McLean, 2016).

▶ **Stereotype Threat Theory**

May affect individual biases based on negative perceptions (Bécares & Priest, 2015).

▶ **Husserlian Theory**

Personal accounts of a phenomenon rely on a past event (Barua, 2014).

Qualitative Narrative Inquiry

▶ **Qualitative Method**

- ▶ Focused on the experiences of female teachers.
- ▶ Participants presented unknown responses, and variables that were unpredictable.
- ▶ In-depth understanding of individual experiences of the participants.
- ▶ Participants responds to descriptive research questions.

▶ **Narrative Inquiry**

- ▶ Focused on understanding and interpreting the essence of the perceptions female teachers have toward African-American male students with misbehaving in the classroom.
- ▶ Participants shared individual experiences through stories (Hartman, 2015).
- ▶ Explored, identified, and made connections between the individual experiences of participants (Clandinin, 2016).

Research Gap

- ▶ There is an under-representation of literature pertaining to female teachers' biases and perceptions toward African-American elementary male students who misbehave in the classroom.

Population & Sample

▶ **Population**

- ▶ Female African-American and Caucasian elementary school teachers who currently teach within the Clayton County Public School district in Georgia.

▶ **Sample**

- ▶ Four African-American female teachers
- ▶ Four Caucasian female teachers
- ▶ Purposeful sampling
- ▶ Agreed voluntarily as participants for the study

Instrumentation

▶ **Field Test**

- ▶ Recruited 3 principals from the Clayton County Public School District who presides over elementary schools.
- ▶ Evaluated survey questions and gave feedback on strengths and weakness of each question.
- ▶ Modifications were made

▶ **Semi-Structured Surveys**

- ▶ SurveyMonkey
- ▶ 30 mins to 1 hour
- ▶ Asynchronous password-protected

▶ **Follow-up telephone interviews**

- ▶ 15 to 30 minutes
- ▶ Collected data until saturation was met
- ▶ 2 more telephone interviews to ensure saturation was met.

Data Collection

- ▶ Recruited participants from the Clayton County Public School district in Clayton County, GA.
- ▶ Participants agreed by signing an Informed Consent Form.
- ▶ Conducted survey interviews via SurveyMonkey.
- ▶ Conducted follow-up phone interviews for data saturation.
- ▶ Transferred follow-up phone interview recordings verbatim.
- ▶ Transferred data to NVivo 12 for analysis.

Data Analysis

- ▶ **NVivo12**
- ▶ **Qualitative content analysis** (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2016).
 - ▶ Examined data to interpret meaning
 - ▶ Nodes
 - ▶ Themes
 - ▶ Sub-themes

Findings: Theme 1

- ▶ African-American Males
 - ▶ Participants experienced varying perceptions.
 - ▶ American males possess undesirable behaviors.
 - ▶ Male mentors can assist in curbing negative behaviors.

Findings: Theme 2

▶ Student Movement

- ▶ Have a understanding that movement is part of the African-American sub-culture.
- ▶ Understand that energetic males are right-brain learners and have difficulties remaining still
- ▶ Teachers need to find a way to connect with African-American male students.
- ▶ African-American male student may have disadvantages which can affect educational outcomes.

Findings: Theme 3

▶ Interactions

- ▶ Have a understanding of cultural differences and use differentiation instructional techniques.
- ▶ Negative teacher-student interactions stem from misunderstandings.
- ▶ Positive teacher-student interactions can build relationships and trust, effecting positive educational outcomes.

Recommendations for Leadership and Practitioners

- ▶ Teachers should restrict student stereotyping based on past experiences.
- ▶ Be aware of the cultural differences for enhanced communication.
- ▶ Attend training to recognize student socialization, language, speech patterns, and African-American male sub-cultures.
- ▶ Teachers should use the strengths of students to channel learning.
- ▶ At times, student learning may be controlled by teachers.
- ▶ The onus is not entirely on teachers as there are some students who do not participate in shared meaning and/or truly misbehave.

Recommendations for Research

- ▶ Conduct a qualitative study to include all Clayton County and Georgia public school districts.
- ▶ Use male African-American and Caucasian elementary school teacher in a similar study.
- ▶ Conduct a study using all elementary school teachers who teach African-American male students.
- ▶ Modify the study by adding additional questions
- ▶ Examine organizational culture, techniques, and beliefs.
- ▶ Conduct a quantitative study into district policies to gauge the effect of teacher preparation for effective teacher-student interactions.

Limitations

- ▶ The quality of the results hinged on the honest responses from participants.
- ▶ Unforeseen limitations included changing the pool of participants and communicating with participants after school hours, off school grounds.
- ▶ Geographical areas of Clayton County, Georgia

Conclusion

- ▶ The results of this study may...
 - ▶ Assist educational leadership in developing more efficient trainings and processes to recognize misbehaving students.
 - ▶ Enable teachers to recognize past experiences can affect current and future teacher-student interactions.
 - ▶ Enable teachers to understand the importance of understanding the African-American male sub-culture.
 - ▶ There is so much more to explore.

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