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Exploring the Minority Teacher Shortage in Southeast Georgia

Kelly Renee' Howe

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EXPLORING THE MINORITY TEACHER SHORTAGE
IN SOUTHEAST GEORGIA

by

KELLY RENEE' HUTCHESON HOWE

(Under the Direction of Linda M. Arthur)

ABSTRACT

In the United States, the Southern states have been impacted drastically by the increasing number of Hispanic and African American residents (Walker, 2009). In October 2005, Georgia had its first student enrollment count in which the state was noted as being a majority-minority public school system, which means more than half of the school population was comprised of non-white individuals (Johnson, 2006). These demographic trends make it necessary for educational leaders in Georgia to examine practices that can positively impact the achievement of all subgroups of students (Walker, 2009). While there is a definite need for high quality teachers in classrooms in order to address the various needs of students, the need is even greater for more minority teachers to be leading the classrooms in most school systems. Minority teachers are currently underrepresented in our public schools.

To explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia and how educational leaders in this geographical region can increase teacher diversity in their schools, the researcher conducted a study using a mixed methods research design. By surveying and interviewing minority teachers about this relative issue, teachers were able

to share their backgrounds, experiences, and thoughts related to the minority teacher shortage in this region along with ideas on how teacher diversity can be increased.

All participants in the study were employed by a school system in Southeast Georgia. While the majority of the participants were African American females, there was much diversity with age, education, experience, and background. Through the survey items, the researcher received input on topics related to the minority teacher shortage through the eyes of the teachers currently employed in the district. However, more in depth knowledge was gained through the one on one interviews conducted with the ten minority teachers. The results of the analysis of data from both the surveys and interviews showed that while some of the findings go along with the review of literature on this topic, others do not. Participants in this study had strong family support. They felt their K-12 teachers had high expectations for them, and it was easy for them to build relationships with their teachers, many of whom were Caucasian. The participants had some negative experiences in school, but not enough to deter them from teaching. The participants felt they could make a positive contribution in the lives of minority students due to their backgrounds and experiences. However, the participants strongly agreed that their school system does not do an adequate job of recruiting minority teachers.

INDEX WORDS: Minority students, Minority teachers, Minority teacher recruitment, Minority teacher shortage, Student diversity, Teacher diversity, Teacher expectations, Teacher recruitment, Teacher shortage

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful family who has provided the necessary support and encouragement in order for this dissertation to become a reality. To my husband, Danny, thanks for helping me realize that I needed to get started when I did versus waiting. I appreciate all of your help along the way and for being someone I can always count on. To my son, Kody, thanks for sacrificing time with me on numerous occasions in order for me to complete this educational journey. I hope through it all, you will be inspired to work hard to follow your dreams and pursue numerous college degrees yourself. I would love for Doctor to be attached to your name one day as well! To my mom and dad, thanks for providing me with a quality upbringing where love and support were given unconditionally, God was a priority, education was valued, and the determination to exceed in life was instilled in me. To my grandmother, thanks for being the spiritual rock of our family. You are indeed an inspiration in my life and to all those who have the pleasure of knowing you. To all of you, I love you and would not be where I am today without your love, guidance, support, and belief in me. To my friends and colleagues, thank you for your encouragement along the way. It indeed is a wonderful feeling to be finished!

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

During President George W. Bush's first week of office in January 2001, he stated the mission of public schools: "To build the mind and character of every child, from every background, in every part of America" (U. S. Department of Education, 2002, p. 9). Each year this mission becomes more challenging as the number of minority students increases in K-12 public schools. The changing student population is reflective of the increasing diversity of the United States population. However, the diversity of teachers in public schools is at a critical low (Shure, 2001). The National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force (2004) cited the following statistics provided by the Center for Education Statistics in 2003: 1) in 2001-2002, 40% of public school students were minority, 2) in the same year, only 10% of the public school teachers were minority, and 3) 40% of public schools had no teachers of color on their staff. According to the data of U. S. Department of Commerce, it is estimated that by the year 2025, at least half of the student population will be students of color (National Education Association, 2002).

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 holds schools accountable for the academic progress of every child, regardless of race, ethnicity, income level or zip code (U. S. Department of Education, 2005). Due to NCLB, it is now a national priority to close the achievement gap in our country between white students and minority group students. Cultural competence and teacher diversity are both major factors in improving student achievement of students of color, and limited attention has been given to these issues by the law (National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004).

Increasing the number of minority teachers is directly connected to closing the achievement gap of students (National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004).

In order to address the challenge of the minority teacher shortage, there must be an emphasis on recruitment. Schools across the United States have had a difficult time identifying effective recruitment and hiring strategies of minority teachers (Barney, 2007). This study will explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia in order to provide information that will be beneficial to educational leaders in the recruitment and hiring of minority teachers. In this study, the term minority teachers will be used interchangeably with teachers of color, and the term minority students will be used interchangeably with students of color.

Background

Principals are often held accountable for recruiting and hiring minority teachers in order to create more diversified staffs. This background section will give an overview of the literature on issues surrounding the recruitment of minority teachers. Topics will include accountability for schools, school leadership, minority teacher shortage, rationale for a diversified teaching staff, and recruitment strategies.

Accountability for Schools

On January 8, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 (U. S. Department of Education, 2001). Being a landmark in educational reform, NCLB brought about change to public school education with the goal to improve student achievement of all students while also closing the achievement gap between students from different ethnic groups and economic backgrounds (National

Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). By improving student achievement of all students, the culture of America's schools would be changed as well (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

In the past, too many minority students were shortchanged by our nation's schools (U. S. Department of Education, 2005). America had an education system which was not reflective of the country's greatness due to two education systems which had been created— separate and unequal (U. S. Department of Education, 2005). A growing achievement gap was evidence that while some students were taught well, others (mostly poor and minority) were allowed to struggle or even drop out. Today, schools must have high expectations for every child, as low expectations for any student or group of students can no longer be acceptable (U. S. Department of Education, 2005).

The U. S. Department of Education (2002) provided some specific guidelines for NCLB. Under NCLB, each state developed and implemented measurements for determining whether its school systems and individual schools are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). States specify annual, measurable objectives to measure progress of all students. The ultimate goal is 100 percent proficiency for all students and each subgroup in at least reading/language arts and math by the year 2013-2014. NCLB requires accountability for these subgroups: English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and breakdowns by race and ethnicity. In *Educational Administration* (Hoy & Miskel, 2008), Ronald Heck is cited for the following:

By definition, effective schools should produce stable and consistent results over time that apply to all students within the school...Underlying the notion of school

accountability is the belief that school personnel should be held responsible for improving student learning. (p. 291)

The Effective Schools research emphasized that family background, race, or socioeconomic status is not a reason to condemn any child to educational failure (Davenport & Anderson, 2002). According to Davenport & Anderson (2002), there should be no excuses for low student performance. Truly effective schools can teach all students, but there must be high expectations of student achievement by both students and staff members (Davenport & Anderson, 2002). Principals are the key to ensuring that high expectations exist in their schools.

School Leadership

A student's academic success can be increased or decreased based on whether a school operates effectively or not (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). This success is ultimately the responsibility of the principal as leader of the school. Blanchard and Hodges (2003) defined leadership as "a process in which one influences the thoughts and actions of others toward accomplishing personal or professional goals" (p.10). Northouse (2008) stated, "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). Bernard Montgomery suggested, "Leadership is the capacity and will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character which inspires confidence" (Montgomery, as cited in Maxwell, 1999, p. 1).

The principal has been identified as the single most influential person in a school. Included in the book, *School Leadership That Works: From Research to Results* (Marzano et al., 2005), is the following information by the 1977 U. S. Senate Committee Report on Equal Educational Opportunity:

In many ways, the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school. He or she is the person responsible for all activities that occur in and around the school building. It is the principal's leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for teaching, the level of professionalism and morale of teachers, and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become. The principal is the main link between the community and the school, and the way he or she performs in this capacity largely determines the attitudes of parents and students about the school. If a school is a vibrant, innovative, child-centered place, if it has a reputation for excellence in teaching, if students are performing to the best of their ability, one can almost always point to the principal's leadership as the key to success. (pp. 5-6)

A principal must do whatever it takes to ensure high levels of learning for all students. The end result will be a successful school that fulfills the hopes of those it serves by creating a culture where students are valued as individuals and pushed to achieve their full potential (Dufour, Dufour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2004). Whether students experience success or failure, acceptance or rejection, and equity or bias in schools largely depends on their teachers (Sheets, 2004). Teachers are the greatest resource in education (Sykes & Dibner, 2009). However, this natural resource is now facing a shortage.

Teacher Shortage

Good teachers are essential in student learning and closing the achievement gaps among students (Sykes & Dibner, 2009). More than ever, schools in the United States require good teachers in order to meet the needs of all students. However, supplying high quality teachers to all schools is a critical concern (Sykes & Diber, 2009).

There is going to be a major teacher shortage in the next eight years (Wallis, 2008). According to economist William Hussar at the National Center for Education Statistics, to keep up with baby-boomer retirement, staff turnover, and increasing student enrollment, the United States will need to recruit an additional 2.8 million teachers over the next eight years (Wallis, 2008). The key to the United States being a competitive nation is finding and keeping high-quality teachers (Wallis, 2008). While administrators and educators are worried about the overall teacher shortage, the shortage of minority teachers is of utmost concern (Shure, 2001). The minority teacher shortage becomes more acute each year (National Education Association, 2008).

Minority Teacher Shortage

Based on the current demographics of the student population in many schools, there is a definite need for more minority teachers. "Forty-four percent of the nation's schools have no teacher of color on staff, and many students will complete their K-12 schooling without being taught by a single teacher of color" (Irvine, 2003, p. 52). While the U.S. population is steadily increasing in diversity, the diversity of teachers in public schools is at a critical low (Shure, 2001).

The National Education Association (2008) claimed that the critical shortage of minority teachers could contribute to a worsening urban plight which could lead to a crisis with American students failing to learn the academic, personal, and social skills they need in the multicultural workplace of the future. With the decreasing number of minority teachers, it will be very difficult for minority students to find role models of their same background leading their classrooms (Shure, 2001). A lack of minority role models in our schools is just one consequence of this shortage.

Rationale for a Diversified Teaching Staff

Effective teaching depends on teachers knowing their students well, inside and outside of the classroom (Santoro, 2007). Not only do teachers teach facts and content, but they also model appropriate behaviors and teach by personal example. For many children, the teachers and other adults in their school are the most important authority figures outside of their home environment. This is why it is very important that students are exposed to a diverse teaching staff who serve as role models within each of our schools, so that students are not getting an educational experience that is stunted (Weaver, 2003). “As our society in general and our schools in particular become more and more diverse, there is an undeniable benefit to exposing students to all sorts of role models” (Gursky, 2002, p. 31).

The National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force (2004) stated that an increase in the number of minority teachers would provide students with more opportunities for learning about ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity. Minority teachers would be able to enrich minority students’ learning because of shared ethnic, racial, and cultural identities (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). Teachers of color could also “serve as cultural brokers” by helping students understand their school environment, as well as their culture, but also by increasing parental involvement and students involvement of other teachers (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004, p. 6).

According to the research cited by Barbra (2007), there are major arguments for teacher diversity. Students of color need teachers of color who share similar cultural experiences and who serve as role models for demonstrating the benefits of education.

Minority teachers are more responsive to students' cultural backgrounds, have higher expectations of minority students, and incorporate social reform into their teaching (Barbra, 2007). By increasing teacher diversity, student achievement will increase with academics, social, and cultural needs being addressed (Barbra, 2007; Salinas, 2002; Weiher, 2000).

In addition, all children need diverse role models in today's world. Minority students benefit in important ways by having some teachers who look like them, who share similar cultural experiences, and who serve as role models who demonstrate that education and achievement are things to be respected (Weaver, 2003). "Teachers of color, especially those who have developed a critical consciousness, can lead us out of social oppression toward social justice and foster contexts wherein ethnic minority students can flourish" (Burant, Quiocho, & Rios, 2002, p. 9). In fact, the growth and learning of all children are limited when schools fail to provide a representative number of teachers and administrators from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds (Witty, 2001). True diversity within the teaching and administrative staff gives all children a sense of the real world.

According to the National Education Association (2002), research has shown when there is a lack of teachers of color, minority students land more frequently in special education classes, have higher absentee rates, and tend to be less involved in school activities. The high dropout rate of minority students has also been influenced by the extremely low number of minority teachers (Salinas, 2002). Gay (2002) stated that many minority students are disproportionately placed in special education classes because of teachers' lack of knowledge about and appreciation for their cultural values and

socialization and the affects these can have on learning. Experts have said a shortage of minority teachers hampers a staff's ability to relate to a diverse student body and boost parental involvement (National Education Association, 2002).

By having an appropriate number of minority teachers, chances are increased for students to experience teachers who relate to them and understand cultural differences in perception of authority, instructional delivery, and teacher performance (Witty, 2001). Teachers' attitudes, expectations, and actions toward minority students are extremely powerful in determining the quality of education these students receive (Gay, 2002; Santoro, 2007). "Minority teachers are important because they can act as role models, encourage students to perform better, better understand cultural differences, and break down the students' stereotypes" (Salinas, 2002, p.1). Because of their own backgrounds, minority teachers can easily understand the needs and experiences of minority students, thus making valuable contributions to the education of minority students (Santoro, 2007). Minority teachers increase the likelihood that students will experience school success.

According to the National Education Association (2008), most districts fail to hire minority teachers that are proportionate to the increasing number of minority students in schools. It has created a policy resolution on minority educators that states "multiracial teaching staffs are essential to the operation of schools" (The National Education Association, 2008). It encourages all involved parties work to increase the number of ethnic-minority teachers to a percentage at least equal to the percentage of ethnic minorities in the general population.

Recruitment Strategies

In order to address the challenge in the minority teacher shortage, there must be an emphasis on recruitment. Schools in the United States have had a difficult time identifying effective recruitment and hiring strategies of minority teachers (Barney, 2007). The shortage has many questioning the merit of their efforts in this process (Barney, 2007). As a result of research, Peoples (2004) found that “various attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and administrative commitments were extremely important in achieving success in minority faculty recruitment and hiring” (p. 21).

As a result of recognizing the urgent need to recruit and retain teachers of color, states across the U. S. are implementing a variety of programs and policies that complement traditional teacher recruitment methods (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). The Collaborative (2004) believes that “significantly greater resources need to be targeted to the recruitment, preparation, and support of a teaching cadre that is fully qualified, ethnically diverse, and culturally competent” (p. 9). Sykes and Dibner (2009) stated that efforts need to be aggressive in attracting high-priority teaching candidates from a diverse pool of academically able students from colleges, as well as other talent pools. Attracting and retaining a more diverse faculty is part of a bigger project: “to complete the cycle by attracting more diverse undergrads, mentoring them as they move on to pursue graduate studies, and then enjoying an even more diverse array of outstanding candidates in our hiring pools in the future” (Wilkinson, 2007, p. 173).

The National Education Association (2008) supports many different strategies for the identification, recruitment, and retention of minority teachers. These strategies

include: a) the early identification of prospective teachers through initiatives such as secondary school surveys, counseling, motivational workshops, college preparatory courses in the summer, and educational theory and practice courses, b) aggressive recruitment techniques such as orientations, media campaigns held in minority communities, and recruiting minorities from the business and military sectors, c) financial aid which would include fellowships, scholarships, and forgivable loans, targeted to minority students who intend to teach, d) social and economic support which would include improving test-taking skills and providing academic counseling and tutoring, and e) assigned mentors in the school setting. Recruiting more qualified minority candidates starts with encouraging greater college attendance of minorities followed by their entry into the teaching profession (Sykes & Dibner, 2009).

While this study will focus on all minority groups, there are studies specific to certain minority groups. For example, Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, and Middleton (2004) conducted research specific to African Americans. Findings from their research noted the eight reasons that African Americans choose teaching as a career: (a) opportunity to use abilities, (b) challenging and interesting work, (c) job stability, (d) health benefits, (e) opportunity to learn, (f) general and sick leave benefits, (g) contributions to humanity, and (h) job location (Lewis et al., 2004). As a result, school district officials should focus their recruitment strategies on the reasons African American teachers have expressed.

African American teachers can be recruited primarily from community colleges, predominantly African American high schools, African American fraternities and sororities, and African American churches (Lewis et al., 2004). Support systems should

be established to encourage as well as assist African American teachers in continuing their education and professional growth. School districts must make a continuous effort to recruit and retain African American teachers and emphasize adequate compensation and other incentives such as loan forgiveness on student loans and signing bonuses (Lewis et al., 2004).

If school systems are serious in their efforts to recruit minority teachers, these factors are also important: (a) school districts need to rethink recruitment strategies to better address both district and community issues with potential African American teacher candidates, (b) African American teaching candidates indicated a desire and a vision to work with school districts that exemplify a vision to educate and encourage high expectations for all students, and (c) African American teaching candidates are concerned about support issues and indicate a need to work for districts with strong support programs (Lewis et al., 2004). In his article on teacher recruitment incentives, David (2008) explained it is important for teachers to be well matched to their teaching assignments. Researchers (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, as cited in David 2008) have found that if teachers lack support in their schools from leaders and colleagues, they will seek a more congenial setting in which they are supported. This research is based on a review of empirical literature on teacher recruitment and retention.

In the book, *Good to Great*, Jim Collins (2001) stated that in order to go from a good organization to a great one, leaders must first begin with “who” rather than “what” (p. 42). Having the *right* people in the *right* positions is essential in making an organization great. Recruiting the *right* minority teachers who are representative of the student population could put a school a step closer to becoming great. Herein lies the

problem. Even though there has been some research on the minority teacher shortage and recruitment efforts, schools continue to have difficulty recruiting and hiring minority teachers due to the low number of minority teaching applicants.

Statement of the Problem

In the United States, the Southern states have been impacted drastically by the increasing number of Hispanic and African American residents (Walker, 2009). The United States Census has predicted that Georgia will be one of the next three states to become a “majority-minority” state, which means more than half of the population will be comprised of non-white individuals (Walker, 2009). As the state increases in diversity so does the school population. This certainly holds true for Georgia. In October 2005, Georgia had its first student enrollment count in which the state was noted as being a majority-minority public school system (Johnson, 2006). These demographic trends make it necessary for educational leaders in Georgia to examine practices that can positively impact the achievement of all subgroups of students (Walker, 2009).

With the increasing minority student enrollment, every school district across the nation must step up their efforts in creating a teaching force that is representative of their student population and also present teaching as a viable profession for all races and genders (Shure, 2001). Currently, the teaching population is comprised mainly of white females (Shure, 2001). However, the minority student population is rapidly increasing, but the minority teacher population is not. Therefore, the teaching population is not reflective of the student population in our schools. While the growth in the minority student population may be more visible in some districts than in others, diversity is the future, no matter where you teach or work (Weaver, 2006).

The shortage of minority teachers in one Southeast Georgia County has become a major concern as well. With approximately 50% of the current student population being non-Caucasian (Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2009), there is the possibility that minority students could actually go through kindergarten to twelfth grade without having a minority teacher. As the student population becomes more diverse each year, there is a need for diversity among teachers. By examining the personal background and experiences of current minority teachers within the school district, community and school factors that influenced their job selection, along with their perceptions on the minority teacher shortage and recruitment efforts, information will be gained that could prove to be beneficial to educational leaders in Southeast Georgia in developing strategies designed to increase teacher diversity in their schools.

Research Questions

Due to the rapidly changing demographics of public schools across America, increased attention has been given to meeting the educational needs of diverse student populations. One recommendation in targeting this issue is the call for an increase in minorities entering the teaching profession (Johnson, 2006). Currently, there is a critical shortage of minority teachers. Therefore, this research study will explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia. To complete this study, the overarching question is this: How can educational leaders in Southeast Georgia increase teacher diversity in schools? The following sub-questions will guide the research.

1. What personal background and life experiences do minority teachers identify as contributing to their teaching career?

2. What reasons do minority teachers give for deciding to teach in the school district as well as the school in which they are currently employed?
3. What are minority teachers' perceptions of the factors that contribute to the shortage of minority teachers in Southeast Georgia?
4. What are minority teachers' perceptions of how school districts in Southeast Georgia recruit and how they can increase the number of minority teachers?

Significance of the Study

While skin color should not be the determining factor in hiring staff members, steps must be made in order to increase teacher diversity in schools. Weaver (2006) stated that school districts that are having success are embracing the spirit of diversity by taking concrete steps to respond to change. These systems are creating policies to strengthen professional development programs, emphasizing cultural competency and mentoring, focusing on the targeted recruitment of faculty of color, and developing partnerships with minority communities to learn more about their students' cultures. "Diversity is—and has always been—one of this country's greatest strengths. As educators, we have a responsibility to be leaders in creating classrooms that are fair and inclusive, and that advance this nation's most treasured ideals" (Weaver, 2006, para.12).

It is important for there to be diversity in the teaching staff so there can be diversity of thought as well. Maya Angelou stated (as cited on ThinkExist.com, 2008), "We should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color" (p.1). It is up to educational leaders to ensure that diversity exists among the teaching staff, especially since the student population becomes more diverse each year.

Having the personal experience of being a school administrator, this researcher has found that even though there is a minority teacher shortage, leaders are held accountable for increasing teacher diversity in their schools. While system level administrators and community members have expressed the urgency to recruit and hire more minority teachers, the task is not an easy one due to the limited number of minority teacher applicants. This researcher sees the minority teacher shortage as a problem in Southeast Georgia with no readily apparent solution. However, the issue cannot be ignored. By surveying and interviewing minority teachers within a school system in Southeast Georgia, this study will give voice to the minority teacher population and provide the researcher with new information in understanding the minority teacher shortage in this particular geographic area via the perspectives of the minority teachers. As a result of the knowledge gained through this study, educational leaders in Southeast Georgia may have a deeper awareness of issues surrounding the minority teacher shortage in hopes of increasing teacher diversity in their schools.

Procedures

Research Design

To explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia and how educational leaders in this geographical region can increase teacher diversity in their schools, the researcher will use a mixed methods research design. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), “mixed methods research is formally defined as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (p. 17). Beginning with a quantitative approach, the researcher will use a survey to collect initial

data from minority teachers on the minority teacher shortage. The survey will provide information that will assist the researcher with the qualitative approach of conducting interviews. By combining quantitative and qualitative research, the researcher can gain further insight into the problem, as well as a deeper understanding (Creswell, 2009). Questionnaires alone cannot probe deeply into the beliefs, attitudes, and inner experiences of the participants (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). The end result will be a phenomenological study, an approach well-suited for this study since the researcher will seek participants' experiences and perspectives on the minority teacher shortage in order to gain ideas into increasing teacher diversity (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007).

Sample and Sampling

The sample for this mixed methods study will be drawn from the population of minority teachers in a medium-sized school district in Southeast Georgia. Both convenience and purposive sampling will be used to gather information from the minority teachers in the selected school district. A convenience sample will suit the purposes of the study and is conveniently available to the researcher (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). A purposive sample is a type of non-probability sample in which the participants are selected based on the researcher's judgment as to them being representative of the population (deVaus, 2002). For this research study, minority teachers will be selected as participants based on their experience and knowledge regarding the minority teacher shortage. The selected school district has approximately 1200 certified staff members of which approximately 180 individuals or 15% are minority. The list of certified minority staff members will be provided by the Human Resources Director of the selected school system along with the school name in which each minority teacher is assigned. All

certified minority staff members who will not be involved in the pilot study of the survey will receive a questionnaire so that a minimum of 100 participants will be included in the sample as recommended for survey research (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Questionnaires will be delivered to in a large envelope to the lead secretary of each school in the selected school system by the researcher. The secretaries will place the questionnaire in each certified minority staff member's mailbox. The survey will conclude by asking individuals if they would be willing to participate in an interview with the researcher. In order for the surveys to be completed anonymously, a blank index card will be provided with the survey for interested participants to include their name and contact information, such as an email address and phone number. If more than ten individuals express a willingness to participate in an interview, the researcher will place the names of the individuals in a jar and then draw out the names of the eight-ten individuals to be interviewed. Eight-ten minority teachers will then be selected based on survey results to participate in an interview with the researcher.

Instrumentation

In order to initially address the overarching research question and the sub-questions for this study, a questionnaire will be developed by the researcher to survey the sample. The questionnaire items will be generated based on a thorough review of the literature. In order to address validity, minority administrators and the Human Resources Director in the school system will serve as the panel of experts to analyze the questionnaire items for face validity and content validity by judging whether the items are appropriate for yielding information from minority teachers on the minority teacher shortage. The researcher will then conduct a pilot study of the items by having a small

sample of minority teachers who will not be included in the main sample to respond to the questionnaire items. Feedback from the experts and results of the pilot study will be used to make necessary revisions to the questionnaire. Each of the above steps in the instrument construction process will help to ensure content validity (deVaus, 2002).

The researcher will also include a demographic section on the questionnaire to gather further information about the participants. The demographic data will include: sex; age; race/ ethnicity; highest degree; total years in education; total years in school system; total years in current school; current level of assignment; total number of minority teachers each participant had in K-12; and original geographic area of participants. The questionnaire will conclude by asking individuals to fill out an index card if they would be willing to participate in an interview with the researcher. If more than ten individuals express a willingness to participate in an interview, the researcher will place the names of the individuals in a jar and then draw out the names of the eight-ten individuals to be interviewed.

Comprehensive interview questions will be formulated by the researcher and will be based on the overarching question as well the sub-questions. As with the questionnaire items, interview questions will be developed out of the literature review. The researcher will also give the interview questions to experts to review for clarity purposes and to make sure that everything necessary is included to answer the research questions. A semi-structured interview guide will be developed to provide a structure to the interview process. The researcher will use the components of the interview protocol for asking questions and recording answers as outlined by Creswell (2009): (a) a heading at the top of the interview form to note the specifics of the interview, (b) interviewer's instructions

to ensure standardization of the interview, (c) an ice-breaker question followed by eight-twelve questions that address the research questions, (d) probes for the eight-twelve questions if needed for elaboration or clarity, (e) a concluding question to bring closure to the interview, (f) space between the questions on the interview form to record a written response if appropriate, and (g) a final thank-you statement to the interviewee for the time spent during the interview.

Data Collection

By using the sequential explanatory strategy for mixed methods design, the data will be collected in two phases (Creswell, 2009). The first phase will be the collection of the quantitative data from the questionnaire. The second phase will be the collection of qualitative data that builds on the results of the initial quantitative results. This mixed methods strategy is used to explain and interpret quantitative results by collecting follow-up qualitative data. Interviews provide adaptability not available from questionnaires. Researchers can follow up on respondent's answers in an interview in order to obtain more information or to clarify vague responses (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007).

The researcher will gain initial permission to conduct the study from the superintendent of the selected school system. However, no data will be collected until the researcher gains official approval from the Instructional Review Board (IRB) at Georgia Southern University to conduct the research. Upon approval from the IRB, the researcher will get the names of the minority teachers in the school system from the Human Resources Director, along with the school name in which each minority teacher is assigned. Questionnaire packets will be delivered to the lead secretary of each school in the selected school system by the researcher in a large envelope which will also serve as

the collection envelope for returned surveys. A list of the minority teachers specific to each school will be in the envelope for easier distribution by the secretary. Participants will receive a cover letter addressed specifically to each individual, a copy of the questionnaire, a blank index card, and a blank envelope. All four of these items will be gem clipped together to create a packet for each participant. The secretaries will be asked to distribute each packet to the minority teachers by placing it in each certified minority staff member's mailbox within a day of receipt. The teachers will return only the completed questionnaire in the sealed envelope with no identifying information to the secretary to place in the designated envelope for easy collection. Completed index cards for those individuals who are interested in participating in an interview will be placed in the designated envelope as well. The researcher will collect the envelope from the lead secretary at each school.

Interviews of minority teachers will be conducted in a location convenient for each participant in order to provide a comfortable, non-threatening environment. Interviews will be planned for 60-90 minutes each and will be tape recorded. Audio recording will provide a complete verbal record of the interview so that it can be studied thoroughly for data analysis (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the questionnaire results. Descriptive statistics are mathematical techniques used to organize, summarize, and display a set of numerical data from the responses of participants in a sample (deVaus, 2002; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). The data will be presented in various tables.

In consideration of this research study's purpose and overarching question, tape-recorded interviews will be the method used by the researcher to probe into the personal beliefs, attitudes, and experiences of minority teachers in regard to the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia. Recorded interviews will then be professionally transcribed to assist the researcher in the data analysis process. The data will be analyzed multiple times in order to examine the data for emerging thematic ideas and patterns that address the study's purpose. The researcher will use two reliability procedures as suggested by Gibbs (as cited in Creswell, 2009): (a) Check interview transcripts for any obvious mistakes made during transcription, and (b) make sure that the meaning of the codes remain consistent and do not change during the coding process. According to Glesne (2006), the first step in the data analysis method is to develop major code clumps reflecting key themes in which to sort the data. Themes will be analyzed and shaped into a general description in narrative form for this phenomenological study (Creswell, 2009).

Limitations/Delimitations

This study is designed to explore the minority teacher shortage and potential recruitment strategies via the perspectives of minority teachers. Since the participants will be interviewed by the researcher, there is the possibility that the willingness of the participants to respond openly and honestly may be limited. Due to the study focusing on the minority teacher shortage in one medium-sized school district in Southeast Georgia, the findings of this study may be limited in generalizability to school districts of different sizes or those located in other geographic locations.

This study will only examine the perspectives of minority teachers from a medium-sized school district in Southeast Georgia. The researcher will use both

convenience and purposive sampling due to the easy access and availability of the minority teachers in the selected school system.

Definition of Terms

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Under No Child Left Behind, each state developed and implemented measurements for determining whether its school systems and individual schools are making AYP. States specify annual, measurable objectives to measure progress of all students. The ultimate goal is 100 percent proficiency for all students and each subgroup in at least reading/language arts and math by the year 2013-2014. AYP is measured in three different ways: annual measurable objectives, a minimum of 95% participation rate on state tests, and a second indicator which is usually the attendance rate for elementary and middle schools (U. S. Department of Education, 2004).

Diversity. For the purposes of this study, diversity means having a student and teaching population that is representative of a variety of races/ethnicities.

Leadership. “Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2008, p. 3).

Minority. For the purposes of this study, a minority is defined as a person of any race/ethnicity other than White, non-Hispanic. According to the National Forum on Education Statistics (2008), categories for race/ethnicity include: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and Hispanic or Latino (ethnicity).

Minority teacher. For the purpose of this study, a minority teacher is a certified educator of any race/ethnicity other than White, non-Hispanic. This term will be used interchangeably with the term “teacher of color.”

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). On January 8, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the NCLB of 2001 (U. S. Department of Education, 2001). Being a landmark in educational reform, NCLB brought about change to public school education with the goal to improve student achievement of all students while also closing the achievement gap between students from different ethnic groups and economic backgrounds (National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). NCLB holds schools accountable for the academic progress of every child, regardless of race, ethnicity, income level or zip code (U. S. Department of Education, 2005).

Recruitment. Recruitment involves the strategies utilized by school systems to attract potential teachers to their area for the purpose of creating a pool of highly qualified teaching candidates in which administrators can select for hiring purposes.

White. A white person is considered to be “a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa” (National Forum on Education Statistics, 2008, p. 27). In this study, white will be used interchangeably with the term Caucasian.

Summary

While the number of minority students is steadily increasing in K-12 public schools and is reflective of the increasing diversity of the United States, the diversity of the teachers in public schools is critically low. This study will explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia via the perspectives of minority teachers in order

to provide information that will be beneficial to educational leaders in the recruitment and hiring of minority teachers. Using a mixed methods research design, a convenience and purposive sample will be drawn from the population of minority teachers in a medium-sized school district in Southeast Georgia in which approximately 100 minority teachers will complete a questionnaire after which eight-ten of the individuals will be selected to participate in an interview with the researcher. Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the questionnaire results in which the data will be presented in various tables. Interviews will be analyzed for themes and shaped into a general description in narrative form for this phenomenological study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In today's world, diversity matters. The minority population in the United States and in schools is rapidly increasing. However, the majority of teachers continue to be white females by an astonishing margin (Learning Point Associates, n.d.). This chapter reviews relevant literature pertaining to the minority teacher shortage in the United States. The literature review will be divided into five different sections: (a) current demographics, (b) rationale for a diversified teaching staff, (c) reasons for the minority teacher shortage, (d) reasons minorities choose to teach; and (e) recruitment strategies and/or programs for increasing the number of minority teachers.

Current Demographics

As the United States population becomes more diverse each year, so does the student population. According to the U. S. Census Bureau, the diversity of the K-12 student enrollment in the United States has almost doubled since 1972 when the student population was comprised of 22% minority. In 2006, the percentage increased to 43% (Planty, Hussar, Snyder, Provasnik, Kena, Dinkes, et al., 2008). While this is the trend across the nation, many states are seeing these changing demographics as well.

The Southern states have been impacted drastically by the increasing number of Hispanic and African American residents (Walker, 2009). The United States Census has predicted that Georgia will be one of the next three states to become a "majority-minority" state which means more than half of the population will be comprised of non-white individuals (Walker, 2009). However, the public education system in Georgia has

already crossed this threshold. In October 2005, Georgia had its first student enrollment count in which the state was noted as being a majority-minority public school system (Johnson, 2006).

Based on the 2007-2008 school year, the public school student enrollment in the state of Georgia was 45.7% majority and 54.3% minority (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009). The specific breakdown was as follows: 45.7% Caucasian, 37.7% African American, 10% Hispanic, 3.2% Asian, 3.2% Multi-Racial, and 0.2% American Indian (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009). During the same year, the composition of Georgia's teachers was 74.6% Caucasian, 22.9% African American, 1.3% Hispanic, 0.8% Asian, 0.3% Multi-Racial, and 0.1% American Indian (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009). So while Georgia's student population was 54% minority, the teacher population was 25% minority. From 2002-2008, there was a 6.5% increase in the minority student population compared to a 3.1% increase of the minority teacher population (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009). Even though the percentage of minority teachers continues to steadily increase annually, a steeper upward trend is seen in the percentage of minority students. As a result of these demographic trends and the federal accountability mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act, increased attention has been given to the student academic achievement gap and rates of academic improvement among minority students (Johnson, 2006; Walker, 2009).

While the growth in the minority student population may be more visible in some districts than in others, diversity is the future, no matter where a person teaches or works (Weaver, 2006). Not only are educators today expected to teach a more diverse student

body than ever before, but they are also expected to help all children reach high achievement standards (Weaver, 2006). Believing that all students can not only achieve but excel is a key factor in the success of high-performing schools (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2003).

Weaver (2006), President of the National Education Association, gave a clear picture of how public schools should be viewed today.

We have to see the changing faces—and voices—in America’s public schools as an asset, not a hurdle to overcome. We must actively work to understand the cultures of our students in a meaningful way, and recognize the beliefs, values, and behaviors that shape their learning experiences. Every child has a basic right to a great public school with a qualified and caring staff, including educators who look like them, who share similar cultural experiences, and who can serve as role models demonstrating that education and achievement are things to be respected. (para. 8 and para. 10).

While NCLB has a focus on teacher quality and ensuring that all teachers are highly qualified, limited attention has been given to issues of cultural competence and teacher diversity, both of which are major factors in improving student achievement of students of color (National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). Although the contribution of minority teachers has been linked more to social and relational areas than on student achievement, increasing the number of teachers of color is also directly connected to closing the achievement gap of students (National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). Public schools in America are experiencing severe shortages of minority teachers. Such minority teacher shortages have

been described for the past four decades (Kearney, 2008). By today's classrooms being so multicultural and multiethnic in nature, the lack of minority teachers in our schools is a significant problem.

Rationale for a Diversified Teaching Staff

Enrolled in our schools today is the most diverse generation of students in the history of our country. In 2007-2008, Georgia schools were comprised of 54% minority students and 25% minority teachers (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009). In order to meet the individual needs of such diversified students, more support and services are required than even before. These students are coming from complex communities with many challenges, and as adults they will be expected to contribute back to these same communities' success (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2009). In order for students to be successful, they need high quality teachers leading their classrooms.

Effective teaching depends on teachers knowing their students well, inside and outside of the classroom (Santoro, 2007). Not only do teachers teach facts and content, but they also model appropriate behaviors and teach by personal example. For many children, the teachers and other adults in their school are the most important authority figures outside of their home environment. This is why it is very important that students are exposed to a diverse teaching staff who serve as role models within each school so that students are not getting an educational experience that is stunted (Weaver, 2003).

While there is limited research on the academic effect of minority students who have minority teachers, there is much research on the benefit of minority students having minority teachers as role models. Gursky (2002) expressed that even though no one has

claimed that teachers and their students need to be the same race or ethnicity to achieve, there are social and educational reasons for teacher diversity. “As our society in general and our schools in particular become more and more diverse, there is an undeniable benefit to exposing students to all sorts of role models” (Gursky, 2002, p. 31). Zirkel (2002) found that when students have role models of the same race and gender they develop an understanding of their placement in the world and of future opportunities available to them within the larger culture. Racial presence alone can generate a sort of role model that engages student effort, confidence, and enthusiasm (Kunjufu, 2002). Minority role models can be significant to minority students’ identity development and future aspirations (Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009).

“Minority teachers are important because they can act as role models, encourage students to perform better, better understand cultural differences, and break down the students’ stereotypes” (Salinas, 2002, p.1). Because of their own backgrounds, minority teachers can easily understand the needs and experiences of minority students, thus making valuable contributions to the education of minority students (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Santoro, 2007). Minority teachers increase the likelihood that minority students will experience school success.

In *Educational Administration* (Hoy & Miskel, 2008), there are numerous theories presented on educational administration that can be beneficial to educational leaders today. However, there are two theories that are aligned with the challenge of getting more minority teachers in schools. Both the needs theory and the equity theory relate to teacher diversity (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

Abraham Maslow developed the need hierarchy theory in 1970 which explains the five levels of basic needs of humans in hierarchical order (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Level three deals with belonging, love, and social activities. These are extremely important in today's society. Students need to have satisfactory associations with others as well as have a sense of belonging (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Esteem needs which include self-respect (achievement, competence, and confidence) and deserved respect of others (status, recognition, dignity, and appreciation) are part of level four of Maslow's need theory (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). If minority students have minority teachers, students may have a stronger sense of belonging in the classroom by being taught by someone "like" them. Minority teachers can serve as role models and make it easier for students to relate to them. Minority teachers bring positive images and varied perspectives to their students (Southern Regional Education Board, 2003).

The equity theory deals with basic fairness (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Individuals decide if they are being treated fairly or not. Hoy & Miskel (2008) state, "Equity theory suggests that the key mechanism for such decisions is social comparison; we compare ourselves and our own plight with others" (p. 151). Students need to know that they are being treated fairly in the classroom by teachers who understand them and can relate to them. Dr. James Comer stated, "No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship" (Payne, 1998, p. 18). In Ruby Payne's book, *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (1998), one of the key chapters is on creating relationships, the most significant motivator for students. Payne (1998) explained what is meant by relationship:

A successful relationship occurs when emotional deposits are made to the student,

emotional withdrawals are avoided, and students are respected. To honor students as human beings worthy of respect and care is to establish a relationship that will provide for enhanced learning. (p. 144)

Due to teachers' limited knowledge of their students' cultures, teachers often approach minority students from a deficit perspective that hinders them from developing close relationships with minority students (Souto-Manning & Dice, 2007). Educators who exhibit a deficit perspective in thinking also fail to see a student's true academic ability (Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005). Research suggests that the interaction of teachers with their students influences student motivation, task engagement, and learning. In a study by Warikoo (2004), she found that teachers are most likely to make connections with students who share their socio-economic status, race, and ethnicity. Another finding was that teachers of different ethnic racial backgrounds used different approaches in order to connect to their students. Due to their different life experiences and perspectives, these teachers connected with different aspects of students' lives. Minority teachers enrich minority students' learning because of shared ethnic, racial, and cultural identities (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). However, Warikoo (2004) noted that the most significant finding from her study was that interpersonal relationships are much more important than external identities.

Research has indicated that teachers are more oriented toward students that share their racial and ethnic background (Kunjufu, 2002). Minority teachers have higher performance expectations for students of color from their own ethnic group (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). This would lead one to believe that since the majority of teachers are Caucasian, then these teachers may have lower

expectations for minority students and higher expectations for white students. Michie (2007) stated that while he thought he had high expectations for his minority students, he realizes that he did not push them hard enough. “Too often, I had let my students’ tough circumstances reduce my expectations, consciously or not, to [what he thought were] more realistic ones.” (Michie, 2007, p. 8) Minority students, specifically, black and Hispanic, respond more to their teacher’s beliefs about their abilities than do white students (Warikoo, 2004). Kunjufu (2002) believes “that the most important factor impacting the academic achievement of African American children is not the race or gender of the teacher but the teacher’s expectations” (p. 17).

By having an appropriate number of minority teachers, chances are increased for students to experience teachers who relate to them and understand cultural differences in perception of authority, instructional delivery, and teacher performance (Witty, 2001). Teachers’ attitudes, expectations, and actions toward minority students are extremely powerful in determining the quality of education these students receive (Gay, 2002; Santoro, 2007). Minority teachers are more responsive to students’ cultural backgrounds, have higher expectations of minority students, and incorporate social reform into their teaching (Barbra, 2007). A teacher’s effectiveness depends, first and foremost, on his or her skills and high expectations, not on the color of his/her skin (Weaver, 2003). Cole (2008) made the following statement: “Often, teachers have low expectations of poor or minority students that are shaped by inaccurate assumptions about innate ability and a lack of knowledge about students’ different cultural backgrounds, including the rules of social interaction between adults and children”(p.viii). By increasing teacher diversity,

student achievement will increase with academics, social, and cultural needs being addressed (Barbra, 2007; Salinas, 2002; Weiher, 2000).

In a study by Dee (2001), test score data was evaluated from Tennessee's Project STAR class size experiment. He found that student exposure to a teacher of their own race generated an increase in math and reading scores by 3-4 percentile points. The results of his study provide evidence that minority teacher recruitment is likely to be successful in generating improved outcomes for minority students. Weiher (2000) stated that a shortfall of minority teachers in schools can cause minority students' performance to suffer as minority students perform better in schools with more minority teachers.

Zirkel (2002) found that adolescents identify more with same race and same gender role models. Adolescents who had at least one role model of the same race and same gender in their lives showed better academic performance and had better achievement related goals than did students without these matched role models. Students with a matched role model also expressed a greater interest in achievement related activities, thought more about their futures, and looked up to adults rather than peers.

In an earlier study by Ehrenberg, Goldhaber, and Brewer (1995), the focus was on how teachers subjectively relate to and evaluate students and how much their students learn. The researchers determined that teacher race does not affect student achievement. However, teachers did seem to be influenced by their racial and ethnic backgrounds, as students of the same race scored higher on subjective evaluations. The researchers suggested that there may be some aspect of teachers' empathy and support that could encourage students to perform at high levels (Ehrenberg, Goldhaber, & Brewer, 1995).

According to the Community Teachers Institute (2008), America's public schools are failing to effectively serve students of color, particularly those in urban, low-income communities. When comparing populations of students, African-American and Latino students score significantly lower on standardized tests, drop out of school at higher rates, and attend or complete college in fewer numbers (Community Teachers Institute, 2008). Minority students are far more likely to be affected by the poverty of school programs and be taught by teachers who are poorly prepared or non-certified (Futrell, 1999; Jorgensen 2001; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Peske & Haycock, 2006). As a result, many minority students are not receiving the necessary academic background skills and knowledge that are essential for college success (Futrell, 1999).

When there is a lack of teachers of color, minority students land more frequently in special education classes, have higher absentee rates, and tend to be less involved in school activities (National Education Association, 2002). The high dropout rate of minority students has also been influenced by the extremely low number of minority teachers (Salinas, 2002). Gay (2002) stated that many minority students are disproportionately placed in special education classes because of teachers' lack of knowledge about and appreciation for their cultural values and socialization and the affects these can have on learning. Minority students are less frequently misdiagnosed as special education by minority teachers (Learning Point Associates, n.d.).

African American and Hispanic students are less likely to be placed in the gifted program in elementary schools and in the advanced placement courses in high school (Futrell, 1999; Wimberly, 2002). Educators are seldom adequately prepared to identify

cultural characteristics, and as a result, educators may not recognize giftedness in students of color (Moore et al., 2005). While these students are quite capable of being successful in such programs, they are often not encouraged to enter or enroll. Swanson (2006) stated that while many barriers exist in the identification of diverse gifted students, teachers' beliefs and assumptions regarding high-poverty, high-minority students are often the cause for minority students being underrepresented in gifted programs.

Cultural issues are critical to minority students, and they can ultimately have an effect on academic achievement. VanTassel-Baska, Feng, and Evans (2007) identified these cultural issues that can have a negative effect: (a) low cultural expectations for achievement evidenced by little encouragement and support, (b) peer rejection, (c) conflict generated when viewed as succeeding in the "majority" culture, thus leaving one's own culture behind, (d) lack of future planning, and (e) lack of career development. When teachers do not perceive cultural differences as deficits, they are able to see strengths more easily in diverse students and serve as their cultural bridges and advocates (Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005).

Another area where cultural differences come into play is in the area of discipline. Minority students receive disproportional discipline in school (Education Rights Center, 2008). Some of the reasons for the overrepresentation of minority students among students who are suspended or expelled are: (a) teacher and student demographics are disproportionate with the majority of the teaching staff being white and middle class, (b) the emotional style of communication of minority students is misperceived as combative, argumentative, or defiant; and (c) teachers more readily take disciplinary action against

minorities due to stereotypes of minorities being dangerous or violent. When minority students have minority teachers, they are less likely to be reported for discipline incidents due to the teacher having a better understanding of their culture (Learning Point Associates, n.d.).

While minority students benefit from having minority teachers, white students also benefit from teacher diversity. The growth and learning of all children are limited when schools fail to provide a representative number of teachers and administrators from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds (Witty, 2001). True diversity within the teaching and administrative staff gives all children a sense of the real world. All children need to have opportunities to see authority figures and leaders from different racial or ethnic backgrounds (Witty, 2001).

In addition to benefiting students, quality minority teachers can also be an asset to their white colleagues in knowing how to relate to their minority students (Weaver, 2005). Dee (2001) stated that minority teachers have a personal perspective in understanding minority students, and can help inform majority teachers about effective ways to interact with students of color. Due to living in a multicultural, global society, teachers from all races and ethnicities need exposure to people and leaders from various backgrounds so that their understanding of the world will be enhanced (Learning Point Associates, n.d.).

There are numerous reasons for schools to have minority teachers on staff. Futrell (1999) stated the following:

Thousands of members of diverse ethnic and racial groups have the ability, skills, and knowledge to be outstanding teachers – and we need them. Minority

educators enhance our students' understanding of the intellectual, social, political, and economic complexity of our democratic society. (p. 30)

Even with these benefits, most districts fail to hire minority teachers that are proportionate to the increasing number of minority students in schools due to numerous barriers (National Education Association, 2008).

Reasons for the Minority Teacher Shortage

In 1950, half of African American professional workers were teachers compared to less than one quarter of white professionals (Gordon, 2000). Due to having limited access to other professions, the competence and qualifications of African American teachers increased (Gordon, 2000). In 1954, there were approximately 82,000 African American teachers who were responsible for the education of the two million African American students in public schools (Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; Tillman, 2004). The role of African American teachers also consisted of being counselors, role models, and spiritual leaders. Regretfully, due to integration and other ramifications of the Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) decision, the number of minority teachers decreased. Within the decade following this court case, over 38,000 African Americans lost their jobs as teachers, counselors, and administrators in school systems in 17 southern and border states (Lewis et al., 2004; Tillman, 2004). This loss has never been regained.

In addition to this historical perspective on the minority teacher shortage, there are several more reasons for the shortage of minority teachers found in the literature. According to Singh and Stoloff (2007), some reasons for the minority teacher shortage include: disproportionate screening out of minorities by licensure tests, low teacher

salaries, exclusion, separation, and discrimination. The National Teacher Association (2008) mentions these reasons for the shortage: (a) few minorities locally available in the teacher pool, (b) burn out and frustration from on the job hazards such as discipline problems, school violence, and lack of collegial support, (c) inadequate schooling of minorities that leaves some of them ill-prepared and unmotivated for higher education, (d) more career opportunities outside of teaching, and (e) minority teachers leave teaching at higher rates than white teachers. Other research found these factors discourage minority students from the teaching profession: poor working conditions, low salaries, crowded classrooms, and students' lack of respect for teachers (Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004). Gordon (2000) found there is a lack of encouragement of minority students by their own families, communities, and peers to enter the teaching profession. A more detailed description of some of these reasons for the minority teacher shortage follows.

Inadequate and Negative School Experiences in K-12

Due to the educational inequities in today's schools, Jorgensen (2001) explained that many minority students often attend impoverished schools and are not prepared to aspire to teaching careers, nor do they have the incentive to return to the schools they attended. Many schools are considered hard to staff due to the large populations of certain subgroups of students within a school: low-income students, low-performing students, and minority students (Horng, 2009). Due to teacher attrition in these at-risk schools, schools have difficulty filling the teaching vacancies. Teachers are often hired who are not highly qualified and have significantly less teaching experience (National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Peske & Haycock, 2006). In fact,

nearly 50% of high school math classes in both high-poverty schools and high-minority schools are taught by teachers who don't have a college major or minor in math or a math-related field (Peske & Haycock, 2006). In middle schools with similar demographics, the situation is worse due to about 70% of math classes being taught by a teacher who is out of field (Peske & Haycock, 2006).

As a result of such statistics, many poor and minority students are getting substandard and unequal educational opportunities. Reading and math performance levels of black and Hispanic 12th graders are equivalent to white 8th graders (National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005). Wimberly (2002) found that African American students had different school experiences than white students: fewer students were on a college preparatory track; fewer students took advanced placement courses; and fewer students went to college.

Several studies identified that the reason for the shortage of African American, Native American, Hispanic and Asian American teachers was not lack of interest but attrition (Mitchell, Scott, & Covrig, 2000; Vegas, Murname, & Willett, 2001). These minority groups tend to drop out of the education system before getting to or through the teacher pipeline. Mitchell et al. (2001) documented how attrition starts in the high schools and as a result the potential pool of minority teachers decreases. The National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools (2005) stated the high school graduation rate for Hispanics and blacks is roughly 55% and 78% for white students. If more minorities completed high school and college, then the problem of the underrepresentation of minorities in teaching would not be as great of a concern (Vegas et al., 2001). According to Peske and Haycock (2006):

More than 50 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, most children of color in this country are still denied the education they need. The education they need to find meaningful and well-paying jobs. The education they need to thrive in college. The education they need to participate fully in this nation's economic and civic life. The education they need to join and continue the fight for a truly just society. (p.1)

To get more in-depth responses as to why minorities are not entering the teaching profession, Gordon (2000) conducted a study where over 200 persons of color were interviewed from four ethnic groups: Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos. Native Americans, African Americans, and Latinos often mentioned poor academic preparation and negative school experiences as contributing to the minority teacher shortage. Negative experiences for Native Americans were mostly seen in terms of racial identity. African American participants stated that some of their unpleasant experiences were due to being pushed aside, misunderstood, or being lost in the system. The negative school experiences for Latino students were centered around their English language proficiency, strength of accent, and color of their skin (Gordon, 2000; Quiocho & Rios, 2000).

Standardized Testing

Many minority students do not test well. Increased standards and competency testing for teachers have been cited as contributing to the minority teacher shortage due to minority students consistently scoring lower than white students on standardized tests for entry into programs for teacher preparation and teacher licensure (Torres et al., 2004). According to the National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force (2004), data

on the results of required teaching tests of teachers of color reveals specific trends. In most instances, fewer than 50% of African-Americans pass teacher tests. This pattern is prevalent across time, location, and types of tests. More teachers of color pass the Praxis II which covers subject matter content than those that pass the Praxis I which covers basic skills. All teacher candidates of color who passed both the Praxis I and Praxis II scored higher on the SAT than their non passing ethnic group peers. However, these students scored higher on the SAT than those in the general population of students who took the Praxis I and Praxis II (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). According to the Educational Testing Service, 59% of Hispanic and 69% of African-American teaching candidates are passing their certification exams to become teachers (Weaver, 2005). This is compared to 91% of whites who pass the required exams. This means that a time when the minority student population is skyrocketing, the minority teacher population will continue to decrease even more so (Weaver, 2005).

Minority teachers expressed concerns in regard to teacher testing (Clewell, Darke, Davis-Googe, Forcier, & Manes, 2000). Concerns included the following:

1. Tests were not standardized on representative samples.
2. Tests were based on the assumption that all test takers had similar experiences.
3. Tests cannot predict teacher classroom success.
4. Tests frequently were dually biased, culturally and linguistically.
5. Tests caused pressure associated with competition and time limits.
6. Test examiners were of different races and displayed attitudes that produced additional bias.

Many claim that not only are teacher examinations biased, but they also lack validity (Torres et al., 2004) While some urge the addition of performance-based testing, which is more closely related to effective teaching, others want to lower the standards on the required tests.

However, many states have considered raising the bar for teacher examinations. Memory, Coleman, and Watkins (2003) conducted a study to see what would happen to the pool of qualified African American teaching candidates if the cutoff score was raised by just one point. Through the administration of the Massachusetts Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST) that was given to a group of elementary teachers, the researchers concluded that by increasing basic skills cutoff scores for teacher licensure, the pool of qualified minority candidates decreased.

Attraction to More Prestigious Careers

Gordon (2000) found, “The choice to enter a profession, any profession, is influenced long before college by the perceptions and attitudes held within families, communities, and schools from which students emerge” (p. 2). Some of the lack of interest in teaching comes from the abundance of job opportunities available today for everyone across the board, not just minorities. Many minorities are given new opportunities as corporate America also has the desire for diversity in the workforce (Chaika, 2004). Minorities who go to college are in high demand from other fields that are often better rewarded in society. However, some minorities have never considered, or do not see themselves, joining the teaching profession which is dominated by white females (Shure, 2001). Gordon (2000) found that due to the lack of minority role models, minority students do not receive the necessary encouragement to consider teaching as a

career. Many minority teachers expressed these two perceptions about teaching: 1) the image of a teacher is a white, middle-class female, and 2) the teaching profession is low in status and pay (Guarino, Santibanez, & Dailey, 2006).

Futrell (1999) stated that teaching is no longer an attractive profession for minority students as evidenced in the decline of minority students enrolled in education programs in historically black colleges and universities. Between 1975 -1985, the number of African American students who chose to major in teacher education decreased by 66% (Tillman, 2004). In a study of more than 11,000 college graduates in Baccalaureate and Beyond, researchers found that out of all minority group graduates, Asians/Pacific Islanders were less likely to enter the teacher profession (Henke, Chen, Gies, & Knepper, 2000).

Some students realize that they can earn more money, prestige, and responsibility by entering the fields of law, medicine, and business (Futrell, 1999). Torres et al. (2004) stated that “minority students entering college are attracted to business, science, or math degrees that can lead to more lucrative jobs in the future” (p. 15). In a case study in Torres et al. (2004), one new minority teacher remembered being encouraged by community members and high school teachers to consider more prestigious professions such as engineering, medicine, and computer science because she was good in math and science and should not waste her time teaching.

Su (1997) also found that relatively low pay was a contributing factor to the low social status of the teaching profession. In spite of the education and training required to become a teacher, society did not recognize teaching as comparable to law and medicine because the earning potential was much less. The American Federation of Teachers

(2008) conducted a survey and analysis of the teacher salary trends in 2007. When teacher pay was compared to the pay of 23 other occupations which require similar education requirements, teachers earned about 70 cents less on the dollar or about \$22,000 less per year. To have an average salary comparable to other professionals, teachers would need a 30% pay increase. In 2006-2007, the average teacher salary was \$51,009. California had the highest average teacher salary, \$63,640, while South Dakota had the lowest average salary of \$35,378. Georgia ranked at number 17 with an average teacher salary of \$49,836 (American Federation of Teachers, 2008).

Working Conditions

Minority teachers get burned out and frustrated by on-the-job hazards, such as poor working conditions, discipline problems, increased school violence, and lack of support from colleagues (NEA, 2008). Witty (2001) found that minorities often leave teaching due to very difficult teaching assignments, many racist employment practices, and little support during their first years of teaching. Torres et al. (2004) cited poor conditions, low salaries, crowded classrooms, and students' lack of respect for teachers as reasons that minority and as well white students are discouraged from the teaching profession. Poor administrative leadership, lack of parental support, and student discipline problems effect job satisfaction and can cause teachers to leave (National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005).

Many minority teachers end up in at-risk urban schools where working conditions are unfavorable and challenges are numerous. They have to deal with low student achievement levels, high dropout rates, lack of teacher resources, many discipline problems, and little control over curriculum decisions (Torres et al., 2004). In a survey of

California teachers, it was found that teachers who work in high-minority, low-income schools reported significantly worse working conditions which included poorer facilities, limited access to textbooks and supplies, less administrative supports, and bigger class sizes (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

The National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force (2004) stated that more research is needed on the impact of practices that may facilitate or hinder the entry of minorities into the teaching profession. It is important to find out why these disparities exist and what the best solutions are to closing this gap. The Collaborative (2004) stated they are “firmly committed to identifying and decreasing the obstacles that currently impede efforts to expand the pool of prospective teachers of color” (p. 8).

While there is no quick fix to the minority teacher shortage, efforts can be made to reduce the barriers. Through encouragement and removal of barriers, more opportunities will be provided towards promoting teacher diversity within public schools (Sanchez et al., 2009). Hope lies in the moment of opportunities.

Reasons Minorities Choose to Teach

Despite the numerous barriers, there are minorities who decide to enter the teaching profession. In the study conducted by Su (1997), it was found that minority teachers viewed becoming a teacher as an important accomplishment and honor. In addition to realizing that they were role models for their students, they also saw the need to be change agents in schools (Su, 1997). Due to their own negative school experiences, minority teachers felt like could make a difference in their communities by creating more equal opportunities for minority students by providing a culturally relevant and multicultural inclusive curriculum (Su, 1997). “Most minority teachers were attracted to

the teaching profession because of the inequalities they found within the education system; then entered the profession with the intent of remedying existing imbalances (Torres et al., 2004). Minority teachers were found to be committed to social justice and to connecting with minority students (Quirocho & Rios, 2000).

Basit and McNamara (2004) conducted a study on ethnic minority teachers. The researchers found that the minority teachers felt they could motivate and inspire minority students to higher academic achievement which would open up more possibilities for students' future career aspirations. Not only did they believe they could shift minority students' self-perceptions and aspirations, but teaching had put them in a position to challenge some of the stereotypes in society in regard to minority teachers (Basit & McNamara, 2004).

Intrinsic rewards play a big role in minorities going into the teaching profession. In a study of 41 African American teachers, researchers found that "intrinsic rewards, such as the opportunity to work with young people, the perception that their abilities were well matched to teaching, the belief that teaching contributed to the betterment of society, and the opportunity to be creative" (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006, p. 183) contributed to these individuals becoming teachers. The intrinsic motivators outweighed other considerations such as salary and prestige.

Findings from the research specifically on African Americans noted the eight reasons members of this minority group cited for choosing teaching as a career: (a) opportunity to use abilities, (b) challenging and interesting work, (c) job stability, (d) health benefits, (e) opportunity to learn, (f) general and sick leave benefits, (g) contributions to humanity, and (h) job location (Lewis et al., 2004). As a result, school

district officials should focus their recruitment strategies on the reasons African American teachers have expressed.

Many minorities are influenced to teach by their families, as well as by their teachers, and view teaching as a way to make a substantial difference in their communities (Quiocho & Rois, 2000). In a study of Latino teachers, researchers found that these teachers realized they wanted to teach at an early age and were encouraged by their fathers to seek teaching as a career (Quiocho & Rois, 2000). Once employed, the Latino teachers found that they had a variety of roles to fill in their communities, and they received energy and support from their communities (Quiocho & Rois, 2000). With support and encouragement from family, teachers, and community members, more minority students may consider entering the teaching profession (Gordon, 2000). Underrepresented minority students simply cannot be recruited into the teaching profession without continued support and encouragement (Mau & Mau, 2006).

Recruitment

A teacher's effectiveness depends, first and foremost, on his or her skills and high expectations, not on the color of his/her skin (Weaver, 2003). While skin color should not be the determining factor in hiring staff members, steps must be made in order to increase teacher diversity in schools due to the school age population becoming more multicultural and multiethnic each year. Teachers of color are in high demand by school systems in all geographic areas and for all grade levels and subjects (Kearney, 2008). Researchers have noted that as teaching positions become available, minority teachers, especially, can be more selective in choosing a school district and school that best matches their personal and professional needs (Apostle, 2008). In his article on teacher

recruitment incentives, David (2008) explained it is important for teachers to be well matched to their teaching assignments. If they lack support in their schools from leaders and colleagues, teachers will seek a more congenial setting in which they are supported (David, 2008).

With the increasing number of minority student enrollment, every school district across the nation must step up their efforts in creating a teaching force that is representative of their student population but also who present teaching as a viable profession for all races and genders (Shure, 2001). As a result of recognizing the urgent need to recruit and retain teachers of color, states across the United States are implementing a variety of programs and policies that complement traditional teacher recruitment methods (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). Weaver (2006) stated that school districts that are having success are embracing the spirit of diversity by taking concrete steps to respond to change. These systems are creating policies to strengthen professional development programs, emphasizing cultural competency and mentoring, focusing on the targeted recruitment of faculty of color, and developing partnerships with minority communities to learn more about their students' cultures.

The National Education Association (2008) supports many different strategies for the identification, recruitment, and retention of minority teachers. These strategies include: (a) the early identification of prospective teachers through initiatives such as secondary school surveys, counseling, motivational workshops, college preparatory courses in the summer, and educational theory and practice courses, (b) aggressive recruitment techniques such as orientations, media campaigns held in minority

communities, and recruiting minorities from the business and military sectors, (c) financial aid which would include fellowships, scholarships, and forgivable loans, targeted to minority students who intend to teach, (d) social and economic support which would include improving test-taking skills and providing academic counseling and tutoring, and (e) assigned mentors in the school setting.

Lewis et. al (2004) listed some specific strategies for the recruitment of African American teachers. The researchers stated that African American teachers can be recruited primarily from community colleges, predominantly African American high schools, African American fraternities and sororities, and African American churches (Lewis et al., 2004). Support systems should be established to encourage as well as assist African American teachers in continuing their education and professional growth. School districts must make a continuous effort to recruit and retain African American teachers and emphasize adequate compensation and other incentives such as loan forgiveness on student loans and signing bonuses (Lewis et al., 2004).

Recruiting more qualified minority candidates starts with encouraging greater college attendance of minorities followed by their entry into the teaching profession (Sykes & Dibner, 2009). One way to help resolve the financial burden for minority students to attend colleges or universities to earn a teaching degree is for federal and state governments to provide financial aid or forgiveness loans (Futrell, 1999). For example, if students are willing to teach at least one year for each year they receive financial assistance, they would qualify to receive financial aid (Futrell, 1999). Not only should African American educators realize their own significance to the children in their community, but the government must realize their significance as well by financially

doing whatever it takes to increase the number of African American educators (Kunjufu, 2002).

The Tom Joyner Foundation-National Education Association Teacher Licensure Scholarship Program began in 2005 (Walker, 2008). In 2008, the program announced that a \$1.1 million grant would be distributed to boost the number of fully certified teachers in minority and hard-to-staff schools across the country. Since more than 60% of the minority teachers in this country are educated at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the scholarship targets these institutions in specified areas and provides hundreds of educators with the proper technical support, workshops, professional learning, and resources needed to help them pass state licensing examinations (Walker, 2008). To earn a scholarship, candidates must make a commitment to teach for a minimum of three years in identified low-income communities.

Futrell (1999) suggested several strategies for the recruitment of minority teachers. She suggested that teacher preparation programs should be restructured to ensure that a qualified teacher is in every classroom, but is also reflective of our nation's diversity. In addition, all students must study a strong academic core curriculum beginning at the elementary level to put students on the right track for college. Marketing and recruitment campaigns must be developed to attract more candidates, especially minorities, into teaching (Futrell, 1999). Learning Point Associates (n.d.) stated that it is important to implement a widespread public information strategy which highlights: teaching as a career, incentives, available supports, and the importance of hiring minority teachers. Some of the recommended formats include: newspaper/radio/television advertisements in publications and programs that minority students find popular, guest

speakers on college campuses, emails, job fair booths, and posters with address cards to request further information (Learning Point Associates, n.d.).

In 2000, Carlos Santana, an award winning rock musician, teamed up with the NEA to encourage minorities to enter the teaching profession. In a 30-second television spot, Santana said, “Do you love music? Do you love art, books, science? We all love something. Whatever you love, think about teaching it” (Shure, 2001, p. 32). Santana said that it was important to him to recruit minority teachers because of the following reasons:

Teachers of color can be valuable role models and support systems for those kids because they’ve been there; they know what it feels like to be in their shoes. It is important that when a kid looks up from his or her desk, no matter what the color, that kid sees someone who likes them, someone who understands where they’re coming from. (p. 32)

This is just one example of how the media can be used to promote the teaching profession.

Lopeman (2005) conducted a study on the cost effectiveness of alternative recruitment strategies for minority teachers. The findings of this study showed that two effective strategies in hiring a significant number of minority teachers that were associated with no costs were word of mouth and university partnerships. The most effective strategy in which there was a cost associated was the participation in job fairs. The major conclusion of this study was that to recruit minority teachers, school districts must invest resources in developing positive public relations and establishing partnerships with universities for effective teacher recruitment at relatively low cost (Lopeman, 2005).

One program that has been successful in South Carolina for recruiting African American males is the Call Me MISTER program which combines the special strengths and resources of Clemson University with the individualized instructional programs offered by four historically black South Carolina colleges: Benedict College, Claflin University, Morris College and South Carolina State University (Call Me MISTER, 2009). The mission of the Call Me MISTER (acronym for Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) National Initiative is to increase the pool of available teachers from a broader, more diverse background particularly among the state's lowest performing public elementary schools. The Call Me MISTER program was created to recruit, train, certify and secure employment for African-American male teachers so they can enter classrooms as strong, positive role models, mentors and leaders (Call Me MISTER, 2009).

The Pathways to Teaching Program is a promising practice designed to increase the number of public school teachers, especially minorities (Witty, 2001). The program recruits potential teacher education students from new pools: paraprofessionals, non-certified teachers, and other adults from nontraditional backgrounds, such as former volunteers in the Peace Corps (Witty, 2001). Individuals in the Pathways to Teaching Careers Program receive scholarship aid to attend participating colleges to earn teacher certification (Witty, 2001).

The Dewitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Pathways to Teaching Careers Program is coordinated through the Southern Education Foundation in Atlanta (Pathways to Teaching Careers Program, 2009). The program is designed to increase the number of highly qualified teachers, particularly minorities, in our nation's rural and urban public

schools. This program is currently being used successfully in Savannah, Georgia. The mission to increase certified minority teachers in the Savannah-Chatham County area is accomplished through the collaboration of representatives from Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah State University, and the Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools. Scholarships are awarded and other support services are given to non-certified teachers and paraprofessionals to help them earn professional certification. In return, these individuals must commit to teaching three years in the urban schools of Chatham County (Pathways to Teaching Careers Program, 2009). For other districts that may be interested in creating a similar program, the following factors have made Armstrong Atlantic State University's Pathways to Teaching Careers program successful: (a) strong collaboration between local schools and universities, (b) leadership by a campus advocate who is committed to the program's objectives, (c) program standards that begin with a strategic selection process and provide emotional, emotional, as well as academic support; and (d) curricular modification that includes strategies for teaching urban populations, builds on cultural strengths, and allows for flexible scheduling (Pathways to Teaching Careers Program, 2009).

Sanchez et al. (2009) pointed out that since minorities frequently serve in high minority schools in positions such as teacher aides, office workers, volunteers, and translators, these staff members who show potential should be encouraged to seek teaching positions. School administrators can encourage paraeducators to pursue teaching through professional learning opportunities and allowing them to have more hands on experiences with students (Sanchez et al., 2009). Learning Point Associates (n.d.) listed some of the reasons that paraeducators make ideal teacher candidates:

1. They are typically mature individuals who already have classroom experience.
2. They are more likely to live in the community in which they are working and often share the language and/or culture of the students they serve.
3. The majority of paraeducators pursuing a teaching degree are minorities.
4. They have a higher retention rate in teacher education programs than traditional education candidates.
5. Once they become teachers, they are more likely to stay in the classroom longer and achieve at equal or higher levels than teachers from traditional preparation programs.

Alternative certification is a general term that refers to nontraditional avenues that lead to teacher licensure. Since 1985, an estimated 200,000 candidates have pursued alternative routes in becoming certified teachers (Mikulecky, Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004). Driven by teacher shortages and changing requirements due to NCLB, close to one-third of all new teachers certified annually in the United States enter the teaching field through alternative certification programs currently offered in 45 states and the District of Columbia (Mikulecky, Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004). Often, these programs are targeted toward attracting potential teachers from underrepresented minority groups, underserved geographic areas, or individuals with subject expertise in high demand fields. Through alternative certification programs which draw from the pool of people who have a variety of work and life experiences, it is possible to boost the quantity, diversity and quality of teachers at the same time. As outlined by Mikulecky, Shkodriani, and Wilner (2004, p. 2) the number of minority teachers has increased due to alternative certification programs:

1. In Texas, 9% of all teachers are minorities and 41% of those who prepare through alternative routes are minorities.
2. In New Jersey, 9% of all teachers are minorities; 20% of alternatively certified teachers are minorities.
3. In the Troops to Teacher program, 90% percent of participants are male, compared with 26% of teachers nationwide, and 30% are minority compared with 10% nationwide.

These statistics show that alternative teaching programs can increase diversity in the teaching force.

The state of Georgia offers the GaTAPP (Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy) program which provides various paths to a Georgia Clear Renewable Certificate for individuals who hold a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institute, who did not complete teacher education degree programs, and who want to transition to the teaching profession (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009). GaTAPP is utilized to help reduce the teacher shortage in Georgia while equipping transition teachers with the skills necessary for initial success in their classrooms. All GaTAPP paths involve structured supervision and coaching by a team of qualified mentors and coaches called the Candidate Support Team (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009).

The Troops to Teachers Program is also available in the state of Georgia. This program is a joint effort between the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Defense (Georgia Troops to Teachers, 2009). The purpose of the Troops to Teachers Program is to assist eligible men and women who have served the nation as members of

the Armed Forces and who are now seeking second careers as teachers in America's public schools. While the Troops to Teachers Program is not a teacher certification program, eligible military veterans may receive federal funding to help them meet the same state teacher certification requirements that any teacher must meet and for agreeing to teach in high needs schools. Candidates in this program are eligible to receive a stipend of up to \$5000 to help pay teacher certification costs or a bonus of up to \$10,000 for teaching in a high needs school (Georgia Troops to Teachers, 2009).

The GaTAPP program and the Georgia Troops to Teachers program have been very successful in recruiting minority teachers (Nweke, Afolabi, Stewart, Stephens, & Toth, 2004). In 2002-2003, 41.8% of the GaTAPP teachers were minority, and 38.2% were male (Nweke et al., 2004). The Troops to Teachers program recruits mainly male and minority teachers due to the makeup of the military. In the 2002-2003 school year, 79.2% of teachers recruited through the Georgia Troops to Teachers program were male, and 33.5% were Black males (Nweke et al., 2004). These numbers suggest that both of these programs are successfully targeting and recruiting males and minority candidates into the Georgia teaching workforce.

Witty (2001) stated that the recruitment paradigm must be expanded. Students' awareness of teaching as a career possibility must be raised in elementary and middle school. Futrell (1999) also suggested that community outreach must be designed that inform middle and high school students about the value of teaching as well as the need for teachers. Gordon (2000) asserted that teachers themselves must help create a fundamental change in attitude toward the acknowledgement that not only is teaching valuable, but also essential to society's future. "If we are to have sufficient able teachers

of America's urban schools, students of color must find meaning in their choice to be a teacher – and the guidance of their communities and their teachers must show the way” (Gordon, p. 106). Tonoli (2001) suggested that central office personnel should encourage teachers of career programs in high schools with significant numbers of minority and bilingual students to identify freshmen and sophomores who could potentially be future teachers. By developing mentoring relationships, these teachers could mentor, encourage, and advise identified students throughout high school and help them prepare for college. Teachers would not only be guiding students to pursue teaching career, but would also be supporting students who might be at risk of dropping out of school (Tonoli, 2001).

The focus of the Community Teachers Institute (2008) which was founded in 1989 is on the broad educational needs of inner city disadvantaged youth and urban public education. The Community Teachers Institute (CTI) believes that one way to meet this challenge is to grow a more qualified, diverse, and culturally connected teacher workforce, not only in the inner city, but in the surrounding suburbs as well. Public schools need “Community Teachers” who are more able to connect with and engage their students in the educational process, inspire students to achieve high standards, and produce high school graduates who successfully pursue higher education and careers (Community Teachers Institute, 2008).

Some school systems are working to recruit high school students into four-year colleges and teaching careers (Sanchez et. al, 2009). “Given that the largest potential supply of minority teachers is arguably found in the public schools, identification and systematic study of high school encouragement programs is clearly needed” (Torres et al., p. 44). A school district in Reno, Nevada partnered with the University of Nevada to

establish the Dean's Future Scholars (DFS) Program. Each year DFS recruits 50 6th grade minority students from low-income families into teacher education programs and works with these students until they reach college age (Sanchez et. al, 2009). These students attend a seven-week institute in the summer in which they participate in academic enrichment, leadership, and confidence building. All workshops include a component that develops students' interest in teaching.

One urban Midwest school district used aggressive recruitment strategies to increase the number of minority teachers in the classrooms. "Grow Your Own" programs were implemented in high schools which: (a) identified interested students, (b) supported teacher internship programs, (c) offered early teaching contracts, (d) created professional development schools, and (e) offered high school program to students across the state (Kearney, 2008).

The state of Connecticut has found success with its Summer Institute of Future Teachers (SIFT) program for recruiting minority students who are rising juniors and seniors from high schools across the state (Singh & Stoloff, 2007). The goals of the program are to: (a) "reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation, (b) increase student achievement, (c) build positive meaningful relationships among students, and (d) promote multi-racial, multi-cultural understanding" (p. 2). SIFT is a four-week residential program held on the premises of a state university. During SIFT, students acquire teaching and learning fundamentals and develop dispositions for diversity in classrooms. Surveys of students and parents, as well as other data, indicate that SIFT is effective in preparing minority students in becoming future teachers, as many of the SIFT

participants have gone on to college to pursue teaching as a career (Singh & Stoloff, 2007).

Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT) is another "grow your own" precollegiate minority recruitment program in New York (Perkins, 2003). The program was designed to recruit, mentor, and train high school students, particular students of color, to enter the teaching career by providing: tutoring, internships, 50% scholarships, mentors, SAT preparation, teacher training workshops, and teacher shadowing experiences. As a result, students are placed back in the classroom as highly qualified teachers and significant role models for a growing multicultural student population. The program has been effective due to the collaboration of school districts, colleges, parents, businesses, government, and communities working together on a common mission (Perkins, 2003). Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers has been nationally recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as "an innovative program that embodies many of the goals and objectives for educational excellence, which should serve as a model for other regions in the nation" (Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers, 2009, para. 5).

Across the country, the need for a diversified teaching staff is evident through the various strategies and programs that have been implemented in order to recruit minority teachers. While increasing the number of minority teachers is certainly not an easy task, it has become a priority for school systems across the United States. There are many recommended strategies and programs that have proven to be effective for assisting school districts in their continuous efforts in the recruitment of minority teachers.

Summary

America's schools are becoming more diverse as the minority student population steadily increases. There is a definite need for high quality teachers in classrooms in order to address the various needs of students. However, the need is even greater for more minority teachers to be leading the classrooms in most school systems. Minority teachers are currently underrepresented in our public schools. A diversified teaching staff benefits all students, not just minority students. While there is some research on the benefits to student achievement, most research addresses the importance of students being exposed to a diverse teaching staff who serve as role models within each school. In addition to being role models, minority teachers encourage students to perform better, understand cultural differences better, and break down stereotypes. According to the research there are numerous reasons for the minority teacher shortage which include: (a) negative effects due to integration and other ramifications of the Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) decision, (b) inadequate and negative school experiences in K-12, (c) standardized testing, (d) attraction to more prestigious careers, and (e) working conditions. Despite the numerous barriers, there are minorities who decide to enter the teaching profession. Many minorities who choose to teach receive support and encouragement from their families, teachers, and community. Minority teachers feel they can make a substantial difference in their communities by relating to their minority students and creating more equal opportunities for them. The research has provided numerous strategies and programs that have been successful in the recruitment of minority teachers on all levels – local, state, and federal. While increasing the number of minority teachers is definitely a challenge, school systems must continue their efforts to

recruit more minority teachers who are representative of the diversified student population.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Objectives of educational research include exploration, description, explanation, prediction, and influence of certain phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). This study will explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia in order to provide information that will be beneficial to educational leaders in the recruitment and hiring of minority teachers. The minority teacher shortage will serve as the phenomenon for this research study. This chapter includes details regarding the research questions, research design, participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Questions

The demographics of public schools across America are rapidly changing. In order to meet the educational needs of diverse student populations, one recommendation is to increase the number of minority teachers (Johnson, 2006). Therefore, this research study will explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia. To complete this study, the overarching question is this: How can educational leaders in Southeast Georgia increase teacher diversity in schools? The following sub-questions will guide the research.

1. What personal background and life experiences do minority teachers identify as contributing to their teaching career?
2. What reasons do minority teachers give for deciding to teach in the school district as well as the school in which they are currently employed?

3. What are minority teachers' perceptions of the factors that contribute to the shortage of minority teachers in Southeast Georgia?
4. What are minority teachers' perceptions of how school districts in Southeast Georgia recruit and how they can increase the number of minority teachers?

Research Design

The researcher will use a mixed methods research design to explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia and how educational leaders in this geographical region can increase teacher diversity in their schools. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) defined mixed methods research “as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (p. 17). Quantitative research involves the collection of numerical data while qualitative research involves the collection of non-numerical data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

The intent of this two-phase, sequential mixed methods study is to explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia in order to better understand this phenomenon. In the first phase, the researcher will use a survey to collect initial quantitative data from minority teachers on the minority teacher shortage. Information from the survey will be explored further in a second qualitative phase in which interviews will be conducted by the researcher. Questionnaires alone cannot probe deeply into the beliefs, attitudes, and inner experiences of the participants (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). By combining quantitative and qualitative research, the researcher can gain further insight into the problem as well as a deeper understanding (Creswell, 2009). The end result will be a phenomenological study, one in which the researcher identifies the “essence” of a

phenomenon from the perspectives of those who have experienced it” (Creswell, 2009, p.13). This approach is well-suited for this study since the researcher will seek participants’ experiences and perspectives on the minority teacher shortage in order to gain ideas into increasing teacher diversity (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Creswell, 2009).

Participants and Sample

The sample for this mixed methods study will be drawn from the population of minority teachers in a medium-sized school district in Southeast Georgia. Both convenience and purposive sampling will be used to gather information from the minority teachers in the selected school district. A convenience sample includes people who are available, volunteer, or can be easily recruited to participate in the research study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). A convenience sample will suit the purposes of the study as it is conveniently available to the researcher (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). A purposive sample is a type of non-probability sample in which the participants are selected based on the researcher’s judgment as to them being representative of the population (deVaus, 2002). For this research study, minority teachers will be selected as participants based on their personal experience and knowledge regarding the minority teacher shortage.

The selected school district has approximately 1200 certified staff members of which approximately 180 individuals or 15% are minority. The list of certified minority staff members will be provided by the Human Resources Director of the selected school system along with the school name in which each minority teacher is assigned. All certified minority staff members who will not be involved in the pilot study of the survey will receive a questionnaire so that a minimum of 100 participants will be included in the sample as recommended for survey research (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Questionnaires

will be delivered to in a large envelope to the lead secretary of each school in the selected school system by the researcher. The secretaries will place the questionnaire in each certified minority staff member's mailbox. The survey will conclude by asking individuals if they would be willing to participate in an interview with the researcher. In order for the surveys to be completed anonymously, a blank index card will be provided with the survey for interested participants to include their name and contact information, such as an email address and phone number. With respect to phenomenological studies, sample size recommendations range from six (Morse, 1994) to ten (Creswell, 1998). Therefore, the researcher will interview eight-ten participants. If more than ten individuals express a willingness to participate in an interview, the researcher will place the names of the individuals in a jar and then draw out the names of the eight-ten individuals to be interviewed. Eight-ten minority teachers will then be selected based on survey results to participate in an interview with the researcher.

Instrumentation

In order to initially address the overarching research question and the sub-questions for this study, a questionnaire will be developed by the researcher to survey the sample. The questionnaire items will be generated based on a thorough review of the literature. In order to address validity, minority administrators and the Human Resources Director in the school system will serve as the panel of experts to analyze the questionnaire items for face validity and content validity by judging whether the items are appropriate for yielding information from minority teachers on the minority teacher shortage. The researcher will then conduct a pilot study of the items by having a small sample of minority teachers who will not be included in the main sample to respond to

the questionnaire items. Feedback from the experts and results of the pilot study will be used to make necessary revisions to the questionnaire. Each of the above steps in the instrument construction process will help to ensure content validity (deVaus, 2002).

The researcher will also include a demographic section on the questionnaire to gather further information about the participants. The demographic data will include: sex; age; race/ethnicity; highest degree; total years in education; total years in school system; total years in current school; current level of assignment; total number of minority teachers each participant had in K-12; and original geographic area of participants. The questionnaire will conclude by asking individuals to fill out an index card if they would be willing to participate in an interview with the researcher. If more than ten individuals express a willingness to participate in an interview, the researcher will place the names of the individuals in a jar and then draw out the names of the eight-ten individuals to be interviewed. Interviews provide the researcher a way to explore teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and philosophies whose subtle meanings could not be captured or developed solely in questionnaires or surveys (Meloy, 2002).

Comprehensive interview questions will be formulated by the researcher and will be based on the overarching question as well the sub-questions. As with the questionnaire items, interview questions will be developed out of the literature review. The researcher will also give the interview questions to experts to review for clarity purposes and to make sure that everything necessary is included to answer the research questions.

A semi-structured interview guide will be developed to provide structure to the interview process with specific questions for the researcher to ask. However, depth-probing questions will be used by the researcher in order to get participants to elaborate

more on their responses when appropriate (Glesne, 2006). “Elaborated responses provide the affective and cognitive underpinnings of respondents’ perceptions” (Glesne, 2006, p. 105). The researcher will become very familiar with the interview guide prior to the interviews in order to conduct the interviews in a conversational manner without hesitating, backtracking, or needing to read or study the guide (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). During the interview, the researcher will focus on both listening and looking very carefully since feedback from participants can be both verbal and nonverbal (Glesne, 2006). By using this interview approach, a better understanding of the phenomenon can be reached. The researcher will use the components of the interview protocol for asking questions and recording answers as outlined by Creswell (2009): (a) a heading at the top of the interview form to note the specifics of the interview, (b) interviewer’s instructions to ensure standardization of the interview, (c) an ice-breaker question followed by eight-twelve questions that address the research questions, (d) probes for the eight-twelve questions if needed for elaboration or clarity, (e) a concluding question to bring closure to the interview, (f) space between the questions on the interview form to record a written response if appropriate, and (g) a final thank-you statement to the interviewee for the time spent during the interview.

Data Collection

By using the sequential explanatory strategy for mixed methods design, the data will be collected in two phases (Creswell, 2009). The first phase will be the collection of the quantitative data from the questionnaire, and the second phase will be the collection of qualitative data that builds on the results of the initial quantitative results. This mixed methods strategy is used to explain and interpret quantitative results by collecting follow-

up qualitative data via interviews. Interviews provide adaptability not available from questionnaires. When researchers make an effort to gain trust and establish rapport with interview participants, it is possible to obtain information that the individuals may not divulge by other data collection methods (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Researchers can follow up on respondent's answers in an interview with depth-probing questions in order to obtain more information or to clarify vague responses (Glesne, 2006; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). The focus of the interviews will be on the participants' experiences and perceptions of the minority teacher shortage.

The researcher will gain initial permission to conduct the study from the superintendent of the selected school system. However, no data will be collected until the researcher gains official approval from the Instructional Review Board (IRB) at Georgia Southern University to conduct the research. Upon approval from the IRB, the researcher will get the names of the minority teachers in the school system from the Human Resources Director, along with the school name in which each minority teacher is assigned. Questionnaire packets will be delivered to the lead secretary of each school in the selected school system by the researcher in a large envelope which will also serve as the collection envelope for returned surveys. A list of the minority teachers specific to each school will be in the envelope for easier distribution by the secretary. Participants will receive a cover letter addressed specifically to each individual, a copy of the questionnaire, a blank index card, and a blank envelope. All four of these items will be gem clipped together to create a packet for each participant. The secretaries will be asked to distribute each packet to the minority teachers by placing it in each certified minority staff member's mailbox within a day of receipt. The teachers will return only the

completed questionnaire in the sealed envelope with no identifying information to the secretary to place in the designated envelope for easy collection. Completed index cards for those individuals who are interested in participating in an interview will be placed in the designated envelope as well. The researcher will collect the envelope from the lead secretary at each school.

Interviews of minority teachers will be conducted in a location convenient for each participant in order to provide a comfortable, non-threatening environment. Interviews will be planned for 60-90 minutes each and will be tape recorded. Audio recordings preserve the words of the interview by providing a complete verbal record of the interview so that it can be studied thoroughly for data analysis (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). As recommended by Creswell (2009), the researcher will also take notes on the interview guide during the interview in case the recording equipment fails.

Data Analysis

Data that emerges from a quantitative study involves numbers. Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the questionnaire results. Descriptive statistics are mathematical techniques used to organize, summarize, and display a set of numerical data from the responses of participants in a sample (deVaus, 2002; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). The researcher will input the survey responses into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for data analysis. Mean, median, and mode scores of the responses will be determined and reported. The standard deviation will also be calculated to determine the variation, if any, in the responses. The researcher will also determine the frequency distribution for each questionnaire item. The data will be presented in various tables.

In consideration of this research study's purpose and overarching question, tape-recorded interviews will be the method used by the researcher to probe into the personal beliefs, attitudes, and experiences of minority teachers in regard to the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia. Recorded interviews will then be professionally transcribed to assist the researcher in the data analysis process. Qualitative data analysis involves the organization of what has been seen, heard, and read by the researcher in order to make sense of what has been learned (Glesne, 2006).

According to Glesne (2006), the first step in the data analysis method is to develop major code clumps reflecting key themes in which to sort the data. The data will be analyzed multiple times in order to examine the data for emerging thematic ideas and patterns that address the study's purpose. No predetermined themes will be selected prior to data analysis. Instead, the themes identified by the researcher during the data analysis will emerge from the data collected from the participants (Creswell, 2009). The researcher will categorize, synthesize, search for themes and patterns, and interpret the collected data (Glesne, 2006). The researcher will use two reliability procedures as suggested by Gibbs (as cited in Creswell, 2009): (a) Check interview transcripts for any obvious mistakes made during transcription, and (b) make sure that the meaning of the codes remain consistent and do not change during the coding process. Since data for qualitative research is reported in words, themes will be analyzed and shaped into a general description in narrative form for this phenomenological study (Creswell, 2009).

Summary

Since the lack of teacher diversity is a concern in schools all across America, this study will explore the minority teacher shortage via the perspectives of minority teachers

in Southeast Georgia in order to provide information that will be beneficial to educational leaders in the recruitment and hiring of minority teachers. The minority teacher shortage will serve as the phenomenon for this research study. An overarching question and four sub-questions will be used to guide the research. The researcher will use a mixed methods research design in which approximately 100 minority teachers will complete a questionnaire which will lead to eight-ten of the individuals being selected to participate in an interview with the researcher. This convenience and purposive sample will be drawn from the population of minority teachers in a medium-sized school district in Southeast Georgia. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed so that they can be studied thoroughly for data analysis. Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the questionnaire results in which the data will be presented in various tables. Interviews will be analyzed and examined for emerging themes and shaped into a general description in narrative form for this phenomenological study.

CHAPTER IV
REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study explored the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia via the perspectives of minority teachers in order to provide information that may be beneficial to educational leaders in the recruitment and hiring of minority teachers. The minority teacher shortage served as the phenomenon for this research study.

Questionnaire and interview items were generated based on a thorough review of the literature. In order to address validity, minority administrators and the Human Resources Director in the school system served as the panel of experts to analyze the questionnaire and interview items for face validity and content validity by judging whether the items were appropriate for yielding information from minority teachers on the minority teacher shortage. The experts reviewed both instruments for clarity purposes and to make sure that everything necessary was included to answer the research questions. The researcher then conducted a pilot study of the items by having a small sample of minority teachers who were not included in the main sample to respond to the questionnaire items. Once feedback was obtained from the experts and results of the pilot study, a few necessary revisions were made to the survey and interview questions to improve the clarity and focus. Each of the above steps in the instrument construction process helped to ensure content validity (deVaus, 2002).

A convenience and purposive sample was drawn from the population of minority teachers in a medium-sized school district in Southeast Georgia. Surveys were sent to 165 certified minority educators. The cover letter to individuals encouraged all who had

started their career in education off as a teacher to participate, even if they were now in another position other than a teacher. The researcher felt that all certified minority educators, regardless of position, would provide valuable input into the study. Of the 165 surveys that were sent out, 98 were completed and returned for a return rate of 59.39%. Out of the 98 participants who returned the survey, 37 individuals filled out the index card with their contact information to express their willingness to participate in an interview with the researcher. As a result, the researcher put the 37 index cards in a container, and drew out 10 index cards to select the interview participants. In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 individuals over a three week period in order to explore participants' beliefs, attitudes, and philosophies which could not be captured or developed solely through the completion of the questionnaire. This chapter includes details regarding the research questions, research design, demographics of the participants, and research findings. Finally, data analysis will be provided that emerged from both the questionnaire items and interview items, while using the research questions as a framework for the analysis.

Research Questions

To complete this study, the overarching question was: How can educational leaders in Southeast Georgia increase teacher diversity in schools? The following sub-questions were used to guide the research.

1. What personal background and life experiences do minority teachers identify as contributing to their teaching career?
2. What reasons do minority teachers give for deciding to teach in the school district as well as the school in which they are currently employed?

3. What are minority teachers' perceptions of the factors that contribute to the shortage of minority teachers in Southeast Georgia?
4. What are minority teachers' perceptions of how school districts in Southeast Georgia recruit and how they can increase the number of minority teachers?

Research Design

To explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia and how educational leaders in this geographical region can increase teacher diversity in their schools, the researcher used a mixed methods research design. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), "mixed methods research is formally defined as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study" (p. 17). Beginning with a quantitative approach, the researcher used a survey to collect initial data from minority teachers on the minority teacher shortage. Information from the survey was explored further using a qualitative approach in which interviews were conducted by the researcher. By combining quantitative and qualitative research, the researcher hoped to gain further insight into the problem as well as a deeper understanding (Creswell, 2009).

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The researcher included a demographic section at the end of the questionnaire to gather further information about the participants. Items 31-40 on the survey included the following demographic data: sex; age; race/ethnicity; highest degree; total years in education; total years in school system; total years in current school; current level of assignment; total number of minority teachers each participant had in K-12; and original

geographic area of participants. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the quantitative data. The researcher entered the survey results for the demographic items to obtain the frequency of each response along with a percent for each item. Table 1 is a detailed description of the survey participants in this study. Surveys were sent to 165 certified minority educators in the selected school system based on the list provided by the Human Resources Director. The breakdown of the possible 165 participants was: 128 females (77.6%), 37 males (22.4%), 150 African Americans (90.9%), 9 Hispanics (5.5%), 2 Asians (1.2%), 3 American Indians (1.8%), 1 Other (.06%), 49 high school teachers (29.7%), 52 middle school teachers (31.5%), and 64 elementary school teachers (38.8%). A total of 98 individuals completed and returned the survey. The majority of respondents were females, with a total of 77 individuals or 78.6% of the sample. 21 teachers were males which equaled 21.4% of the sample. Teachers varied in age with 4.1% being 20-25 years old, 11.3% being 26-30 years old, 26.8% being 31-40 years old, 27.8% being 41-50 years old, and 29.9% being 51 years old or older. In regard to race/ethnicity, 86.7% of the participants were African-American, 5.1% Asian, 6.1% Hispanic, and 2% other. Almost half of the teachers held a Masters degree with the specifics on the highest degree earned being: 22.7% Bachelor, 49.5% Masters, 24.7% Specialist, and 3.1% Doctorate. There was a wide range of years as an educator with 12.2% with 0-3 years experience, 27.6% with 4-10 years experience, 15.3% with 11-15 years experience, 17.3% with 16-20 years experience, and 27.6% with more than 20 years experience. As for the total years as an educator in the current school district which was being used for the research study, 20.4% have been employed 0-3 years, 33.7% have been employed 4-10 years, 17.3% have been employed 11-15 years, 11.2% have been

employed 16-20 years, and 17.3% have been employed with this school system for more than 20 years. As for the total years as an educator in the current school in which participants teach, 45.4% of the respondents were in the 0-3 year range, with the percentages for the other categories being: 23.7% with 4-6 years, 7.2% with 7-10 years, 8.2% with 11-15 years, and 15.5% with more than 15 years in their current school. The current level of teaching assignment for the participants was: 3.1% in Pre-K, 36.5% in elementary school, 28.1% in middle school, 26% in high school, and 6.3% in another area within the school system. The total number of minority teachers that each of the respondents had in K-12 varied as well with 21.7% having 0-3 minority teachers, 25% having 4-6 minority teachers, 25% having 7-10 minority teachers, 14.1% having 11-15 minority teachers, and 14.1% having more than 15 minority teachers while they were students. The geographic area of which participants were from originally also differed: 30.2% from the current community, 13.5% from a neighboring community, 16.7% from another part of Georgia, 32.3% from another state, and 7.3% from another country.

Table 1

Frequency Distribution for Minority Teacher Survey Participants

Characteristic	n	% of population
Sex		
Female	77	78.6
Male	21	21.4
Age		
20-25	4	4.1
26-30	11	11.3
31-40	26	26.8
41-50	27	27.8
51 or older	29	29.9
Race/Ethnicity		
African-American	85	86.7
Asian	5	5.1
Hispanic	6	6.1

Table 1
(continued)

Other	2	2
Highest Degree		
Bachelor	22	22.7
Masters	48	49.5
Specialist	24	24.7
Doctorate	3	3.1
Total Years as an Educator		
0-3	12	12.2
4-10	27	27.6
11-15	15	15.3
16-20	17	17.3
More than 20	27	27.6
Total Years as an Educator in Current School District		
0-3	20	20.4
4-10	33	33.7
11-15	17	17.3
16-20	11	11.2
More than 20	17	17.3
Total Years as an Educator in Current School		
0-3	44	45.4
4-6	23	23.7
7-10	7	7.2
11-15	8	8.2
More than 15	15	15.5
Current Level of Assignment in School District		
Pre-K	3	3.1
Elementary	35	36.5
Middle School	27	28.1
High School	25	26
Other	6	6.3
Total Number of Minority Each Had in K-12		
0-3	20	21.7
4-6	23	25
7-10	23	25
11-15	13	14.1
More than 15	13	14.1
Original Geographic Area		
This Community	29	30.2
A Neighboring Community	13	13.5
Another Part of Georgia	16	16.7
Another State	31	32.3
Another Country	7	7.3

Table 2 is a detailed description of the interview participants in this study. Of the 98 teachers who completed and returned the survey, 37 of them returned the index card expressing their willingness to participate in an interview with the researcher. Ten individuals were randomly selected to be interviewed which consisted of eight women and two men. Teachers varied in age with one being 26-30 years old, four being 31-40 years old, two being 41-50 years old, and three being older than 50. In regard to race/ethnicity, eight of the participants were African-American, one was Asian, and one was Hispanic. Both of the males were African-American. Of the ten interview participants, one held a Bachelor degree, seven held a Masters degree, and two held a Specialist degree. The range of years as an educator was: one with 0-3 years of experience, four with 4-10 years experience, two with 11-15 years experience, one with 16-20 years experience, and two with more than 20 years experience. As for the total years as an educator in the current school district which was being used for the research study, four have been employed 0-3 years, three have been employed 4-10 years, one has been employed 11-15 years, and two have been employed with this school system for more than 20 years. As for the total years as an educator in the current school in which participants teach, seven of the respondents were in the 0-3 year range, and one respondent in each of the following categories: 4-6 years, 7-10 years, and more than 15 years in their current school. The current level of teaching assignment for the interview participants was: one in Pre-K, three in elementary school, four in middle school, and two in high school. The total number of minority teachers that each of the respondents had in K-12 varied as well with one having 0-3 minority teachers, one having 4-6 minority teachers, four having 7-10 minority teachers, one having 11-15 minority teachers, and

three having more than 15 minority teachers while they were students. The geographic area of which participants were from originally also differed: two from the current community, one from a neighboring community, four from another part of Georgia, and three from another state.

Table 2

Frequency Distribution for Minority Teacher Interview Participants

Characteristic	n	% of population
Sex		
Female	8	80
Male	2	20
Age		
20-25	0	0
26-30	1	10
31-40	4	40
41-50	2	20
51 or older	3	30
Race/Ethnicity		
African-American	8	80
Asian	1	10
Hispanic	1	10
Other	0	0
Highest Degree		
Bachelor	1	10
Masters	7	70
Specialist	2	20
Doctorate	0	0
Total Years as an Educator		
0-3	1	10
4-10	4	40
11-15	2	20
16-20	1	10
More than 20	2	20
Total Years as an Educator in Current School District		
0-3	4	40
4-10	3	30
11-15	1	10
16-20	0	0
More than 20	2	20
Total Years as an Educator in Current School		
0-3	7	70

Table 2
(continued)

4-6	1	10
7-10	1	10
11-15	0	0
More than 15	1	10
Current Level of Assignment in School District		
Pre-K	1	10
Elementary	3	30
Middle School	4	40
High School	2	20
Other	0	0
Total Number of Minority Each Had in K-12		
0-3	1	10
4-6	1	10
7-10	4	40
11-15	1	10
More than 15	3	30
Original Geographic Area		
This Community	2	20
A Neighboring Community	1	10
Another Part of Georgia	4	40
Another State	3	30
Another Country	0	0

So that the demographics of the teachers interviewed will be clear when the findings are presented, each teacher was assigned a number and will be referred to in this sense throughout this section.

Teacher 1

Teacher 1 is a female, African-American, elementary school teacher originally from this community and is older than 50. She has a Masters degree with approximately 30 years as an educator all being in this school system. She has been in her current school for less than four years, and had approximately seven to ten minority teachers when she was a student. In fact, she went to school during segregation and did not have a white teacher or go to school with children other than African American until she was in the

eighth grade. While she considered going into radiology, she followed the traditional path into teaching by going straight to college from high school and getting her teaching degree. Her decision to teach was influenced by the fact that her mother was a teacher.

Teacher 2

Teacher 2 is a female, Asian, elementary school teacher originally from another state, and is between 31-40 years old. She has a Masters degree with four-ten years as an educator. She has been in the current school district as well as in her current school for less than four years, and had zero to three minority teachers when she was a student. She, too, followed the traditional path into teaching.

Teacher 3

Teacher 3 is a female, African-American, middle school teacher originally from another state and is between 31-40 years old. She has a Specialist degree with four-ten years as an educator. She has been in the current school district as well as her current school for seven-ten years, and had more than 15 minority teachers when she was a student. She followed a non traditional path into teaching by first pursuing an engineering degree before taking a break from college in her junior year.

Teacher 4

Teacher 4 is a female, African-American, elementary school teacher originally from a neighboring community and is between 31-40 years old. She has a Masters degree with four-ten years as an educator. She has been in the current school district as well as her current school for less than four years. Due to being raised in a military family and doing lots of traveling, she had a very diverse group of teachers with over 15 of them being minorities. She followed the traditional path into teaching.

Teacher 5

Teacher 5 is a male, African-American, high school teacher originally from another state and is older than 50. He has a Specialist degree with 11-15 years as an educator. He has been in the current school district as well as in his current school for less than four years, and had four to six minority teachers when he was a student. He followed a non traditional path into teaching by earning an art degree, and then working in the airline business for numerous years, before making a commitment to become a teacher.

Teacher 6

Teacher 6 is a female, African-American, middle school teacher originally from another part of Georgia who moved to this community in the 5th grade, and is between 41-50 years old. She has a Masters degree with four-ten years as an educator. She has been in the current school district four-ten years as well and in her current school less than four years. She had approximately 11-15 minority teachers when she was a student. She followed the non traditional route into teaching by earning a degree in sociology, and then becoming a substitute teacher.

Teacher 7

Teacher 7 is a female, Hispanic, middle school teacher originally from another state. She is from a military family, and is between 26-30 years old. She has a Masters degree with zero-three years as an educator, as well as in the current school system and current school. She had approximately seven-ten minority teachers when she was a student. However, none were Hispanic. She followed a non traditional path into teaching with a biology degree.

Teacher 8

Teacher 8 is a male, African-American, middle school teacher originally from another part of Georgia and is 41-50 years old. He has a Masters degree with 16-20 years as an educator. He has been in the current school district four-ten years and in his current school four-six years. He had approximately seven-ten minority teachers when he was a student. He also followed a non traditional path into teaching earning his bachelor degree in business administration.

Teacher 9

Teacher 9 is a female, African-American, high school teacher originally from another part of Georgia and is older than 50. She has a Masters degree with approximately 30 years as an educator in this school system. She has been in her current school for approximately 30 years as well. She had approximately seven to ten minority teachers when she was a student. She followed a non traditional path into teaching with degrees in political science and public administration.

Teacher 10

Teacher 10 is a female, African-American, Pre-K teacher originally from this community, and is between 31-40 years old. She has a Masters degree with 11-15 years as an educator in the current school system. She has been in her current school for less than four years, and had more than 15 minority teachers when she was a student. When deciding on what career to enter, she was torn between psychology and education. However, she ended up going to college to become a teacher. Being a Pre-K teacher, she thinks she has the best of both worlds with education and psychology since there is so much parent involvement in the Pre-K program.

Research Findings

The researcher entered the survey responses into SPSS for data analysis. The survey had a four point likert scale for each item: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), and strongly agree (4). Even with the four point scale, some participants circled the line halfway between disagree and agree to take a more neutral stance. The researcher decided to include these neutral responses as well instead of discarding them. The mean, median, and mode scores of the responses were determined. The standard deviation was also calculated to determine the variation, if any, in the responses. The frequency distribution was also determined for each questionnaire item. Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of each survey item.

Table 3

Frequency Distribution of Questionnaire Items

Item	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		(Neutral)		Agree (3)		Strongly Agree (4)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Q1	19	19.6	18	18.6			41	42.3	19	19.6
Q2	20	21.1	26	27.4			33	34.7	16	16.8
Q3	21	21.9	29	30.2			36	37.5	10	10.4
Q4	1	1.0	2	2.1			23	23.7	71	73.2
Q5	13	13.4	26	26.8			19	19.6	39	40.2
Q6	41	41.8	27	27.6			9	9.2	21	21.4
Q7	35	36.1	27	27.8			20	20.6	15	15.5
Q8	53	54.1	18	18.4			18	18.4	9	9.2
Q9	0	0	6	5.8			38	39.2	53	54.6
Q10	29	29.6	32	32.7			23	23.5	14	14.3
Q11	6	6.2	13	13.4			36	37.1	42	43.3
Q12	2	2.1	15	15.6			35	36.5	44	45.8
Q13	3	3.2	10	10.5	1	1.1	33	34.7	48	50.5
Q14	22	23.2	43	45.3			22	23.2	8	8.4
Q15	39	39.8	44	44.9			15	15.3	0	0
Q16	1	1.1	22	23.2			45	47.4	27	28.4
Q17	3	3.1	2	2.1			35	36.1	57	58.8
Q18	3	3.2	15	16.1	1	1.1	27	29.0	47	50.5
Q19	0	0	2	2.1			35	36.1	60	61.9

Table 3
(continued)

Item	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		(Neutral)		Agree (3)		Strongly Agree (4)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Q20	0	0	1	1.0			27	27.8	69	71.1
Q21	3	3.1	7	7.3	1	1.0	45	46.9	40	41.7
Q22	16	16.7	38	39.6	1	1.0	31	32.3	10	10.4
Q23	35	36.1	21	21.6			21	21.6	20	20.6
Q24	52	53.6	34	35.1			5	5.2	6	6.2
Q25	5	5.4	22	23.9	1	1.1	37	40.2	27	29.3
Q26	53	54.1	33	33.7			5	5.1	7	7.1
Q27	28	29.8	37	39.4			25	26.6	4	4.3
Q28	4	4.2	7	7.3	1	1.0	55	57.3	29	30.2
Q29	3	3.1	4	4.1	4	4.1	51	52.6	35	36.1
Q30	9	9.8	33	35.9	3	3.3	38	41.3	9	9.8

As a means of reporting the data, the researcher will present the findings from the research by responding to the four individual research questions driving the study.

Research Question 1

What personal background and life experiences do minority teachers identify as contributing to their teaching career? There was a total of twenty questionnaire items and three interview questions related to research question one. Tables 4-7 show the twenty questionnaire items with the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation for each. Table 4 shows the results for questionnaire items one through five. The first three questions were related to receiving encouragement to become a teacher. The mean for these three items fell close to the middle between disagree and agree which means that while some were not encouraged by their family, community, and peers, others were encouraged by someone to enter into the teaching profession. Most participants responded that they agreed to receiving encouragement from their family, community, and peers. However, most participants strongly agreed that their family was proud of

them when they became a teacher: 73.2% marked strongly agreed and 23.7% marked agreed. Approximately, 60% of participants agreed or strongly agreed of being aware of the minority teacher shortage when they went into teaching.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 1-5

Q1: I was encouraged by my family to become a teacher.

Q2: I was encouraged by my community to become a teacher.

Q3: I was encouraged by my peers to become a teacher.

Q4: My family was proud that I became a teacher.

Q5: I was aware of the minority teacher shortage when I decided to go into teaching.

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
N	Valid	97	95	96	97	97
	Missing	1	3	2	1	1
Mean		2.6186	2.4737	2.3646	3.6907	2.8660
Median		3.0000	3.0000	2.0000	4.0000	3.0000
Mode		3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		1.01492	1.00892	.94166	.56570	1.09572

Table 5 shows the results for questionnaire items six through ten. 69.4% of the respondents did not know that they wanted to become a teacher before they completed high school. In fact, the response selected most often was strongly disagree. Even more enlightening was the fact only 30.6% of the respondents decided in college that they wanted to teach. The majority strongly disagreed with receiving financial incentives to complete their teaching degree with only 27.6% receiving some type of financial benefit. While the research showed that many minority students did not receive the academic background and knowledge skills to be successful in college, this was not the case with the participants in this study. 54.6% strongly agreed with being adequately prepared for college followed by those who agreed at 39.2%. In regard to having negative experiences

in school due to being a minority, the majority of the responded were not in agreement with this statement: 29.6% strongly disagreed and 32.7% disagreed.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 6-10

Q6: I knew before completing high school that I wanted to be a teacher.

Q7: I decided in college that I wanted to be a teacher.

Q8: I was offered financial incentives to complete teacher education requirements.

Q9: I received the necessary academic background and knowledge skills to be successful in college.

Q10: I had negative experiences in school due to being a minority.

		Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
N	Valid	98	97	98	97	98
	Missing	0	1	0	1	0
Mean		2.1020	2.1546	1.8265	3.4845	2.2245
Median		2.0000	2.0000	1.0000	4.0000	2.0000
Mode		1.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		1.17086	1.08340	1.03571	.61430	1.03077

Table 6 shows the results for questionnaire items 11-13, 15, and 17. While many minorities have experienced teachers not having high expectations for them, this was not true for the participants in this study. Approximately 80% felt that their K-12 teachers had high expectations for them. Even more important, approximately 82% found it was easy for them to build relationships with their teachers with the most popular response being strongly agree. 85.2% agreed or strongly agreed that a teacher is highly respected in their culture. Pay was not what influenced the participants to become teachers. In fact, 84.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed with pay being an influential factor into their decision to become a teacher. Approximately 95% felt that teaching is a way for them to give back to their community with the majority strongly agreeing with this statement.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 11-13, 15 and 17

Q11: My K-12 teachers had high expectations for me.

Q12: It was easy for me to build relationships with my teachers.

Q13: In my culture, a teacher is highly respected.

Q15: Pay influenced me to become a teacher.

Q17: My becoming a teacher is one way to give back to my community.

		Q11	Q12	Q13	Q15	Q17
N	Valid	97	96	95	98	97
	Missing	1	2	3	0	1
Mean		3.1753	3.2604	3.3316	1.7551	3.5052
Median		3.0000	3.0000	4.0000	2.0000	4.0000
Mode		4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		.88988	.79796	.79764	.70435	.69408

Table 7 shows the results for questionnaire items 18-21 and 23. Approximately 80% of the minority teachers felt it was important academically for minority students to have teachers “like” them. The minority teachers also felt strongly that they are role models for minority students with 36.1% agreeing and 61.9 % strongly agreeing with this statement for a total of 97.9% in agreement. In addition to being role models for minority students, the teachers also felt that they serve as role models for non minority students as well with 99% in agreement with most strongly agreeing. 87.6% of the minority teachers felt that they understand better than most teachers the needs of minority students due to their background and experiences. As far as following a traditional career path into the teaching profession, the responses were split: 35 teachers strongly disagreed, 21 disagreed, 21 agreed, and 20 strongly agreed.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 18-21 and 23

Q18: It is important academically for minority students to have “like” teachers.

Q19: Minority teachers are role models for minority students.

Q20: Minority teachers are role models for both minority and majority students.

Q21: As a minority teacher, I understand better than most teachers the needs of minority students due to my background and experiences.

Q23: I followed a traditional career path into the teaching profession.

		Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q23
N	Valid	93	97	97	96	97
	Missing	5	1	1	2	1
Mean		3.2742	3.5979	3.7010	3.2760	2.2680
Median		4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	2.0000
Mode		4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	1.00
Std. Deviation		.85502	.53346	.48229	.73938	1.15934

The teachers who were interviewed had some interesting stories to share related to their background and experiences that contributed to them becoming teachers. Three of the ten teachers interviewed had mothers who were teachers. Several mentioned having a love or passion for children so teaching was their calling. Only four out of the ten teachers followed a traditional path into teaching, meaning they went straight from high school to college to earn an education degree. The other six followed a non traditional route.

Teacher 3 originally went to college to become an engineer. However, in her junior year of college, the physics and chemistry courses became very difficult for her to handle, so she decided to take a break from school. When she started working, all the jobs that she received were somehow related to education– summer camps, summer programs, tutoring, day care, after-school programs, and substituting. As a result of all of

these experiences around children, she felt comfortable, and decided to become a teacher. She completed her degree in education, and became a math teacher.

When Teacher 5 got out of high school, he went to college and earned a degree in art. Due to difficulty finding a job related to his major, he substitute taught. However, he stated that he was selfish at that young age, and decided that teaching was not for him. It was then that he went to work in the airline business. When the airline company that he was working for went out of business, he decided to get an art education certificate so that he could teach. Well, he taught for two years, and decided once again that teaching was not for him, so he went to work for another airline company. After working for two more airlines that went out of business, he decided to try teaching one more time, and the third time it clicked as he has been teaching for over a decade.

Teacher 6 originally went to college, and earned a degree in sociology. Eleven years after college, she moved back to this community. Not sure of the direction she wanted to take, she started substituting. She did that on a daily basis for a year, and then became a paraprofessional in the school system. It was during this time that she took the necessary courses to become certified as a teacher. Due to a local scholarship program, the school system paid for her teaching coursework which in turn required a three year commitment on her part to teach for the school system.

The original path in college for Teacher 7 was to become a doctor, an optometrist. However, she ended up with a major in biology. She moved to this area due to her desire to be near the coast thinking she would be able to get a job related to her major. When that did not work out, she ended up in the automobile industry as a car salesperson. After a year of doing this, she began pursuing teaching due to already having a science degree.

She took the GACE (Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators) and became certified to teach.

Teacher 8 originally earned a degree in business administration, and began working on the university level. Due to some of his responsibilities on the college level, he got to experience working with students and also some teaching. Because his mother was a teacher, he thought teaching was not something that he would go into. However, he found out that he actually enjoyed teaching while working at the university, and went back to school to become certified as a teacher.

Due to her mother being a teacher as well, Teacher 9 actually did not intend to be a teacher either. She went to college and earned degrees in political science and public administration. After completing an internship in public administration, she began substituting out of necessity for an income and found out that she enjoyed it. While completing a long-term substitute position, she decided to take some educational courses so that she would be able to better help the students who were “falling through the cracks” and became certified to teach.

Many of the interviewees discussed teacher expectations as an important factor for them. The majority of the teachers did not feel like they were treated any differently by their teachers because of their minority status. They felt their teachers, who were mainly white, had high expectations for them, and held them to the same standards as everybody else. Teacher 1 had only African American teachers through 7th grade. She referenced the fact that prior to integration, she had very firm, very strict teachers with high expectations for everyone. She does not remember special education being an option:

I don't ever remember there being a special ed. when I was in elementary school.

I don't remember the expectation being that some kids do it, and some kids couldn't do it. I think the expectations were high and expected- the same expectations for everybody.

One of the questions in the interview was "who or what caused you to want to become a teacher?" Teacher 3 shared the story of her 7th grade teacher who was white as the one who encouraged her to do more than just the academic part of school. She pushed her into academic clubs and organizations. "She saw in me that I had a knack for the academic clubs and she encouraged me. Actually, she initiated a club because of me which was the Debate Team."

Teacher 4 stated that she knew since middle school that she wanted to become a teacher. She enthusiastically discussed her middle school chorus teacher, and how rare it was to see a "black lady doing chorus and music and being so awesome at it." Because of this teacher's apparent love for what she did, she instilled an instant desire for a young child to follow in her footsteps to teach kids what she loved to do. This chorus teacher became a mentor for Teacher 4 by guiding and coaching her all the way through high school and also into college as she helped her pursue her dream of teaching.

The story told by Teacher 5 showed what an inspiration a teacher can be in the life of a child. Teacher 5 is a high school teacher in his mid-fifties who shared the story of his 6th grade teacher. It was apparent that this teacher had such a positive impact in his life as Teacher 5 got up during the interview to get something off of his desk. He brought back to the table his 6th grade class picture from 1965 that he keeps on his desk. Sitting up tall on the front row in the middle of all of his students was his teacher, Mr. Brown, a

white man who definitely had a military look about him. Teacher 5 shared that Mr. Brown was a WWII Army Air Force Veteran who was also a photographer. Teacher 5 spoke with such admiration about Mr. Brown. “He was the kindest and the gentlest thing you ever saw in your life but still, I mean when it came time to lay the law down, we knew the law!” However, even more important was the relationships he built with his students. “He found everybody’s gift in that room. He knew his crew, and had a rapport with every last one of us.” Teacher 5 talked about all of the unique learning experiences that were naturally part of Mr. Brown’s classroom which included making movies, photography, aviation, etc. The cameras used in class were even his personal belongings:

It was unheard of for a white man to give a little black kid his professional camera and then tell him to go outside on the playground and take pictures. Then, when he’s done taking all the pictures to bring the camera back in so that he could teach him how to develop them.”

Teacher 5 talked about how the classroom had a little room in the back which was intended to be used as the teacher’s office. However, Mr. Brown set it up as a dark room instead so that his students could go back there and develop pictures. For the passion that Mr. Brown had for teaching and passed on to his students, Teacher 5 keeps him on his desk to this day. “I am like, if he could pull that off in the 6th grade, surely I can teach anybody that comes through that door.”

Research Question 2

What reasons do minority teachers give for deciding to teach in the school district as well as the school in which they are currently employed? Table 8 shows the results for questionnaire items 5, 8, 15, 17, and 24. Four of these questions also related to research

question one. Due to 60% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing of being aware of the minority teacher shortage when they went into teaching, this could have contributed to their decision to teach in their current school district as well as current school if they felt there was a shortage of minority teachers in this area. With less than 28% receiving financial incentives to complete their teaching degree, financial incentives are not why minorities are teaching in this school system. The same thing is true of pay. Teachers are not teaching in the select school district because of the pay they receive. However, the minority teachers overwhelming view teaching as a way to give back to their community which may contribute to where they are currently teaching. As far as being initially recruited into teaching because of their minority status, 88.7% disagreed with this statement with over half that strongly disagreed.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 5, 8, 15, 17, and 24

Q5: I was aware of the minority teacher shortage when I decided to go into teaching.

Q8: I was offered financial incentives to complete teacher education requirements.

Q15: Pay influenced me to become a teacher.

Q17: My becoming a teacher is one way to give back to my community.

Q24: I was initially recruited into teaching because I am a minority.

		Q5	Q8	Q15	Q17	Q24
N	Valid	97	98	98	97	97
	Missing	1	0	0	1	1
Mean		2.8660	1.8265	1.7551	3.5052	1.6392
Median		3.0000	1.0000	2.0000	4.0000	1.0000
Mode		4.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.00
Std. Deviation		1.09572	1.03571	.70435	.69408	.84392

Table 9 shows the results for questionnaire items 26 and 28-30. Only 12.2% of the minority teachers currently in this select school system were encouraged to apply to this school system due to their minority status. This means the majority of the minority teachers are not teaching in this school system due to being recruited because of simply being a minority. 87.5% of the participants felt that they receive the necessary support from their colleagues in their current school which may be why many of them have chosen to teach where they are currently teaching. An even higher percentage felt like they receive the necessary support from the administrators in their school with 88.7% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Without adequate support in their school, many teachers look for opportunities elsewhere. However, the feelings were split as far as the school system providing the necessary support for minority teachers with approximately half disagreeing and the other half agreeing.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 26 and 28-30

Q26: I was encouraged to apply to this school system due to my minority status.

Q28: I receive the support needed from colleagues in my school.

Q29: I receive the support needed from the administrators in my school.

Q30: My school system provides the necessary support for minority teachers.

		Q26	Q28	Q29	Q30
N	Valid	98	96	97	92
	Missing	0	2	1	6
Mean		1.6531	3.1406	3.2371	2.5272
Median		1.0000	3.0000	3.0000	3.0000
Mode		1.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		.87464	.72802	.69632	.79960

In response to interview questions related to the reasons that minorities choose to teach in their current school district as well as their current school, having a comfort zone was overwhelming the number one reason mentioned. Often, having family and a support system in a community makes a huge difference. Many of the interviewees are teaching in this school system in Southeast Georgia due to their family being here. One of the teachers came to this school system due to her husband being transferred to this community. Another teacher ended up here from another state due to her parents moving here. Even though she was out of college when they moved to Georgia, she decided to come with them due to wanting that family connection. Another teacher grew up in Atlanta but moved here in the 5th grade. She went to college in Atlanta and lived there for approximately ten years, but then ended up back in this community due to her family being here. Two of the teachers interviewed were originally from this community and went all the way through school in this school district. They came here to teach because it was home for them. One of the teachers said that comfort levels are important, and she finds comfort in small towns. Teacher 9 stated, “It has a lot to do with comfort, where you grew up, familiarity, and those kinds of things.” Teacher 7 agreed that people tend to go towards what they are comfortable with and what they know. “For someone who is of any nationality, I think we tend to go to those that appear like us, because when they appear like us, they probably have the same traditions as we do.” The need for people to feel connected was evidenced throughout all of the interviews.

As far as the school one decides to teach at in the community, comfort is also an issue. The teacher often decides “because of their hearts” and what feels comfortable and right. Teacher 4 thinks that there are several factors that come into play: the number of

minority teachers on staff, the location of the school, the administration, and the demographics of the school. Teacher 2 thinks that minority teachers have to feel accepted in their schools, not only by their colleagues but by the children as well. Feeling accepted leads to being comfortable in that environment.

For others, it is about serving their community. Having grown up locally in this community, Teacher 10 views teaching as a way to give back to her community. She proudly talked about former students that she taught in Pre-K who are now in gifted classes and others who are now graduating and moving onto being successful in life. Teacher 3 feels that many teachers want to give back or they want to contribute to a certain area or community, thus determining where they teach.

Support was another factor mentioned is important. Teacher 1 openly shared her struggles as a minority teacher when she started teaching in the 1970s and how the lack of support was an issue:

It was a different kind of pressure being an African American during the time that I started teaching because not only was my intelligence questioned but my abilities, too. I have always told African American teachers that I felt that I had to be twice as good as the worst white teacher in order to be considered half as good. She experienced this lack of support across the board from parents, students, colleagues, and administrators. It was to the point that after just three years of teaching, she decided that she could not handle it any longer and quit. However, she did not stay out of teaching long, and came back. When asked if there has been a difference as time has gone by over the years, she said, "Yes, it is a new and different generation today."

Teacher 1 commented on how the principal can be a determining factor as to where a teacher chooses to teach. It is important for the principal not to be in a power struggle with the teachers. The principal can create a positive working environment with the goal of getting children where they need to be and doing whatever it takes to get that done. As a result, it becomes a wonderful situation for everyone as everyone comes together as a team. Two of the teachers interviewed had recently transferred to other schools due to differences with their administrators. Teacher 8 expressed having a good relationship with the principal as well as having the principal's support is essential: "If [minority teachers] are comfortable with the principal, and feel that person is someone they can go to, somebody they can rely on, somebody that will provide what is needed to do their job, they will go."

Teacher 5 had a unique reason for deciding to teach in this school system as well as at his current school. He is involved in a specialized program at the high school level. He was actually recruited due to his experience with the program, and viewed the job as an opportunity to "try a lot of out-of-the-box" ideas. Due to the program being new to the community, he saw it as a "chance to go somewhere where the answer to all those possibility questions might be, [yea, let's try it.]" While he had experience with this particular program in another school in the state, he felt like the program he created here would not be a "clone" but would "have its own personality and its own entity" for the purpose of best serving this community.

Teacher 6 was actually recruited by the previous Human Resources Director because the system was trying to hire more minority teachers. As previously mentioned, she had a degree in sociology. Due to being a regular substitute in the school system and

having a college degree, she was approached by the Human Resources Director to become a teacher. When she became a paraprofessional in the school system, she began taking the necessary courses to become certified as a teacher because of a local scholarship program with the school system. The school system paid for her teaching coursework which in turn required a three year commitment on her part to teach for the school system. It became a win-win situation for both parties.

Teacher 7 also ended up in this school system for a different reason. She actually had a degree in science and was drawn to this area due to wanting to be near the coast. Her original plan was to get a job with the Department of National Resources. However, when that did not come about, she decided that with her science background, teaching would be a logical choice for her.

Research Question 3

What are minority teachers' perceptions of the factors that contribute to the shortage of minority teachers in Southeast Georgia? Table 10 shows the results for questionnaire items one through four and eight. All five of these questions also related to research question one, and question eight also related to research question two. The first three questions were related to receiving encouragement to become a teacher. Without the necessary encouragement, many minorities will not choose teaching as a career. While approximately 10% more received encouragement from their families over their community and peers, the support received fell close to the middle with approximately half disagreeing and half agreeing. Even though teaching may not have been the route their family members encouraged them to take, 96.9% of the teachers stated that their family members were proud of them once they did become a teacher. While the lack of

financial resources can contribute to the minority teacher shortage, 72.4% of the minority teachers surveyed went into teaching without receiving financial incentives to complete their teaching degree.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 1-4 and 8

Q1: I was encouraged by my family to become a teacher.

Q2: I was encouraged by my community to become a teacher.

Q3: I was encouraged by my peers to become a teacher.

Q4: My family was proud that I became a teacher.

Q8: I was offered financial incentives to complete teacher education requirements.

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q8
N	Valid	97	95	96	98	98
	Missing	1	3	2	0	0
Mean		2.6186	2.4737	2.3646	3.6907	1.8265
Median		3.0000	3.0000	2.0000	4.0000	1.0000
Mode		3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	1.00
Std. Deviation		1.01492	1.00892	.94166	.56570	1.03571

Table 11 shows the results for questionnaire items 9-13. All five of these questions also related to research question one. While not having the necessary academic background and knowledge skills to be successful in college can deter many minorities from entering the teaching profession, this was not true for the minority teachers in this study as evidenced by the 93.8% that agreed or strongly agreed that they were adequately prepared for college. Negative experiences in school can also contribute to minorities not entering the teaching profession. 37.8% of the teachers had negative experiences in K-12 due to their minority status. However, they entered into teaching regardless of the negativity they experienced. Without high expectations from some teachers, many minorities do not consider teaching as an option. However, only 20% of minority teachers in this study experienced the lack of high expectations from their teachers in K-

12. Student-teacher relationships are also crucial in students reaching their fullest potential. Approximately 17.7% of the minority teachers had difficulty building relationships with their teachers. While some cultures do not highly respect teachers and thus deter students from entering the teaching profession, only 14.8% of the minority teachers in this survey felt that teachers were not respected in their culture.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 9-13

Q9: I received the necessary academic background and knowledge skills to be successful in college.

Q10: I had negative experiences in school due to being a minority.

Q11: My K-12 teachers had high expectations for me.

Q12: It was easy for me to build relationships with my teachers.

Q13: In my culture, a teacher is highly respected.

		Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13
N	Valid	97	98	97	96	95
	Missing	1	0	1	2	3
Mean		3.4845	2.2245	3.1753	3.2604	3.3316
Median		4.0000	2.0000	3.0000	3.0000	4.0000
Mode		4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		.61430	1.03077	.88988	.79796	.79764

Table 12 shows the results for questionnaire items 14, 16, 22, and 25. In regard to minority college graduates not choosing to teach because of low prestige, 31.6% agree or strongly agree with this statement. With this being approximately one-third of the sample, low prestige is viewed as a factor that is contributing to the minority teacher shortage. In addition, approximately three-fourths of the sample, 75.8%, felt that a major factor in the minority teacher shortage is that minority college graduates go into other fields other than education due to higher pay. The teacher certification test can also be an obstacle for minorities who want to teach with 42.7% of the minority teachers surveyed agreeing or

strongly agreeing that this is a contributing factor as well. As far as recruitment of minority teachers, 69.5% of the minority teachers agree or strongly agree that schools do not actively recruit minority teachers.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 14, 16, 22, and 25

Q14: Minority college graduates do not choose teaching as a career because of low prestige.

Q16: Minority college graduates go into fields other than education because of pay.

Q22: The teacher certification test is an obstacle for minorities who want to teach.

Q25: Schools often do not actively recruit minority teachers.

		Q14	Q16	Q22	Q25
N	Valid	95	95	96	92
	Missing	3	3	2	6
Mean		2.1684	3.0316	2.3698	2.9402
Median		2.0000	3.0000	2.0000	3.0000
Mode		2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		.88309	.75021	.88331	.87027

During the interviews, there were several reasons that were repeatedly given for the minority teacher shortage. However, money was the top factor as to why minorities do not choose teaching as a career thus contributing to the minority teacher shortage. With females becoming more independent, they are seeking jobs that pay a lot more than teaching so that they can provide for themselves. Teacher 7 mentioned how she was one of the first in her family to go to college, and her mom had higher aspirations for her than being a teacher, not that teaching was not an honorable position, but not one that was a high money making position. As a result, she was encouraged by her family to aim for something higher such as an engineer, doctor, lawyer, or even an officer in the military.

The same was true for Teacher 3. While teaching is viewed as a noble profession in her culture, the money is not there. Due to the pay, people with degrees tend to lean towards medicine, law, or engineering.

Teacher 10 mentioned that teaching is not a career you choose for financial status but something one really wants to do because of the desire to help people. “It has to be something that is near and dear to your heart, something that you really have a love for, but not for the money.”

Teacher 1 pointed out that while her generation was more interested in the rewards of the job; today’s generation is more interested in what a job is going to pay. She shared the story of her niece who went to college to get a business degree and stated her goal from the beginning of her college career: to get her first job making \$60,000 a year. “College students have these preconceived notions of business as big business and big bucks.”

Teacher 5 mentioned that many times minorities are not the most affluent part of the population so their aspiration is get a larger part of the world’s wealth. Therefore, minorities tend to not go into teaching due to wanting a dramatic change from what they have known, and there is no evidence that teaching will bring about the high leverage change that many minorities seek.

Teacher 3 mentioned that sometimes minorities cannot financially afford to seek an education degree due to the requirements of the program such as the time needed for classroom observations and student teaching. For some, it would mean taking time off from their regular jobs and even quitting their regular jobs to student teach. This would

be a burden for some as they can not afford to leave their current jobs when it is their source of income.

Besides money, another reason that was mentioned was the difficulty of the required coursework as well as teaching testing requirements. Teacher 3 felt like many minorities struggle with the college coursework, especially the math and science. When they decide to go to college, math and science is a hurdle for them. In addition, Teacher 9 mentioned that testing is an obstacle for many minorities. She felt that due to testing anxiety, many minorities perform poorly on tests and are therefore shut out of many schools that they would like to attend. She also made reference to the fact that many historically black colleges and universities have been put on probation due to the low tests scores in the Education Department.

In addition, two teachers felt like the state of today's youth plays a role in the minority teacher shortage. Teacher 4 mentioned that many students do not have an interest in education and do not see the importance of it. They have grown up in home environments that do not value education so they tend to follow in the footsteps of their parents. Teacher 6 stated that survival is the top priority for many students due to their surroundings, and that education is at the bottom. As a result, teaching this generation of students has become more difficult due to trying to meet so many more of students' needs versus just their education. For many people, they do not want all of the extra responsibilities and burdens that come with teaching today's youth.

As far as a particular factor contributing to the minority teacher shortage specific to Southeast Georgia, the lack of social life comes into play. Teacher 8 has friends who teach in Atlanta, Macon, and Henry County. He thinks this is due primarily to the richer

cultural experiences that they can have in the bigger cities that are not available in rural or small areas. Teacher 6 thinks that many minorities do not come to areas like Southeast Georgia due to their desire to have a life outside of work and wanting social outlets and cultural activities. Teacher 6 stated:

A lot of it has to do with it socially because I think that most people fail to realize it is very, very hard if you were in an environment where you are a minority. At some point in time you have to have some balance because you are constantly fighting that battle all day to prove yourself. You have to be able to turn that off. If you can't turn that off when you go home, in the big scheme of things, it is not worth it.

Teacher 8 also pointed out that the demographics or the population of the community makes a difference with the number of minority teachers. In school systems that have a large minority community, there tends to be more minority teachers. Also, having historically black colleges nearby can make a difference as neighboring communities will have higher numbers of black teachers due to graduates choosing to stay in the area to teach.

Research Question 4

What are minority teachers' perceptions of how school districts in Southeast Georgia recruit and how they can increase the number of minority teachers? Table 13 shows the results for questionnaire items 25-27 which all deal specifically with recruitment. As previously mentioned, only 30% of the minority teachers surveyed felt that schools actively recruit minority teachers. Only 12.2% of the minority teachers currently in this select school system were encouraged to apply to this school system due

to their minority status. By far, the majority of teachers, 69.1%, felt that the select school system does not do an adequate job of recruiting minority teachers.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics of Minority Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items 25-27

Q25: Schools often do not actively recruit minority teachers.

Q26: I was encouraged to apply to this school system due to my minority status.

Q27: My school system does an adequate job of recruiting minority teachers.

		Q25	Q26	Q27
N	Valid	92	98	94
	Missing	6	0	4
Mean		2.9402	1.6531	2.0532
Median		3.0000	1.0000	2.0000
Mode		3.00	1.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		.87027	.87464	.85970

70% of the interviewees mentioned the importance of making the school system's presence known at colleges. However, certain colleges need to be targeted versus repeated visits to colleges in this area due to a convenience factor. The minority teachers felt that visits need to be made to historically black colleges and those that are notorious for having minority students. It was also pointed out that every college has its specialty whether its medicine, music, or education, so the district needs to go to colleges with a strong emphasis in education. When colleges host job fairs, go more than one time of year since different students could be recruited. One teacher felt that it is a little too late to start recruiting at spring job fairs as many upcoming graduates already have an idea of where they want to go, so it is important to start early. Another teacher also mentioned that is good to start building relationships with students before they are ready to graduate and leave the universities. By starting in their sophomore and junior years, a district can

have a head start on recruiting. Also, in relation to job fairs, several teachers felt it is necessary to have different races represented at the school system's table versus all whites or all blacks. A mixed panel can show that the school system is multi-cultural.

The next popular recommendation for recruiting minority teachers to Southeast Georgia was the need to sell the community as well as the surrounding area as a whole package to potential minority teachers. By pointing out how close some of the smaller communities are to the bigger cities such as Jacksonville and Savannah could be a lure for minority teachers who are looking for more options socially and culturally. While visiting the bigger cities would be convenient, living in a smaller area could be a more desirable place to raise a family as one could be at a grocery store, the hospital, a church, or even a school within a matter of minutes. It was also mentioned that a better job could be done of matching up areas to areas that could easily be compared and contrasted. Some people may be interested to come to Southeast Georgia if things are highlighted that are different from their current communities- ex. warm climate versus cold climate, outdoor activities versus indoor activities, oceans versus lakes, etc. In fact, Teacher 2 specifically mentioned that is how her family got to this area. After living up north where it was very, very cold and snowy, her parents were looking for somewhere warm to retire. Our local area could appear very attractive in the right market if the system taps the right places.

One teacher expressed her dissatisfaction with the recruiting video done by a local school district that showed horseback riding, golfing, sailing, boating and beaches. Her view was that those activities are not going to attract minorities. She was not saying that minorities do not participate in those things, but her issue was that while the video

showed minority teachers in classrooms, white individuals were shown doing the activities in the community. As a result, minorities could have viewed the video and assumed it was not a community where they would fit in and feel comfortable. Another teacher mentioned that what attracts one person will not attract another. Presentation of the community is important.

In addition to highlighting the community, 40% of the minorities mentioned the need to start recruitment efforts in the local community versus going elsewhere. By making deliberate efforts to recruit minorities into teaching through visits to minority communities, churches, and even Alumni Associations, local community members could become involved in the recruitment efforts as well as being targeted themselves. No one is more familiar with the students in the area and the needs of the community than the local community members. Parents, especially those that are unemployed, could be a good population to start with as many of them may have an interest in teaching as well as the heart for it if they had the guidance from someone to lead them in that direction. One teacher shared that often times it is not until people are in their thirties or forties before they would even consider teaching. If people in the community see the need for minority teachers as well as why they are needed, and offer support to those that have the potential, more minorities may entertain the idea of entering the teaching profession. In the long run, they will be making a difference in the population of people who live around them by ultimately affecting the things they do and the decisions they make.

Having the necessary support systems in place for minority teachers is important both in the school and in the community. One teacher mentioned how some districts have a minority-minority mentor program in which a new minority teacher is paired with

another minority teacher already employed in the school district. Another teacher stated that while minorities being paired together for support could be a bonus, the more important factor is finding the right match to pair together, and that minority status should not be the determining factor. The connection has to be there as well. While support within the school is important, it is also necessary for support systems to be established in the community. One teacher mentioned this community support is even more important when a minority teacher does not have family in the area because living in the south can be tough for a minority.

Other recruitment ideas shared by the majority of the teachers dealt with money. By far, signing bonuses was the most popular idea. Other ideas included: having attractive baseline starting salaries, paying relocation expenses, providing short term housing, and funding tuition for interested parties to get their teaching degrees.

Perhaps the most powerful recruitment technique discussed that does not require any money is teachers themselves. Minority students could be attracted to the teaching profession by good teachers who are attentive to the needs of minorities and who make them feel good about themselves as well as the profession. Teachers have the ability to ignite the motivation and passion in others. Students need to realize that while teachers are not the highest paid professionals, the pay is decent and the benefits are great. However, even more important are the rewards that come from teaching. By having students observe and shadow teachers in their classrooms, teachers can give students a window into teaching by showing them a glimpse of what teaching is all about and what it can be. It is important for students to observe teachers who make learning fun and uplifting so that students will be inspired to want to teach. By teachers taking the time to

tell students as well as other people what teaching is all about and showing them all that it can be, an awareness can be established for the teaching profession, and a spark ignited that may not have otherwise been there.

It was repeatedly mentioned how crucial it is for teachers to build relationships with their students and to serve as positive role models for students who may not otherwise have one in their lives. By teachers getting to actually know their students, they will have the opportunity to better relate to them. One teacher expressed that once teachers figure out what they have in common with a student or what students enjoy, they will have a connection and a little pathway with them so that teaching and learning becomes a natural part of the relationship. Teacher 5 said that if a teacher takes the time to build relationships with students, the content area or subject matter will not be an issue. Once the relationship is built, students will trust the teacher enough to know that what is being taught is worth knowing. In addition, while students may not remember exactly what a teacher taught them, they will remember the teacher as an individual by the words and especially the actions of that individual, and students will tend to mirror those things.

Forty percent of the minority teachers interviewed freely expressed that they felt when looking at recruitment of teachers, the determining factor to hire an individual should not be based simply on race. They felt the number one qualification should be the quality or competency of the teacher versus the race of the teacher. Teacher 3 gave an analogy, that if she was a patient, she would look at a doctor's credentials and how confident the doctor was in helping her become better above the doctor's ethnicity or background.

It was repeatedly mentioned that school systems should not get on the African American band wagon and recruit just African American teachers. All minorities are needed in the school system including Hispanics and Asians due to the fact that it is important to be fair to all children by providing them with a variety of role models. In fact one teacher mentioned that it should not be just about minorities but gender as well as male students need male teachers for role models. She specifically mentioned that even female minority teachers will not treat the minority boys and girls with the equity that they should due to the gender difference. By having teacher diversity in schools, students can experience different teaching styles and individuals who can relate to them on a variety of levels.

Summary

After receiving clearance from the Instructional Review Board at Georgia Southern University, the researcher conducted a mixed methods study to explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia. By surveying and interviewing minority teachers about this relative issue, teachers were able to share their backgrounds, experiences, and thoughts related to the minority teacher shortage in this region along with ideas on how teacher diversity can be increased.

All participants in the study were employed by a school system in Southeast Georgia. While the majority of the participants were African American females, there was much diversity with age, education, experience, and background. Through the survey items, the researcher received input on topics related to the minority teacher shortage through the eyes of the teachers currently employed in the district. However, more in depth knowledge was gained through the one on one interviews conducted with the ten

minority teachers. The four research questions guiding this study were used as the framework for data analysis, and the findings were reported under each research question through the use of tables as well as a general description in narrative form. The results of the analysis of data from both the surveys and interviews showed that while some of the findings go along with the review of literature on this topic, others do not. However, new information was gained specific to this geographic area that can be beneficial in increasing teaching diversity in schools.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter begins with a summary of the study on the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia. Also included are a discussion of the research findings, conclusions and implications based on the findings, recommendations for further research based on the analysis of the data gathered in the study, and the dissemination of the study. This chapter ends with the concluding thoughts of the researcher.

Summary

America's schools are becoming more diverse as the minority student population steadily increases. There is a definite need for high quality teachers in classrooms in order to address the various needs of students. However, the need is even greater for more minority teachers to be leading the classrooms in most school systems. Minority teachers are currently underrepresented in our public schools.

In October 2005, Georgia had its first student enrollment count in which the state was noted as being a majority-minority public school system, which means more than half of the student population was comprised of non-white individuals (Johnson, 2006). These demographics make it necessary for educational leaders in Georgia to examine practices that can positively impact the achievement of all subgroups of students (Walker, 2009).

The shortage of minority teachers in one Southeast Georgia County has become a major concern as well. With approximately 50% of the current student population being non-Caucasian (Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2009), there is the possibility

that minority students could actually go through kindergarten to twelfth grade without having a minority teacher. As the student population becomes more diverse each year, there is a need for diversity among teachers.

Even though there has been some research on the minority teacher shortage and recruitment efforts, schools continue to have difficulty recruiting and hiring minority teachers due to the low number of minority teaching applicants. By surveying and interviewing minority teachers within a school system in Southeast Georgia, this study gave voice to the minority teacher population and provided the researcher with new information in understanding the minority teacher shortage in this particular geographic area via the perspectives of the minority teachers. As a result of the knowledge gained through this study, educational leaders in Southeast Georgia may have a deeper awareness of issues surrounding the minority teacher shortage in hopes of increasing teacher diversity in their schools.

The overarching question for this study was: How can educational leaders in Southeast Georgia increase teacher diversity in schools? The following sub-questions were used to guide the research.

1. What personal background and life experiences do minority teachers identify as contributing to their teaching career?
2. What reasons do minority teachers give for deciding to teach in the school district as well as the school in which they are currently employed?
3. What are minority teachers' perceptions of the factors that contribute to the shortage of minority teachers in Southeast Georgia?

4. What are minority teachers' perceptions of how school districts in Southeast Georgia recruit and how they can increase the number of minority teachers?

This mixed methods study was completed through the use of surveys as well as semi-structured interviews with minority school teachers currently employed in a medium-sized school district in Southeast Georgia. Survey data was entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for data analysis. The interview tapes were transcribed, and the completed transcripts were analyzed for themes, patterns, and statements corresponding to the interview questions. Interview question responses were organized according to the research questions in which they corresponded.

Discussion of Research Findings

Research Question 1

What personal background and life experiences do minority teachers identify as contributing to their teaching career? The lack of support can be an issue for many minority students (Gordon, 2000; The National Teacher Association, 2008; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007). Having the necessary support systems in place can make a difference for some individuals as to what career path is chosen. For the group of participants in this study, some became teachers due to the encouragement of their family, community, and peers, while others entered the teaching profession without receiving the support from people who were close to them. Three of the teachers interviewed had mothers who were teachers. Several interviewees mentioned having a love or passion for children. This shows that while the support of others is certainly a good thing, it is not a necessity when one has a true desire or calling to become a teacher.

Many minorities do not decide in high school the career path they will follow. In fact, the researcher found it surprising that only 30.6% made that determination in college that teaching would be their career of choice. This means that today's teachers are not necessarily following the traditional career path into teaching. In fact, 60% of the interviewees followed a non traditional path into education. Even if minority teachers are graduating with alternative degrees, it does not mean that teaching will not become a part of their future somewhere along the line. The timing is what is important for many individuals, along with the circumstances in which they find themselves.

Research has shown that many minority students do not receive the academic background and knowledge skills to be successful in college (Futrell, 1999; Jorgensen 2001; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Peske & Haycock, 2006; Wimberly 2002). However, only 6.2% of the participants in this study agreed with this previous research. It was a positive affirmation that the majority of minority teachers in this system felt they received an adequate education in K-12 so that they could be successful in college. Negative school experiences can also turn minorities away from teaching (Jorgensen, 2001; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Peske & Haycock, 2006). While 37.7% of the survey participants experienced some negativity in school due to being a minority, it was not enough to deter them from entering into teaching. Even with the interview participants who shared some negative things that happened to them throughout school, they felt the good outweighed the bad for an overall good educational experience.

Teacher expectations helped contribute to the minority teachers in this study becoming teachers. Even though research has shown that low teacher expectations have

been an issue for many minority students, this was not the case with the participants in this study, since 80% felt their teachers had high expectations for them (Barbra, 2007; Gay, 2002; Kunjufu, 2002; Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Santoro, 2007). Of course, the question did not specify the race/ethnicity of the teacher so the participants had to give an overall feeling taking into consideration all of their previous teachers. Many of the interviewees discussed teacher expectations specifically. The majority of the teachers did not feel like they were treated any differently by their teachers because of their minority status. They felt their teachers, who were mainly white, had high expectations for them, and held them to the same standards as everybody else. This finding concurs with Kunjufu (2002): “the most important factor impacting the academic achievement of African American children is not the race or gender of the teacher but the teacher’s expectations” (p. 17).

Research has found that building relationships with teachers can also be difficult for minority students (Souto-Manning & Dice, 2007; Warikoo 2004). Once again, the participants expressed that they found it easy to build relationships with their teachers. With 43.3% strongly agreeing about the ease of building relationships with teachers, it shows that minority students can have the benefit of a strong student-teacher relationship regardless of race. In fact, two of the teachers interviewed who were African American shared that it the influence of a previous teacher was the reason that they became teachers themselves. Even more enlightening was the fact that the two teachers who were referenced by the two interviewees were not minority teachers, but ones who made a personal investment in them. The finding is in agreement with that of Warikoo (2004) in

which it was noted that interpersonal relationships are much more important than external identities.

Research Question 2

What reasons do minority teachers give for deciding to teach in the school district as well as the school in which they are currently employed? With less than 28% of the study participants receiving financial incentives to complete their teaching degree, one would assume that financial incentives are not what brought them to this area to teach. As previously mentioned in the review of literature, pay is not a reason that people go into teaching (American Federation of Teachers, 2008; Futrell, 1999; Guarino, Santibanez, & Dailey, 2006; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004). The same is true for this study. Teachers are not teaching in the select school district because of the pay they receive.

Another finding in this study is that the minority teachers in the select school system were not recruited or encouraged to apply to teach in the district simply because of their minority status. While the researcher did interview one teacher who was recruited based on the fact that the system was looking for more minority teachers, this was a rarity. Another teacher was recruited not because of his minority status, but due to his experience with a particular program. However, the minority teachers overwhelmingly view teaching as a way to give back to their community which may contribute to where they are currently teaching, especially if there is a minority teacher shortage in the particular areas or if the school has a large minority population where they can serve as role models. For some of the teachers that grew up in this community, there is a

connection with this community, as well as a sense of pride in helping students achieve their fullest potential.

Previous research has shown that many minorities will not teach where they do not feel supported (Darling-Hammond, 2003; David, 2008; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; NEA, 2008; Torres et al., 2004; Witty, 2001). Without adequate support in their school, many teachers look for opportunities elsewhere. Principal support was mentioned numerous during the interviews. In fact, two of the teachers interviewed had recently transferred to other schools due to differences with their administrators. In this study, 87.5% of the participants felt that they receive the necessary support from their colleagues in their current school, which may be why many of them have chosen to teach where they are currently teaching. An even higher percentage felt like they receive the necessary support from the administrators in their school, with 88.7% agreeing or strongly agreeing. One teacher who was interviewed stressed that having the principal's support is essential for minority teachers. As an administrator, it is important to know that teachers need to feel supported as well as accepted.

While the participants felt that they received the necessary support at the school level from their colleagues as well as their administrators, the feelings were not as strong for the level of support given by the school system. Approximately half felt they received the necessary support at the system level, while half did not. This leads one to think that more things need to be put in place at the system level.

Through the interview questions, comfort zone emerged as the number one reason that minorities choose to teach in their current school district or school. Often, as well as

having a support system in a community, having a family makes a huge difference and is a reason that people want to teach in that district. In addition, many teach in an area that is “home” for them. Being familiar with the community, due to growing up in it and attending the schools as a student, can contribute to one’s comfort zone. The need for people to feel connected and comfortable was evidenced throughout all of the interviews, whether it was because of family, familiarity, or a positive school environment.

The researcher included a section on demographics at the end of the minority teacher questionnaire. While the researcher expected to find that the majority of teachers currently teaching in this school district were from this area or a surrounding area; that was not the case. In fact, there were more participants in this study who are teaching in the school system from another state than from this community. The specific breakdown of the area in which the minority teachers are originally from is as follows: 30.2% from this community, 13.5% from a neighboring community, 16.7% from another part of Georgia, 32.3% from another state, and 7.3% from another country. This shows that the teachers are coming from a variety of areas, thus recruitment efforts should be made in a variety of locations versus keeping efforts more localized.

Research Question 3

What are minority teachers’ perceptions of the factors that contribute to the shortage of minority teachers in Southeast Georgia? Without the necessary encouragement, many minorities will not choose teaching as a career (Gordon, 2000; The National Teacher Association, 2008; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007). While approximately half of the participants felt they received the necessary support from

people close to them, the other half did not. Regardless of this fact, the participants perceive the lack of support as a contributing factor into the minority teacher shortage.

Research has found that minority college graduates do not choose to teach because of low prestige (Chaika, 2004; Futrell, 1999; Gordon, 2000; Guarino, Santibanez, & Dailey, 2006; Henke, Chen, Gies, & Knepper, 2000; Su, 1997; Tillman, 2004, Torres et al., 2004). Su (1997) found that relatively low pay was a contributing factor to the low social status of the teaching profession. In spite of the education and training required to become a teacher, society did not recognize teaching as comparable to law and medicine because the earning potential was much less. Only one-third of the sample in this study viewed low prestige as a factor that is contributing to the minority teacher shortage.

However, approximately three-fourths of the sample surveyed felt that a major factor is that minority college graduates are going into other fields other than education due to higher pay. With the interview participants, money was repeatedly given as the top factor as to why minorities do not choose teaching as a career thus contributing to the minority teacher shortage. Minorities are pushed into more lucrative careers so that they can provide for themselves without the reliance on other individuals. They also want to be able to provide a much better life for themselves than what they were accustomed to as a child.

Some teachers felt like the state of today's youth plays a role in the minority teacher shortage. It was expressed that many students do not have an interest in education and do not see the importance of it. They have grown up in home environments that do not value education, so they tend to follow in the footsteps of their parents. Often,

survival is the top priority for many students due to their surroundings, thus making education not a priority at all. As a result, teaching this generation of students has become more difficult due to trying to meet many more students' needs than just their education. For many people, they do not want all of the extra responsibilities and burdens that come with teaching today's youth. Teaching is not just about teaching any longer. It is an all inclusive job that involves numerous careers rolled into one, such as social worker, nurse, counselor, custodian, nutritionist, police officer, parent, etc.

The teacher certification test can also be an obstacle for minorities who want to teach (Clewell, Darke, Davis-Googe, Forcier, & Manes, 2000; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Torres et al., 2004; Weaver, 2005).

Approximately 43% of the minority teachers surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that this is a contributing factor as well. A few of the teachers interviewed mentioned the teacher certification test as an issue, along with some of the coursework related to math and science.

While the reasons mentioned above are more general in nature in regard to the minority teacher shortage, there were some reasons given in the interviews that were specific to Southeast Georgia. The most popular reason that minority teachers are not coming to this area is the lack of social outlets and cultural activities. Many minority teachers are teaching in the bigger cities like Atlanta, Macon, and even Savannah. However, Atlanta and its surrounding areas are where the majority of minority teachers are selecting to live and teach based on the input from the participants in this study.

In addition to what a city has to offer culturally and socially, it was also pointed

out that the demographics or the population of the community makes a difference with the number of minority teachers that are there. In school systems that have a large minority community, there tends to be more minority teachers. Also, having historically black colleges nearby can make a difference as neighboring communities will have higher numbers of black teachers. As a result, this can be an issue for many school districts in Southeast Georgia.

Research Question 4

What are minority teachers' perceptions of how school districts in Southeast Georgia recruit and how they can increase the number of minority teachers? There is no doubt that the number of minority teachers in Southeast Georgia is not proportionate to the number of minority students in this area. However, this is a state of Georgia issue as well, with the student population being 54% minority and the teacher population being 25% minority in the 2007-2008 school year (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009). It was interesting to find that only 30% of the minority teachers surveyed felt that schools actively recruit minority teachers. In addition, 69.1% of the minority teachers felt that the select school system does not do an adequate job of recruiting minority teachers. It became evident with these results that the teachers do not have a positive perception of the current state of recruitment in schools as well as the select school district in Southeast Georgia. As a result, the researcher wanted to get the minority teachers' ideas on what could be done in the area of recruitment.

Research specific to African Americans states teacher recruitment can take place primarily at community colleges, predominantly African American high schools, African American fraternities and sororities, and African American churches (Lewis et al., 2004).

The interviewees were in agreement with these recruitment techniques, as 70% mentioned the importance of making the school system's presence known at colleges. However, it was stressed that certain colleges need to be targeted versus repeated visits to colleges in this area due to a convenience factor. The minority teachers felt that visits need to be made to historically black colleges and those that are known for having minority students. It was also pointed out that every college has its specialty whether its medicine, music, or education, so the district needs to go to colleges with a strong emphasis in education. The interviewees repeatedly asked what colleagues were being visited and how the system decides on what colleges to visit. They questioned whether the system was sincere in their efforts to recruit minorities if none of the historically black colleges were the ones that were visited.

Lopeman (2005) found that one of the most effective strategies for recruitment with a cost association was the participation in job fairs. The major conclusion of Lopeman's study was that to recruit minority teachers, school districts must invest resources in developing positive public relations and establishing partnerships with universities for effective teacher recruitment at relatively low cost (2005). The participants in this study repeatedly mentioned participation in job fairs as well. They recommended that when colleges host job fairs, the school system should go more than one time of year since different students could be recruited. Also, in relation to job fairs, several teachers felt strongly about the need to have different races represented at the school system's table versus all whites or all blacks in order to present a school system that is multi-cultural. It would send the wrong message if only white females are representing a school system if the system really wants to increase teacher diversity.

The next popular recommendation for recruiting minority teachers to Southeast Georgia was the need to sell the community and the surrounding area as a whole package to potential minority teachers. Minorities have mentioned that the lack of social outlets and cultural events can be deterrents for minorities coming to smaller communities. Instead of focusing strictly on one's local community, it is important to point out how close the community is to the bigger cities such as Jacksonville and Savannah. This approach could be the best of both worlds to those wanting entertainment opportunities, but also the smaller town feel to raise their families.

One idea that could be implemented without much difficulty is to match up the local area with other areas for the purposes of comparing and contrasting. By highlighting things that are different in the communities, the differences alone could prove to be enticing. Our local area could appear very attractive in the right market if the system taps the right places. With proper presentation of the community, more minorities may be interested in coming to this area.

Some systems may choose to create a recruiting video to highlight their school system as one system in Southeast Georgia did. However, it is important to get the input of the minority teachers before the video is filmed if the desire is to increase teacher diversity. By sharing the proposed ideas with the minority teachers beforehand, they may be able to give some valuable input on how the video may be perceived by minorities and in turn provide ideas that may work better.

In addition to highlighting the community, 40% of the minorities mentioned the need to start recruitment efforts in the local community versus going elsewhere. By making deliberate efforts to recruit minorities into teaching through visits to minority

communities, churches, and even Alumni Associations, local community members could become involved in the recruitment efforts, as well as being targeted themselves. This is important since no one is more familiar with the students in the area and the needs of the community than the local community members. Often times, the solution to issues such as the minority teacher shortage can be close to home or even at home.

Once minority teachers are in the school system it is important to have the necessary support systems in place for minority teachers both in the school and in the community. It was mentioned that some districts have a minority-minority mentor program in which a new minority teacher is paired with another minority teacher already employed in the school district, and could be an idea this school system may want to consider. However, due to low minority teacher numbers in most schools, this may not be the best route to take within an individual school. One teacher felt that while minorities being paired together for support could be a bonus, the more important factor is finding the right match to pair together, and that minority status should not be the determining factor. The connection has to be there as well. While support within the school is important, it is also necessary for support systems to be established in the community. One teacher mentioned this community support is even more important when a minority teacher does not have family in the area, because living in the south can be tough for a minority. By getting to know the personal background of the minority teachers a little more, the system could put more targeted supports in place to address any needs.

Other recruitment ideas shared by the majority of the teachers dealt with money. By far, signing bonuses was the most popular idea. Other ideas included: having attractive baseline starting salaries, paying relocation expenses, providing short term

housing, and funding tuition for interested parties to get their teaching degrees. However, this is going to be a problem with the current state of the economy. School districts are facing extreme budget cuts over the next few years with teachers being furloughed, positions being cut, and even contract days being reduced. As a result, the researcher does not see recruitment ideas in which extra money is paid out for any reason as a feasible strategy at this point in time.

Perhaps the most powerful recruitment technique discussed by the minority teachers interviewed in this study is teachers themselves. Witty (2001) stated that the recruitment paradigm must be expanded. Students' awareness of teaching as a career possibility must be raised in elementary and middle school. Gordon (2000) asserted that teachers themselves must help create a fundamental change in attitude toward the acknowledgement that not only is teaching valuable, but also essential to society's future. "If we are to have sufficient able teachers of America's urban schools, students of color must find meaning in their choice to be a teacher – and the guidance of their communities and their teachers must show the way" (Gordon, p. 106). The minority teachers interviewed could not agree more. Minority students could be attracted to the teaching profession simply by good teachers who are attentive to the needs of minorities and who make them feel good about themselves and the teaching profession. Teachers have the ability to ignite the motivation and passion in others. By having students observe and shadow teachers in their classrooms, teachers can give students a window into teaching by showing them a glimpse of what teaching is all about and what it can be. However, it cannot be just any teacher that is observed. Some teachers could be an instant turn off to the profession if everything is related to lecture, textbook instruction, note taking, and

worksheets. Too often that is why students do not even consider teaching as a career; because they have been bored to death for 13 years and certainly do not want to think about being in a classroom the rest of their lives. It is important for students to observe teachers who make learning fun and uplifting so that students will be inspired to want to teach. By teachers taking the time to tell students as well as other people what teaching is all about and showing them all that it can be, an awareness can be established for the teaching profession, and a spark ignited that may not have otherwise been there.

It was repeatedly mentioned in this study how crucial it is for teachers to take the time to build relationships with their students and to serve as positive role models for students who may not otherwise have one in their lives. By teachers getting to actually know their students, they will have the opportunity to better relate to and connect with them. In turn, students will learn simply because a relationship has been established.

Forty percent of the minority teachers interviewed freely expressed that they felt when looking at recruitment of teachers, the determining factor to hire an individual should not be based simply on race. They felt the number one qualification should be the quality or competency of the teacher versus the race of the teacher. However, they all agreed that minority teachers can serve as role models for not only minority students but all students. No minority should be recruited above another as the more diversified staff the better. African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and even males are needed in the school system so that all children can have a variety of role models and view the teaching profession as accessible by anyone who wants to pursue it.

Conclusions

This study gave voice to the minority teachers within a school system in Southeast Georgia in order to provide the researcher with new information in understanding the minority teacher shortage in this particular geographic area via the perspectives of the minority teachers. While many of the findings were similar to previous research findings on the topic, others differed. However, the main difference in this study and that of other studies related to the minority teacher shortage is the specific geographic region in which this study was conducted. The purpose of the research was to explore the minority teacher shortage in Southeast Georgia in order to give educational leaders in this area insight into the problem in hopes of increasing teacher diversity in their schools. Data was analyzed by the four research questions that guided the study in order to answer the following overarching question.

Overarching Question

How can educational leaders in Southeast Georgia increase teacher diversity in schools? In order to meet the educational needs of diverse student population, schools need to increase the number of their minority teachers. However, this is easier said than done due to the serious shortage of minority teachers that currently exists. The same is true in Southeast Georgia as there is no readily apparent solution to the minority teacher shortage. However, through the use of the questionnaire and the interviews conducted in this study, it became apparent that the minority teachers do not feel that schools and school systems are really being deliberate or intentional in their efforts of recruiting minorities. While those “in charge” may feel that efforts are being made in this area, this is not the perception among the minority teachers. This leads one to believe that it is very

important to involve minority teachers in the recruitment initiatives related to minorities. This relates to the discussion in this research study about recruiting in the community, as no one knows the needs of the community or the student population better than the community members. Nobody knows the issues surrounding the minority teacher shortage better than minority teachers. Districts need to use them as a resource in their recruitment efforts.

The participants in this study varied in their background and experiences that contributed to their teaching career. However, what emerged as the most important themes were teacher expectations and relationships. It is important for educational leaders to emphasize with their current teaching staff, which consists mainly of white females, the importance of having high expectations for all students. Expectations should not be lowered for minority students due to their race or their circumstances. Students will rise to the occasion when teacher expectations are high. In addition, it is crucial for teachers to take the time to build relationships with their students. Too often, the teacher is the only positive role model in a child's life, regardless of the skin color of the child or the teacher. A teacher can help mold or help shade a child by words or deeds. This research study has shown that it does not take a minority teacher to have a positive impact in a child's life. While minority teachers certainly positively influence minority students, many minority students will not have the benefit of a minority teacher in their educational experience. As a result, it is up to all teachers to be the difference maker in the lives of all students that they have the pleasure to teach. That should be their mission.

While ideas emerged that included representing/highlighting the community effectively at colleges with large minority populations, being selective at which job fairs

to attend, and offering the necessary support and acceptance of minority teachers, there was another idea that could be even more beneficial. This idea is that teachers can be the most effective recruitment method that systems need to utilize more. Find those dynamic teachers who are truly called to the profession and absolutely love what they do. Be deliberate in highlighting the teaching profession to students as well as to the community. Encourage students as well as community members to find out what the teaching profession is all about and all that it can be. Dare them to take the plunge into teaching and to make learning fun by transforming the classroom environment into an interactive place with endless possibilities for all who enter.

Implications

The researcher has had personal experience as an administrator where the shortage of minority teachers has been a concern. Yet, even with the known shortage, the researcher has been held accountable, like many other principals, in increasing the number of minority teachers on staff. While there is no easy fix to the problem, the issue has to be explored in order to gain knowledge on ways to address it. Principals and system level administrators must be intentional in their efforts to recruit minority teachers. However, they must develop a deeper awareness and knowledge base as to why the number of minority teachers is decreasing in order to make an effort to do something about it.

While the minority teacher shortage has been a topic of much research, no research could be found specific to a single school district in Southeast Georgia. More importantly, the studies that have been done in other areas of Georgia, mainly involved administrators and Human Resources Directors as participants versus going straight to

the source, the minority teachers. This study was an effort to provide a new perspective on the minority teacher shortage via the minority teachers. In addition, the majority of studies on this topic have been qualitative in nature. There are very few quantitative studies, and the researcher is not aware of any mixed-methods studies on this topic. While lots of information can be gained through each type of research, it is through the combination of both that a clearer picture can be established.

This study may give school and system administrators different views into the issue and ways that they can address the problem in their local area. By giving voice to the minority teachers, hopefully, there are some ideas that other school leaders will find beneficial in their recruitment efforts. While one thing may appear to be a good idea for one school district and not another, it is apparent that the minority teachers are more than willing to share their thoughts and give their input into increasing the number of minority teachers in order to address the needs of minority students.

Recommendations

There are several recommendations offered by this researcher as a result of this research study:

1. It is the recommendation of the researcher that similar studies be conducted in other school districts to allow more minority teachers across the state of Georgia the opportunity to share their beliefs and perceptions about the minority teacher shortage along with ideas for recruitment.
2. It is the recommendation of the researcher that similar studies be conducted on how to involve current minority teachers in the recruitment efforts of school

administrators and school systems in order to increase the number of minority teachers.

3. It is the recommendation of the researcher that similar studies be conducted on how to involve current staff members in professional learning revolving around student diversity issues, cultural differences, teacher expectations, and teacher-student relationships.
4. It is the recommendation of the researcher that this study be replicated at the higher education level in order to ask other adult minorities why they did not consider going into teaching.

Dissemination

The researcher plans to disseminate the findings of this research study in three ways. The findings of this study will be presented to the following administrators in the select school district: the superintendent, the Human Resources Director, and principals. A bound copy of this dissertation will be produced and provided to the Henderson Library at Georgia Southern University. Finally, the research study will be made available on the internet via the dissertations abstracts site so that people in all areas who are interested in this topic will have access to the findings.

Concluding Thoughts

Based on the fact that America's schools will become even more diverse in the future, there is no doubt that the teacher demographics will never be proportionate to the student demographics. However, that is no excuse to ignore the minority teacher shortage. Principals are held accountable for the student achievement of all subgroups of students and must do whatever it takes to ensure that all students succeed. While skin

color should not be the determining factor in hiring staff members, steps must be made in order to increase teacher diversity in schools due to the school age population becoming more multicultural and multiethnic each year. It is the hope of the researcher that educational leaders will be more aware of the issues surrounding the minority teacher shortage, and in turn, be more deliberate in their efforts in addressing the needs of minority students. While minority teachers can certainly help meet the needs of minority students, the two most important things for all teachers to remember in relating to all students are expectations and relationships.

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Appendix A

Minority Teacher Questionnaire

Instructions:

The purpose of this survey is to gather information regarding your thoughts on various issues relating to the minority teacher shortage.

Use the following scale to respond to each statement: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree. Please circle the response that most closely resembles your feelings towards each statement.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I was encouraged by my family to become a teacher.	1	2	3	4
2.	I was encouraged by my community to become a teacher.	1	2	3	4
3.	I was encouraged by my peers to become a teacher.	1	2	3	4
4.	My family was proud that I became a teacher.	1	2	3	4
5.	I was aware of the minority teacher shortage when I decided to go into teaching.	1	2	3	4
6.	I knew before completing high school that I wanted to be a teacher.	1	2	3	4
7.	I decided in college that I wanted to be a teacher.	1	2	3	4
8.	I was offered financial incentives to complete teacher education requirements.	1	2	3	4
9.	I received the necessary academic background and knowledge skills to be successful in college.	1	2	3	4
10.	I had negative experiences in school due to being a minority.	1	2	3	4
11.	My K-12 teachers had high expectations for me.	1	2	3	4
12.	It was easy for me to build relationships with my teachers.	1	2	3	4
13.	In my culture, a teacher is highly respected.	1	2	3	4
14.	Minority college graduates do not choose teaching as a career because of low prestige.	1	2	3	4

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
15.	Pay influenced me to become a teacher.	1	2	3	4
16.	Minority college graduates go into fields other than education because of pay.	1	2	3	4
17.	My becoming a teacher is one way to give back to my community.	1	2	3	4
18.	It is important academically for minority students to have “like” teachers.	1	2	3	4
19.	Minority teachers are role models for minority students.	1	2	3	4
20.	Minority teachers are role models for both minority and majority students.	1	2	3	4
21.	As a minority teacher, I understand better than most teachers the needs of minority students due to my background and experiences.	1	2	3	4
22.	The teacher certification test is an obstacle for minorities who want to teach.	1	2	3	4
23.	I followed a traditional career path into the teaching profession.	1	2	3	4
24.	I was initially recruited into teaching because I am a minority.	1	2	3	4
25.	Schools often do not actively recruit minority teachers.	1	2	3	4
26.	I was encouraged to apply to this school system due to my minority status.	1	2	3	4
27.	My school system does an adequate job of recruiting minority teachers.	1	2	3	4
28.	I receive the support needed from colleagues in my school.	1	2	3	4
29.	I receive the support needed from the administrators in my school.	1	2	3	4
30.	My school system provides the necessary support for minority teachers.	1	2	3	4

Demographics

Please complete the following section by placing a check in the appropriate blank.

31. Sex:

1. Female
2. Male

32. Age:

1. 20-25
2. 26-30
3. 31-40
4. 41-50
5. 51 or older

33. Race/Ethnicity:

1. African-American
2. Asian
3. Hispanic
4. Other

34. Highest Degree:

1. Bachelor
2. Masters
3. Specialist
4. Doctorate

35. Total Years as an Educator:

1. 0-3
2. 4-10
3. 11-15
4. 16-20
5. more than 20

36. Total Years as an Educator in Current School District:

1. 0-3
2. 4-10
3. 11-15
4. 16-20
5. more than 20

37. Total Years as an Educator in Current School:

1. 0-3
2. 4-6
3. 7-10
4. 11-15
5. more than 15

38. Current Level of Assignment in School District:

1. Pre-K
2. Elementary
3. Middle School
4. High School
5. Other

39. Total Number of Minority Teachers I Had in K-12:

1. 0-3
2. 4-6
3. 7-10
4. 11-15
5. more than 15

40. Area that I am Originally from:

1. this community
2. a neighboring county
3. another part of Georgia
4. another state
5. another country

Thank you for your participation. Please place the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided, seal it, and return it to the school secretary. If you would be willing to participate in an interview with the researcher, please write your name, email address, and phone number on the blank index card provided. In order for the surveys to remain anonymous, do not place the index card in the envelope with the completed questionnaire, but simply return it to the school secretary along with your envelope.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1. Briefly describe your K-12 educational experiences.
2. Who or what influenced you to become a teacher?
Possible Probes: Family? Peers? Community? Teachers?
3. How did you decide to teach?
Possible Probes for First Career: What other career options did you consider? Did your parents influence you? What do/did your parents do?
Possible Probes for Mid-Careers: What did you do before you decided to teach? Why did you decide to make a career change?
4. What, in your opinion, are reasons that minorities do not choose teaching as a career?
Possible Probes: More Prestigious Careers? Pay? Negative School Experiences? Working Conditions?
5. What are some factors that contribute to where a minority teacher chooses to teach?
Possible Probes: Family? Entertainment?
6. What brought you to this school district to teach?
Possible Probe: What was the determining factor that brought you here?
7. What recruiting technique did you find enticing when you considered coming to this school district?
If none: What about in other school districts you have worked in?
8. What are some of the reasons that you decided to teach at your current school?
Possible Probes: Support? Administration? Mentor? Family?
9. What can districts do to actively recruit minorities into the teaching profession?
10. What can this school district do to recruit more minority teachers?
11. Why, in your opinion, should school districts strive to increase their number of minority teachers?

Appendix C

Table 14

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
1. I was encouraged by my family to become a teacher.	1 and 3	Gordon, 2000; Mau & Mau, 2006; Quioco & Rois, 2000; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007
2. I was encouraged by my community to become a teacher.	1 and 3	Gordon, 2000; Mau & Mau, 2006; Quioco & Rois, 2000; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007
3. I was encouraged by my peers to become a teacher.	1 and 3	Gordon, 2000; Mau & Mau, 2006; Quioco & Rois, 2000; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007
4. My family was proud that I became a teacher.	1 and 3	Gordon, 2000; Mau & Mau, 2006; Quioco & Rois, 2000; Su, 1997
5. I was aware of the minority teacher shortage when I decided to go into teaching.	1 and 2	Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009; Kerney, 2008; Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Planty, Hussar, Snyder, Provasnik, Kena, Dinkes, et al., 2008; Walker, 2009; Weaver, 2006

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
6. I knew before completing high school that I wanted to be a teacher.	1	Community Teachers Institute, 2008; Futrell, 1999; Gordon, 2000; Kearney, 2008; Perkins, 2003; Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009; Singh & Stoloff, 2007; Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers, 2009; Tonoli, 2001; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; Witty, 2001
7. I decided in college that I wanted to be a teacher.	1	Futrell, 1999; Gordon, 2000; National Teacher Association, 2008
8. I was offered financial incentives to complete teacher education requirements.	1, 2, and 3	Futrell, 1999; Pathways to Teaching Careers Program, 2009; Walker, 2008
9. I received the necessary academic background and knowledge skills to be successful in college.	1 and 3	Futrell, 1999; Jorgensen 2001; Mitchell, Scott, & Covrig, 2000; Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005; Horng, 2009; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Peske & Haycock, 2006; Swanson, 2006; Vegas, Murname, & Willett, 2001; Wimberly, 2002

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
10. I had negative experiences in school due to being a minority.	1 and 3	Gay, 2002; Gordon, 2000; Mitchell, Scott, & Covrig, 2000; National Education Association, 2002; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Singh & Stoloff, 2007; Su, 2007; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007; Vegas, Murname, & Willett, 2001
11. My K-12 teachers had high expectations for me.	1 and 3	Barbra, 2007; Cole, 2008; Ehrenberg, Goldhaber, & Brewer, 1995; Futrell, 1999; Gay, 2002; Kunjufu, 2002; Michie, 2007; Mitchell, Scott, & Covrig, 2000; Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005; Learning Point Associates, n.d.; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2003; National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; National Education Association, 2002; Santoro, 2007; Swanson, 2006; Vegas, Murname, & Willett, 2001; Warikoo, 2004; Weaver, 2003; Weaver, 2006; Wimberly, 2002

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
12. It was easy for me to build relationships with my teachers.	1 and 3	Community Teachers Institute, 2008; Payne, 1998; Santoro, 2007; Souto-Manning & Dice, 2007; Warikoo, 2004
13. In my culture, a teacher is highly respected.	1 and 3	Gordon, 2000; Guarino, Santibanez, & Dailey, 2006; Shure, 2001; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004
14. Minority college graduates do not choose teaching as a career because of low prestige.	3	Futrell, 1999; Chaika, 2004; Guarino, Santibanez, & Dailey, 2006; Henke, Chen, Gies, & Knepper, 2000; Su, 1997
15. Pay influenced me to become a teacher.	1 and 2	American Federation of Teachers, 2008; Singh & Stoloff, 2007; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004
16. Minority college graduates go into fields other than education because of pay.	3	Chaika, 2004; Futrell, 1999; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004
17. My becoming a teacher is one way to give back to my community.	1 and 2	Basit & McNamara, 2004; Gordon, 2000; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton,

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
18. It is important academically for minority students to have “like” teachers.	1	2004; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2009; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004 Basit & McNamara, 2004; Community Teachers Institute, 2008; Dee, 2001; Futrell, 1999; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Southern Regional Education Board, 2003; Su, 1997; Warikoo, 2004; Weaver, 2003; Weiher, 2000; Zirkel, 2002
19. Minority teachers are role models for minority students.	1	Basit & McNamara, 2004; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Gursky, 2002; Kunjufu, 2002; National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Salinas, 2002; Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009; Southern Regional Education Board, 2003; Su, 1997; Warikoo, 2004; Weaver, 2003; Zirkel, 2002

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
20. Minority teachers are role models for both minority and majority students.	1	Learning Point Associates, n.d., Weaver, 2003; Witty, 2001
21. As a minority teacher, I understand better than most teachers the needs of minority students due to my background and experiences.	1	Ehrenberg, Goldhaber, & Brewer, 1995; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Kunjufu, 2002; Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005; National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Santoro, 2007; Warikoo, 2004; Witty, 2001
22. The teacher certification test is an obstacle for minorities who want to teach.	3	Clewell, Darke, Davis-Googe, Forcier, & Manes, 2000; Memory, Coleman, & Watkins, 2003; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Singh & Stoloff, 2007; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; Weaver, 2005
23. I followed a traditional career path into the teaching profession.	1	Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009; Georgia Troops to Teachers, 2009; Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Mikulecky, Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004; Nweke,

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
24. I was initially recruited into teaching because I am a minority.	2	Afolabi, Stewart, Stephens, & Toth, 2004; Pathways to Teaching Careers Program, 2009; Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009; Witty, 2001
25. Schools often do not actively recruit minority teachers.	3 and 4	Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; Lopeman, 2005; National Education Association, 2008; Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009; Sykes & Dibner, 2009
26. I was encouraged to apply to this school system due to my minority status.	2 and 4	Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; Lopeman, 2005; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; National Education Association, 2008; Shure, 2001; Sykes & Dibner, 2009

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
27. My school system does an adequate job of recruiting minority teachers.	4	<p>Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; Lopeman, 2005; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; National Education Association, 2008; Shure, 2001; Sykes & Dibner, 2009</p> <p>Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; Lopeman, 2005; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; National Education Association, 2008; Shure, 2001; Sykes & Dibner, 2009; Weaver, 2006</p>
28. I receive the support needed from colleagues in my school.	2	David, 2008; National Education Association, 2008; Witty, 2001
29. I receive the support needed from the administrators in my school.	2	Darling-Hammond, 2003; David, 2008; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Witty, 2001

Correlation of Questionnaire Items with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
30. My school system provides the necessary support for minority teachers.	2	Darling-Hammond, 2003; David, 2008; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Witty, 2001

Appendix D

Table 15

Correlation of Interview Questions with Research Questions

Interview Questions	Research Questions	Literature Review
1. Briefly describe your K-12 educational experiences.	1	Barbra, 2007; Cole, 2008; Ehrenberg, Goldhaber, & Brewer, 1995; Futrell, 1999; Gay, 2002; Gordon, 2000; Horng, 2009; Jorgensen 2001; Kunjufu, 2002; Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Mau & Mau, 2006; Mitchell, Scott, & Covrig, 2000; Michie, 2007; Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2003; National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force 2004; National Education Association, 2002; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Peske & Haycock, 2006; Quiocho & Rois, 2000; Santoro, 2007; Singh & Stoloff, 2007; Su, 2007; Swanson, 2006; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007; Vegas, Murname & Willett, 2001; Warikoo, 2004;

Correlation of Interview Questions with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
2. Who or what influenced you to become a teacher?	1	<p>Weaver, 2003; Weaver, 2006; Wimberly, 2002</p> <p>Basit & McNamara, 2004; Gordon, 2000; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton 2004; Mau & Mau, 2006; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2009; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007</p>
3. How did you decide to teach?	1	<p>Barbra, 2007; Cole, 2008; Ehrenberg, Goldhaber, & Brewer, 1995; Futrell, 1999; Gay, 2002; Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2009; Georgia Troops to Teachers, 2009; Gordon, 2000; Horng, 2009; Jorgensen 2001; Kunjufu, 2002; Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Mau & Mau, 2006; Mitchell, Scott, & Covrig, 2000; Michie, 2007; Mikulecky,</p>

Correlation of Interview Questions with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
4. What, in your opinion, are reasons that minorities do not choose teaching as a career?	3	<p>Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004; Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2003; National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; National Education Association, 2002; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Nweke, Afolabi, Stewart, Stephens, & Toth, 2004; Pathways to Teaching Careers Program, 2009; Peske & Haycock, 2006; Quiocho & Rois, 2000; Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009; Santoro, 2007; Singh & Stoloff, 2007; Su, 2007; Swanson, 2006; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007; Vegas, Murname & Willett, 2001; Warikoo, 2004; Weaver, 2003; Weaver, 2006; Wimberly, 2002; Witty, 2001</p> <p>American Federation of Teachers, 2008; Chaika, 2004; Clewell, Darke,</p>

Correlation of Interview Questions with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
5. What are some factors that contribute to where a minority teacher chooses to teach?	2, 3, and 4	<p>Davis-Googe, Forcier, & Manes, 2000; Futrell, 1999; Guarino, Santibanez, & Dailey, 2006; Henke, Chen, Gies, & Knepper, 2000; Memory, Coleman, & Watkins, 2003; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Singh & Stoloff, 2007; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; Weaver, 2005</p> <p>Basit & McNamara, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; David, 2008; Gordon, 2000; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2009; National Education Association, 2008; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; Witty, 2001</p>

Correlation of Interview Questions with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
6. What brought you to this school district to teach?	2 and 4	Basit & McNamara, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; David, 2008; Gordon, 2000; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2009; National Education Association, 2008; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Quioco & Rios, 2000; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; Witty, 2001
7. What recruiting technique did you find enticing when you considered coming to this school district?	2 and 4	Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; Lopeman, 2005; National Education Association, 2008; Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009; Sykes & Dibner, 2009
8. What are some of the reasons that you decided to teach at your current school?	2	Basit & McNamara, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; David, 2008; Gordon, 2000; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley,

Correlation of Interview Questions with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
9. What can districts do to actively recruit minorities into the teaching profession?	4	2006; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2009; National Education Association, 2008; National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools, 2005; Quioco & Rios, 2000; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; Witty, 2001
10. What can this school district do to recruit more minority teachers?	4	Learning Point Associates, n.d.; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; Lopeman, 2005; National Education Association, 2008; Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009; Sykes & Dibner, 2009

Correlation of Interview Questions with Research Questions

(continued)

Questionnaire Items	Research Questions	Literature Review
11. Why, in your opinion, should school districts strive to increase their number of minority teachers?	1	Basit & McNamara, 2004; Community Teachers Institute, 2008; Dee, 2001; Futrell, 1999; Gordon, 2000; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Gursky, 2002; Kunjufu, 2002; Lewis, Garrison-Wade, Scott, Douglas, & Middleton, 2004; National Collaborative in Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2009; Quiocho & Rios, 2000; Salinas, 2002; Sanchez, Thornton, & Usinger, 2009; Southern Regional Education Board, 2003; Su, 1997; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004; Warikoo, 2004; Weiher, 2000; Zirkel, 2002

Appendix E

Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs		
Institutional Review Board (IRB)		
Phone: 912-478-0843		Veazey Hall 2021
		P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-478-0719	IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460

To: Kelly Renee' Hutcheson Howe
201 Blackberry St
Brunswick, GA 31525

cc: Charles E. Patterson
Associate Vice President for Research

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: November 20, 2009

Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered: **H10112**, and titled "**Exploring the Minority Teacher Shortage in Southeast Georgia**", it appears that your research involves activities that do not require full review by the Institutional Review Board according to federal guidelines.

According to the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46, your research protocol is determined to be exempt from full IRB review under the following exemption category(s):

- Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (I) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (II) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

*Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that your research is exempt from IRB approval. **You may proceed with the proposed research.***

Sincerely,



Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer