Descriptive Case Study: How African American and Caucasian Students View Teachers

Submitted by

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A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctorate of Philosophy

Grand Canyon University

Phoenix, Arizona

May 11, 2021

GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY

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Approved

May 11, 2021

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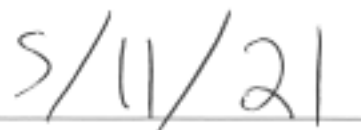
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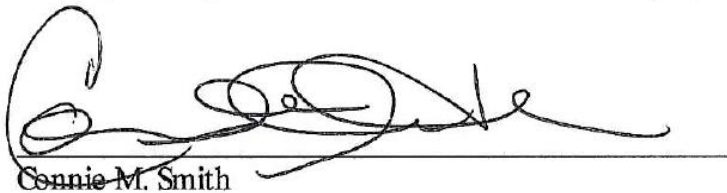Dean, College of Doctoral Studies

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Abstract

As of 2015, only 17% of African American 12th grade students were at or above proficient level in reading. The dynamics between teachers and students can influence growth and achievement for African American students, but it is not known how racialization impacts African American and Caucasian students' views of teachers and how those views influence teacher-student interactions. The purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore how racialization influenced the views of African American and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in secondary schools. The research was guided by critical race theory, with data from interviews and focus groups from 10 African American students and 8 Caucasian students attending Title I secondary schools in a large district in South Texas. Thematic analysis of the collected data showed that racialization caused student-teacher interactions to become antagonistic, making learning difficult. Cross-case and within-case analyses showed that African American students expressed themselves freely and worked harder when they viewed teachers as validating, and they avoided teachers whom they viewed as unapproachable. Caucasian students engaged with learning when they viewed their teachers as engaged and were less cooperative with teachers whom they viewed as biased. The results expanded knowledge in the field by showing that African American students believed racialization made teacher-student interactions a distraction from learning, while Caucasian students believed racialization alienated students from teachers. Teachers must become better aware of their biases as a first step in creating an equitable classroom environment for all students.

Keywords: Abstract, assist future researchers, 150 to 250 words, vital information

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to everyone who supported and prayed for me throughout this process. This journey would not have started without the encouragement of my family and friends. To my supportive husband, Henley, thank you for being voice of reason and comfort for without you I would not have accomplished my lifetime goal. To my daughters (Latitia, Tianna, and Lashadre), thank you for understanding why I missed so many special moments in your life so that I may focus on my scholarly duties. Now that this journey is over, it is my goal to spend quality time with each of you. To my siblings (Ben & Niecy), thanks for checking in and holding me accountable for finishing what I started. Your constant words of advice and personal opinions about my journey kept me optimistic about the outcome. To my work family and friends, thank you for standing in my place when I could not be present to stand for myself. Your selflessness inspired me to keep pushing on. To my mom and dad (Lillie & Johnnie), rest your souls, I hope that I have made you proud! I will forever stand on your shoulders.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation process required unwavering faith, focus and determination. The road to completion was not smooth. Life's blows of death and illnesses caused many moments of self-doubt. There were times when I wanted to give it all up to find inner peace. It was the support received from the staff of Grand Canyon University that kept me on track to meet my milestones. To my dissertation committee Dr. Ajay Das (dissertation chair), Dr. Widner (methodologist), Dr. Thelma Phillips (content expert) and Dr. Racheal Stimpson (AQR peer reviewer), thank you for years of guidance, understanding, support and constructive feedback. I am grateful that you all remain constant influencers in my journey. To my advisor (Jenna), your consistent check ins kept me engaged in the process- one course at a time. Because of you all, I am now Dr. Connie M. Smith.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

This section describes what the researcher will investigate, including the research questions, hypotheses, and basic research design. Bottiani et al. (2016), Kenyatta (2012), and Watkins and Aber (2009) stated that a better understanding of students' classroom experiences and how they interpreted support would show student related behaviors (frustration, self-control, helpless, and motivation) to reveal how interactions had influenced student achievement. Brittian and Gray (2014) also referenced a need for researchers to determine the influence that teacher-student interactions had on the perceptions of African American (AA) and Caucasian students. Researchers have confirmed that when people and students perceive that their lives and experiences are valued, they are less likely to resist conformity (Byrd & Chavous, 2011). Current national outcries, such as the recent #Blacklives matter protests, further indicate a need for an in-depth understanding of how students perceive, describe, and interact with sociocultural dynamics, such as race.

There is an agreement among teachers, parents, researchers, and school advocates that educational practices tend to neglect factors, such as personal, emotional, and social contributions to academic achievement, particularly among AA students (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015). Seaton et al. (2008) reported that underachieving AA students felt that their teachers treated them with less respect than other students. Byrd and Chavous (2011) suggested that students' experiences with teacher support and acceptance influenced their beliefs in teachers' abilities to instruct. Often, people of color have expressed concerns about being negatively judged and profiled because of their ethnicity.

According to Brittian and Gray (2014), criticized, ostracized, or devalued people are often motivated to act in antisocial, aggressive, and angry ways instead of motivated to repair their social images.

According to O'Connor (2006), leaders of the American educational system must delve deeper to determine the role that racialization plays in how students receive, analyze, and interpret information. Gans (2016) defined racialization as a socially constructed process by which groups of people would face differential treatment based on phenotypic cultures and gender characteristics. This current researcher explored how racialization influence the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views influenced teacher-student interactions in secondary schools Title I schools. Secondary schools were selected because students 12 years and older could think morally, ethically, and socially to utilize deductive logic to formulate thoughts, as suggested by researchers (Bottiani et al., 2016).

Past studies suggest that student-teacher relationships depend on how well the needs of the student are fulfilled (Bottiani et al., 2016; Kenyatta, 2012; O'Connor, 2006). These studies lacked details about how racialization influenced how AA and Caucasian students perceived, described, and interacted with teachers. This current researcher extended prior research by exploring racialization through the views of AA and Caucasian students in Title I public schools. According to Mayer et al. (2016), Title I schools receive financial assistance funded via the Elementary and Secondary Act because of high percentages of children from low income families to make certain that all students meet challenging academic standards. For this study, a Title I school was selected because students receive additional instructional support beyond regular

classroom experiences, thereby limiting the variables influencing the outcome of the study.

Bottiani et al. (2016), Kenyatta (2012), and O'Connor (2006) continued to confirm that social capital, such as relationships, was more important than instructional expenditures and schools' ethnic makeup, achievement, and poverty. Moreover, this current researcher provided a deeper understanding of the how AA and Caucasian students perceived teachers and how these views influenced teacher-student interactions in Title I secondary schools. This study was important because it provided insight into ways to cultivate teacher-student interactions that would positively influence student academic achievement.

The remainder of this chapter includes an in-depth background of the study with an explanation of the theoretical foundation of racialization and its influence on viewpoints. The purpose of the study, problem statement, and research questions are presented. A comprehensive description of the study significance to the field of education and the rationale for the research methodology and design utilized are provided. Lastly, the chapter concludes with the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations.

Background of the Study

One of the most passionately discussed and debated issues since the early 1990s has involved the declining social, economic, and educational statuses of young AA males in the United States (Pitre, 2014). Despite the numerous reform efforts such as the legislative interventions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (2002), AA students continue to underachieve (National Center for Education Statistic [NCES], 2015). The achievement gaps between AA students and their Asian, Hispanic, and

Caucasian counterparts have been well documented for the past 20 years (Barbarin &

Aikens, 2015; Campbell et al., 2000).

Barbarin and Aikens (2015), Kenyatta (2012), and Spring (2006) contended that

issues lamented in performance disparities were from teacher expectations, structural

inequities, lack of student motivation, school practices, limited resources, and cultural

insensitivities. Likewise, Kenyatta (2012) and Pershey (2011) blamed the disparities in

school experiences on inadequate school relationships, limited exposure to rigorous

curriculum, and low expectations. Brittain and Gray (2014) suggested that differential

treatment of AA students was due to cultural insensitivities of teachers and leaders.

Moreover, the researchers suggested the perceptions of the campus leaders and staff

contributed to the underperformances of AA students compared to Caucasian students.

Further researchers should use the views of students to show how students' racial

background might shape their views of teachers. This current researcher explored how

AA and Caucasian students perceived teachers and how their views influenced teacher-

student interactions. Bottiani et al. (2016) and Kenyatta (2012) defined positive

relationships as crucial to closing the achievement gap. Thus, understanding how

racialization influenced teacher-student interactions showed insights into factors that

influenced student academic success.

Viewing children of color and children of low socio-economic status (SES) in a

deficit frame of reference inhibits the understanding of racial differences and prevents

teachers from effectively cultivating relationships with minority students, specifically AA

students (Newton & Sandoval, 2015). Many teachers believe they are unprepared to work

with the behavioral and cultural differences of racially diverse students (Cochran-Smith,

1995). Brittain and Gray (2014) and Vallegas and Lucas (2002) found that many ill-equipped teachers believed that failure was associated with students' background or disconnect between home and school rather than structural inequalities of the schools. These inequities are from issues highlighted by the critical race theory (CRT; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001).

Historically, racial segregation was prominent in American society (Hopmann, 2008; Kenyatta, 2012). Segregated communities developed their own cultures, differing inherently along racial lines resulting in racially influenced cultures (Griffin et al., 2016). When integration occurred after the decision in *Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* (1954), a clash of cultures occurred in classrooms between teachers and students (McGrady & Reynolds, 2013). For example, teachers tend to have low expectations for AA students (Brittain & Gray, 2014; Howard, 2001; Wallace & Brand, 2012). Andrews and Gutwein (2016) used the voices of students to examine how middle and high school students described teacher expectations. The findings indicated that students believed that teachers' differentiated expectations were based on identity characteristics of students. Further researchers should explore the implications that racialization had on how student views influenced teacher-student interactions.

According to Griffin et al. (2016) and Vallegas and Lucas (2002), teachers who do not acknowledge how cultural bias surfaces in the behaviors may create learning environments that lack trust resulting in strained interactions, often attributing to low student academic performances. Bottiani et al. (2016) studied student perceptions of school support and found that supportive relationships with staff members at schools were critical assets to student achievement during adolescence. The researchers sampled

AA and Caucasian students to explore the variations in perceived caring, equity, and high expectations by student race. The results indicated that AA students, when compared to Caucasian students, perceived less caring and equity from staff members.

Racial and ethnic inequalities in education continue to show AA students academically underperform Caucasian students (Kincaid & Yin, 2011). For the last 30 to 40 years, researchers have recognized educational disparities in assessment scores, graduation and dropout rates, enrollment in higher learning institutions, and increased behavioral infractions (Cowan, 2015; Warren, 2015). Researchers should determine how to cultivate positive teacher-student interactions to close the achievement gaps and increase AA student academic achievement. Barbarin and Aikens (2015) stated that positive relationships were a necessity for students to achieve academic success.

This study was important because the current researcher explored the views of AA and Caucasian students to determine the impact that racialization had on their views of teachers and how their views influenced teacher-student interactions. The researcher added to the substantial gap in literature by exploring how racialization influenced student views of teachers and how student views of racialization impacted teacher-student interactions. The data from this study were used to find ways to improve student achievement through the cultivation of positive interactions.

Problem Statement

It was not known how racialization impacted AA and Caucasian students' views of teachers and how those views influenced teacher-student interactions (Brittian & Gray, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012). The literature did not show investigations into how racialization influenced students' perspectives of teachers and how their views impacted teacher-

student interactions. Therefore, there was a substantial gap in the research addressed in this qualitative descriptive case study.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2015) indicated that only 17% of 12th grade AA students were at or above proficient level in reading compared to 46% of the Caucasian students. Past research has shown that the dynamic between a teacher and student can have tremendous influence on that of AA students, not because teachers can shape the learning experience, but because teachers influence academic progression (Kenyatta, 2012). This finding is an important issue for learning institutions as it has been a long-time goal of the nation's school system to close the achievement gap between Caucasian and AA students. Relationships influence learning experiences in the classroom and are related to student success rates (Kenyatta, 2012). According to Brittian and Gray (2014), there is a need to understand the role that teacher-student interactions play in the production of perceived educational disparities. Using AA and Caucasian students, this current researcher provided a deeper understanding of how racialization influenced views of AA and Caucasian students and how their views influenced student-teacher interactions.

The features of the CRT represent powerful tools for explaining social and educational inequities (Wallace & Brand, 2012). The problem associated with the current research was the failure to explore the views of AA and Caucasian students to gain a better understanding of how AA students and Caucasian interpreted and described learning environments (see Kenyatta, 2012). Researchers have linked low SES circumstances to how teachers interact with students (Kenyatta, 2012) and low student performance (Brittain & Gray, 2014).

Research has shown the issue of racialization as a contributing factor, influencing the academic performance of AA and Caucasian students (Brittian & Gray, 2014; Brunn-Bevel & Byrd, 2015; Gans, 2016; Rowley & Wright 2011). According to Mahatmya et al. (2016) and Rowley and Wright (2011), teachers who perceive students as insignificant in the dominant culture due to stereotypical behaviors and/or lower intelligence create a higher possibility of academic failure. The researchers found that discrimination based on race contributed to the achievement gap between Caucasian and AA students (Brunn-Bevel & Byrd, 2015). Moreover, a teacher's ability to address cultural diversity in the classroom in connections with the teacher's relatability influenced interactions, thereby impacting the academic success of students (Riley & Wright, 2011). Mahatmya et al. (2016) also suggested that beyond classroom behaviors and practices, the perceptions of teachers and their cultural awareness might contribute to student- teacher interactions and perceptions of students. Mahatmaya et al. recommended using observable measures to assess teacher-student interactions in the classroom while assessing the experiences of teachers and students to provide a better understanding of how students learned. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to explore how racialization influenced students' views of teachers and how these views about racialization influenced teacher-student interactions in secondary schools (e.g. acceptance, relatability, beliefs, and nurture).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore how racialization influenced the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in secondary schools. The

target population was a group of AA and Caucasian students between the ages of 18 to 19 attending a Title I secondary school. Secondary schools were defined as campuses serving students in Grades 9 to12. The secondary school, associated with this study, was in South Texas. The experiences of AA and Caucasian students were defined as commonly held views of individual subjective interpretations of their learning environment and observed teacher behaviors (see Atieno, 2009).

Racial disparities between AA students and Caucasian students in academic and disciplinary outcomes are among the pressing concerns facing U.S. school leaders, leading the topics of research and policies (Andrews & Gutwein, 2016). One plausible explanation for the academic disparity may derive from racialization due to societal beliefs about ethnicity, race, gender, and class (Brittian & Gray, 2014; Brunn-Bevel & Byrd, 2015; Gans, 2016; Rowley & Wright, 2011). This researcher utilized the qualitative research design, specifically a descriptive multi-case approach, to explore the influence of racialization to understand the similarities and differences that racialization had on student views and student-teacher interactions.

The current multi-case study involved exploring two cases to understand the similarities and differences that racialization had on student views of teachers and how those views of racialization impacted student-teacher interactions. Merriam (2009) defined a multi-case study as an in-depth analysis of a bounded systems. A bounded system is a single entity or unit that has limits within a setting or context. A case can be an individual, a single program, a group of people, an organization, or a classroom (Alpi & Evans, 2019; Merriam, 2009). In a descriptive multi-case study, the researcher selects

an issue or concern and then selects multiple cases to illustrate the concern or issue (Bagwell, 2019; Baskarada, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Roberts, 2013).

For this study, the researcher selected two groups of students of the AA and Caucasian race attending the different schools to illustrate the influence that racialization had on student-teacher interactions. The first case involved collecting data from 10 AA students attending secondary schools. The second case involved collecting data from eight Caucasian students attending secondary schools.

According to Gustafsson (2017), researchers utilize multiple cases to understand the differences and similarities between cases to analyze the data across and within situations. In this descriptive multi-case study, the data from both cases were explored to understand the influences that racialization had on students' views of teachers in a secondary Title I school. This current researcher delved into the characteristics students that utilized to form an opinion or view about a teacher based on culture, ethnicity, tone, fairness, and beliefs. The researcher used the descriptive multi-case study to examine how racialization influenced how AA and Caucasian students interacted with teachers.

In both the case and multi-case study, a researcher would explore the bounded systems using multiple sources of data, such as interviews, archival documents, and focus groups (Alpi & Evans, 2019; Bagwell, 2019; Gustafsson, 2017). For this study, the researcher utilized interviews and focus groups to gain in-depth information. The semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted at secondary schools located in the mid-south region of the United States. The open-ended questions were utilized to explore the AA and Caucasian students' interactions with teachers.

Leaders of the American educational system have addressed the AA student underachievement as an academic problem (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015). Researchers have suggested that the underachievement of AA students results from a devaluation of self-image and self-esteem experienced in a variety of environments to include the student-teacher interactions (Ryan et al., 2013). Brittian and Gray (2014) also suggested that student achievement was a reflection of self-image. Moreover, successful students often report feeling supported and rated themselves with higher self-images (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015). According to Byrd and Chavous (2011) and Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), members of minority groups tend to internalize stereotypical images constructed to devalue self-worth. These stereotypic images often show the beliefs of inadequacy experienced by students to include AA and Caucasian students (Byrd & Chavous, 2011).

Educational leaders can use the information provided by this research to raise their awareness of the need to understand better how racialization influences student views of teachers and how those views of racialization influence student-teacher interactions. Moreover, the potential cultural awareness that the achievement gap between AA and Caucasian can be related to the differences between students and how they perceive teachers. This understanding will foster a deeper understanding of the importance of cultural sensitivity of students and student-teacher interactions, resulting in higher levels of academic achievement and reducing the achievement gap between AA and Caucasian students in secondary schools.

Research Questions

The goal of this study was to explore how racialization impacted how AA and Caucasian students attending Title I secondary schools viewed teachers and how those

views about racialization influenced teacher-student interactions in Title I schools. For this study, describing teachers meant the characteristics that students utilized to form an opinion or view about a teacher based on culture, ethnicity, tone, fairness, and beliefs. This researcher also explored how students' interpretations of teacher responses, decision-making, and body languages influenced how the students interacted with the teachers. The research questions showed the views of AA and Caucasian students regarding their perspectives of teachers. The questions also showed how students perceived teachers and how these views influenced interactions. The following research questions guided this case study research:

RQ1. How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?

RQ2. How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?

The academic performance of AA students continues to lag their Caucasian counterparts and other demographic groups (Cowan, 2015). According to the NCES (2015) report, 17% of 12th grade AA students were at or above proficient in reading compared to 46% of Caucasian students. Kenyatta (2012) argued that the reason for the disparity between AA and Caucasian students was student-teacher interactions; therefore, researchers should explore student views for factors that would influence interactions. Research should explore how AA and Caucasian students might perceive, describe, or interpret teachers and how these views would influence teacher-student interactions in Title I schools (see Brittian & Gray, 2014).

This researcher provided further insights regarding characteristics that influenced teacher-student relationships. The answers to the research questions of this study showed the teacher behavioral characteristics viewed by students commonly associated with

interactions between students and teachers. Moreover, this researcher explored the connection between how AA and Caucasian students perceived teacher and student-teacher interactions. The researcher explored if racialization played a role in how AA and Caucasian students perceived their teachers and how their views influenced interactions to provide an understanding about how views of students would influence student-teacher interactions.

Advancing Scientific Knowledge and Significance of the Study

Researchers focused on teachers' perceptions of students (DeCastro-Ambrosetti & Cho, 2011; Francis, 2012; Hannaway et al., 2014); yet, there was limited research on how students interpreted teachers in secondary schools (Bottiani et al., 2016; Kenyatta, 2012; Kincaid & Yin, 2011). Researchers of education reports have used assessment data to explore characteristics influencing the academic achievement of AA students (McKown, 2013; Pitre, 2014). As a result, school leaders tend to fund highly rated academic programs to enhance the performances of AA students (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015; Brunn-Bevel & Byrd, 2015). Yet, recent reports have shown that AA students underperform when compared to Caucasian students in National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP, 2018) reading scores (McKwon, 2013).

Ahmad and Farooq (2012) defined student-teacher relationships as key to academic success of students; however, there were limited studies on how students perceived interactions with teachers. Research on students often did not show documented experiences of the participants (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Rollin, 2013). According to Brittian and Gray (2014), the perception of acceptance enhances students' abilities to build relationships. Bottiani et al. (2016) studied student

perceptions of teacher caring and found that intervention leaders should focus on the student-teacher relationship instead of sociopolitical contexts of school reform. The study also indicated that future researchers should examine how differential student views of support could be linked to academic gaps in student outcomes. The findings from this research study advanced the body of knowledge in this field of study by showing the views, perspectives, and testimonies of AA and Caucasian students' interactions with teachers in Title I schools.

This researcher also contributed to the existing body of empirical work within the field regarding student achievement. Previous studies of the experiences of AA and Caucasian students were minimal (Brittian & Gray, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012). The data collected in this study showed a deeper understanding of how AA and Caucasian students viewed and responded to teachers and how these views influenced student-teacher interactions. The research information gathered can be used to increase the understanding of how racialization influence AA and Caucasian students in Title I schools. This exploration of AA and Caucasian student views showed specific behaviors associated with teacher-student interactions (see Griffin et al., 2016). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore how racialization influenced the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in secondary schools.

The CRT served as the theoretical foundation for this study. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), CRT theorists define racial inequities as ingrained in American society and maintained over time by law and power. These racial inequities were created by racial segregation prominent in America in the early 20th century (Byrd & Chavous,

2011). People of different races have vastly different life circumstances (Berry & Candis, 2013; Brittian & Gray, 2014). As a result, cultures are developed along racial lines (Lofton & Davis, 2015).

In this study, the views of high school AA and Caucasian students were used to make linkages between the CRT and how students viewed and interacted with teachers in Title I secondary schools. The examination of the views of secondary AA and Caucasian students showed a better insight into how students created impressions of teachers and how these views influenced interactions in Title I schools. Using CRT as a framework, this researcher utilized the tenet of racism permanence to explore how high school AA and Caucasian students perceived teachers and the influence of these views on teacher-student interactions in secondary Title school. The exploration of how AA perceive teachers showed insights into those characteristics that influenced interactions.

Significance of the Study

Brittian and Gray (2014) found that the perceptions of differential treatment deterred academic outcomes, negatively influencing the academic success of AA students. Researchers reported that AA students were at a greater risk of discrimination and were more marginalized by culturally insensitive teachers than Caucasian students (DeCastro-Ambrosetti & Cho, 2011). This researcher contributed to the body of knowledge by exploring the use of CRT to analyze how AA and Caucasian students perceived teachers to identify the characteristics that shaped the views of students and how these views influenced interactions with teachers and the development of relationships. Moreover, this researcher used the CRT lens to explore how AA and

Caucasian students perceived teachers and how these views influenced teacher-student interactions.

Researchers have focused on the perception of teachers as it relates to student achievement (Brittian & Gray, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012). Because most researchers used teachers' perceptions, this current researcher provided more information about learning experiences through the lens of students to enhance the information about interactions between teachers and students. This researcher built on the current field of research and extended knowledge by providing an additional lens to address the absence of a study showing how students perceived and described teachers and how their views influenced teacher-student interactions.

According to Soumah and Hoover (2013), students learn more effectively based on a positive student-teacher relationship. The current researcher could influence the understanding of characteristics that would shape the teacher-student interactions using the views of AA and Caucasian students. The opinions of AA and Caucasian students were used to explore characteristics that influenced teacher-student and interactions.

For supportive interactions to exist in the classroom, both teacher and students exhibit behavioral characteristics that foster trust and acceptance (Warren, 2015). In other words, the learning environment must be culturally responsive for all students for learning to be effective (Kenyatta, 2012; Soumah & Hoover, 2013). Therefore, this study showed additional knowledge about how students perceived and described teachers and how their views influenced teacher-student interactions.

Rationale for Methodology

This researcher explored how racialization influenced the views of high school AA and Caucasian students and how they interpreted, described, and perceived the teachers in Title I secondary schools. According to Gustafsson (2017), qualitative research involves inquiry into the meanings that groups of individuals ascribe to a problem or concern. Additionally, Alpi and Evans (2019) suggested that that qualitative research, specifically case studies, involved exploring a bounded systems through data collection utilizing multiple sources of information to report a description of themes. In this multi-case study, the researcher focused on the "how" and "why" of student behaviors as evident by multiple sources of information—semi-structured interviews and historical data (see Bagwell, 2019). The researcher selected a qualitative research design, specifically descriptive multi-case study, to explore how racialization influenced the views of AA and Caucasian students and how such views about racialization influenced teacher-student interactions.

There are primarily two different types of research methodologies—quantitative and qualitative. Generally, the quantitative methodology is based on positivism, which is a paradigm that shows that universal laws or theories exist to govern social events and behavior (Gustafsson, 2017; Roberts, 2013). Researchers can use these laws to consider the cause and effect to make predictions (Roberts, 2013; Silverman, 2016). According to Silverman (2016), the researcher conducts quantitative research by first formulating a hypothesis and then selecting characteristics to study. Conversely, qualitative researchers study the whole not variables (Roberts, 2013). Next, quantitative researchers use structured data collecting instruments to identify statistical relationships. The data are

then collected and analyzed to provide answers to the research questions. Lastly, the findings are communicated, and the conclusions are drawn. Hence, quantitative methodology is useful when the purpose of the research involves seeking to understand how variables relate to one another (Roberts, 2013; Silverman, 2016). For this study, quantitative research was not selected because the researcher explored the issue of racialization, not the variables impacting racial issues.

In contrast, qualitative methodology is based on the interpretivist paradigm, which seeks to understand values, beliefs, and meanings of social phenomena (Roberts, 2013). According to Silverman (2016), the researcher conducts qualitative research by first reviewing the literature for the research topic and then generating a hypothesis by using the data collected. A qualitative methodology is useful when the purpose of the research is to learn from participants the way the participants experience a concern or issue. Because qualitative research, such as a case study, would be based on exploration to understand an issue, Baskarada (2014) and Gustafsson (2017) suggested that case studies were suitable platforms when seeking to explore the influence that a situation had on group in the same setting. The case study approach was selected because the researcher sought to understand the influence that racialization had on student views of teachers and student-teacher interactions.

In this study, the researcher selected the qualitative methodology, specifically descriptive multi-case study, to describe and provide a deep understanding of the influence of an issue of racialization. The descriptive multi-case study approach was the most suitable platform to understand the influence that racialization had on student views and student-teacher interactions of teachers. This researcher focused on the views of AA

and Caucasians students to understand the similarities and differences that racialization had on interactions of students and teachers. According to Alpi and Evan (2019), researchers utilize a bounded system (case) or multiple cases to understand the differences and similarities when analyzing the data across and within situations. In this descriptive multi-case study, the data from both cases were explored to understand the influences that racialization had on students' views of teachers in a secondary Title I school.

The current descriptive multi-case study involved exploring two cases to understand better the similarities and differences that racialization had on student views about teachers and how those views of racialization impacted student-teacher interactions. Merriam (2009) defined a descriptive multi-case study as an in-depth analysis of a bounded systems (cases). A case can be an individual, single program, group of people, organization, or classroom (Merriam, 2009). In a descriptive multi-case study, the researcher selects an issue or concern and then selects multiple cases to illustrate the concern or issue (Bagwell, 2019; Creswell, 2013). For this study, the researcher selected two groups of students based on the AA race and Caucasian race and who attended different school to illustrate the influence that racialization had on student-teacher interactions. The first case involved collecting data from ten AA students attending a secondary school. The second case involved collecting data from eight Caucasian students attending the same secondary school.

According to Richard (2013), the qualitative methodologist offers the most valuable approaches to understanding the human experiences. Qualitative researchers attempt to understand the complexities of the world through human experiences (Reck,

2017). The knowledge gained by examining the phenomenon from the perspective of the participant is the key to constructing meaning and interpretation for the phenomenon (Snelgrove, 2014). The purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore how racialization influenced the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in secondary schools.

In this research, the hypothesis went untested, rather the meaning of the interactions was sought. Baker et al. (1992) found that researchers tended to use non-structured or semi structured interviews to elicit description of human experiences. For this reason, the current researcher utilized qualitative methodology as opposed to quantitative methodology. The objective of this research was to access the experiences of AA and Caucasian students to explore their views and interactions with teachers. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used to develop an explanation from participants' views of teachers about interactions that influenced academic success.

Nature of the Research Design of the Study

Researchers should understand how AA and Caucasian students might define situations encountered to understand how they would perceive teachers and how their views would influence teacher-student interactions (see Roberts, 2013). According to Ospina (2004), researchers use qualitative research design to explore phenomenon not yet studied and explain experiences from voices of the participants rather than outside interpretations. The qualitative research method of study was chosen to provide a platform to learn how racialization influenced how AA and Caucasian students viewed teachers and how their views influenced student-teacher interactions. According to Baker et al. (1992), phenomenological qualitative descriptive researchers aimed to describe the

situation as experienced by participants to discover the shared meanings underlying the observed disparities of a given phenomenon. The qualitative research designs associated with this study included phenomenology, case study, and grounded theory.

A researcher could use Giorgi's (1989) descriptive phenomenological approach to explore the intentional relationships between situations and individuals. Generally, researchers use phenomenological research to describe an event or a phenomenon. Researchers also could use grounded theory research to provide an explanation of why an event or phenomenon occurred (Roberts, 2013). Although grounded theorists examine individuals who share in the same interactions, ethnographic researchers focus on shared patterns of individual groups (Bagwell, 2019; Creswell, 2013; Gustafsson, 2017). The ethnographic design approach involves describing and interpreting shared and learned patterns of behavior. Lastly, researchers use case studies to explore a bounded system (case) or multiple cases to understand the issue under examination (Gustafsson, 2017). The current researcher sought to understand behavior of two groups to understand the influence of racialization. For this study, descriptive multi-case study design was most suitable so that researcher could explore the influence that racialization had on the views of two groups of students in the same setting when relationships went unclearly defined (Bagwell, 2019; Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2013).

This researcher compared the experiences of 18 AA and Caucasian students to explore if racialization influenced how students perceived and interacted with teachers. The use of descriptive multi-case studies was preferable because the data collected could be generalized (see Robert, 2013). Researchers use multiple-case study to explore differences between cases to predict contrasting results (Bagwell, 2019; Baxter & Jack,

2008; Creswell, 2013; Gustafsson, 2017; Robert, 2013). The descriptive multi-case case study often has shared common characteristic, and the cases can be categorically bonded together. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), researchers can use descriptive multi-case studies to increase the reliability and validity of a study by providing a variety of experiences.

The essence of the selected research design was to explore how each group operated rather than the issue. This researcher also explored how racialization influenced student views and how those views of racialization influenced student-teacher interactions. The case study approach was used to explore a group of AA and Caucasian students to gain an understanding of how they described and perceived their teachers.

Two data sources, such as interviews and focus groups, were utilized to understand how students' views of racialization influenced relationships, interactions, and academic success levels (Bagwell, 2019). Semi-structured interviews were used as a research tool to explore different views of specifically targeted audiences (see Baker et al., 1992). The semi-structured interviews were utilized to capture the views of secondary AA and Caucasian students attending Title I secondary schools.

Descriptive multi-case researchers use multiple data sources to increase credibility (Robert, 2013). This study consisted of individual recorded and transcribed interviews. The research questions served as discussion points to formulate the interview protocol. The interview protocol was utilized to lead the discussion with participants, and probing questions were utilized to gain clearer meanings (Appendix D). Additionally, the researcher utilized focus groups to gain data to understand better the links between students' views of teacher and student-teacher interactions.

This researcher used the descriptive multi-case study design to compare the views of AA and Caucasian students to explore if racialization influenced how students viewed teachers and how these views influenced student-teacher interactions. Considering the advantages and disadvantages multiple research approaches, the descriptive multi-case study approach was selected so that the researcher could explore both cross settings and within each individual setting. Lastly, the researcher used descriptive multi-case study to explore differences between cases to predict contrasting results (see Baxter & Jack, 2008). Baxter and Jack (2008) reported that multiple case researchers could increase the reliability and credibility because suggestions were grounded in multiple empirical evidence.

Definition of Terms

Throughout this study's exploration of racialization and the viewpoints of AA and Caucasian students' interpretations of teachers, there were frequently used terms. The following shows the terms used throughout the study:

Academic performance. Students display this performance level in educational settings when striving for test scores, grades, and distinguishing honors (Gray, 2014).

Achievement gap. This gap represents the disparity in academic performances between groups of students. Often, this term is used to describe performance gaps between subgroups of populations (Gray, 2014).

Black inferiority. Black inferiority is the identification of self as less than because of negative stereotyping by large masses of people (Cochran-Smith, 1995).

Cultural awareness. Cultural awareness is the ability to recognize and accept different beliefs, customs, and values of others with different origins. It cultivates relationship building in diverse settings (Ahmad & Farooq, 2012).

Cultural differences. These differences can occur within a given nation between people. In context with the study, these differences refer to the tension that splits people and disrupts the progress of a group of people (Vallegas & Lucas, 2002).

Cultural insensitivity. This insensitivity is the lack of recognition that cultural differences and experiences exist (Spring, 2006).

No Child Left Behind. This education act was created in 1965 for Title I federal aid programs reducing achievement gaps in elementary and secondary schools (NCES, 2015).

Perception. Perception is an individual's beliefs based on lived experiences (Kenyatta, 2012).

Race-based culture. Race-based culture refers to the cultural norms associated with a group's racial identity (Soumah & Hoover, 2013).

Secondary schools. These schools are campuses that support Grades 9 to 12 (MacMahon, 2011).

Title I school. These schools have high numbers or percentages of children from low-income families, with a goal to ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards (MacMahon, 2011).

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

The current qualitative descriptive multi-case researcher explored how AA and Caucasian students perceived, described, and interpreted teacher behaviors. The

researcher explored how these views influenced teacher-student relationships and interactions. Silverman (2016) defined assumptions as a researcher's beliefs that cannot be proven. For this study, the following assumptions were present:

1. It was assumed that the participants were truthful and honest when answering and responding to interview questions. The results and validity of this study depended on the participants providing truthful answers because the answers were collected as data to create the foundation to address the research questions.

2. It was assumed that during this study, the participants' ages would not significantly affect their interpretations of observed teacher behaviors. Moreover, students could express their views anonymously.

3. It was assumed that participants would understand the contexts of race, beliefs, and SES. The results and validity of this study depended on participants' abilities to understand and describe teacher cultures.

4. It was assumed that the participants had interactions with their teachers that would provide data to answer the research questions. According to Ryan et al. (1998), students may avoid interacting with teachers in classrooms where they do not experience academic success. The results of the study depended on the richness of data provided by the participants.

The limitations in a study refer to the uncontrollable constraints that may influence the outcome (Silverman, 2016). For this study of secondary AA and Caucasian students' views of interactions with teachers, the following limitations existed:

1. All 18 students were enrolled in the same school district. Choosing students with similar demographics might describe a phenomenon that would occur only within the selected school. The results of the research could not be generalized to other populations—a common pitfall that might threaten misunderstanding of the questions due to personal convictions or prejudices within the same district (Baskarada, 2014).

2. This qualitative research was susceptible to the researcher's bias because the researcher was an AA female administrator in a Title I school, and the research was about personal views. The skills of the researcher conducting the study and collecting, sorting, and interpreting data could influence the outcomes of the study (see Baskarada, 2014). Therefore, the researcher utilized the bracketing process. The researcher limited bias by using a peer debriefing committee (PDC). The researcher used PDC to provide suggestions on the researcher's thoughts and behaviors to minimize bias. The researcher also limited bias by not disclosing the role in the district to the participants.

3. The unequal power between a student and an adult researcher was a limitation to this study (see Einarsdóttir, 2007). The student might have attempted to provide the researcher with responses that the student believed the researcher desired. Additionally, participants could have been hesitant to share responses due to the researcher's ethnicity. According to Mayall (2000), power inequities are inevitable, and researchers must seek children's assistance to understand their perspectives.

4. The participants might have listened and responded to what was easily understood and articulated. The participants might also have had poor recall and bias. The researcher elicited more detail by employing "pause and wait," providing overt encouragement, asking for elaboration and/or clarification, and paraphrasing the responses to reduce bias and support with verbal expression (see Baskarada, 2014).

Silverman (2016) defined delimitations as those variables that would surface because of the limitations of a study. The study of high school AA and Caucasian students' interactions with teachers and how they perceived, interpreted, and described teachers included the following delimitations:

1. A delimitation of this study involved the demographics of the participants. All participants were AA and Caucasian students attending secondary schools. The researcher ensured each participant was a member of this specific demographic group during the sampling process.

2. Another delimitation of this study was using only students' perspectives. The inclusion of teacher views might have added value in determining the correlation between teacher views and student views on behavioral variables that influenced relationships, interactions, and academic success. The focus was students because of the lack of studies on the perspectives of such students.

3. The restrictions of generalizations about findings when utilizing a qualitative case study design was also a delimiting factor (see Baskarada, 2014). Using a smaller sample size in a single geographic location impacted generalizations.

Summary and Organization of the Remainder of the Study

There is a need for a better understanding of the AA and Caucasian students' experiences and how they interpret teacher support (Kenyatta, 2012; Watkins & Aber, 2009). Using students' views to show racialization issues may give researchers insights into the factors that drive behaviors that impact student-teacher interactions. There was a

need to understand why reforms, such as the NCLB (2002), did not give rise to the AA students (NCES, 2015). According to Kenyatta (2012), performance disparities are due to lack of motivation and structural inequalities. Pershey (2011) linked disparities to inadequate relationships and low expectations due to differential treatment due to cultural insensitivities (Brittain & Gray, 2014). The current qualitative descriptive multi-case researcher explored how secondary AA and Caucasian students described and viewed teachers and how those views influenced teacher-student interactions.

Chapter 1 contained an introduction and background to the exploration of AA and Caucasian students' interpretations and relationships with classroom teachers. Chapter 1 showed how personal views and perceptions influenced interactions between teachers and students, often impacting student achievement (Brittain & Gray, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012). Chapter 2 contains the review of current literature and provides historical literature related to cultural disparities in learning institutions. This chapter also contains the theoretical framework or the foundation of the study. Chapter 3 shows the use of the qualitative-descriptive multi-case study research method to understand how an issue or concern influence participants and the procedures utilized throughout the research student to collect data. Chapter 4 provides details of the data analysis. The explanation included a written and graphic summary of the results, which took 4-6 weeks to complete. Lastly, Chapter 5 contains the discussion of results and its connections with the existing literature and dissertation topic.

The dissertation was approved by the dissertation committee in November 2019. The academic quality review (AQR) approval was in January 2020. The oral defense of the proposal took place February 2020. The Grand Canyon University (GCU)

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval occurred February 2020. The collection of data was 4 to 6 weeks in duration and occurred by May 2020. The data analysis was 6 to 8 weeks in duration and occurred by July 2020. The completion of the written dissertation occurred February 2021.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction to the Chapter and Background to the Problem

This qualitative phenomenological researcher explored the views of high school AA students with respect to the phenomenon of perceived racialization. The main topic of this research was how the AA and Caucasian students' viewpoints about teachers influence student-teacher interactions, Title I schools, and academic achievement. Specifically, this study aimed to explore how racialization influences the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views influence student-teacher interactions by using the following research questions:

RQ1.   How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?

RQ2.   How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?

The literature review provided significant studies that explained the historical influence of the phenomenon of race based-culture on teacher perceptions. However, there is no qualitative study has been dedicated to capturing the influence that racialization has on student-teacher interactions (Gans, 2016; Kenyatta, 2012). Like Kenyatta (2012), Watkins and Aber (2009) recommended future researchers should explore how students perceived teachers and the influence that these views had on student-teacher interactions. Few qualitative researchers focused on capturing the views of AA and Caucasian, specifically those views that influenced student-teacher interactions.

The literature is organized into categories to include the teacher and student views of educational inequities, teacher-student interactions, and academic achievement. The first section includes the background of the study in relationship to the perception of

cultural differences and the underlining thread of the deeply rooted racial profiling in United States. The remaining sections show the notion of the CRT and how it shapes the views of AA and Caucasian students in secondary schools. The section that follows is the review of literature that shows the evolution of cultural differences in learning institutions and its significance for AA student learning. The last section is the summary of the chapter.

Gaining an in depth understanding of the topic required reviewing numerous written texts. Electronic databases provided by the GCU library were consulted to include books and journals. The databases accessed included Academic Search Premier, ERIC, OmniFile, ProQuest PsycInfo, Academic Search Complete, and Sage. The research of literature often involved broad literature searches by using key words, such as *perceptions, interpretations, AA student achievement, teacher beliefs, culture in learning institutions, racial profiling in schools,* and *low achievement*.

The literature review included peer-reviewed articles within the last five years; however, relevant older seminal and empirical publications were included due to limited research studies on the topic. The cited and referenced articles also indicated additional studies to reference. Key studies also provided additional studies to reference. Lastly, key details and abstracts of relevant articles were placed in the GCU electronic file for storage. All articles that were not relevant to the study were eliminated.

The literature reviewed during this study showed that perceived cultural differences had negatively influenced learning for decades (Kenyatta, 2012). For many years, educational leaders have sought to close the achievement gap between AA students and students of other racial affiliations. AA students in low income areas face many

reasons for underachieving when compared to Caucasian students. AA students may underachieve because of a lack of motivation, high level of poverty, lack of parental involvement, and lack of appropriate resources (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012).

Other evidence has indicated that race plays crucial roles in first impressions, thereby creating biased behaviors and thoughts that negatively impact the learning of AA students (Rollin, 2013). Jong et al. (2014) suggested that students would model adults' behaviors and allow differential treatments to impact any emotional connections. Consequently, research about the experiences of AA students was lacking (Kenyatta, 2012), and it remained unknown how such students perceived cultural differences based on race in learning institutions.

According to Watkins and Aber (2009), racism and cultural bias are why AA students may disconnect with learning institutions. The review of literature shows that expectations to address the achievement gap have topped the nation's agenda. These expectations increased with the desegregation decision in 1954, with the *Brown v. Board of Education* and the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965, which focused on the inequalities of resources in schools. In the 90s, the focus shifted to using the analysis of whole communities and the impact of cognitive and non-cognitive experiences shape development and achievement (Brittain & Gray, 2014). Grissmer and Eiseman (2008) strengthened the notion that much of the achievement gap opens before students enter into PreK. Consequently, newer understandings showed that researchers should consider the larger set of circumstances and environments that students might face in their classrooms and campuses (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2008).

In this period of no progress in closing the gap, several studies have shown that many AAs have come to resist schools and education compared to Caucasian students (Brittain et al., 2014). Hannaway et al. (2014) suggested that social structures in the American educational system showed why educational gaps existed. Because system leaders handle creating expectations and evaluating outcomes based on the beliefs and values accepted by the dominant culture, they handle creating educational gaps. Pershey (2011) reported that almost 84% of U.S. elementary and secondary teachers identified as Caucasians, while only 10% of teachers identified as AAs. Given that a large percentage of AA students are educated by Caucasian and/or culturally irresponsive educators, there is a need to know more about the impact that teachers' behaviors and expectations have on students' desires to learn, as well as student-teacher relationships (Jong et al., 2014; Kenyatta, 2012).

Compounding the problem of teachers' cultural misunderstandings and indifferences, evidence has shown that the gap between teachers and students is exacerbated by social conditioning that cultivates negative perception and attitudes about AA students (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2008). DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2014) conducted one of a few studies that showed the experiences of high school AA students' perceptions on academic success; researchers had yet to examine the interpretations of cultural differences through the eyes of AA students in Title I schools (Kenyatta, 2012). However, research literature indicated that culturally irresponsive teachers' failure to address or value AA students' primary culture could be a significant impact on academic success. This study was unique because the current researcher examined how secondary

AA students and Caucasian perceived, described, and interpreted teachers in their learning environments and how their views influenced teacher-student interactions.

There exists a historical reasoning for the vast difference in cultures based on race in American society. Racial segregation was the legally or socially enforced separation of people of color by Caucasian communities in the early 20th century. As a result, cultures were created based on race. Thompson (2015) proposed a conceptualization of culture based on highly variable systems of meanings shared by an identifiable segment of a population. These systems of meanings represented ways of life transmitted from one generation to another. The racial cultures that developed because of segregation permeated through all areas of society, especially schools. The subsequent integration of public schools resulted in classrooms comprised of students and teachers from vastly different cultures. Many studies have shown the perceptions of Caucasian teachers of AA students (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2008). Significantly lesser numbers of studies have shown the perceptions of AA and Caucasian students about teachers.

Even though researchers have studied relationships, less research is available about student perceptions of staff interactions, campus climate, and campus leadership and the relationship to the academic success of AA students in public urban schools. Recently, researchers have shifted focus to find the reasons for the gap in academic performances of AA students in comparison to Caucasian students (McKown, 2013) using the voice of students. Scrutinizing racial inequalities, the implications of poverty on student performance, and gaining a better understanding of how students perceived cultural differences in a learning environment were recommended to address the needs of students (Jong et al., 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; McKown, 2013; Pershey, 2011).

Understanding how AA and Caucasian students perceived teachers in classroom could yield great advances in nurturing the well-being of all students to include AA students and Caucasian and close the achievement gap. According to Kenyatta (2012) and Smith and Skrbiš (2017), the number one key component of academic success is relationships. Understanding how the factors that influence relationships, such as perceptions, trust, and acceptance (Jong et al., 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Smith & Skrbiš, 2017), impact the learning of AA and Caucasian students could shape how educators interact with AA and Caucasian students. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), the voices of the people of color can show a deep analysis of the educational system. Capturing the experiences of AA and Caucasian students will provide a deeper understanding of how racialization influences the views of students (Bottiani et al., 2016; Kenyatta, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995; O'Connor, 2006).

Identification of the Gap

The achievement gap between AA students and Caucasian students has been a topic of research for decades. The effort to address riveting achievement gap increased with the *Brown vs Board of Education* desegregation decision in 1954 and the focus on the inequality of school resources from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965. In 1964, the Civil Rights Act caused a peak in optimism for the progress in education. In the 2000s, the NCLB (2002), with its requirement to disaggregate achievement scores by state accountability programs, exposed the inequality that became a target of research to determine causes and solutions (Ladson-Billings, 2005).

The NAEP (2018) data, beginning its assessment in 1970s, showed achievement data for the United States. Specifically, the NAEP data showed trends in average reading

and math scores for AA and Caucasian students. The NAEP reported that the data from early 1970s to late 1980s revealed an impressive narrowing of the gap occurring in both math and reading. For example, a 39-point gap for 13-year old students reported in 1971 was reduced to 18-point gap in 1988. During the 1990s, the gap narrowing halted and began to increase. For example, the gap increased for 18 points in 1988 to about 30 points by the end of 1990s for 13- and 17-year-old students (NAEP, 2018). Although the gaps began to narrow, with minute fluctuations from 1999 to 2008, the progress of closing the gaps decreased in momentum overall.

In the early 2000s, researchers began to focus on the reasons for the gap in academic performance of AA students in comparison to Caucasian students (McKown, 2013). Researchers began to hone in on racial inequalities and the implications of poverty on student performances (Jong et al., 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; McKown, 2013; Pershey 2011). The researchers' key findings indicated that the number one key component of academic success entailed relationships (Kenyatta, 2012; Smith & Skrbiš, 2017). In the mid- to late-2000s, researchers shifted focus from what to how to understand better the factors that influenced relationships, such as perceptions, trust, and acceptance (Jong et al., 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Smith & Skrbiš, 2017).

Most past researchers focused on racial bias from the viewpoints of adults, such as McGrady and Reynolds's (2013) study of racial mismatch in the classroom. McGrady and Reynolds demonstrated that students instructed by teachers of the same ethnicity and race received more positive evaluations. The implication of this study's result was that evaluations of teachers continued as susceptible to racial stereotypes that disadvantaged minority students, particularly AAs, confirming racial dynamics found in past studies.

McGrady and Reynolds used broad ethnic/racial categories, thereby ignoring cultural variation within each ethnicity or racial status. Additional research was suggested to examine the views of students and teachers of similar and different racial/ethnic statuses on perceptions toward schooling, staff, and behavior.

Bottiani et al (2016) defined supportive relationships with staff at learning institutions as critical to student engagement during adolescent years. The researchers utilized multilevel latent variable methods with a sample of Caucasian and AA students in 58 high schools to explore variations in perceived equity, caring, and high expectations based on students' races and SES contexts. The results indicated that AA students perceived less equity and caring than Caucasian students. Bottiani et al. suggested future researchers should examine how differential perceptions of school support, such as teachers, could be linked to subsequent gaps in student outcomes using the insights of student perceptions. Additionally, Bottiani et al. indicated that a limitation of the study was the way in which equity was operationalized as the results indicated that racial inequities might be factors contributing to disparities between Caucasian and AA students' perceptions of fair treatment. Moreover, the measures did not exclusively focus on race, culture, ethnicity, or SES, indicating that future researchers should explore students' perceptions of racial bias.

Past studies indicated that student-teacher relationships depended on how well the needs of the student is fulfilled (Kenyatta, 2012; O'Connor, 2006). Kenyatta (2012) and Watkins and Aber (2009) stated that a better understanding of students' classroom experiences and how they understood support and assistance would explain student related behaviors and show discrepancies in teachers' and students' expectations of

relationships. Additionally, Brittian and Gray (2014) referenced a need for researchers to determine the influence that negative race-related experiences have on the perceptions of AA students. Lastly, Brittian and Gray showed the need to understand the role that teacher differential treatment played in the production of educational disparities of AA students.

Mounting evidence showed that when people and students perceived that their lives and experiences are valued, they were less likely to resist conformity (Byrd & Chavous, 2011). The purpose of this study was to explore how racialization impacts high school AA and Caucasian students' views of teachers and the influence of these views on teacher-student interactions in secondary Title school. The exploration of how AA and Caucasian students perceived teachers showed insights into those characteristics that influenced interactions.

Theoretical Foundation and Conceptual Framework

The literature showed that racial bias framed by cultural insensitivities played a significant role in cultivating the academic development of AA and Caucasian students in low SES schools. The CRT formed the theoretical framework for this study. The CRT framework was the theoretical platform to explore whether the phenomenon of racialization had influence on student views and teacher-student interactions. Maslow's (1943) theory of hierarchy of needs and Bandura's (1979) social learning theory were referenced to serve as a supplemental platform for understanding the influence that needs, such as belonging and esteem, had on relationships and motivation.

This study of secondary AA and Caucasian students' interpretations of racialization was grounded in the CRT theoretical assumptions, which alluded to racism

acting as a repetitive stitching interwoven throughout the fabric of American life. This researcher used CRT analysis how racialization influenced student views about teachers and how those views about racialization influenced teacher-student interactions in the learning environment.

CRT theorists can challenge the claims of objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy in society. In other words, they may highlight the intricate tapestry of how race is interwoven with ethnicities, genders, classes, and other systems of authority. A few researchers have reported racialization and cultural inequalities as negatively influencing achievement of students (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Pershey, 2011).

In 1995, the CRT was first used as an analytical framework to access inequity in education (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) supported this theoretical assumption and formulated a discussion of social inequity and school inequity based on three central propositions: (a) Race continues as a significant factor, (b) social inequity can be understood using an analytical tool derived from the intersection of property and race, and (c) U.S. society is based on property rights. Ladson-Billings and Tate pointed out that intellectual salience of race had not been fully applied in the analysis of educational inequality.

A keyword search in Google Scholar search engine showed CRT has been recognized in more than 2,500, 000 literatures. Researchers cited Ladson-Billings and Tate's (1995) study in nearly 2,100 articles. Furthermore, researchers referenced Ladson-Billings's (2005) study in nearly 200 articles. A 2016 search on Google Scholar of Ladson-Billings (2005) revealed that the works were cited in about 44,000 articles and

papers. The increase in Ladson-Billings's (2005) citations corresponded to the quest to understand how AA and Caucasian students interpreted racial inequalities in instructional settings. Several studies have shown the link between race and teacher-student interactions and academic success (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Pershey, 2011; Soumah & Hoover, 2013).

Researchers have used the CRT as a framework to evaluate and analyze educational practices further. For example, Wallace and Brand (2012) used the CRT tool to explore the influence that race identities had on teachers' perceptions and practices. The researchers found that the beliefs and practices of teachers were informed by the teachers' critical awareness of social constraints imposed on AA students' identities. The findings indicated a correlation occurred between social awareness and the way teachers instructed and managed students, which led to educational inequity.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) argued that the cause of AA poverty in conjunction with the condition of schools in high poverty areas was an example of structural racism. Although AAs account for 12% of the population, they are the majority in most urban districts. CRT theorists, such as Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), argued that members of minority groups tended to internalize stereotypic images imposed by society. The researchers suggested using storytelling as a kind of medicine to heal the wounds caused by racial oppression to realize how one came to be oppressed and indicate ways to stop inflicting mental violence on the self.

Researchers can use the voice component of the CRT tool so that people can communicate experiences and realities. The views of secondary AA and Caucasian students were used to make linkages between student achievement and racialization. The

CRT framework was used to explore how racialization influenced student views and teacher-student interactions. Exploring how secondary AA and Caucasian students viewed teachers showed a better insight about the influences that racialization had on interactions. Using CRT as a framework, this researcher utilized the tenet of racism permanence to explore the possible contrasts that existed between the views of AA and Caucasian secondary students in the interpretations of teachers and influence of student-teacher relationships in Title I secondary schools.

According to Wallace and Brand (2012), how individuals are perceived by an observant often shapes relationships. In the case of AA students, research indicates that teachers perceive AA students as aggressive and hard to teach (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Soumah & Hoover, 2013). Brittian and Gray (2014) suggested that racism existed and influenced the individual beliefs that would lead to negative stereotyping of AA students. Research studies are needed to examine how students, particularly minority AA students describe how inequalities resonate in the learning environment based on services, resources, and classroom instructions (Brittian & Gray, 2014; DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012). The research questions of this study, using the views of the AA and Caucasian students, showed a deeper understanding of how AA students viewed teachers in secondary Title I schools. The examination of AA and Caucasian students' interpretation of teacher behaviors showed insights into the influences that racialization had on student-teacher interactions.

Review of the Literature

U.S. educators have been socialized to believe that they should treat all students the same, without considering race, ethnicity, gender, or class. Based on the notion of

teaching all students equally is whether teachers can successfully perform as gate-keepers of equal educational opportunities. Research studies confirm that when people as well as students perceive that their lives and experiences are valued, they are less likely to resist conformity (Byrd & Chavous, 2011). On the other hand, people who are criticized, ostracized, or devalued are often motivated to act antisocial, aggressive, and angry instead of motivated to repair their social images (Brittian & Gray, 2014).

Byrd and Chavous (2011) suggested that students' experiences with teacher support and acceptance influenced their beliefs in teachers' abilities to instruct. According to Barbarin and Aikens (2015), AA students need academic success positive relationships. Barbarin and Aikens (2015), Kenyatta (2012), and Spring (2006) lamented performance disparities were due to a combination of teacher expectations, structural inequities, lack of student motivation, school practices, limited resources, and cultural insensitivities. Likewise, Kenyatta (2012) and Pershey (2011) blamed the disparities in school experiences on inadequate school relationships, limited exposure to rigorous curriculum, and low expectations.

Researchers have studied the views of adults on student academic performance, motivations, and behaviors. For example, O'Connor (2006) provided notions to many factors contributing to why AA students struggled in learning institutions in comparison to Caucasian students. Some factors included inequalities, relationships, poverty, and negative perceptions as indicated from the experiences of others involved in the learning of AA students. Andrews and Gutwein (2016) captured the voices of students to examine how middle and high school students described the teacher expectations and the influence that expectations had on relationships and academic achievement. The findings indicated

that students believed that teachers' differentiated expectations were based on the identity characteristics of students. Bottiani et al. (2016) studied students' perceptions of school support and found that supportive relationships with staff members at schools were critical assets to student achievement in adolescence. The researchers sampled AA and Caucasian students to explore the variations in perceived caring, equity, and high expectations by student race. The results indicated that AA students, when compared to Caucasian students, perceived less caring and equity from staff members.

There were limited research studies available on the impact that racialization had on student views about teachers and learning environments, particularly AA and Caucasian students (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015). Jones (2014) suggested that researchers should ask students *why* and *how* questions to gain their perspectives.

Implications of Inequalities in Education

Researchers have focused on studying the inequalities in education to isolate the root cause of the problem and find feasible solutions. Researchers have associated some possible answers with intelligence quotient (IQ) deficits of AA students, as theorized by Jensen (1969), resulting from lower social class status. Another theory connected to educational inequality is the cultural deficit theory. Theorists have suggested certain groups of people are inferior when comparing intelligences (DeCastro-Ambrosetti & Cho, 2011). The commonality of these theories is that each place students within structures indicated by class or race instead of appearance and/or language. However, these domineering structures indicate that blame should be placed on victimized students, incriminating teachers, rather than holding higher entities that imposed such societal constraints.

According to Kenyatta (2012), these imposing structures (societal constraints) negatively influence teachers' expectations for students, especially AA students. Teacher expectations of students can be influenced by teacher personality, unique socializing experiences, research theories, and historical data tracking trends (Garcia et al., 2011). DeCastro-Ambrosetti and Cho (2011) focused on teachers' expectations of students based on their physical appearance. The research focus question was related to what teachers' thought of their students based on gender, race, and social class. The researchers examined prejudice or discrimination based on the grounds of appearance. The qualitative research study involved using 226 secondary education teachers. The teacher candidates completed an attitudinal survey to solicit teacher perceptions about adolescents based on physical characteristics. The survey instrument tool consisted of 10 formulated statements and a series of adolescents ranging in ages from 15 to 17 from four major racial groups: AAs, Caucasians, Asians, and Hispanics. Referencing a series of inflammatory statements, teacher candidates were asked to link the statement to a photo that portrayed a specific racial group. The findings indicated that participants' responses to photos were reflective of perceptions and revealed prejudices and stereotypic associations (DeCastro-Ambrosetti & Cho, 2011). The findings showed that the teacher candidates had preconceived thoughts about the adolescents in the photos.

Similarly, Francis (2012) examined the influence of teacher perceptions on AA female students. The researcher surveyed teachers on the attentiveness and disruptiveness of students and found that teachers viewed AA females significantly less favorably than other ethnic groups. The researcher also found that teachers rated attentiveness based on academic performances that might have resulted in less favorable outcomes than others

based on attentiveness. Even after the researcher-controlled test scores, parental involvement and poverty level AA female students remained less favorable in attentiveness. Lastly, the results of disruptiveness indicated that AA female students were viewed as significantly more disruptive.

Although AA females were perceived less favorable in attentiveness and disruptions, these perceived behaviors did not have a significant relationship to AA female students being recommended for honor classes. In contrast, Francis (2012) found that patterns in racial differences for honors recommendation were similar among the social classes. For example, poor AA students were 9% less likely to be recommended for honors classes than the other poor groups. The limitations to this study included the lack of evidence to rule out bias behaviors and the lack of data to determine a correlation between the actual behavior of AA female students and teacher perception. The findings indicated that AA female students were perceived as less favorable than other racial groups.

Francis (2012) warned that the impact of disruptive perceptions could lead to higher behavioral infractions than any other ethnic groups. According to Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), members of minority groups tend to internalize stereotypical images that were constructed to maintain Caucasian superiority. These stereotypic images often show support for the beliefs of inadequacy of classroom teachers and staff (Griffin et al., 2016). Research has also shown that the dynamic between a teacher and student can influence AA students—not solely because teachers can shape the learning experience, but because teachers influence academic progression (Kenyatta, 2012).

Low expectations and the lack of positive student teacher relationships influence AA students' academic success (Kenyatta, 2012). O'Connor (2006) conducted a qualitative study and found that AA students learned best in environments with high expectations and caring. Given the potential importance of teacher perception on academic performance, future researchers should determine the mechanisms influencing perceptions (Francis, 2012; Kenyatta, 2012).

DeCuir-Gunby and Schutz (2014) studied secondary students and found that perceived or actual discrimination could make it difficult for students to engage with learning in the same way as other counterparts. Watkins and Aber (2009) found that AA students often believed that they were treated unfairly and were more harshly judged than their counterparts. Woodson (2006) established the legitimacy of the AA race as a research topic and led the discussion of the positive attributes of AA and their situation in the United States. Woodson identified the school's role in cementing inequality and demotivating the AA students (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Woodson (2006) suggested that the educational process devalued the spark of genius in AA students as they believed their races would never measure to the standards of other people. Following in a similar path of Woodson, Du Bois (2014) used race as a theoretical instrument for assessing social inequity, coining the revolutionary concept of double consciousness.

According to DuBois (2014), double consciousness refers to the concept of divided self in which the AA lives within two thoughts regarding a Caucasian and an AA United States. Watkins and Aber (2009) proposed that because of double consciousness, AAs would view themselves from self-perspectives and those perceived by others. Due to experiencing a divided identity, AA people would suffer from a damaged self-image

shaped by the perception of another people (Griffin et al., 2016). Kincaid and Yin (2011) explained that feelings of inadequacies were ingrained in AA students during the elementary and secondary school years. Researchers have indicated that learning institution leaders have not just failed to meet the developmental and social needs of these students but also academically oppressed them (DeCastro-Ambrosetti & Cho, 2011; Kenyatta, 2012).

Title I Schools

Title I, the nation's oldest and largest federally funded program, was enacted in 1965 under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act U.S. Department of Education (2015). The policy was written to close the achievement gap between low-income students and other students. The policy was amended in 1994 to improve measures intended to help at-risk students. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2015), the purpose of Title I is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.

The fundamental principles of Title I indicate that schools with large populations of low-income students will receive additional funding to assist in meeting students' educational goals. The number of low-income students is determined by the number of students enrolled in free and reduced lunch programs. Schools that qualify for Title I funds must have at least 40% of its students enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program, indicating that at least 40% of students are at or below the poverty level.

Hopmann (2008) concluded that children from lower income households scored significantly lower on key areas of educational assessment, such as vocabulary skills,

knowledge of numbers, and the ability to concentrate. Many children who live in poverty reside in urban neighborhoods or isolated rural areas and attend Title I Schools (Hopmann, 2008). However, many educators come from middle-class backgrounds, making it difficult for them to relate to students who live in poverty and attend Title I schools (Lofton & Davis, 2015). The purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore how racialization influenced the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in secondary schools.

Implications of Teacher Perceptions

Successful teachers of AA children create a community of engaged learners that help students to create knowledge based on life-experiences. There were limited data on the culturally relevant beliefs of teachers. Love and Kruger (2005) sampled the beliefs of staff who provided instruction and/or support to AA students in six urban public schools. The participants included 244 teachers, principals, tech personnel, and instructional specialists. The participants self-identified as 42% Caucasian, 48% AA, and 10% other. In all, 85% of the participants identified as female. The survey encompassed 48 statements, and 25 of those statements reflected on culturally relevant beliefs and practices of teachers. In the study, special attention was given to those bimodal distributions that utilized demographic variables to identify trends that would lead to further investigations. Love and Kruger found that successful teachers of AA students agreed that learning from students was just as important as teaching them. Additionally, Kruger (2005) indicated that these teachers believed in the relevance of students'

cultures, ethnicities, and races. The results indicated a need to identify a link among classroom interactions, teacher beliefs, and student outcomes.

All learners desire to be treated equally by their classroom teachers despite social characteristics, ethnicity, and class. Unfortunately, substantiated evidences have shown that teachers tend to evaluate AA students' academic potential and behaviors more negatively than other students, particularly compared to Caucasian students (McGrady & Reynolds, 2013). Moreover, researchers have shown that negative perceptions of AA students exist in primary and secondary classrooms. Sociologists have suggested that negative perceptions of teachers are rooted in racial stereotypes that creates micro-political classroom dynamics (DeCastro-Ambrosetti & Cho, 2011). The evidence of stereotyping manifests in many forms to include studies that show that teachers tend to expect less achievement from AA students (Francis, 2012). Downey and Pribesh (2004) reported that AA kindergarteners were rated as having more behavioral problems (e.g., fighting, arguing, and becoming angry) than other Caucasian students; however, when the same students were evaluated by AA teachers, the AA students were rated as having fewer behavioral problems. Kruger (2015) indicated that Caucasian teachers' perceptions of AA students were generally implicated in racial inequalities influenced by societal views of racial order of superiority when compared to Caucasians.

Bandura (1979) created the social learning theory to suggest that people tended to learn from other people through imitation, observation, and modeling. Teachers must create a learning environment that satisfy the need for students, particularly AA to experience exemplar learning environments where staff and students model appropriate behavior and interpersonal skills (Griffin et al., 2016). In addition, the educator must

ensure that learning objectives and behavior expectations are demonstrated. Jong et al.

(2014) warned that students were more likely to model behavior if the results represented

what students valued. Jong et al. suggested that positive student teacher relationship

directly correlated to high student achievement, such as Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of

needs. Moreover, students should experience love, esteem, safety, and physical needs

before progression to self-actuality. Jong et al. shared that students who reported positive

relationships with teachers had higher attendance and academic grades than those

students who reported a negative relationship.

Students who feel safe and successful enjoy school. Moreover, successful students

tend to show higher academic success and attendance rates. Additional theorists, such as

Maslow (1943), noted that human beings would require love, connection, respect from

others, and personal growth to fulfill expectancies (Noltemeyer et al., 2012). Teachers

should ensure that their needs are met for students to want to learn. According to

Noltemeyor et al. (2012), positive relationships foster the fulfillment of these needs.

Stakeholders should become experts at building relationships with students to fulfill the

needs of all students to fuel their motivation to learn.

McGrady and Reynolds (2013) explored how Caucasian teachers' perceptions of

students varied depending on teachers' and students' ethnic statuses. The researchers

examined how Caucasian teachers viewed non-Caucasian students versus Caucasian

students and how non-Caucasian teachers viewed non-Caucasian students. McGrady and

Reynolds found that although teacher perceptions of student effort and demeanor were

consequential for grades, cultural differences might better indicate teachers' racial biases

and views of students' academic abilities. In 75% of the outcomes, Caucasian teachers

rated AA students as having lower scholastic aptitudes than Caucasian students. For example, in comparison to Caucasian students instructed by Caucasian teachers, AA students had lower odds of being rated as using good grammar and having the ability to organize ideas in their English class. Moreover, McGrady and Reynolds confirmed that AA students often received more negative ratings than other students when evaluated by Caucasian and non-Caucasian teachers.

Teachers' perceptions of students' academic abilities and classroom behaviors appeared susceptible to the racial beliefs that AA had lower academic potential (McGrady & Reynolds, 2013). The findings indicated that non-Caucasian teachers' perceptions of AA students were like Caucasian teachers' views. The implication of this study was that the teachers' evaluations remained vulnerable to racial stereotypes that disadvantaged AA students. An analysis of data collected by governmental agencies indicated that there was a low percentage of AA students enrolled in public school gifted programs (GT; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015). Survey data from 2015 showed that the combined national percentage of AA male and female students participating in public school GT was 6.2%.

According to Brunn-Bevel and Byrd (2015), the biased procedures utilized by educational institution leaders to identify GT often students stifled AA male interests in formal education compared to Caucasian students. AA students often began school excited by learning. Yet, by age 10, students' interests in school and learning diminished because of unfair treatment by teachers and low expectations due to stereotyping (McGrady & Reynolds, 2013). Other researchers argued that the low enrollment of AA male students in GT programs stemmed from the actions of teachers serving as

gatekeepers (Brunn-Bevel et al., 2015). Moreover, the literature indicated that supportive teachers of GT program leaders did not fully recognize the gifted characteristics in AA students. This inability to recognize gifted characteristics in AA students resulted from racist predispositions and SES biases (Brunn-Bevel et al., 2015).

According to Hayes et al. (2014), teachers' expectations drive students' academic attainment levels. Educators often have expectations and beliefs about their students involving self-fulfilling prophecies for students' high and low academic performances (Ofonedu et al., 2013). For example, classroom teachers may react to certain students in different ways based on preferential treatment and frequent affirmations. Research has shown that elementary teachers have lower expectations for educational attainment for male than female students (Spilt & Hugh, 2015). Hayes et al. (2014) reported that teacher bias and stereotypes appeared in primary school years. DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2014) reported that teachers had low behavioral and academic expectations from AA students by the time they were age 6 compared to Caucasian students. Teachers with gender biases are often less motivated to ensure that students have proper academic preparation necessary for postsecondary success. This type bias, over a long period, causes educational differences between the educational outcomes for AA students when compared to Caucasian students (McCormick et al., 2014). AA students are less likely to receive praise and affirmation in the classrooms- therefore diminishing their chances for educational success in comparison to Caucasian students (McCormick et al., 2014).

Nowadays there is a conflict of belief regarding the implications of a classroom setting that emphasize mastery and understanding on the motivation on students. Cowan (2015) argued that these conditions negatively influenced the motivation of all students.

Moreover, Berry and Candis (2013) suggested that a goal-oriented teachers' beliefs and instructional practices were the catalysts that most influenced students' goal orientations and reasons for engaging, choosing, and learning academic tasks. Goal orientations theorists, such as Ames (1992), suggested that personal goals of students were influenced by teachers' instructional practices in the classroom and beliefs. Research indicated that students' personal goal orientations often corresponded with the subjective perceptions of the goal structure of the classroom. Spilt and Hughes (2015) examined the students' perceptions of teacher achievement goals emphasized in the classroom and found that students' perceptions of teacher performance goals often mirrored students' personal goals.

According to DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2014), AA students perceived behavioral problems in the classroom continue to present challenges for teachers and mental health facilities in elementary and secondary schools. Students who present a persistent pattern of overactive, aggressive, and disruptive behaviors are at high risk for antisocial behaviors. McCormick et al. (2014) found that fallacies and biases in teachers' perceptions and examinations of AA behaviors increased the risk of behavioral difficulties in the classroom. The researchers suggested that the emotional expressions and behaviors of AA students were often misinterpreted by teachers in school settings as dysfunctional compared to Caucasian students. DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2014) explored the factors of rejection sensitivity, anger expression, and racial socialization on teacher perception of AA students within the classroom setting.

Researchers have accepted that the quality of relationships between teachers and students is crucial in the behavioral outcomes of students. McCormick et al. (2014)

indicated the escalation or mitigation of disruptive behaviors hinged on whether the nature of the relationship between the teacher and student was positive or negative. Moreover, teachers with negative perceptions of the behaviors of their students were inversely related to the degree of support given to the student in the classroom, resulting in an increase in behavioral problems (Cowan, 2015). According to Berry and Candis (2013), teachers tended to rate AA students higher than other ethnicities on factors relating to externalizing behaviors. In their study, AA students at the ages of 10 to 16 were the only students to receive high ratings on the Antisocial Factor of Connors's Teacher Rating Scale. Hayes et al. (2014) also found that teachers' expectations were the lowest for the capabilities of AA students compared to Asian, European, and Latino American students.

Racial biases in educators' expectations and perceptions of the AA student behaviors often account for their disproportionate reports of classroom behavioral adjustment problems (Ofonedu et al., 2013). Berry and Candis (2013) showed that teachers, particularly Caucasian ones, perceived AA students with certain gaits and cultural expressions based on media. They often identified traits of higher aggression, lower academic achievements, and increased needs for special educational services. Researchers have also noted that a few AA teachers discourage AA students from reinforcing negative racial stereotypes that lead to lower expectations from staff members. In contrast, Cowan (2015) shared that the discouragements of cultural expressions inadvertently communicated to AA students that their cultural style was not valued.

Although teachers' perceptions of students' overall behavioral adjustment of overt anger are significant predictors, overall behavioral adjustments were determined by AA students' awareness of cultural biases levied against them (Hayes et al., 2014). The awareness of discriminatory practices heightened the reactive emotional coping stances on the teachers' perception of student over activity. Moreover, the ability to suppress anger depended on the emotional vulnerability of students to social rejection and their awareness of racial discrimination. This finding indicated that the perceived discrimination practices played a critical role in AA students' emotional coping challenges and consequent adjustments to problems in classrooms and schools. Hayes et al. (2014) found that students with restricted knowledge and awareness of cultural heritage were more likely to have their behaviors regarded by teachers as problematic. Across different grade levels, teachers tended to rate and judge the behaviors of AA students more harshly than those of other ethnicities (Hayes et al., 2014). Such practices were connected to high levels of conflict and friction in the classroom between AA students and teachers. These findings showed the need for more research on the interplay between individual emotional racial socialization processes and behavioral options chosen by AA students in comparison to Caucasian students.

All students, regardless of ethnicities, races, and classes, desire to be treated equally by their teachers. Unfortunately, a large number of scholarly evidences indicated that teachers, specifically Caucasian teachers, tend to evaluate AA students' behaviors and academic potential more harshly that those of Caucasian students (Berry & Candis, 2013; Brunn-Bevel et al., 2015). Researchers have noted these more negative views as occurring in elementary, middle, and high schools. Because teachers' perceptions of

student behavior are linked to assignment of grades, the negative views of AA students are often implicated in racial inequalities in education (Ofonedu et al., 2013). Newton and Sandoval (2015) contended that students taught by teachers of the same ethnicity received more positive behavioral evaluations than those students instructed by teachers of different ethnic backgrounds. According to Newton and Sandoval, this mismatching effect often came from racial stereotypes, and evidence of such stereotyping existed in many forms. For example, evidence indicated that teachers expected higher cognitive abilities from students who had Caucasian-sounding names (Hayes et al., 2014) and showed that the AA teachers found that Caucasian colleagues saw less potential in AA students compared to Caucasian students.

Past studies of racial inequality consistently showed that AA students faced disadvantages relative to other Caucasian and non-Caucasian students taught by teachers. AA students receive lower ratings based on both behavior and academic ability compared to Caucasian (McCormick et al., 2014). McGrady and Reynolds (2013) noted that AA kindergarteners in an early childhood longitudinal study had more externalizing problem behaviors, such as getting angry, fighting, and having higher frequencies of arguments than Caucasian kindergarteners when evaluated by Caucasian teachers. In contrast, the researchers found that students who matched their teachers' SES or racial backgrounds tended to enjoy a more positive behavioral evaluations and grades. For example, McCormick et al. (2014) indicated that students who received instruction from a teacher of the same race had higher gains in core content areas.

Moreover, racial mismatch tends to affect how teachers view their students' scholastic aptitudes, which becomes a telling indicator of teacher racial bias (McGrady &

Reynolds, 2013). Similarly, Newton and Sandoval (2015) examined the value of education and educational expectations of AA males and females in low to moderate SES. The researchers analyzed the expectations of teachers, perceptions of parents, and neighborhood qualities to gain insights into academic disparities among AA high school students. The qualitative study showed that low teacher expectations and negative views of the parents hindered the academic success of most AA students. The researchers also reported that AA students earned 34% of all bachelor's degrees awarded in America compared to 62% of Caucasian males (Newton & Sandoval, 2015).

Inequities in graduation rates and academic achievement across ethnic background persevere, regardless of reforms and policies generated to reverse these gaps (Dexter et al., 2016). Multiple measures of academic achievement and completion have shown that the educational learning systems is severely underserving students of color (Hayes et al., 2014). Cowan (2015) argued that the gap was not solely based on the results of the lack of structural and social resources but through the interpersonal relationships of students and teachers. The underserving of children of color, specifically AA students, may relate to differences in culture between learning institutions and students. McGrady and Reynolds (2013) found that students' perceptions of relationships informed their participatory engagement in the educational system. Furthermore, the researchers found that teacher-student relationships impacted student achievement, school engagement, prosocial behaviors, and motivation levels.

In the United States, researchers have documented racial inconsistencies in rates of suspensions for AA students (McCormick et al., 2014). For instance, in the 2013-2014 school year, the national poll indicated that administrators used out-of-school suspensions

to discipline 12% of AA elementary students and 33% of AA students compared to 4% Caucasian elementary students and 11% Caucasian secondary schools (McCormick et al., 2014). Additionally, a rising number of research studies have indicated that disproportionality is not solely attributed to structural factors, such as poverty. Even AA students participating in gifted-and-talented programs continue to face disciplinary consequences at higher rates than the Caucasian students (Tovar-Murray & Tovar-Murray, 2012).

Laying a crucial foundation for addressing disproportionality requires validating and developing a theoretical framework that shows why disproportionality occurs to identify interwoven variables used to minimize it. Therefore, Smolkowski et al. (2016) developed the vulnerable decision points (VDP) model to describe the conditions that indicate when racial bias was most likely to influence decisions in campus discipline. The model researcher focused on administrator and teacher perceptions and judgements within discipline decisions. The two critical aspects of the model included explicit versus implicit bias and susceptible decisions descriptors within school discipline. According to McCormick et al. (2014), explicit bias is associated with prejudices, such as racism, ethnocentrism, and conscious beliefs or attitudes. In contrast, implicit bias is the unconscious (automatic) impacted that stereotypical racial associations can have on perceptions, decision making, behaviors, and judgements (McGrady & Reynolds, 2013). Moreover, the implicit bias can be hypothesized as inappropriate stimulus control over an individual's responses to other behaviors. On campuses, implicit bias can be observed in staff decisions to send AA students for minor incidents of undesirable behaviors compared to Caucasian students.

Using the lens of aversive racism theory, individuals are shown as highly motivated and not racially biased (Berry & Candis, 2013). Therefore, when responses are connected to discriminatory action, individuals will most likely select nondiscriminatory responses. However, in the cases where discretionary decisions are unclear and unlinked to racial bias, most decision makers will choose discriminatory responses. In school settings, VDPs are contextual events that increase the likelihood of implicit bias affecting decision making. VDPs are not linked to student behavior, instead linking to the internal state of the decision maker (Smolkowski et al., 2016).

Using the VDP model, Smolkowski et al. (2016) explored patterns in school discipline data as supporting or negating the conceptual model. The results showed that AA students were at a greater risk for subjective exclusionary consequences compared to Caucasian students for minor infractions. The pattern of disproportionality indicated that the most influential bias involved gender bias (overlooking female violations) and the in-group preferences for students who liked teachers (Johnson-Bailey, 2015). The results of the study showed tentative support for considering VDPs for reducing school discipline disparities by improving the specificity surrounding subjective responses. Professional development was recommended to provide educators, specifically teachers with the tools to identify and counteract their personal VDPs. For example, if teachers make less equitable decisions under stress, then they can use this knowledge as a reminder to slow down the decision-making process. Lastly, building relationships and proactively teaching classroom routines and using equitable acknowledgment systems will prevent VDPs.

From the sociocultural historical perspective, learning is tied to identity due to its connection via relationships. As students grow in their comprehension of subject matter, their understandings and awareness levels of the goals of their community members also grow. Thus, from a sociocultural perspective, learning is motivated and assessed based on relationships. Learning, a socially embedded process, is inseparable from the relationship between learner and teacher (McKown, 2013). Newton and Sandoval (2015) found that successful AA high school students had meaningful relationships with their teachers that fostered developing their identities as learners. According to the students, these teachers showed they cared by serving as cultural mediators for students engaging with an inequitable system. All students reported that their teachers respected their cultures. A small segment of the students reported the presence of books about their culture and historical text about other countries as evidence of a teacher's cultural respect. Teachers recounted discussing personal experiences and politics of race issues and challenges that they faced, as well as counteracting negative perceptions of their ethnic group (McKown, 2013). Moreover, successful students had the support of teachers who saw schooling as a cultural space, addressing any inequities. Lastly, the students described positive relationships with their teachers as grounded in effective instructional support, positive disposition, and personalized relationships.

Previous studies have shown that different types of conflicted relationships with teachers can predict academic underachievement. Because little was known about the types of conflicted relationships, Rollin (2013) examined whether AA IQ, ethnicity, and demographics were unique descriptors of teacher-student conflictual relationships. Based on social and motivational perspectives and attachment theory, Rollin believed positive

relationships would foster emotional security and engagement in learning activities. Johnson-Bailey (2015) identified pockets of academically at-risk girls and boys who exhibited different trajectories of conflict throughout elementary school. The researchers found that the degree of underachievement manifested over a period of 6 years, which coincided with the timing and length that the students had conflictual relationships with teachers. For example, a small number of boys with prolonged conflict throughout Grades 1 to 5 performed much poorer on the academic achievement tests than was expected based on IQ testing and achievement tests.

Children who had more conflicts with teachers over multiple years also exhibited serious underachievement (Berry & Candis, 2013). Children experiencing conflictual relationships in early school years, but declining levels afterwards, demonstrated only minor under achievements in secondary school. The typical trajectory indicated that low levels of conflict throughout elementary years for most students was not associated with academic achievement. In contrast, other researchers showed that the a-typical conflict trajectories would predict achievement and externalizing problems (Ofonedu et al., 2013). Rollin (2013) examined varying dimensions of sociobehavioral functioning to include aggression, prosocial behaviors, and inhibitory control because each was identified as an at-risk factor. The results showed that only AA ethnicity, with low and below average literacy skills, made unique contributions to the prediction of increasing conflict when the pre-rated aggression was considered. These results indicated that AA students were more likely to receive disciplinary referrals and/or be suspended from school for disruptive behaviors (McCormick et al., 2014).

According to McCormick et al. (2014), several explanations show why AA students are over-represented in the low-increasing conflictual trajectory, such as the sample of students with lower than normal literacy skills. Misunderstandings among cultures, intergroup biases, and/or mismatches among racial backgrounds can occur. Jones (2014) reported that primary grade teachers often underestimated the achievement of AA students on standardized achievement assessment compared to Caucasian students. In subsequent studies, predictors of low achievement were correlated to both low teacher expectations and poor student teacher/parent relationships (Johnson-Bailey, 2015).

Although AA students have more negative relationships with classroom teachers compared to Caucasian students, AA students are more likely to benefit more from positive student-teacher relationships than Caucasian students (Newton & Sandoval, 2015). McGrady and Reynolds (2013) found that teachers benefitted from professional development that offered classroom coaching, curriculum training, and models of emotional and instructional support. Building relationships between AA students and teacher could be enhanced by incorporating multicultural teacher education. An analysis of videos of teacher effectiveness showed the need for teachers to strive for emotional connectedness with children (McGrady & Reynolds, 2013). Also, the researchers indicated that AA students were at risk of increasingly clashing relationships, with teachers monitoring of sociobehavioral functioning, SES, and IQ. These finding indicated that early social experiences in school could be the main contributing factor of racial disparities in educational attainment rather than equities.

Educators teaching in diverse communities should learn about the cultural experiences of AA students to obtain a deeper understanding. According to Rollin (2013),

understanding the cultural experiences of students will show students' cultural identities. Cultural experiences and cultural identities influence how people view the world. Jones (2014) defined cultural identity as both invisible and visible domains of the self that could influence self-construction. These domains can include skin tone, sexual orientation, gender, and ethnicity. These nonsynchronous interactions of values, races, and social statuses influence and permeate every aspect of daily living (Ofonedu et al., 2013).

According to Johnson-Bailey (2015), the experiences and identities of AAs have been shaped by the sociocultural venues constructed by the views of others. For AA people, race tends to be the leading factor toward influencing experiences, regardless of gender, nationality, sexual orientation, and language. In contrast, Caucasian Americans reported that they rarely had experiences that caused them to assess their views of their races (Newton & Sandoval, 2015). Rollin (2013) wrote that Caucasian individuals seldom took the opportunity to speak about how their cultures had influenced their attitudes and actions toward others AA students.

School activities, such as the teaching, curriculum, and learning, are sociocultural pathways from which AA students' experiences and identities are remembered, reinvented, and racialized (Summer, 2014). Students must attend school 180 days yearly for 12 years. Socially speaking, school staff prepares students for conformity to societal views of appropriateness or acceptance. In school, there is a certain way to act, react, and live (Berry & Candis, 2013). Conversely, for AA students, these ways of living and being do not generally coincide with how they live in their cultural communities. Public schools are known for assimilation practices, leaving AA students more disconnected from their

values, customs, and beliefs compared to Caucasian students (McCormick et al., 2014).
This disconnection is the driving force for the cultural gaps and negative views that AA
students have about learning.

The quality of student-teacher interactions and the quality of instruction may
influence on racial ethnic achievement gaps. Both factors influence the achievement
levels similarly for all students. Additionally, positive teacher-student relationships and
quality instruction are more available for Caucasian students than AA students (Johnson-
Bailey, 2015). Compared to Caucasian students, AA students attend schools with average
teachers and average instructional quality (Rollin, 2013). McKown (2013) reported that
students from varying racial-ethnic groups benefited from different levels of teaching
experience, while AA students had teachers with less experience. Thus, systematic racial-
ethnic differences in the quality of teachers and instruction among schools may impact
the achievement gap.

Each race experiences differences in the quality of relationships between teachers
and students, thereby contributing to the achievement gap. The level of caring and
closeness that students experience with their teachers influences academic outcomes
(McKown, 2013). On average, Newton and Sandoval (2015) reported that Caucasian
students enjoyed closer and more caring relationship than AA students. For example,
Summer (2014) studied 197 primary teachers and found that Caucasian students enjoyed
less conflict dependency their teachers than their AA peers. Similarly, Rollin's (2013)
teacher participants reported that the quality of relationships with AA students was lower
when compared with Caucasian students. Hence, evidence showed that the quality of
teacher-student relationships was associated with academic outcomes.

In comparison to Caucasian students, AA students attending urban Title I schools are at heightened risks for developing disruptive behaviors in elementary schools (Warren, 2015). Disruptive behaviors reduce the ability of a teacher to instruct and students to learn. Disruptive behaviors also have negative effects on classroom management and organization (Brittian & Gray, 2014). AA students with temperaments high in negative reactivity require teachers who foster classroom environments that support and respond to those temperaments (McKown, 2013). Few researchers examined the classroom factors that protected against the maladaptive behavioral development of students.

Researchers have identified associations between high-quality student-teacher relationships and positive student academic outcomes in early elementary schools (Summer, 2014). For example, Brittain and Gray (2014) classified teacher-student relationships into two dimensions: closeness and conflict. The researchers described relationships high in conflict as antagonistic and disharmonious between the child and teacher. In contrast, student-teacher relationships were characterized as warm, and positive interactions were high in closeness.

Research indicated that high levels of closeness and low levels of conflict constituted fewer behavioral problems. Dexter et al. (2016) found that AA students who exhibited higher levels of discipline problems had lower levels of closeness with classroom teachers when compared to Caucasian students. Conversely, researchers found that the closeness in teacher-student relationships was associated with declines in externalizing behaviors of kindergarten to third grade. In general, teachers were less likely to accept AA students' negative reactivity as a temperamental characteristic and

more likely to view negative reactivity as character deficits (Dexter et al., 2016). These teachers tended to react quickly to AA students with high reactivity, and such teachers were more likely to cite behavior and classroom management as a continuous stressor in comparison to their Caucasian students. Thus, Newton and Sandoval (2015) showed the need to rewire perceptions of both teachers and students to address gross disparities in later behavioral outcomes of AA students.

Implications of Relationships

In 2012, 24.4% of AA adolescents aged 16 to 24 years were unenrolled in high school and had not obtained their high school diplomas compared to 16.4% of Caucasian adolescents (Tovar-Murray & Tovar-Murray, 2012). Researchers supported interactions between psychopathology and achievement (Uwah et al., 2008). Learning institution leaders provide a critical domicile for a multitude of interactions that mediate the attainment of academic skills and cultivate social, cognitive, and affective development. Students who do not satisfactorily complete the requirements for high school suffer from unfortunate psychological aftermaths from inadequate development of these skills and competencies within a learning setting.

According to Summer (2014), one reason of school underachievement among students may involve negative school-related attitudes. Research indicated that negative school-related attitudes toward schools were associated with lower expectations for future success, lower achievement levels, and increased antisocial behaviors (Tovar-Murray & Tovar-Murray, 2012). AA students with undesirable attitudes toward school are likely to have poorer relationships with teachers (Rollin, 2013). Researchers have indicated that positive relations with school staff, particularly teachers, improve outcomes of students

(Uwah et al., 2008). Difficult interactions with teachers and dissatisfaction with school appear as the common reason given by AA students for dropping out of school. Moreover, research has shown that AA students who drop out of school view their teachers as unfair, uncaring, and disinterested (McKown, 2013).

The process of disengagement from the learning environment initiates before students enter secondary schools, probably beginning in the elementary grades (Summer, 2014). Transitions from primary schools to secondary are associated with changes in teaching styles, classroom organizations, and differing teacher expectations. The school context, socially and academically, is more ambiguous and less predictable, with amplified demands for self-responsibility and self-motivation (McKown, 2013). The changes in a secondary learning structure are connected to increased negative attitudes toward learning, decreased academic motivation, and faulty relationships between students and teachers.

Similarly, Warren (2015) suggested that research showed a decline in the perceived quality of student-teacher relationship of AA students compared to Caucasian students. The researcher further suggested that schoolteachers could spend more time maintaining discipline within the classroom than guaranteeing that students' emotional needs were met or providing individualized attention to each student (Warren, 2015). A possible reason could be that secondary teachers tended to stress over covering content instead of nurturance. Compared to secondary students, most elementary school students had only a few teachers, resulting in ample opportunities to build relationships.

AA students may be seen as having a higher risk factor for low achievement compared to Caucasian students. Students from minority backgrounds tend to experience

more negative school attitudes and distress due to discrimination, alienation, and prejudice from the majority culture (Jones, 2014). Brittian et al. (2014) examined differences across ethnicity regarding self-reported attitudes toward teachers and schools. Overall, the researchers reported that AA students reported more negative attitudes toward both school and teachers. The study involved children from 116 public and private schools, and 9.6% of the participating population included AA students. The study indicated that teacher related attitudes seemed to influence student academic achievement.

Researchers have stated that AA students have a higher probability of dropping out of high school than their Caucasian counterparts (Suh et al., 2014). McKown (2013) examined factors contributing to the dropout rate, considering the sources of the dropout gap within and between racial groups. The most significant discriminating factors identified for being retained included gender, family composition, parental involvement, grades, and number of suspensions. The consistent impact on dropout shifted from environment to family and students' experiences (Suh et al., 2014). This shift in contributing factors showed the need for new interpretations of dropout using student experiences as a focus.

Poor student-teacher relationships and school alienation are a major cause of negative experiences of students attending learning institutions (Rollin, 2013). Studies indicated that student-teacher relationships were related to academic achievement (Uwah et al., 2008). Less than positive student-teacher relationships often contributed to undesirable feelings toward school, eventually causing students to drop out of school.

Minority students conveyed that the acuity of teacher ethnic bias was the main cause of

disengagement from school (Rollin, 2013).

Tovar-Murray and Tovar-Murray (2012) discussed the importance of AA students

establishing positive relationships with faculty. Von Robertson and Chaney (2015) also

hypothesized that AA students with positive relationships with Caucasian faculty

members tended to be satisfied in a Caucasian college environment. Moreover, good

relationships with faculty facilitated healthy personal and social development among the

AA college students. According to Jones (2014), students performed better in classroom

settings reflective of their interests and views. In other words, Jones indicated that when

instructors included information about the accomplishments of AAs into the class

instruction, the interest levels of students increased. For example, Von Robertson et al.

(2015) reported the courses that focused on the experiences of individuals with AA

descent often negated some of the stereotype that AAs had not contributed to the history

of America.

A supportive learning environment is a necessity for AA students because they

adjust better when they feel as though they are a part of the learning. Uzogara et al.

(2014) utilized stereotype threat as the lens, examined how AA students' knowledge of

negative stereotypes impacted their success at the college level. Moreover, the

researchers addressed areas related to AA student matriculation, including perceptions of

racism and negative racial stereotypes that inhibited adjustment and academic

performance. The researchers found that AA college students adjusted well when the

learning environment included AA staff members and courses that endorsed the

contribution of AA people by fostering fairness (Uzogara et al., 2014).

Implications of Student Perceptions

Quality education entails unbiased and just decision making by those in authority (Jones, 2014). Even though decades have passed since the courts ruled against racial inequalities in schools, young people still experience racial discrimination. Minority students fall behind in achievement and graduation rates (McKown, 2013). Impoverished schools lack up-to-date resources. Thus, students and teachers struggle to feel motivated to learn in perceived dilapidated school settings. Perception involves interpreting and making sense of stimulus taken in by sensory organs under the influence of expectation, attention, and need (Uzogara et al., 2014). Therefore, children tend to learn behaviors required to maintain their existence by using information acquired through such perceptions (Lofton & Davis, 2015). Campus leaders must ensure that student perceptions of the learning environment remain culturally responsive to all students.

One of the most significant factors contributing to students' perceptions is the teacher (Jones, 2014). The teacher handles maintaining, designing, and evaluating the learning process. Fulfilling this duty requires teachers to interact with students and such interactions cause changes in both their personal and learning behaviors (McKown, 2013). In elementary education, students view teachers as learning models and their perceptions regarding the teacher reflect in their overall learning experiences. Children's perceptions of teachers are influenced by society's views, student-teacher interactions, and school culture. Aktas (2010) investigated the primary school students' perceptions of teachers. The researcher used 45 Turkish students' drawings/images to determine how students viewed their teachers. The drawings and structured interviews indicated that students viewed their teachers as informants, guide directors, and helpful. Shockingly,

few students drew teachers in the role of modeling. Teachers are models for students (Aktas, 2010) in that they provide observed experiences for students.

The most immediate way to address learning deficits in school is to listen to the students, particularly those among minority and lower SES households (Wakefield & Hudley, 2005). When the voices of students are unsought or disregarded in planning reforms, leaders' resolutions will often be misguided. Consequently, leaders should listen to students from diverse backgrounds during reform decisions (Lofton & Davis, 2015). There is a lot to learn from minority students, specifically AA students, about open and hidden discriminations still existing in schools (Brittian & Gray, 2014). AA students regularly report being discourage from taking advanced coursework. Also, they often perceive disciplinary and grading policies as unfair. When students feel that discipline is based on unfairness toward their group, they have little motivation to cooperate (Wakefield & Hudley, 2005).

Vega et al. (2015) explored the perceptions of school inequality on the part AA and Latino to understand teacher bias from the perspectives of students and how it impacted their everyday lives. The study showed that students perceived that educators and administrators subtly communicated lower expectations about the academic abilities of AA students in comparison to Caucasian students (Vega et al., 2015). Students reported that some teachers saw no reason to go outside of their comfort zone when providing assistance. Students provided examples of racial and cultural differences. Students also connected unfair treatment with ethnic stereotyping (Lofton & Davis, 2015). Most discouragingly, most AA students did not see schools as providing

immediate or future benefits (Jones, 2014). Students expressed the significance of diversity and how it impacted their motivations to learn.

Adolescents' understandings of the secondary school environment are subjective and individualistic, with a setting that may feel challenging and supportive to one student while appearing hostile and overwhelming to another (Buehler et al., 2015). Hence, researchers should examine students' personal interpretations of the secondary school environment. Buehler et al. (2015) examined the associations between students' perception of the school environment as well as school satisfaction, trouble avoidance, and school engagements. The findings indicated that students were more satisfied with their school when they perceived it as safe and positive. The academic rigor most connected with teacher expectations was correlated with teacher support (Buehler et al., 2015). The benefits of a positive learning environment were stronger for students with lower prior grades than those with higher grades. The researchers also found that teacher support was more relevant for males' satisfaction and engagement than females' engagement and satisfaction.

One finding in educational research showed that student interactions in a classroom contributed to school success, yet Hafen et al. (2012) reported that high school students routinely defined themselves as disengaged. Student engagement is a defining mark for attainment and performance in social and achievement domains. Recent researchers proposed that disengagement was the norm because of the new standards-based reforms that had constrained classrooms, thereby restricting the developmental needs of adolescents (Hafen et al., 2012). These reform needs include connection, autonomy, and competence. The need for connection is derived from the experience of

feeling close to significant individuals. The need for autonomy is based on the perception that individualized activities are matched with the self. The need for competence is often satisfied by the inner feeling that a person can successfully produce the desired outcomes. Isolating factors that increase engagement is an integral piece form improving the support for student achievement.

Hafen et al. (2012) investigated students' perceptions of teacher connection, autonomy, and academic proficiency as predictors of change in student engagement in an academic course over a calendar year. The research involved 578 high school students: 67.8% Caucasians, 25.2% AAs, and 5.1% Hispanics. The high school students provided questionnaire data at the start and end of the school year. The researchers found that students who perceived that their classrooms allowed for autonomy in the first few weeks actually increased their engagement throughout the course. Thus, at a classroom level, teachers who promoted interactions by using interesting and relevant classroom activities would more likely have motivated students driven to participate (Hafen et al., 2012).

Given the evidence that engagement is a critical marker for student success, little remains known about the predictors of change that impact the engagement of AA students. Few researchers have addressed whether AA students' beliefs are related to student-reported engagements (Hafen et al., 2012). Some evidence has indicated AA females are more likely to show higher levels of engagement and overall satisfaction and motivation levels (Hafen et al., 2012). The evidence has shown that school environments that foster connections through teacher support can positively impact the motivation to learn for all students. However, Hafen et al. (2012) indicated that teacher support tended to decrease as students transitioned to upper grade levels.

Considering that students often thrive in environments that foster connections and relationships, researchers have not addressed how racialization influences how students view teachers and how their views influence engagement (McCormick et al., 2014). A focus on predictors of change in AA students' levels of engagement is critical to ruling out some alternative causal hypotheses' associations. The researcher selected AA students for this study because of the relatively large achievement gap between AA students and other demographic groups.

Also, rather than serving as a place of opportunity, schools represent spaces where AA students are marginalized and stigmatized (Harper, 2012). AA students are more likely than Caucasian students to be diagnosed with behavioral problems and labeled as less intelligent. AA students are more likely to be severely punished for minor offenses without regard for their welfare (Buehler et al., 2015). They are also more likely to be excluded from rigorous class and educational opportunities that may support and provide encouragement (Cunningham & Swanson, 2015).

School leaders may not nurture, support, or protect AA students (Cunningham & Swanson, 2015). The current researcher showed the marginalization of AA students from their perspectives, thereby providing an opportunity for educators to address the needs of the most at-risk population in schools. The current research findings were based on classroom levels and staff perceptions rather than on students' perceptions. Therefore, such findings from the perceptions of staff and not through AA students would never fully isolate the true needs of AA students (Brittian & Gray, 2014).

Like the current study, the reviewed researchers utilized qualitative research designs to capture individual experiences using in-depth interviews, focus groups, and

participant observations. The research designs of the empirical studies supported the research questions focused on perception of individual students, particularly AA students. The researchers could present data through storytelling to reveal cultural experiences and identities of the oppressed (Berry & Candis, 2013).

According to Ladson-Billings et al. (1995) and Berry and Candis (2013), the phenomenological research approach supported the four research questions that were used to guide this study because it identifies shared experiences among individuals. Additionally, the CRT framework was an ideal tool as the researcher examined personal views to understand how an issue influenced the experiences of a group or entity, as supported by researchers. For example, Ladson-Billings et al. (1995) used the CRT tool to understand school inequity, and Solórzano and Bernal (2001) examined student resistance using the CRT framework.

Methodology and Instrumentation/Data Sources/Research Materials

In similar studies of perceptions, researchers utilized the case study qualitative research design. Griffin et al. (2016) utilized a descriptive multi-case study design to examine AA students' experiences with campus racial climate. The researchers compared the perspectives of students from U.S. and immigrant backgrounds. The students were aggregated into groups based on the immigrant status.

Another study of AA mothers' perception of the role of race in education utilized the Emic approach (Williams et al., 2015). The Emic approach is similar to a multi-case study in that in explores the viewpoints of participants from different demographics (Williams et al., 2015). Each cohort (for a total of three groups) included 25 AA biological middle-class mothers recruited from two suburban Midwestern cities. Andrews

and Gutwein (2016) also used the qualitative case study design to explore students'
perspectives on teachers' expectations to understand the ways that students experienced
their teachers' expectations. Donahue and Vogel (2018) also studied teacher perceptions
using a qualitative case study to examine how teachers believed the evaluation and
supervision practice impacted daily classroom instructional practices. The bounded
system was based on location, time, and the district's history of using the evaluations of
teachers to improve instructional practices. Lastly, Vandeyar and Mohale (2017) used a
qualitative case study approach to understand how students' ethnic and racial
backgrounds interpreted their experiences of sharing space with people in the out-group.
The case study was defined by a single university residence at an urban university.

In studies of perceptions that utilized the case study approach, researchers used
similar instruments, data sources, and research materials to include semi-structured
interviews, observations, and reflective notes. For example, Griffin et al. (2016) collected
data using a demographic questionnaire to collect historical academic data. The
researchers also used a semi-structured interview to capture students' educational
experiences. Andrews and Gutwein (2016) used a qualitative case study approach with
focus groups to explore students' perspectives on teachers' expectations to understand the
ways that students experienced their teachers' expectations. The researchers completed
field notes to scribe any additional information that surfaced during the interview.

Similarly, Donahue and Vogel (2018) conducted a qualitative case study and used
semi-structured interviews as a primary source of capturing data to examine how teachers
believed the evaluation and supervision practice would influence daily classroom
instructional practices. Donahue and Vogel reviewed historical data, such as teacher

evaluations, to outline the evaluation process. Donahue and Vogel maintained a chronological audit trail to provide evidence of the sequence of events and data collections within the study.

Lastly, Vandeyar and Mohale (2017) conducted a qualitative case study data using capturing instruments that included a mix of observations, field notes, and semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews lasted one hour. The researchers used follow-up interviews to provide an opportunity for member checking and adding additional information.

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher reviewed key elements important to research outcomes that provided the foundation for the current study on how cultural differences perceived by secondary AA students in Title I schools were interpreted. The review included an in-depth look at the legacy of racialization as the possible reason AA students experienced disconnects with learning institutions compared to Caucasian students (Brittian & Gray, 2014; Gans, 2016). Utilizing a semi-structured interview process, this current researcher explored how AA and Caucasian students attending secondary Title I schools perceived and interpreted teachers and the influence that these views had on student teacher interactions.

Ducuir and Dixson (2004) reviewed the CRT analysis and found that perceived or actual discrimination could make it difficult for students to engage with learning like their other counterparts. The findings also indicated that individuals became conscious of external stereotypes as early as 3 years old, depending on individual experiences. Minority students who have been the target of stereotypes will exhibit heighten

awareness of broadly shared stereotypes (Ducuir et al., 2004). In comparison to Caucasian students, AA students may believe that they are treated unfairly and more harshly judged than their counterparts. Although there was a wealth of research on teacher perceptions of AA students, there was limited research on how AA and Caucasian students perceived and interpreted teacher behaviors and how these views influenced student-teacher interactions (see Kenyatta, 2012).

Secondly, this researcher used research studies to support a clearer understanding of how racialization influenced opinions of AA and Caucasian students about their teachers. How students measured their teachers showed insights into how views influenced perceptions and were interpreted in the learning environment. For example, Ahmad and Farooq (2012) showed that when students partook in negative experiences with teachers that had led to negative relationships, they disconnected from learning and showed negative attitudes toward school. The literature review also showed a positive correlation occurred between student behavior and positive teacher-student relationships in diverse population; however, there was limited research on how the views of students influenced teacher-student interactions, specifically AA and Caucasian students. Kincaid and Yin (2011) suggested a need for additional studies to understand how students perceived teacher effectiveness as related to teacher responsiveness, class preparedness, organization, and student engagement. Extensive research showed that there was limited qualitative research on perceptions of students about their teachers and the influence that racialization has on interactions (Brittian et al., 2014; Jones, 2014; Warren, 2015), but the gap persisted in the need to research of student voices and opinions.

Lastly, researchers should explore how students described and interpreted teachers, classrooms, and schools to understand how students' views impacted interactions. Understanding the influence that racialization has on student views of teachers, particularly AA and Caucasian in the secondary schools, was valuable for planning, modifying, and evaluating student experiences to increase academic success. The literature review showed how teachers' expectations, perceptions, alienations, and quality instruction influenced academic success of students.

As indicated in the reviewed literature, researchers used the qualitative approach and CRT framework of storytelling to show the permanence of race in education. The practices and beliefs that necessitated the inception of CRT are imbedded in the foundations of the nation (Warren, 2015). The CRT shows a marginalized group of people's voices and perspectives to describe the influence that race, as a construct, has on events in their lives. Researchers have studied students based on teacher perceptions and external factors negatively impacting academic success (Brittian et al., 2014; Hafen et al., 2012; Jones, 2014; Warren, 2015).

Researchers have used the CRT framework to consider the role that racism plays in education (Berry & Candis, 2013; Ladson-Billings et al., 1995). Using 13 open-ended questions in a semi-structured interview, this researcher captured how AA and Caucasian students perceived, described, and interpreted teachers and how the views influenced student-teacher interactions. Using semi-structured interviews, the multiple-case researcher captured data to understand how racialization influenced the personal views of AA and Caucasian students. The researcher used the descriptive multi-case study to explore the similarities and differences of interactions influenced by racialization. There

was a gap in literature regarding the voices and views of students to understand a concern or issue (see Kenyatta, 2012). This current researcher utilized the views of AA and Caucasian students to understand how racialization influenced student-teacher interactions and how they interpreted their teachers in Title I schools.

The next chapter shows the chosen methodology of this study. Chapter 3 includes a detailed description of the qualitative design and multiple-case study approach that was utilized in the research. Chapter 3 outlines the research design, targeted population, sources of data, data collecting procedures, and analysis procedures.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

Even with the numerous reform efforts, such as the legislative interventions of NCLB (2002) formulated in 2001, AA students continue to underachieve in comparison to Caucasian students (NCES, 2015). The achievement disparities between AA students and their Asian, Hispanic, and Caucasian counterparts have been documented for the past 20 years (Campbell et al., 2000). Researchers have contended that issues lamented in performance disparities are due to a combination of teacher expectations, structural inequities, lack of student motivation, school practices, limited resources, and cultural insensitivities (Spring, 2006). Research has shown that the dynamic between a teacher and student interactions can influence AA students—not only because teachers can shape the learning experience but also because teachers influence academic progression (Kenyatta, 2012).

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive multi-case study was to explore the impact of racialization on how AA and Caucasian students perceive teachers and how their views influence student-teacher interactions in Title I secondary schools. This researcher explored the views of AA and Caucasian students using semi-structured interviews focus groups to understand student views about teachers and how those views about racialization influenced teacher-student interactions the teacher-student interactions in Title I public schools. This researcher provided focused and detailed documentation to understand the links between student views of teachers and student-teacher interactions. This researcher employed a descriptive multi-case study design to identify similarities and differences of the influences that racialization had on student views and interactions

of the selected participants. This chapter provides a detailed account of the sampling

procedures, data collection, and analysis for this qualitative research study. This chapter

also communicates the limitations and ethical issues regarding data collection and

interpretation.

Statement of the Problem

It was not known how racialization impacted AA and Caucasian students' views

of teachers and how those views influenced teacher-student interactions. The NCES

(2015) reported that only 14% of 12th grade AA students were at or above proficient in

reading compared to 46% of the Caucasian students. Research has shown that the

dynamic between a teacher and student can influence AA students, not solely because

teachers can shape the learning experience but also because teachers influence academic

progression (Kenyatta, 2012, Wallace & Brand, 2012). According to Brittian and Gray

(2014), there is a need to understand role of differential treatment by teachers in the

production of educational disparities. The features of the CRT can be a powerful tool for

explaining social and educational inequities (Wallace & Brand, 2012). The results from

this qualitative study added to the existing literature in the areas of racialization and its

impact on student perspectives of teachers in secondary schools. The researcher explored

how student views influenced teacher-student interactions.

The problem associated with the current research was the limited exploration of

the student views of AA and Caucasian students to gain a better understanding of how

students perceived teachers and how these views influenced student-teacher interactions.

The qualitative methodology selected provided an opportunity to gather descriptive data

about the experiences that shape the views of AA and Caucasian students. Howard (2001)

suggested that interactions were linked student academic performance. Wallace and

Brand (2012) suggested that one of the factors influencing academic performance of

students was teacher relationships. Obtaining input from semi-structured interviews

detailing the learning environment showed a greater understanding of how the influence

of racialization impacted student views of teachers and how those views about

racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in the classroom.

Research Questions

The goal of this study was to explore how racialization influenced students' views

of teachers and how these views about racialization influenced teacher-student

interactions in secondary schools. This researcher utilized a semi-structured interview

and focus groups to capture the views of AA and Caucasian students attending secondary

schools regarding how views of teachers influenced student-teacher interactions. The

research questions were formulated to capture how racialization influenced the views of

AA and Caucasian students in secondary schools and how these views of racialization

influenced student-teacher interactions.

The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1.   How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?

RQ2.   How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?

The primary approach of the research study was to explore how racialization

influenced student views about teachers and how those views about racialization

influenced teacher-student interactions using a descriptive multi-case study design.

Robert (2013) defined a case study as a qualitative approach associated with research

methods, such as field observations, archived document analysis, and interviews. Because

this researcher explored the views of both Caucasian and AA students, the descriptive multi-case study was utilized. A descriptive multi-case study design researcher explores differences within and between cases to predict results (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Roberts, 2013).

The primary data collection involved semi-structured interviews and focus groups. The researcher randomly selected a total of 18 AA and Caucasian students attending a Title I secondary schools. The selected interview and focus group protocols were utilized to gather qualitative information to document the views and interactions of AA and Caucasian high school students.

The semi-structured interview consisted of 13 open-ended questions aligned to the research questions of the study (Appendix D). The open-ended questions for both the interview and focus groups were written to collect rich experiential data and to identify the recurring patterns of participants' responses. Experts vetted the protocols to ensure that the questions were specific, direct, unbiased, and understandable by the target population (Appendix F).

According to Griffin et al. (2016) and Vallegas and Lucas (2002), strained teacher-student interactions often attribute low student academic performances. Therefore, the researcher utilized focus groups to gain data about the influence of racialization on students' views and interactions (Appendix E). The focus groups consisted of seven participants of the same ethnic background per session. Participants could answer questions in an interactive setting. According to Creswell (2013), focus groups offer rich information due to collaboration of participants. The researcher's notes were reflected on to create a narrative on what was observed and stated (see Baskarada,

2014). The interview and focus group protocols, audio recording, and notes were utilized to check and recheck the consistency of the findings of the study.

Research Methodology

Because the goal of this study was to explore the views of high school AA and Caucasian students, the qualitative research method was utilized. Quantitative research was not selected because it was not designed to capture subjective data, such as emotions and human behavior (Baker et al., 1992). Quantitative research methods are used to determine the relationship between observed variables within a specific population (Muijs, 2010). The data collected are analyzed using mathematically based methods, usually statistics. Quantitative methods are used when a researcher seeks to confirm a hypothesis about particular phenomena associated with the selected population (Muijs, 2010). Quantitative methodology is described as positivism, which states that the world operates according to fixed laws of cause and effect (Muijs, 2010). According to positivism, the researcher uses scientific thinking to test theories about the laws to either reject or accept the theory (Reck, 2017). The goal is to study the world objectively. An alternative paradigm of research questions the idea of objectively conducting research. Subjectivism shows that the reality or truth is partly constructed by individuals or an individual's observations (Reck, 2017). As a result, qualitative methodology was developed based on this concept. According to Silverman (2016), qualitative research methods are used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons or motivations for a particular phenomenon. Also, researchers can use qualitative research methods to construct hypotheses related to the phenomenon (Silverman, 2016).

Baker et al. (1992) further justified using qualitative research method to explain that inquiry-based research involved documenting the everyday experiences of individuals by interviewing and observing them and relevant others in the environment of study. According to Fischer (2009), a researcher who aims to assess personal perspectives should utilize qualitative methods for data collection. The current researcher used the qualitative process to provide a structured process and capture personal perspectives of in-depth understandings of how secondary AA and Caucasian students perceived, interpreted, and described teachers in Title I schools.

The goal of utilizing the qualitative methodology was to describe the situation as experienced by the participants to discover the shared meanings underlying the observed disparities of a given phenomenon (see Baker et al., 1992). The objective of this research study was to explore student views about teachers and how views about racialization influenced teacher-student interactions The researcher used the qualitative descriptive multi-case study approach as the most suitable platform to explore how racialization influenced how students viewed teachers and how their views influenced interactions of AA and Caucasian participants (see Roberts, 2013).

Using the qualitative descriptive multi-case study method, this researcher attained responses and discovered how two groups of participants viewed teachers and the influence that those views had on teacher-student interactions in Title I schools. The participants' expressions of the phenomenon, termed racialization in this descriptive multi-case study, provided the researcher with access to the experiences that shaped the understanding of the interactions in the human experience (see Richard, 2013). Researchers should understand the similarities and differences that racialization could

have on student views about teachers and how those views about racialization could influence student-teacher interactions. This researcher focused on the views of AA and Caucasians students by exploring two cases to understand how racialization influenced the views of AA students and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher relationships.

Qualitative methodologists offer valuable approaches to understanding human experiences (Richard, 2013). Baker et al. (1992) indicated that researchers tended to use non-structured or semi-structured interviews to elicit descriptions of human experiences. Because the objective of this research was to access the views of AA and Caucasian students, semi-structured interviews were used to develop an explanation from participants' experiences of how they perceived teachers and how such views influenced interactions. The researcher used this approach to gain an in-depth examination of an ongoing phenomenon of secondary high school students' views regarding the first impression of teachers and the influence on interactions. The data were collected from semi-structured interview process and focus groups. The data collected were used to answer research questions concerning how students viewed and interacted with teachers in Title I schools.

Research Design

The researcher sought to define the situations encountered to understand the meanings that AA and Caucasian students assigned to racialization. Qualitative methodologists can use several research designs to conduct research. According to Roberts (2013), researchers can use five designs to conduct qualitative research: ethnography, narrative, grounded theory, case study, and phenomenology. According to

Reck (2017), researchers can use descriptive phenomenology to describe a phenomenon and bracket their biases, while researchers can use interpretive phenomenology to ask the participants for the meaning of the phenomenon, when not bracketing any researcher biases.

According to Tsai et al. (2016), ethnography involves collecting and analyzing data about cultural groups. In ethnographic research, the researcher lives with the people and becomes a part of their culture. According to Wall Emerson (2016), grounded theory involves collecting data to develop a theory. In grounded theory studies, the theory developed is grounded in the data. According to Gustafsson (2017), case studies are in-depth examinations of people, organizations, or events to understand the influence of an issue or situation. Case studies involve observing the participant over an extended period within the same setting. The seven types of case studies include explanatory, exploratory, descriptive, multiple-case, intrinsic, instrumental, and collective (Baskarada, 2014).

Researchers can use the case study research design to investigate and explore real-life phenomenon using detailed contextual analysis of relationships of limited events (Roberts, 2013). According to Roberts (2013), phenomenological researchers seek to identify shared experiences and locate the viewpoints of everyone. Although case study design and phenomenological design researchers explore phenomenon, the selection of design approach depends on the intent or purpose of a study (Roberts, 2013). Because this researcher focused on the how and why of AA and Caucasian students' views about teachers, the descriptive multi-case study research design was selected.

Although both phenomenological research and case study designs explore phenomenon, the selection of design approach depends on the intent or purpose of a

study (Roberts, 2013). The descriptive multi-case study research method of study was chosen to provide a platform to learn how AA and Caucasian students would describe and interpret the cultures of teachers and student-teacher interactions (see Bagwell, 2019). Because the current researcher had to explore differences between two groups bounded by the influence of the same issue (Alpi & Evans, 2019), the descriptive multi-case study approach was the most appropriate approach. The researcher used the descriptive multi-case study to examine AA and Caucasian students to gain an understanding of how racialization influenced their views about teachers at Title I schools.

Researchers use qualitative approach to utilize a collection of data in a natural setting of participants and data analysis to establish patterns or themes of intentional relationships between situations and individuals (Bagwell, 2019; Creswell, 2013). The case study method, a qualitative based approach, was most suited for this study to explore situations using a bounded system (see Bagwell, 2019). The researcher explored how racialization influenced the views of students in a secondary school. In addition, the essence of the research design was to explore how the group operated under the influence of the same issue (see Alpi & Evans, 2019). The descriptive multi-case study approach was used to explore a group of AA and Caucasian students to gain an understanding of how students viewed teachers and the influence of racialization on student-teacher interactions. Although a main disadvantage of a case study is that the collected data cannot be generalized, the case study approach does show rich details about a subjected-event in natural settings (Roberts, 2013).

Researchers can use a descriptive multi-case study to analyze the views of individuals to better understand the meanings that they attach to their learning experiences. According to Yin (2014), evidence from multiple case studies is more compelling than single case studies because there is a chance of direct replication of the study, resulting in powerful analytical conclusions. Researchers may prefer descriptive multi-case studies because the collected data are generalizable. Baxter and Jack (2008) suggested that descriptive multi-case study researchers could explore differences between cases to predict contrasting results. Baxter and Jack also shared that multiple case studies increased trustworthiness by providing a variety of experiences to foster credibility and confirmability.

Lastly, a descriptive multi-case case study has shared common characteristics, and the cases can be categorically bonded together. Considering the advantages and disadvantages of such multiple research approaches, the multiple-case study approach was selected to analyze cross settings and each individual. Although the current researcher understood that student experiences were authentic, there was an understanding that students did share the common experiences of interactions with teachers. Despite the differences in race of the students participating in this study, they were expected to share some experiences as students attending the secondary Title I schools. This researcher compared the views of AA and Caucasian students to explore the influences that racialization had on student views of teachers and how those views about racialization influenced teacher-student interactions.

Using semi-structured interviews, the case study research design showed the views of secondary AA and Caucasian students attending a Title I secondary school. As a

research tool, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to explore the different views of this specifically targeted audiences (see Baker et al., 1992). This study consisted of individual interviews that were recorded and transcribed. The research questions served as discussion points to guide the formulation of the interview protocol. The interview protocol was utilized to lead the discussion with participants, and probing questions were utilized to gain clearer meanings (Appendix D).

The goal of descriptive multi-case study research was to gain an in-depth understanding of how participants viewed teachers by collecting data using focus groups. This study consisted of recorded and transcribed interviews. Like the interviews, the research questions served as discussion points to guide the formulation of the focus group protocol. The focus group protocol was utilized to lead the discussion with participants, and probing questions were utilized to gain clearer meanings and linkages of views as participants described interactions and interpretations of behaviors.

According to Giorgi (2012), the first step to achieve precise descriptions is that researchers should consciously refrain from using past knowledge and remain cognizant of different aspects of the phenomena to ensure that the focus remains clearly defined. As suggested by Fisher (2009), before the data collection, the researcher should minimize influences by identifying personal perspectives, examining these perspectives, and periodically checking for personal influences. The responses to the interview questions and the focus group were associated with the secondary data points to discover patterns of behaviors (see Baker et al., 1992).

Fisher (2009) suggested that researchers should set aside personal assumptions by utilizing the bracketing process to become fully open to data. The high school AA and

Caucasian students were randomly selected to explore how they viewed teachers. The sample consisted of 18 students to ensure that the research process did not become overpowered with large amount of data points. A small sample size afforded the participants the opportunity to share large amounts of personal experiences (see Baker et al., 1992).

Population and Sample Selection

The setting for this study was 18 secondary campuses in a large urban school district in southeast Texas. The schools were of average size, with approximately 1,100 students, which comprised the general population of this study. These campuses were selected because of the ratio of ethnicities. The school district comprised the following demographics: 38% AAs, 22% Caucasians, and 40% Hispanics. The district staff comprised 32% AAs, 40% Caucasians, and 28% Hispanics. Additionally, 94% of the general population qualified for free/reduced lunch, and 12% of the students receive special education services.

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore how racialization influenced the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in secondary schools. The general population for the study included AA and Caucasian secondary school students. Therefore, the target population for this study included secondary school AA and Caucasian students from 18 Title I schools in a large urban school district in southeast Texas.

Qualitative Sample Size

For this study, the investigator used both convenience and random sampling methods to select cases. The study sample size was 18 high school students. Case 1 consisted of ten AA students. Case 2 consisted of eight Caucasian students from the Title I school. The age range of the participants was 18 to 19 years old. The researcher utilized convenience sampling method to select eligible participants. Convenience sampling involves collecting data from participants who are conveniently available to participate in the study (Reck, 2017). Using a list of criteria, the campus support staff provided a list of students that qualified. The researcher, after receiving the list from each campus, used random sampling to solicit participants until one student per campus agreed to participate.

Eighteen secondary AA and Caucasian students were selected to participate in this study, which complied with the GCU standards of qualitative research. This study consisted of 55% AA students and 44% Caucasian students.   In this sample population, 94% of the participant qualified for free or reduced lunch and 0% received specialized services to include Special Education, 504, Dyslexia, and Gifted and Talented. Because the participation rates in research studies were often low, Reck (2017) suggested sampling method to include convenience sampling and/or random sampling to choose participants. Additionally, Fischer (2009) recommended small sample sizes, such as 10 to 16 participants for interview research, to provide a scope for developing cross-case generalities without data overload.

The school administration team provided a numbered list of all AA and Caucasian students. The researcher proceeded to place the names in a container. The researcher

selected names from each list until a participant agreed to participate. The AA and

Caucasian whose numbers were randomly selected comprised the participant pool. The

researcher began to solicit approval from students until ten AA and eight Caucasian

students agreed to participate. Those students received a consent form to outline the

purpose and description of the study, as well as lists of any risks and benefits involved

with participation (Appendices F to G). The researcher did not need to contact the

parent/guardian to gain permission for the students to participate in the study because the

students were 18 years or older. Participants received details about how confidentiality

would be handled and the procedures to withdraw from the research if so desired.

The data collection tools included interviews and focus groups. The interviews

and focus group were scheduled and averaged 60 minutes or continued until saturation.

Bowen (2008) clarified that saturation in qualitative research studies occurred when the

data gathered were enough to answer the research questions. In this study, saturation

occurred when redundancy of answers appeared, and there were no new insights given in

responses to the research questions.

Each interview was conducted using Microsoft Teams. Each participant read the

questions and had time to reflect. Each interview was recorded (with approval from

participants) and transcribed by the researcher. All responses were analyzed to comprise

a report of the views of the AA and Caucasian students. The focus groups were

conducted using Microsoft Teams conferencing to gather information pertaining to

student and teacher interactions and student views of teachers. Field notes taken during

the interviews and focus groups showed the reactions of the students and any additional

information shared that would further enhance understanding. According to Fischer (2009), handwritten field notes can be transcribed and utilized as reflection points.

The initial site authorizations were granted (refer to a sample in Appendix A). Before receiving GCU IRB approval, permission to use of each campus was acquired from the district's liaison. The district's approval to conduct research acknowledged the use of both protocols: interview and focus (Appendices D and E). With campus consents, the participation consent forms were acquired from the participants. The confidentiality of the identities of the participants was maintained by assigning pseudonyms to the participants and their teachers.

Sources of Data

According to Yin (2014), the researcher should use multiple sources of evidence to gain access to a broader range of data to validate the study. For this study, the researcher used interviews and focus groups as data sources. The multiple data sources indicated that the end result was trustworthy and substantiated. Yin (2014) suggested using written reports to maintain a chain of evidence to allow for external observers to replicate the research process while increasing the validity of the study.

The researcher used the qualitative descriptive multi-case study as the most suitable platform to explore the influence that racialization had on student views teachers and how student views about racialization influenced interactions of two cases: AA and Caucasian participants (see Roberts, 2013). This researcher utilized the responses to discover how the two groups of participants viewed teachers and the influence that their views had on teacher-student interactions. The participants' expressions of the phenomenon, termed racialization in this descriptive multi-case study, provided the

researcher with access to the experiences that shaped the understanding of the interactions in the human experience (Richard, 2013). The researcher strove to understand the similarities and differences that racialization could have on students' views about teachers and how those views about racialization would influence student-teacher interactions. The study involved exploring two cases, one being AA students and the other Caucasian students, to understand the influences of racialization on students' views, relationships, and interactions.

This descriptive multi-case study research design consisted of a semi-structured interview process using open-ended questions to capture how AA and Caucasian students perceived teachers in secondary Title I schools. The semi-structured interview approach was selected to provide reliable, comparable qualitative data (Bagwell, 2019; Baskarada, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Gustafsson, 2017). Given the transient situations of students, semi-structured interviews are recommended when the researcher has one opportunity to speak to participants (Kajorboon, 2005). The use of open-ended interview questions allows the respondents to share their views in depth and elaborate on details as desired, allowing data to emerge.

An expert panel of three individuals was utilized to vet the interview protocol (Appendix D). Each expert reviewed the interview protocol and provided feedback. The researcher used the feedback to revise the interview questions to ensure that the questions would answer the research questions. A copy of the validation rubric is located in Appendix G. The questions encouraged students to share how they viewed teachers' behaviors, decision making, and responses and how those views influenced student-teacher interactions. The interview questions were aligned with both research questions.

The interviews were recorded with a video and digital recorder (with the participants'

permission) to ensure that accurate translations were created. A copy of the interview

protocol is located in Appendix D.

The researcher also used focus groups to gather deeper understanding of the

influence of racialization on views and interactions (Appendix E). According to Aspelin

(2012), teachers are the most influential factors impacting learning; therefore, they need

to remain aware of what students think and know to provide a meaningful and conducive

learning environment. Ahmad and Farooq (2012) reported that there was a similarity

between highly effective schools and teacher relationships with students. The researcher

found that the relationship between student and teacher was regarded as a major

component of student achievement. For this study, the focus groups were used to observe

the interaction of a group of individuals to gather a large amount of data in a short period.

The data showed insights into how students collectively viewed teachers and formed

relationships. The focus groups were used to provide insights into the influence that

racialization had on teacher-student interactions.

According to Argelagos and Pifarre (2016), observations during interviews are

potential sources of data for case studies. The observations of the participants' tone,

discourse, and support/response showed reflection data to support how student views

influenced interactions. The researcher's notes were reflected to create a narrative on

what was observed and/or sensed (see Baskarada, 2014). The interviews, focus groups,

audio recording, and notes were utilized to check and recheck the consistency of the

findings of the study.

The main objective of interview questions was to gather data to determine the shared and differentiated responses to racialization. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), interviews provide richer and deeper data than information collected from surveys. In this study, the interviewer used an approved list of questions (Appendix D) to conduct an in-depth interview designed to capture how secondary AA and Caucasian students perceived, described, and interpreted teachers and how those views influenced interactions. The open-end questioning format showed how the participants thought about situations and constructed realities.

A group of 18 AA and Caucasian students were randomly selected to participate in the interview process. The participants could review, read, and write responses to the questions before sharing verbal responses. The interviews were recorded. After each interview, the researcher read the participants' responses to ensure accuracy of the documented of interactions. The audio was transcribed. The respondents' responses were utilized to gain an understanding of how secondary AA and Caucasian students viewed teachers and the influence that their views had on interactions. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher and reviewed by a third party. The interviews continued until there were no new or relevant insights emerging from the data.

The second source of data was obtained using focus groups. The questions were written to provide in-depth information relevant to the guiding research questions. These questions were developed to guide the researcher during the interview process to highlight similarities and differences of views. Additionally, the questions were developed to foster a conversational tone in which the AA and Caucasians students could provide information by formulating responses to how and why type questions. Three

experts vetted the questions to ensure that the questions provided answers to the research questions (refer to Appendix F). Using the feedback provided by the expert panel, the researcher revised the questions. According to Fisher (2009), interview questions should be written and revised to be specific in jargon to relate to the participant as well the case to be explored.

The school records of the 18 AA and Caucasian student participants were used to provide additional understandings, such as age and ethnicity. The use of audiotaped recordings, written responses, and notetaking provided several sources of data to minimize loss of data due to unforeseen circumstances. The use of several sources of data provides strength to a qualitative study by providing a platform for clear patterns to emerge (Baker et al., 1992). A case study database was utilized to store important data/evidence that would show how the conclusions were made (see Baskarada, 2014).

Lastly, the researcher ensured that an authentic understanding of the issue emerges. The researcher did not allow personal bias or use knowledge to influence the emerging data by providing an opportunity for participants to review transcribed information. The researcher used a recorder check to support accuracy. Moreover, triangulation across the cases and discussion of results was utilized to increase validity in the current study (see Yin, 2014).

Trustworthiness

Researchers can increase trustworthiness of qualitative research design by establishing credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability via the incorporation of a case study profile (CSP). Because the scientific method was inappropriate for this study, the researcher followed the CSP process to conduct the

study. The CSP process outlined the procedures and rules for the study. According to Yin (2014), the CSP allows for repeatability and supports the attainment of validity of a study's results. Using a CSP process enables researchers to adapt methods best suited for the study and understand the subject under investigation (Yin, 2014). The process was useful because it ensured uniformity during data collection and analysis.

The CSP framework consists of three phases: model development, model testing, and model refinement (Yin, 2014). The researcher incorporated a triangulation of data sources, member checking, and review of data analysis by others and opportunities to practice interviewing to make certain that the collected data remained true and certain (see Fischer, 2009). This researcher utilized the following sources of data to increase trustworthiness of the participants' responses to interview questions. The researcher selected participants randomly to increase validity of the study.

Additionally, the researcher remained objective using member checking and triangulation to address any potential research bias. The researcher used member checking to explore the credibility of data by returning the transcribe information to the participants to check for accuracy. Triangulation also reduced biases by using two or more ways to gather information. These essential processes are suggested to establish creditability in qualitative research (Baskarada, 2014; Yin, 2014).

Credibility

Triangulation of data promotes credibility in qualitative studies (Baskarada, 2014). Triangulation is defined as using multiple data points to establish trustworthiness in a qualitative research study (Yin, 2014). The triangulation method is used to establish credibility through analysis of research questions from multiple perspectives, such as

interview and focus groups. Triangulation assists with varying types of bias depending on the research. For example, measurement bias, which is caused by how researchers collect data, can be minimized by combining group research and individual data sources. According to Bekhet and Zauszniewski (2012), some reasons for utilizing triangulation include using formal and informal instruments to add value, using data to disprove and confirm hypothesis, and widening the lens by showing unexpected findings. The data triangulation approach was selected because the study involved sampling the population and using data from multiple sources to ensure the collection of sufficient coverage to minimize sampling bias. Additionally, using multiple data points helped to confirm the findings from the interview process (see Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012).

In this descriptive multi-case study, the main source of data was gathered using the individual interview process (see Baker et al., 1992). A series of open-ended questions and prompts were used to provide opportunities for the researcher and students to discuss the accuracy of answers in detail. This method also gave the researcher flexibility to probe (see Fischer, 2009) the AA and Caucasian participants to make certain that thoughts remained clearly captured. The respondent validations and panel review of the interview questions were utilized to strengthen the credibility of this study.

Due to the COVID -19 pandemic, member checking and peer checking was utilized to check accuracy of transcription. The peers and participants reviewed each transcriptions of participants' interview responses for accuracy (see Fischer, 2009). They eliminated misunderstandings or unintended biases that might have occurred during the interpretations of the interview (see Baker et al., 1992). The expert panel vetted the interview questions to test for clarity before the individual interviews (Appendix F).

Vetting the interview questions reduced the number of procedural and mechanical errors, as well as made certain that questions led to appropriate responses (Yin, 2014). Additionally, increasing time in the field via multiple visits through interviews and member checking established rapport and accuracy of responses with the participants, thereby increasing the understanding of core issues (see Fisher, 2009).

Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree that the results of the research can be transferred by contexts to other participants (Baskarada, 2015). Transferability can be established using purposeful sampling and "thick" descriptions of the research process. During this study, the researcher increased transferability by clearly documenting the entire research process, including the data collection procedures and the entire context of the study. Each interview was recorded, thereby increasing the accuracy of the interpretations. Two data collection tools, written and electronic devices, were utilized to ensure that the researcher focused on the interview while the other recorded the responses (see Baskarada, 2014). According to Yin (2014), documenting the entire process would support replicating the study under similar conditions. Research journals were used to capture to the contexts of all observations, field notes, raw data, and decisions to maintain an elaborate account of the research process. The data richness provided a thick description of the process to support future studies with similar contexts (see Fischer, 2009).

The researcher purposefully selected participants to ensure that the data collected would support the context of the research. The participants were selected based on the comparative research studies indicating academic gaps among AA and Caucasian

students. The age group of the students was selected based on the Piaget's (1971) theory of cognitive stages. Moreover, individuals 12 and up could think morally, ethically, philosophically, and socially. For the current study, 18-19 years old were the targeted age group.

The purposive sampling approach was utilized to ensure that the data reflected the personal views of the respondents. The interview questions were read to each student to enhance consistency of question interpretation. Each recording was transcribed by the researcher and reviewed for accuracy by a third party to reduce bias and enhance validity of interpretation accuracy. All data gathered in the study were included (see Fischer, 2009). The transcriptions and recordings were compared to ensure accuracy of the interpretation, and all discovered discrepancies were resolved.

Dependability

The researcher increased dependability by documenting and/or tracking how responses led to more elaborate linkages utilized during the final data analysis (see Fischer, 2009). The dependability in a qualitative study is defined as using a third-party researcher to establish consistency through examining the data collection and analysis processes of the qualitative study (Baskarada, 2015; Fischer, 2009). The dependability involves the third-party researcher's evaluation and interpretations of research findings to determine if the findings are supported by the collected data.

The interpretations and recommendations of the findings from the study ensured that information was supported by the data collected from the respondents. This researcher established dependability by documenting the process (termed audit trail) and peer examinations. Coding the data multiple times increases dependability if the results

are in agreement (Fischer, 2009). The researcher kept a journal of documenting methodological decisions and actions throughout the study. According to Baskarada (2014), this method is valid way to create an auditable trail of events.

For this study, the following documents were maintained for cross-checking: field notes, raw data, all documentation, and records of collected field notes. A case study database was utilized to store important data/evidence that showed how conclusions were made for future linking to allow reviewers to trace the conclusion back to the research questions (see Baskarada, 2014). Written communication about coding was documented and referenced to gain consistency of the coding/pattern matching process.

The researcher identified the initial categories under which data could be grouped based on both individual and group interviews. Next, the researcher wrote codes, such as phrases and abbreviations, to support summarizing and interpreting information gathered (see Yin, 2014). The researcher reviewed the list of codes (phrases, words, and/or abbreviations) to determine which codes should appear in which category. After reviewing the categories, the researcher synthesized the categories to generate themes to apply to the research questions. The patterns should be consistently compared with the collected data (see Baker et al., 1992; Gustafsson, 2017). Lastly, the researcher of this study discussed findings with neutral researchers, such as other doctoral students, to gather additional insights into the study and establish dependability (see Fisher, 2009).

Confirmability

According to Baskarada (2014), the confirmability of qualitative research can be established if the results can be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers. Usually the confirmability can be established by using audit trails, reflexive journals, and

triangulation. The confirmability in this study was established by performing

triangulation during data analysis to identify common themes and discrepancies among

data sources. The researcher documented the process via audio recording and journaling

of responses. The journals also showed any methodological decisions, procedures to

collect data, the process of purposive sampling, and actions throughout the study. The

overall objective of establishing confirmability is to ensure that the evidence and

researcher's interpretations remain accurately aligned (Fisher, 2009).

Data Collection and Management

According to Baskarada (2014), data for case studies can be collected using

individual and focus group interviews. The data collection of this study involved

collecting data from interviews and focus groups for 5 to 6 weeks. The researcher gained

permission from the campus leader to convene with the participants on campus. Jones

(2014) suggested that there was a correlation between teacher-student performances in

school to include discipline, attendance, and grades. Moreover, negative teacher-student

relationships resulted in low attendance and increased failures and discipline infractions;

however, the researcher focused on the student views for this study. The researcher of

this study used focus groups records to support triangulation. The collection of

prospective data was used in the comparative analysis to determine patterns of

association with teacher-student interactions.

The data collection also involved conducting individual semi-structured

interviews and focus groups with 18 AA and Caucasian students. The researcher used an

interview protocol consisting of five overarching questions accompanied by varying

quantities of subquestions to capture the opinions of each participants (Appendix D). The

questions were vetted by three experts. The expert feedback was utilized to formulate questions that led to rich responses.

The researcher wrote and recorded student dialogue during the interview to ensure that transcriptions accurately reflected the responses of the participants (see Baskarada, 2014). The researcher used reflection journals to capture field notes, methodological decisions, and actions throughout the study. Hamill and Sinclair (2010) also suggested that using the reflexivity protocol to record/write the interactions of participants. According to Reck (2017), researchers can use journaling to write comments to capture any behavioral characteristics and nonverbal cues during the interview.

The retrospective data emerged from the field notes observed during one-on-one interview process. The researcher conducted two focus groups with three AA students and another with three Caucasian students. The researcher selected to separate ethnicities to create a safe environment to share views. According to Reck (2017), focus groups require arranging participants in like groups to gather authentic rich-data. The researcher wrote and recorded student dialogue during the video conference to ensure that transcriptions accurately reflected the responses of the participants (see Baskarada, 2014). Again, the researcher used a reflection journal to capture field notes, methodological decisions, and actions throughout the study. The researcher used reflexivity protocol to write comments to capture intonation cues observed during the video conference. The retrospective data emerged from the field notes observed during the focus group.

Lastly, the researcher followed procedures and protocols throughout the data collection process and the management of data. The researcher followed the procedures to collect and manage data. Good data management involved clearly naming files,

creating a tracking system, establishing procedures for transcriptions, determining quality control, and establishing a real timeline (Maletic & Marcus, 2010). A case study database was utilized to store important data/evidence to show how conclusions were made.

At the start of data collection, the researcher selected students based on selection criteria to eliminate sampling bias. The campus registrar provided the student demographic information with the approval of the campus principal. The researcher used a demographic profile sheet to determine that each student met the criteria based on age, ethnicity, and not receiving special education services. The researcher selected 18 AA and Caucasian students from a high school. Selection criteria required for participants to be between 18 years old and 19 years old. Participants must have been AAs or Caucasians attending different Title I schools. The participants were assured of confidentiality and the protection of identity via written and verbal communication.

The researcher did not need to obtain parental consent nor child assent for selected participants because students were 18 years and older. However, the research attained a permission assent for documentation that each participant was 18 years or older (Appendix C). The researcher conferenced with each select participant to explain the study and their role throughout the study. At the conclusion of each initial meeting, the researcher provided each participant with a written synopsis of the study and consent form. Participants were given 2 to 3 days to return the completed forms to the building principal via email. Participation in the study was voluntary. There was no conflict of interest as the researcher did not have professional involvement or personal involvement with the participants.

After receiving approval from the building principals (Appendix A), the researcher submitted the study to the district's liaison to gain permission to conduct the study. The researcher emailed a synopsis of the study, along with the campus approval, to gain permission to complete the study at the designated campus. Once the approval was granted by the district's liaison and the GCU IRB, the researcher began to collect data.

The email asked for initial consent to perform research using campus students. The researcher informed participants with consent to participate about the research, individual privacy, and protection from harm. The researcher shared the goals and the benefits of the study. The researcher explained the responsibilities of participants in the study and the options of participation. The researcher communicated to the participants that all responses would be confidential. All participants' responses were protected with the strictest level of confidentiality. The participants were assigned alphanumeric coding to protect their personal identities.

The documents linking specific participant information were encrypted using alphanumeric coding and securely stored in a separate file in a locked cabinet in an undisclosed area to be viewed only by the designate researcher. In the case that the interview caused any psychological harm to the participants as identified via verbal and nonverbal communication, such as displays of sadness and anger, the following steps were established to be followed: termination of the interview, contact the parents/guardians, and referral to the campus/district counselor. The researcher interviewed the students individually and scheduled a video conference time to conduct a focus group.

The researcher allowed participants to read the interview questions before verbally sharing answers. The focus group participants received the protocol before the scheduled conference time. The researcher recorded the video conference and wrote the participants' responses. The participants had the option to waive responses to questions and terminate the interview at any time. The researcher asked the interview questions before answering the questions. The researcher scribed and audio recorded the interview. According to Baskarada (2014), equipment failure can threaten a research study. Therefore, this researcher had an additional video conference link available. Two methods were utilized to ensure that the transcription of responses was accurately aligned (see Baskarada, 2014). The researcher documented information in field notes. As needed throughout the interview process, the researcher asked probing questions.

After participating in the interview and focus groups, the participants were assigned a number that then became their identification numbers to maintain confidentiality. The researcher transcribed the audio files. The researcher coded the transcribed audio responses. The researcher compiled and analyzed using the Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Program: MAXQDA- Plus 2020. This program delineated unit meaning and cluster to form themes. The researcher summarized and validated responses by cross checking with notes and audio recording of responses. Peer checking was used as a substition to member checking to ensure the accuracy of the transcription (see Baskarada, 2014). The researcher scheduled meetings with peers and participants to review the accuracy of the transcribed responses and ask clarifying questions as needed. Each meeting lasted approximately 60 minutes. The peer and

participant checking meetings showed the accuracy of the transcription, the accuracy of the responses/the captured views, and the need for clarifying questions.

The researcher safely stored the audio files on a password-protected computer accessible only to the researcher. Transcriptions and secured interview logs were placed in a secure file cabinet accessible only by the researcher. A case study database was created to allow researchers to use the data collected to develop an audit trail. The audio files, transcriptions, and secured interview logs were stored for a three-year time period required by the university. After the 3-year time elapsed, the audio files will be deleted, and the transcriptions and secured interview logs will be shredded.

The researcher minimized personal bias by bracketing. Bracketing procedures afforded the researcher to utilize reflexivity to identify biases and bracket those biases to minimize influences on the study. Bracketing and reexamination were utilized throughout the process. Reflexivity protocol was used to identify and note preconceptions throughout the process.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis is the process used by researchers to understand the meaning of the collected data (Merriam, 2009). This process involved sorting, interpreting, and consolidating student responses of interviews, observations, and focus groups. The data analysis method was the constant comparative method. The researcher used this constant comparative method to modify and/or create categories by comparing and contrasting patterns that arose from the data.

A case study analysis plan involves using four analytical strategies (Yin, 2014). One strategy involved assigning codes to data derived from the study to represent the

concept of interest. Other strategies described by Yin (2014) included developing a case description resulting from the organization according to a descriptive framework, use of theoretical propositions as the basis of a study, and the examination of plausible explanations to identify potential conflicting explanations. Data analysis using constant comparative thematic analysis showed a deeper understanding of how racialization impacted AA and Caucasian students' interpretations of teachers and how their views influenced teacher-student interactions. This qualitative researcher explored how AA and Caucasian students viewed teachers and how those views influenced teacher-student interactions. For this study, the data analysis incorporated the following steps: transcription, content analysis, thematic coding, cleansing, synthesis, review, and storage to ensure a completeness and accuracy of the study (Baskarada, 2014).

For this study, participants' responses during the interview and focus groups were compared with the other participants to identify initial categories using codes summarizing phrases. The list of phrases (codes) were reviewed to determine patterns for categorization. The researcher synthesized the categories to generated themes to apply to each research questions. According to Baskarada (2014), the primary step of data analysis involved deconstructing data into smaller fragments so that each unit could be compared to similar units. These small units were then united to provide answers to the guiding research questions. The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1. How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?

RQ2. How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?

One of the first steps of thematic data analysis involves transcribing audible and visual data into written form and data cleansing (Yin, 2014). Data quality is crucial

because data containing errors leads to flawed and inaccurate interpretations. In this study, the data cleansing involved checking for errors, filling in of missing information, removal of duplicates, and addressing of integrity violations (e.g., bias; see Baskarada, 2014). The summary of the narrative method was conducted (Snelgrove, 2014; Thompson, 2015). This process involved a write-up of the interviews and interpretations of the information to describe the views/thoughts of the participants (see Patton, 2002). This transcription process supported data analysis by providing precise and concise text for the researcher to analyze the data from the study.

The researcher minimized transcription errors and ensured accuracy of translation by listening to and reading the responses three to four times. The researcher summarized and validated responses by cross checking with notes and audio. The researcher solicited peers with content knowledge to review findings. The researcher summarized and validated each interview using member checking. The researcher solicited expert peers in the field to review and provide feedback about the final thematic units and correlated data sets. Member checking enhanced the credibility of the final report (see Baskarada, 2014).

The participant responses to the interview questions were analyzed. The data were analyzed for trends and how those themes were interpreted by AA and Caucasian students via content analysis (see Patton, 2002). However, before the information was clustered, it must be coded by the investigator. The first steps in the data management system involved labeling and sorting (see Yin, 2014). The researcher wrote notes and captured important details in the margins of each document, a process known as coding (Merriam, 2009). Coding supports researchers with creating themes in which subsequent data can be sorted. The researcher compiled and analyzed using MAXQDA-Plus 2020 to

delineate unit meanings and clusters to form themes in the process known as thematic coding (see Maleti & Marcus, 2010). This program created a system to label, compile, and organize data to observe patterns and trends that emerged (see Patton, 2002). The similarities and differences of views were extracted from the interviews to create a composite summary of the thoughts.

The thematic coding process involved multiple phases to include transcription, code generation, theme identification, theme review, and theme significance to the study. The researcher transcribed the audio recordings, archived records, and students' responses into similar formats for insertion into the MAXQDA-Plus 2020 program. After the transcription process, the researcher utilized repeating patterns to generate codes for the research questions. Linkage of responses involved organizing and sorting data to unite and integrate themes and concepts.

According to Maletic and Marcus (2010), assigning codes to the research questions supports the condensing larger data sets into small manageable units. The researcher assigned general descriptions or color codes to descriptions to understand patterns/trends of the codes. The findings from the research process were examined to determine the frequency of the data. The matrix method was used to display frequency distributions. The researcher reviewed the thematic codes to determine trends that had a coherent pattern and those outliers from the trends. Themes that deviated from the trends were evaluated as possible emergence of another theme. Themes that created a coherent pattern were reviewed to ensure the themes relate to the data set (see Maleti & Marcus, 2010; Patton, 2002).

The researcher then analyzed meaning of the data within each theme and the significance to the research questions. This process continued until theoretical saturation. Theoretical saturation is reached when there are no additional codes or themes observed from the reviewing of responses, observations, and documents regarding the research questions being studied (Baskarada, 2014). After the themes were analyzed and reviewed for significance, the researcher devised a written thematic analysis report detailing the logical process that contained evidence that the data sets were supported by enough themes to enhance credibility of the analysis.

Data analysis is also dependent on the researcher's ability to structure raw data in a retrievable manner that it can be easily used through the writing and reporting stages of research (Baskarada, 2014; Maleti & Marcus, 2010; Patton, 2002). The use of computer database systems (CDS) supports researchers in handling data during the research study. In this study, the researcher utilized CDS to store data, such as the transcriptions of interviews, field notes, and observations. CDS supported the data analysis by supporting in the following processes throughout the study: transcription, content analysis, thematic coding, cleansing, synthesis, review, and storage to ensure a completeness and accuracy of the study (see Baskarada, 2014).

After the researcher analyzed the individual cases, a cross-case synthesis was conducted to determine common themes and answer the research questions. The researcher used the individual case analysis to compare answers within and across individual cases. Use of cross-case analysis provided a synthesis of student experiences regarding teacher-student interactions. Understanding the influences of student views in

the development of interactions showed strategies that could be utilized by students to cultivate favorable interactions and increase student achievement.

Ethical Considerations

This qualitative study researcher explored how AA and Caucasian students perceive, describe, and interpret teachers in secondary Title I campuses. The students' views and personal experiences comprised the main focus of the research. Ethical considerations for this study were derived from the principles of the *Belmont Report* (U.S. Department of Health, 2014). The *Belmont Report* summarizes protocol for research involving human subjects based on the following core principles: beneficence, justice, and respect.

The parameters of this research were presented to participants both orally and in written. Precautions were taken to ensure that the students' identities and voices were protected throughout the study. If students experienced difficulties at any point throughout the study, the campus guidance counselor provided support services. For this study, IRB procedures and protocol were adhered to ensure the protection of individual participants and responses.

Additional ethical considerations for this study involved providing confidentiality of information and ensuring that the participants understood the purpose of the study while having a clear understanding of the questions before answering. The three content experts vetted the questions to ensure the questions remained appropriate, clear, and free of errors. The researcher also made certain that guidelines were followed to gain site authorization by designee for school district.

The consent forms from students were obtained before participation in the research (Appendix C). The participants could opt out of the research study at any time throughout the process. The researcher also considered nonverbal cues and signs from students that might have indicated that they were reluctant and/or unenthusiastic about study participation. Before each meeting, the participants could discontinue participation. The participants were assured that the confidentiality of any findings in the study would also cover any participant specific information that might surface throughout the research.

According to Baskarada (2014), the researcher must remain mindful about the issues that arise when consent is both granted and denied. In this study, parental consent was not required. The researcher ascertained whether the students wanted to be involved. If the consent was denied, the researcher found alternate ways to manage the situations with appropriate sensitivity. Interviews were anonymously coded (see Baskarada, 2014). After participating in the interview, the participants were assigned a number that then became their identification number.

The procedures were addressed to ensure that the participants were comfortable. The location and time of the interview and focus groups were finalized using feedback from the participants. Private conference rooms were utilized to ease discomfort and promote a safe environment. School counselors were available to counsel the participants to protect the well-being of the participants.

Lastly, all information linking participants to the research will be stored in a locked file cabinet for 3 years to ensure confidentiality; only the researcher will have access to this data (Baskarada, 2014). After 3 years, the electronic data will be deleted

and the paper data including audiotapes will be destroyed by shredding. All communication in relation to this research is done with transparency and honesty.

Limitations and Delimitations

This researcher used the qualitative research method to explore how AA and Caucasian students perceived, described, and interpreted teachers in classrooms, as well as the influence those views had on teacher-student interactions. The researcher also examined how the students' views influenced teacher-student interactions in secondary Title I schools. The limitations in a study are the uncontrollable constraints that may influence the outcome (Silverman, 2016). According to Fischer (2009), the subjectivity of the collected data makes it challenging to establish the reliability of the information.

One of the limitations of this study was that the research involved only the views of AA and Caucasian students in Title I schools. The views of these AA and Caucasian students might be specific to Title I campus settings. The 18 students attended different high schools. One of the disadvantages of choosing students with similar demographics might describe a phenomenon that occurred only within that selected school district (see Silverman, 2016), resulting in findings that could not be generalized to other populations—a common pitfall that might threaten the misunderstanding of the questions due to personal convictions or prejudices (Baskarada, 2014). Moreover, the concept of race studied in this dissertation might have represented another limitation, as Caucasian students and AA students might have a power struggle among them in the classrooms based on their own biased views of one another or teachers based on race. This possibility could have influenced how students answered the interview questions, causing them to

limit their answers or even adjust the way they would normally answer if concerned their honesty would not be taken so well by the researcher or others involved in the study.

Another limitation of this study was the small sample size of 18 randomly selected students. When sample sizes are small, the findings cannot be generalized (Fisher, 2009). In this study, a small sample size ensured that the researcher would not become overwhelmed with the amount of data points. Because the small sample size is not an accurate representation of the student body, the results are not generalizable (Fisher, 2009, Silverman, 2016).

Capturing accurate accounts of views in case studies was also a limitation in the current study. When using a descriptive multi-case research design to capture views, it was crucial to consider the ability of participants to clearly express themselves. The participants would listen and respond to what was easily understood and easily articulated. The participants could have poor recall and bias. The researcher should elicit more detail by employing "pause and wait," using overt encouragement, asking for elaboration and/or clarification, and paraphrasing the responses to reduce bias and support with verbal expression (see Baskarada, 2014). Additionally, the researcher utilized audio record to accurately capture participants' responses. Because this study involved the interviews of high school students, participants could preview the questions before responding. The participants could also provide written and oral explanations of their responses.

An additional limitation of qualitative research was its susceptibility to research bias. Because the researcher was an administrator in a Title I school, and the research was about the views of AA and Caucasian students attending Title I schools, research bias

existed to an extent. Therefore, the researcher utilized the bracketing process and multiple

data sources. The researcher limited bias by using a PDC. The PDC showed suggestions

on the researcher's thoughts and behaviors to minimize bias. Lastly, the researcher was a

school administrator with experiences in both elementary and secondary campuses;

therefore, the interpretation of the day could be perceived as slightly bias perspective.

The bracketing process was utilized to reduce bias interpretation of student testimonies

by ensuring that potential deleterious preconceptions are mitigated (see Einarsdóttir,

2007).

Additionally, the unequal power between a child and an adult researcher was a

limitation to this study (Einarsdóttir, 2007). The student might have attempted to provide

the researcher with responses that the student believed the researcher desired.

Additionally, participants could have been hesitant to share responses due to the

researcher's ethnicity. According to Mayall (2000), power inequities are inevitable, and

researchers must seek children's assistance to understand children's perspectives. During

the current study, the researcher sought to establish a safe environment to encourage open

and truthful dialogue.

Delimitations are defined as those variables that surface as a result of the

limitations of a study (Silverman, 2016). The study of high school AA and Caucasian

students' interactions with teachers and how view teachers included several delimitations.

One delimitation of this study involved the demographics of the participants. All

participants were AA and Caucasian students attending secondary schools. The

researcher ensured each participant was a member of this specific demographic group

during the sampling process. Another delimitation of this study was the use of only

students' perspectives. The inclusion of teacher views might have added value in determining the correlation between teacher views and student views on behavioral variables that influenced relationships, interactions, and academic success. The focus was students because of the lack of studies on the views of students. The restrictions of generalizations about findings when utilizing a qualitative case study design was also a delimiting factor (see Baskarada, 2014).

Summary

This qualitative researcher utilized phenomenological design to gather data. Using the phenomenological research design fostered a highly focused approach to gathering information about how secondary AA and Caucasian students attending Title I schools viewed teachers and how racialization influenced teacher-student interactions. This research study design enabled the researcher to use the views/opinions of a group of students to identify similarities and differences of viewpoints. A semi-structured interview process was selected as the instrument for this study for the researcher to understand the viewpoints of the participants better (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

The open-ended questions were developed and were used to collect testimonies of 18 AA and Caucasian students attending a Title I school in South Texas. The formulated questions were unique to this study and were vetted by content experts to increase credibility. The research questions were designed to gather in-depth data significant to the research questions guiding this study. A small sample of randomly selected secondary students participated in the study. The narrative of the interviews was transcribed and reviewed. A disciplined reflection by the researcher resulted in identifying common themes and patterns.

In addition to the data collected during the semi-structured interview process, the demographics were provided by the campus and the school district. A qualitative approach was used to link observed interpretation of teacher behaviors to teacher-student interactions. The essence of the cases was captured. A computer assisted qualitative data analysis program, MAXQDA-Plus 2020, was utilized to devise a system to organize data to observe emergent trends. The researcher chose a structured research framework model to capture data that showed a comprehensive understanding of how secondary students perceived, described, and responded to teachers observed in a school setting.

In Chapter 4, the data collection and analysis of the research design are delineated and organized according to the research questions. This chapter shows the findings of the research data. The chapter also includes the systematic application of the phenomenological method to identify commonalities in the experiences of the participants.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore how racialization influenced the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in secondary schools. One-to-one, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six AA students, five Caucasian students, and one Hispanic student attending a Title I secondary school. Two focus groups were also conducted: One included four AA students, and the other included three Caucasian students. Data from the interviews and focus groups were analyzed thematically in MAXQDA-Plus 2020 software. Within-case analyses were conducted first, with the two cases defined as AA students and Caucasian students, respectively. The themes from the two cases were compared in a cross-case analysis. Triangulation was conducted during data analysis to identify common themes and discrepancies among the data sources.

Two research questions were used to guide the data collection and analysis, including:

RQ1.   How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?

RQ2.   How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?

This chapter includes a section summarizing the findings descriptively, including participant characteristics and the nature of the interview and focus group data collected. Next, this chapter includes a description of the implementation of the data analysis procedure. This chapter then proceeds with a presentation of the data analysis results, which are organized by research question. A summary concludes this chapter.

Descriptive Findings

Data quality is crucial because data containing errors leads to flawed and inaccurate interpretations. In this study, the data cleansing involved checking for errors, filling in of missing information, removal of duplicates, and addressing of integrity violations (e.g., bias; see Baskarada, 2014). The summary of the narrative method was conducted. This summarization process involved a write-up of the interviews and interpretations of the information to describe the views of the participants (see Patton, 2002). This transcription process supported data analysis by providing precise and concise text for the researcher to analyze the data from the study. Moreover, data were organized by case (i.e., AA and Caucasian). A pseudonym was assigned to each individual interview and focus group participant. The researcher transcribed the audio-recorded interviews and focus groups verbatim into Microsoft Word documents, with one document per interview or focus group. The researcher read and reread the transcriptions while listening to the audio recordings to verify the transcripts. The verified transcripts were then uploaded in MAXQDA-Plus 2020 computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software.

Descriptive Data

The data collection in this study occurred over a 2-week period. Individual interview data were collected from six AA and five Caucasian students, ages 18 to 19, attending a Title I secondary school. The focus group participants were not selected from the participants interviewed. The focus group participants were also ages 18 to 19 and attending a Title 1 secondary school. The focus group with Caucasian students included three participants, and the focus group with AA students included four participants. Thus,

individual interview data were collected from 11 participants, and focus group data were collected from seven additional participants, for a total of 18 participants. A total of 10 participants included AA students, with six participants being Caucasian students and one participant being a Hispanic student. Table 1 indicates the age and race of the individual study participants.

Table 1.

Participant Demographics

Pseudonym (alphabetical)	Race	Gender	Type of data provided
Briana	African American	Female	Individual interview
Carolyn	Caucasian	Female	Focus group
DaDarian	African American	Male	Individual interview
Dustin	African American	Male	Focus group
Elexys	Caucasian	Female	Focus group
Harper	Caucasian	Female	Focus group
Jenna	Caucasian	Female	Individual interview
Jetaury	African American	Female	Focus group
Josephine	African American	Female	Individual interview
Justice	African American	Male	Focus group
Kamille	African American	Female	Focus group
Larry	African American	Male	Individual interview
Mariana	Caucasian/Hispanic	Female	Individual interview
Mason	Caucasian	Male	Individual interview
Ruby	Caucasian	Female	Individual interview
Terri	African American	Female	Individual interview
Tina	Caucasian	Female	Individual interview
Ty	African American	Male	Individual interview

The gender composition of the sample was 33% male and 67% female. In the sample of Caucasian students, one student (12.5%) was male, and the remaining seven students (87.5%) were female. Within the sample of AA students, five participants (50%) were male, and five (50%) were female. The racial and ethnic composition of the sample was 44% AA, 39% Caucasian/Non-Hispanic, and 5% Caucasian/Hispanic. The Hispanic

participant was included in the Caucasian sample because Hispanic designates an ethnic

subcategory of the Caucasian racial classification.

    Audio recorded interviews and focus groups were transcribed verbatim by the

researcher. Transcripts were de-identified by substituting pseudonyms in place of the

participants' real names and redacting potentially identifying references to persons,

organizations, and locations. Tables 2 and 3 indicate the quantities of data collected.

Table 2.

Descriptive Data of Participants

Individual interviewee pseudonym (alphabetical; $N = 11$)	Duration (minutes)	Number of typed, single-spaced, 12-pt font transcript pages
Briana	45	6
DaDarian	50	7
Jenna	55	6
Josephine	90	10
Larry	48	5
Mariana	50	7
Mason	63	8
Ruby	53	7
Terri	46	7
Tina	45	5
Ty	58	5
Total	603	73
Average	55	6.6

Table 3.

Descriptive Data of Focus Groups

Focus group pseudonym (alphabetical)	Duration (minutes)	Number of typed, single-spaced, 12-pt font transcript pages
AA Focus Group	103	11
Caucasian Focus Group	85	15
Total	188	26
Average	94	13

The duration of data collection through 11 interviews was a total of 10 hours and 3 minutes. Transcription of the individual interviews yielded 73 transcript pages, with an average length of 6.6 pages per transcript. The total duration of data collection through the two focus groups was 3 hours and 8 minutes. The transcription of the focus group data yielded 26 transcript pages, with an average length of 13 pages per transcript (see Appendix H for a sample excerpt). The focus group and interview data were cleaned through the omission from the transcripts of words that participants repeated while they formulated their thoughts, of sentences broken off when participants changed their minds about what they wanted to say, and of spacers such as "um," "uh," and "like." Thus, only coherent statements were transcribed.

Data Analysis Procedures

Reflexivity Protocol

A bracketing process was utilized to minimize researcher bias in the interpretation of student testimonies. Bracketing involved reflecting on past experiences and the biases that potentially resulted from them, reflecting on whether those biases were present, and remaining mindful of those biases and any new ones that might have emerged during the study to attempt to suspend them (Tufford & Newman, 2012). The overall objective of bracketing was to ensure that the evidence and researcher's interpretations were accurately aligned (Fisher, 2009). A reflexivity protocol was utilized to structure self-reflections during bracketing (Appendix J). The reflexivity protocol indicated reflection prompts for writing about perceptions of racialization and life experiences. Prior to data collection, the activities were completed to identify thoughts and biases that might impact interpretations.

The researcher also limited bias by using a PDC. Three colleagues checked the researcher's interpretations of the data against two transcripts for accuracy, for a total of six transcripts. This PDC deemed the researcher's interpretations accurate in each instance, so no changes were made because of PDC feedback (Appendix I).

The data were analyzed in MAXQDA-Plus 2020 computer-assisted data analysis software using the thematic procedure described by Maletic and Marcus (2010). The thematic procedure involved data familiarization, preliminary coding, identification of common patterns, theme finalization, theme verification, and analysis of patterns to make inferences. There were no deviations from the procedure described in Chapter 3, and no outliers or sources of error were identified. The data analysis began with assigning a code to each research question by creating two codes in the MAXQDA code system pane, labeling one as RQ1 and the other as RQ2. The larger dataset was then condensed into smaller, more manageable units by coding the data thematically, per Maletic and Marcus (2010).

First, within-case analyses were conducted. The focus-group and individual-interview transcripts were analyzed together within each case to identify codes and themes supported by both data sources or to identify discrepancies between the sources. The subcodes of African American and Caucasian were added under each of the research-question codes to facilitate distinguishing the cases.

Next, each AA transcript was read in full. An inductive, descriptive coding technique was used to identify subcodes within the framework indicated by the deductive research question codes. Excerpts in the form of phrases or groups of consecutive phrases were assigned to a subcode under the appropriate research-question/AA code when they

expressed a meaning relevant to addressing that research question. This procedure was used to maintain alignment between the findings and the study objectives. Excerpts were assigned to the same code when they expressed similar meanings. In MAXQDA, a subcode was created in the code system pane when an excerpt indicated a meaning relevant to answering a research question. The excerpt was assigned to that code. Other excerpts that expressed the same, relevant meaning were assigned to the same code. The codes were labeled with a descriptive phrase that indicated the relevant meaning of the data assigned to them. This process was repeated with the Caucasian transcripts. During this step, a total of 116 transcript excerpts were assigned to 13 initial thematic codes. Table 4 indicates the initial code system as appearing in the MAXQDA at the conclusion of this step.

Table 4.

Within-Case Analysis Initial Codes

Research question code
    Case (AA / Caucasian)
        *Initial thematic code (listed
        alphabetically)*
	n of transcript excerpts included

RQ1. How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?	71
African American	46
Avoiding teachers viewed as unapproachable	6
Being silent around teachers viewed as judgmental	15
Expressiveness and effort with teachers viewed as validating	22
Spontaneity around teachers viewed as open	3
Caucasian	25
Defying or disengaging from teachers viewed as biased	7
Disengaging from teachers who are viewed as apathetic	7
Engaging with teachers who are viewed as enthusiastic	7
Openness toward teachers viewed as unbiased	4
RQ2. How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?	45
African American	20
Absence of racialization promotes focus on learning	9
Racialization as a barrier to learning	11
Caucasian	25
Racialization as favoritism	6
Racialization as teacher disengagement	6
Students engage when they do not perceive racialization	13

The analysis proceeded with grouping initial, within-case codes into within-case themes. Theme formation was inductive, with the themes representing patterns identified in the data rather than predefined ideas. Theming the data within the cases involved

reviewing the initial codes and clustering similar or related codes into a smaller number of categories that indicated broader patterns in the data. For example, two of the inductive codes formed during analysis of the AA transcripts were 'being silent around teachers viewed as judgmental' and 'expressiveness and effort with teachers viewed as validating.' These two codes were related in two ways. First, both codes indicated the same relevant property of the underlying phenomenon of teacher-student interactions. The relevant, perceived property was that of influencing AA participants' self-expressiveness and effort. The two codes further indicated how the perceived effects of that property varied depending on where participants located the teacher-student interactions on a continuum or dimension that ranged from validating to invalidating. When teachers were perceived as judgmental (invalidating), students described themselves as becoming silent (unwilling to express themselves). When teachers were perceived as validating in their interactions with students, students became more self-expressive and put more effort into their classwork. These two codes were therefore grouped into one theme, which was labeled 'students express themselves freely and work harder when they view teachers as validating.' In MAXQDA, under the code for each case (AA and Caucasian), similar or related codes were clustered under parent codes representing themes. This step resulted in the 13 initial codes being grouped into six within-case themes, with three themes per case (the two cases were African American students and Caucasian students). Evidence of the initial codes and finalized themes is provided in Appendix K. Tables 5 and 6 as indicate the code system as organized after this step.

Table 5.

Within-Case Analysis Themes for Research Question 1

Research question code
  Case (AA / Caucasian)
    Theme
      Initial thematic code grouped to form theme (listed alphabetically)
	n of transcript excerpts included

RQ1. How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?	71
African American	
Within-case theme 1: Students express themselves freely and work harder when they view teachers as validating	37
Being silent around teachers viewed as judgmental	
Expressiveness and effort with teachers viewed as validating	
Within-case theme 2: Students avoid teachers who they view as unapproachable	9
Avoiding teachers viewed as unapproachable	
Spontaneity around teachers viewed as open	
Caucasian	
Within-case theme 1: Students engage with learning when they view their teachers as engaged	14
Disengaging from teachers who are viewed as apathetic	
Engaging with teachers who are viewed as enthusiastic	
Within-case theme 2: Students are less cooperative with teachers who they view as biased	11
Defying or disengaging from teachers viewed as biased	
Openness toward teachers viewed as unbiased	

Table 6.

Within-Case Analysis Themes for Research Question 2

Research question code
    Case (AA / Caucasian)
        Theme
            Initial thematic code grouped to form theme
            (listed alphabetically)
	n of transcript excerpts included

RQ2. How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?	45
African American	
Within-case theme 3: Racialization makes teacher-student interactions a distraction from learning	20
Absence of racialization promotes focus on learning	
Racialization as a barrier to learning	
Caucasian	
Within-case theme 3: Racialization alienates students from teachers	25
Racialization as favoritism	
Racialization as teacher disengagement	
Students engage when they do not perceive racialization	

The final step of data analysis was the cross-case analysis, where within-case themes were compared. The comparison of within-case themes resulted in identifying two overarching cross-case themes. Cross-case themes were named and defined to indicate their significance as answers to the research questions. Table 7 indicates how the within-case themes were grouped to identify cross-case themes, and how the cross-case themes were named to indicate the answers to the research questions.

Table 7.

Cross-Case Themes

Research question code
    Cross-case theme identified to answer research question
        Within-case theme grouped to form cross-case theme
	n of transcript excerpts included

RQ1. How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?	
Cross-case theme 1: Students are expressive and engaged when they view teachers as welcoming and validating	71
AA within-case theme 1: Students express themselves freely and work harder when they view teachers as validating	
AA within-case theme 2: Students avoid teachers who they view as unapproachable	
C or H within-case theme 1: Students engage with learning when they view their teachers as engaged	
C or H within-case theme 2: Students are less cooperative with teachers who they view as biased	
RQ2. How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?	
Cross-case theme 2: Racialization makes student-teacher interactions antagonistic and obstructive to learning	45
African American within-case theme 3: Racialization makes teacher-student interactions a distraction from learning	
C or H within-case theme 3: Racialization alienates students from teachers	

The trustworthiness of the findings was enhanced by implementing procedures to

strengthen the four elements of trustworthiness identified by Lincoln and Guba (1985),

including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is the

extent to which the findings accurately represent the reality intended to describe (Denzin

& Lincoln, 2008). The threats to credibility include inaccurate recording and transcription

of data, as well as inaccuracies or bias in the participant responses that compose the data.

The threat of inaccurately recorded or transcribed data was mitigated through the

researcher's audio recording the interviews, transcribing those interviews verbatim, and

verifying the transcripts by reading and listening to the recordings twice. The threat of

inaccuracies in the data was mitigated through the thematic analysis and triangulation

procedures, which facilitated the identification of common themes across multiple data sources, thereby minimizing the potential for a single participant's error or bias to influence the findings. Member checking was conducted after data cleaning so participants could verify that the cleaning process had not distorted their intended meanings in any way. Member checking involved emailing each participant their transcript with a request that they review it and either verify its accuracy or request modifications (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). All 18 participants verified the accuracy of their transcripts by phone and written and signed verifications were collected from 15 out of 18 participants. The remaining three participants could no longer be reached using the contact information they provided. Their transcripts were accepted as-is.

Credibility was further enhanced through the development of the interview protocol (see Appendix D). A panel of three experts reviewed a draft of the protocol and recommended revisions to ensure the questions would clearly and unambiguously elicit the data needed to answer the research questions. The expert recommendations (see Appendix G) were incorporated into the final versions of the individual interview protocol (see Appendix D) and focus group protocol (see Appendix E).

Transferability is the extent to which findings hold true of other settings or populations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). The small sample size in this study and the delimitation of the study to a Title I school were likely to limit transferability. Thick descriptions of the data were provided to assist readers in assessing transferability. Thick description refers to a presentation of the data that references the individual perspectives and specific social contexts in which the study is grounded, rather than treating the data as context-independent (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Thick descriptions were provided in

this study by presenting quotations in which participants described their experiences, views, and perceptions in their own words and from their own perspectives through attributing each quotation to a pseudonymous participant for whom demographic information was provided.

Dependability refers to the replicability of the findings in the same research setting at a different time (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Unclear or incomplete descriptions of study procedures threaten dependability because these may impede readers from replicating the study. Therefore, detailed descriptions of the study procedures were provided. The replicability of the study was further enhanced through a researcher-developed, expert panel-validated protocol to structure the individual interviews (see Appendix D) and focus groups (see Appendix E).

Confirmability is the extent to which the findings represent participants' opinions and experiences rather than researcher bias (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). The threat to confirmability is the potential for researcher bias to influence data collection and analysis processes. To mitigate this threat, the researcher used a reflexivity protocol (Appendix J) to document and monitor personal biases, dispositions, limitations, and assumptions during the study. The researcher also limited bias by using a peer debriefing committee (PDC). The PDC showed suggestions on the researcher's thoughts and behaviors to minimize bias (see Appendix I). Evidence for all findings in the form of direct quotations from the data was provided in the results section of this chapter for readers to assess the confirmability of the analysis independently.

The analysis was organized to consist of a within-case analysis for the AA and Caucasian cases. The Hispanic participant's responses were grouped with the rest of the

Caucasian sample on the basis that Hispanic designates an ethnic subcategory of the

Caucasian racial classification. The analysis continued with a cross-case analysis to

facilitate comparison of within-case findings to identify common themes and any

discrepancies. This organization of the analysis was aligned with the multi-case study

design of this research because it facilitated a full description of both of the cases and

then a comparison between those groups.

A code was created for each research question at the beginning of the analysis to

ensure the analysis was aligned with the research questions. The transcript excerpts were

only assigned to a subcode under a research question code if showing a meaning relevant

to answering the questions. This procedure ensured that the initial codes and the within-

case and cross-case themes remained aligned with the research questions.

Results

The results of the reflexivity protocol (Appendix J) indicated that due to the

researcher's position as an administrator in a Title I school and to the focus of this

research on the views of AA and Caucasian students attending Title I schools, some

researcher bias existed. The researcher was a school administrator with experiences in

both elementary and secondary campuses, so potential existed for the interpretation of the

data to be influenced by sympathy for students who reported encountering bias or by

knowledge of conditions in schools that had the potential to conflict with, add to, or alter

the emphases of the participants' reports. The reflexivity protocol was implemented so

the researcher could remain mindful of and work to suspend biases and preconceptions

that might have threatened the confirmability of the data and findings.

This presentation of the results is organized by research question. The answer to the research question is indicated in the cross-case analysis results, as presented after presentations of the within-case results. The presentations of the within-case analysis results are organized by theme.

Research Question 1

RQ1 was the following: How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions? The discussion is organized into three sections. The first section is a discussion of the AA within-case analysis results. The second section is a discussion of the Caucasian within-case analysis results. In the third section, the results of the cross-case analysis are presented.

African American Within-Case Analysis. Two within-case themes were identified during data analysis. The following subsections are discussions of the themes. The evidence is provided for the themes in the form of quotations from the data.

Within-Case Theme 1: Students Express Themselves Freely and Work Harder When They View Teachers as Validating. Findings indicated that when teachers validated students by welcoming and respecting their ideas and opinions, soliciting student participation, and maintaining a classroom culture of openness and respect, students responded by expressing themselves freely to the teacher and putting forth more effort in class. One way in which teachers could validate students and encourage expression involved suppressing classmates' disapproval of an unpopular view. For example, Larry (individual interview) described a class discussion about abortion in which he was the only pro-life advocate. When he voiced his opinion, classmates derided and attempted to silence him. The teacher validated Larry by not judging his opinion and

insisting on his right to be heard: "He told them be quiet and listen to my idea and that's what they . . . so that made me really comfortable right there. The teacher ensured that students gave me an opportunity to be heard."

DaDarian (individual interview) described teachers whom he viewed as friendly as validating and encouraging student expression by maintaining a safe, nonjudgmental space in their classrooms, saying that he viewed teachers as validating: "When teachers are nice. When they're caring and kind and they'd let it be known this classroom is an open space. You are not to be judged here . . . let students know this is a safe place." DaDarian stated that his view of a teacher as validating and nonjudgmental affected interactions by making him comfortable speaking with the teacher: "I know that that's a person that I can go to after class and talk to them that is a person that I'm safe with."

Kamille (focus group) described teachers as validating and promoting student expressiveness when they gave explicit assurances to students that no one was to be judged and that everyone was equal: "The few days of class can inspire an inclusive class. My teachers shared on the first day that their class was a safe haven. They communicated that no one was above anyone in the class." Justice (focus group) viewed teachers as validating and inviting student expression when they did not suppress students from putting themselves into their work: "When teachers allow students to be themselves. Like in Math, letting you solve the problem like you understand it. Or letting you write papers with your emotions." When Justice viewed a teacher as allowing these freedoms, he expressed himself more freely in his work and in the class because "this allows you to be comfortable in your own work instead of placing you in a box and not allowing you to fully express yourself."

The AA students also expressed that when teachers were viewed as judgmental or disapproving, students curbed their expressiveness. Ty (individual interview) described an incident in which his view of a teacher as invalidating caused him to stop contributing to the class discussion: "The teacher called on students to give ideas. Students shared ideas. Teacher states, 'No, not the answer.' Students feel dumb. And if a teacher makes me feel dumb, I guess I should not say anything at all." Kamille (focus group) described invalidation in the form of personal derision that made her dread attending one teacher's class: "My teacher would make remarks about my weight . . . He made me feel me feel disgusting and gross. I did not want to go to his class, but I had to." Josephine (individual interview) described a teacher's reaction to her debating a point in class as causing her to view the teacher as invalidating and judgmental: "I felt like she just made this perception of me to be like a very loudmouth and disrespectful young lady . . like a dumb, young loudmouth." Josephine described the silencing effect that her view of the teacher as judgmental had on her: "After she formed her perception, while sitting in her classroom, I was very quiet. I didn't want to say nothing to her. I didn't want to be bothered by her. I was always in my little own little thing." Table 8 indicates the codes grouped to form this within-case theme and sample quotations for each of them.

Table 8.

African American Within-Case Theme 1 Codes and Examples

Code	Frequency	Sample quotation
Being silent around teachers viewed as judgmental	14	"The teacher voiced his opinion about a certain topic that I felt very strongly about and it was a moment where I was looking at him in shock . . . it was just kind of a situation where I realize that my teacher thinks like this or I know where my teacher stands on the topic resulted in me stepping away from the conversation." (DaDarian)
Expressiveness and effort with teachers viewed as validating	22	"We were doing poetry in my English class. It was an assignment that you wrote poetry on how we felt or someone else in your family felt. We shared with the class. No one was allowed to judge you. No one was allowed to give feedback on your poem. It was an emotional poem. Once I shared my poem, I was free. I felt that there was a weight lifted off my shoulder. No one was there to judge me. No one was there to say anything negative about my poem. It was a pure and positive moment." (Terri)

Within-Case Theme 2: Students Avoid Teachers Who They View as

Unapproachable. The findings indicated that when students viewed teachers as

unapproachable (e.g., strict, unfriendly, and mean), they avoided those teachers,

sometimes seeking help from a different teacher when they had questions about material

in the unapproachable teacher's class. The students tended not to ask questions of or

attempt to bond with or talk to teachers who seemed unapproachable, unfriendly, and

rigid in expectations and outlook.

Briana (individual interview) described an unapproachable teacher as one who

seemed annoyed, and she described how viewing a teacher as unapproachable in this way

caused her to avoid the instructor: "I try to figure out myself or ask a friend if I feel my

teacher is annoyed. I would even ask other teachers. I would not interact with the teacher

as much. You can dread going into that class." Ty (individual interview) described

unapproachable teachers as easily angered by students and indifferent to their success:

"They are there to collect a paycheck. They are explosive. They can't handle the students.

I have seen teachers become so mad that they want to fight students." Ty said that

viewing a teacher as unapproachable in these ways caused students either to disengage or

find illicit means of succeeding academically because they did not want to approach the

teacher: "It makes students disengage, start talking, lack of attention, getting on the

phones, and cheating by going online to get answers. Students will say that they

understand when they don't just to move on."

Teachers were perceived as approachable when they manifested vulnerability and

were friendly, welcoming, and personable. Students were comfortable initiating

interactions with approachable teachers that were positive, warm, and validating. Briana

(individual interview) stated, "Favorable teachers are open teachers. Open teachers are

vulnerable. Allowing themselves to be seen, like being 100% honest with us." Thus,

Brianna was more likely to rely on the teacher for assistance: "Favorable teachers are

understanding. They are able to work with you if you are not able to do something such

as offering to stay after school to help you understand." Table 9 indicates the codes

grouped to form this within-case theme and sample quotations for each of them.

Table 9

African American Within-Case Theme 2 Codes and Examples

Code	Frequency	Sample quotation
Avoiding teachers viewed as unapproachable	6	"Unfavorable teachers are not welcoming. These teachers' classes are hard to go to. The teacher gives a lot of work, and she's very bad, and she's very strict. Those are the things that kinda make me shy away from my unfavorable teachers. If you're very strict and you're like not open with students and don't talk to you." (DaDarian)
Spontaneity around teachers viewed as open	3	"We were doing poetry in my English class. It was an assignment that you wrote poetry on how we felt or someone else in your family felt. We shared with the class. No one was allowed to judge you. No one was allowed to give feedback on your poem. It was an emotional poem. Once I shared my poem, I was free. I felt that there was a weight lifted off my shoulder. No one was there to judge me. No one was there to say anything negative about my poem. It was a pure and positive moment." (Terri)

Caucasian Within-Case Analysis. Two within-case themes were identified during data analysis. The following subsections contain the discussions of the themes. The evidence for the themes is presented in the form of quotations from the data.

Within-Case Theme 1: Students Engage with Learning When They View Their Teachers as Engaged. The findings indicated that when students perceived teachers as engaged with teaching, enthusiastic about the subject and the learning process, and happy to be teaching, students became more engaged with the curriculum and work, attending and participating in the class. For example, Mariana (individual interview, stated, "If I know that the teacher is trying, on top of their game, and really trying to help us, it motivates me. It excites me. If they are teaching, I would be excited and pumped to go to class." Mariana added that viewing teachers as passionate made students more enthusiastic about attending class and learning the content: "I would be excited to learn for the day. If teachers are passionate about the work, it will show. And the students will want to go to their class."

Teachers could also manifest engagement through responsiveness to student preferences and need. Ruby (individual interview) indicated, "Teachers that I like were willing to like change things to make things in such a way that they were not outside your range to do them. They make assignments that they knew the class wouldn't hate." Teachers viewed as engaging with their roles by finding innovative ways to engage students caused Ruby to participate more actively and enthusiastically: "Normally, in English classes, you would get a play and then you would read it by yourself, but instead of doing that, we read it all in class, and every time, we get to a dramatize with our voices." The teacher's effort in facilitating this participatory engagement with literature caused Ruby to refer to the activity as "one of my favorite things we ever did."

When teachers appeared disengaged (e.g., exhibiting low energy or indifference), students did not care as much about the subject or the work, and they disliked attending the class. Jenna (individual interview) viewed teachers as disengaged when they did not appear enthusiastic or to be making an effort in teaching: "They are not putting forth effort. Some teachers, you can tell the lessons are the same for the past 10 years. The lessons are too easy. I had a class where you can find the answers to assignments online." When Jenna viewed a teacher as disengaged in this way, it caused her to disengage because of feelings of futility and aversion: "Doing the work was pointless. I did not care for this class . . . there would be no interactions with the teachers. I would just show up." For Harper (focus group), the effect of viewing a teacher as disengaged was that she also became disengaged: "If the teacher doesn't care, then I am not going to care. I would walk into the class and I would not pay attention and just blow it off. Teachers should

show that they want to be there." Table 10 indicates the codes grouped to form this within-case theme and sample quotations for each of them.

Table 10.

Caucasian Within-Case Theme 1 Codes and Examples

Code	Frequency	Sample quotation
Disengaging from teachers who are viewed as apathetic	7	"Teachers who read the textbook to you. I guess I'd say doesn't take your opinion. He either doesn't engage in discussion or doesn't Let the discussion flow where it is and stops it. Teachers who give last minute assignments off the Internet and didn't actually read the assignment all the way through." (Ruby)
Engaging with teachers who are viewed as enthusiastic	7	"A favorable teacher who is energetic. Someone who makes the learning environment fun. Someone who puts a lot of time in preparing their lessons. You can tell when a teacher puts a lot of time and effort into the lesson versus a teacher who does not. Someone who is open to opinions. Someone who makes it a place that students want to be." (Jenna)

Within-Case Theme 2: Students are Less Cooperative with Teachers Who They View as Biased. The findings indicated that when teachers were perceived as having a strongly biased perspective (e.g., bias against the student's race or a rigid insistence on religious views), they argued with the teacher and/or disengaged from the learning process by giving less attention and effort to it. Jenna described behaviors of one instructor that caused her to view the teacher as biased: "I had one teacher who was very spiritual. She thought that every single person should be on the same spiritual path as her. She had her own belief system that she would push on everyone." The teacher's behaviors surrounding this bias caused Jenna to view her as aggressive or needy: "When someone is pushing an opinion on me, it does not look normal. It looks hostile and like them begging you to believe what they want you to believe." Jenna described herself as becoming less cooperative with this teacher by engaging in what she called, "a heated

discussion." That conflict irritated her, and the result was that she became passively uncooperative: "The interaction feels very annoying. I am not going to listen. It is a waste of time. I will look like me walking away."

Elexys (focus group) described a conflict with a teacher that caused her to view the teacher as biased: "My [art] teacher did not agree with what I thought. The teacher did not agree with how I chose to express myself because according to the teacher it was wrong in the art world." Elexys said her view of the teacher as biased caused her to become less cooperative than with teachers more open to students' expressive styles: "I felt that because she didn't like the way that I expressed my feelings so I am not going to interact with you the same way as those who like how I express my feelings."

When teachers were viewed as unbiased, students expressed themselves more openly, which promoted engagement. Ruby (individual interview) viewed teachers as unbiased when they were "able to respect their students' opinions. Sort of accepting the opinions as they are. Letting the other students argue with them as opposed to putting their opinions in the argument." Tina (individual interview) reported that when she viewed a teacher as unbiased, "I don't think there was a time when I felt uncomfortable to share my ideas. I was very open in the classroom. There was nothing I ever didn't say." Table 11 indicates the codes grouped to form this within-case theme and sample quotations for each of them.

Table 11.

Caucasian Within-Case Theme 2 Codes and Examples

Code	Frequency	Sample quotation
Defying or disengaging from teachers viewed as biased	7	"I really feel uncomfortable when teachers push their ideas onto us. Especially as high schoolers, we are trying to figure out what we believe and what we want to follow and when you are pushing your ideas on us about certain races on us. My school is not very diverse. Outside of that we do not have a lot of different people. When teachers push their idea it makes me uncomfortable in the classroom." (Elexys)
Openness toward teachers viewed as unbiased	4	"In order to feel safe, I have to believe that the teachers would be understanding and cooperative. They can demonstrate that they are understanding when they don't try to make us feel that we are wrong." (Mariana)

Cross-Case Analysis Theme: Students are Expressive and Engaged When They View Teachers as Welcoming and Validating. The finding that students' views of teachers as welcoming promoted engagement was drawn from the AA within-case theme: Students avoid teachers who they view as unapproachable. This theme indicated the converse, that when students viewed teachers as open and welcoming, it positively influenced interactions. The finding was also drawn from the Caucasian within-case theme: Students engage with learning when they view their teachers as engaged. This theme indicated that students were engaged when their view of the teacher as enthusiastic and dedicated made the classroom a welcoming and stimulating environment. The AA students appeared to place more importance on teachers welcoming students through signals of receptivity. As DaDarian said in an interview response, "When teachers are nice, when they're caring and kind and they'd let it be known this classroom is an open space. You are not to be judged here . . . Lets students know this is a safe place." In contrast, Caucasian students appeared to place more importance on teachers actively

engaging the class through performative behaviors that signified enthusiasm, dedication, and concern for student preferences and needs. For example, Mariana (individual interview), stated, "If I know that the teacher is trying, on top of their game, and really trying to help us, it motivates me. It excites me. If they are teaching, I would be excited and pumped to go to class."

The finding that students' views of teachers as validating positively influenced interactions was drawn from the AA within-case theme: Students express themselves freely and work harder when they view teachers as validating. The finding about the positive effects of viewing teachers as validating was also drawn from the Caucasian within-case theme: Students are less cooperative with teachers who they view as biased. This theme indicated that students viewed teachers as biased when they suppressed student opinions in favor of their own, and teachers viewed as validating students' right to be heard had a positive effect on interactions. These two within-case themes also supported the conclusion that increased student expressiveness was an effect of viewing teachers as validating. AA students appeared to place a higher importance on validation in the form of explicit guarantees, expressions of support and respect, and active eliciting of student contributions. As Kamille stated in a focus group response, "The few days of class can inspire an inclusive class. My teachers shared on the first day that their class was a safe haven. They communicated that no one was above anyone in the class." Caucasian students appeared to place more importance on teachers refraining from invalidating student expressions through active suppression. In a focus group response, Elexys offered an example of active suppression in the form of teacher expressions of disapproval: ""My [art] teacher did not agree with what I thought. The teacher did not

agree with how I chose to express myself because according to the teacher it was wrong in the art world.".".

Research Question 2

RQ2 was the following: How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers? The results are organized into three major sections. The first section is a discussion of the AA within-case analysis results. The second section is a discussion of the Caucasian within-case analysis results. In the third section, the results of the cross-case analysis are presented.

African American Within-Case Analysis. One within-case theme was identified during data analysis related to the second research question. The following subsection is a discussion of the theme. The evidence for the theme are provided in the form of quotations from the data.

Within-Case Theme 3: Racialization Makes Teacher-Student Interactions a Distraction from Learning. The findings indicated that racialization was experienced as antagonism toward AA students, often in the form of open derision or manifestations of stereotyping. This antagonism became the experience that characterized all interactions with the teacher, as well as the class. This shift of focus diverted attention from learning and positive classroom engagement. The teacher-student interactions became barriers to rather than facilitators of learning.

Josephine (individual interview) described teachers' racial biases as tending to be conspicuous: "I feel like when a teacher has a perception of [race] it's hard to miss. I feel like it shows in the way that they teach. It shows in the way that they interact with students." Josephine said the following of one teacher's display of racial bias and its

effect on producing antagonism between the teacher and the students: "It's kind of like her perceptions made the learning environment feel not like a learning environment, and more like a battlefield. More like a war between the students and the teacher."

Terri described teachers' displays of racialization: "The interactions would look like him making a face and saying a smart remark when he asked a question that took me longer to answer." Terri described racialization as influencing her interactions with teachers when "they just go with what they believe instead of looking at the bigger picture and noticing that I am working hard." The result of racialization was to cause Terri to become reciprocally hostile toward the teacher: "The interaction felt like I was being undermined. I felt like he was disappointed in me which made me mad."

Kamille (focus group) described an encounter with racialization from a teacher: "This teacher would respond to me in slang. She would make racist remarks. She would make remarks that were targeted at my skin." The effects of racialization from this and other teachers represented escalating conflicts that caused Kamille intense stress and diverted much of her time, attention, and energy from learning: "I was targeted . . . I had Caucasian teachers trying to get me kicked out for the dumbest things. A teacher tried to fail me multiple times and tried to get me in trouble with my family."

The findings associated with this theme indicated that the absence of racialization promoted students' focus on learning. Larry (individual interview) described his experience of the absence of racialization as teachers of all races believing in and encouraging him equally: "Teachers from different races shared that they all would push and believe in me. Therefore, [racialization] hasn't affected me. Throughout my school career, I had teachers from all different races, and they've all told me they know I'm

great." DaDarian (individual interview) described the absence of racialization as

teachers' readiness to regard students as individuals rather than members of a racial

category: "I've been fortunate enough to have teachers who really understand or who look

over race. They don't look at race. They look at who you are as a person or who you

present to the other person." The absence of racialization increased DaDarian's focus on

his learning by giving him a sense of agency and accountability: "I just know personally

that my performance is not being affected by my teacher being of a different race. I know

that anything happened with my academic performance it's up to me." Josephine

(individual interview) also described the absence of racialization as promoting students'

focus on learning: "It gave us this mindset that this is a classroom where it's like, 'Oh

yeah, we got this.' It made us want to do defeat the odds. It made us want to do our

work." Table 12 indicates the codes grouped to form this within-case theme and sample

quotations for each of them.

Table 12.

African American Within-Case Theme 3 Codes and Examples

Code	Frequency	Sample quotation
Absence of racialization promotes focus on learning	9	"[The teacher's] opening up the platform of the room and allowing us to discuss out loud, we felt comfortable to say the stereotypes. Our teacher was an African American. However, if it was with another race, I feel like it would have gotten out of hand very fast, but I feel like because it was African American teacher in a predominantly African-American classroom, she really knew how to keep us level." (Josephine)
Racialization as a barrier to learning	11	"I did have one teacher in my 10th grade year whose personality was racist. His entire class he made remarks that were uncomfortable and that forced the class to be secluded within themselves and not be able to speak when they had something to say.." (Justice)

Caucasian Within-Case Analysis. One within-case theme was identified during data analysis related to the second research question. The following subsection is a discussion of the theme. The evidence for the theme is presented in the form of quotations from the data.

Within-Case Theme 3: Racialization Alienates Students from Teachers. The findings indicated that racialization manifested as discriminatory treatment from teacher disengagement from members of a racial group and favoritism toward another racial group. This issue caused the Caucasian students to be uncomfortable with teachers, whether the discrimination was directed against them. The students were offended by racialization, and it alienated them from teachers who imposed it. Mariana (individual interview), who was of Caucasian-Hispanic ethnicity, described racialization from a teacher as the airing and supporting of prejudicial views: "He would agree with people who would say things that were hurtful about minority people. He would emphasize his beliefs." She described this racialization as alienating her from the teacher by making her uncomfortable around him: "It made me uncomfortable because he was teaching me knowing that he agreed with things that negatively affected me personally and targeting my community." Carolyn (focus group) described herself as alienated from teachers who expressed prejudicial views by feelings of discomfort and disgust: "I felt extremely uncomfortable in myself at that time. It caused me not to want to talk to anyone. I was very disgusted."

Elexys (focus group) experienced racialization as teachers' favoritism toward other students based on race: "I was struggling and an African American was struggling, and that teacher put more time with the African American student than me. The teacher

did not even try to help me." Elexys perceived some teachers as discriminating against her because they perceived her as privileged because she was Caucasian, which alienated her from teachers by causing her to feel indignation at their hypocrisy as sources of that privilege: "They think I have more opportunities, but they're the ones giving the opportunities. They think I have more privilege, but they're my teachers and everyone else's. If I have privilege, then it's you who are giving it to me."

In contrast, students became more open and engaged when they did not perceive racialization. Tina (individual interview) did not perceive racialization in her school: "I just don't think that race has anything to do with academic learning. The way that they teach is the way that I learn . . . All teachers interact with students the same ways." Tina associated her perception of unprejudiced teachers with her own ability to express herself freely: "I was very open in the classroom. There was nothing I ever didn't say." Marianna (individual interview) associated the absence of racialization with a Caucasian teacher's willingness to open up to students and suspend negative judgment in cross-racial discussions: "The teacher was Caucasian and made it clear that she was not there to judge. She presented herself as a normal person. She shared her story. She showed that she was different from how we imagined her to be." Jenna (individual interview) associated the absence of racialization with equitable treatment of students: "I did not experience any bias. I did not witness any bias based on race . . . I didn't think that anyone had an advantage over me because of race. Everyone was treated like a smart kid." Jenna said of one teacher's "inclusiveness" in treating all students equitably regardless of race that it made her comfortable participating and opening up: "I feel that I am pretty comfortable sharing an opinion. There were more arguments in that classroom

than any other classroom because everyone was comfortable with sharing their opinions."

Table 13 indicates the codes grouped to form this within-case theme and sample

quotations for each of them.

Table 13.

Caucasian Within-Case Theme 3 Codes and Examples

Code	Frequency	Sample quotation
Racialization as favoritism	6	"I have a Caucasian teacher who always would shrug me off or make excuses for not being nice to me [because I am Hispanic]. I never understood why. She would grade my papers harder. She would treat me differently when compared to the other students who were Africans and Caucasians. She would always say that they were her favorite." (Mariana)
Racialization as teacher disengagement	6	"The harmful impact of teachers being from a different race would be making it harder for students of different races to learn. Don't give them the best books, don't answer their emails, don't take the initiative to help with assignments just because they are of different race." (Mason)
Students engage when they do not perceive racialization	13	"I feel motivated to talk about it or share my ideas, if it is an interesting topic. Keeping the topic under control makes me feel comfortable. The classroom outbursts of comments that might have been discriminatory, the teacher would address by telling the students to not say something or by changing the topic." (Tina)

Cross-Case Analysis Theme: Racialization Makes Student-Teacher

Interactions Antagonistic and Obstructive to Learning. The students experienced

racialization as prejudice and discrimination as antagonistic toward themselves and other

students. For the AA and Caucasian students, the students' focus on racialized situations

shifted from learning to defending themselves against the antagonism. The AA within-

case theme, racialization makes teacher-student interactions a distraction from learning,

indicated that students disengaged from learning and their interactions with teachers to

protect themselves against racial antagonism. This within-case theme also indicated that

racialization influenced students to focus attention and energy on managing and

mitigating the antagonistic relationship with teachers rather than on learning. As the AA

participant Josephine stated, "It's kind of like her perceptions made the learning

environment feel not like a learning environment, and more like a battlefield. More like a

war between the students and the teacher." The Caucasian within-case theme of

racialization alienates students from teachers also indicated that racialization made

student-teacher interactions antagonistic and caused students to disengage from the

teacher and from learning. However, although AA students needed to divert energy

inward, into self-soothing disengagement to mitigate the pain of racial attacks, Caucasian

students associated their disengagement with an outward focus of their attention on

feelings of alienation, disgust, antagonism, and indignation toward teachers. As Carolyn

stated in the focus group, "I felt extremely uncomfortable in myself at that time. It caused

me not to want to talk to anyone. I was very disgusted."

Limitations

No new limitations emerged because of implementing the data collection and

analysis procedures. Therefore, the limitations discussed in Chapter 1 remained relevant.

The reliance on self-reported data in this study potentially limited the credibility and

dependability of the findings by making them dependent on the honesty and accuracy of

participants' responses to the interview and focus group questions. Qualitative data are

grounded in specific contexts and perspectives and are not expected to be generalizable

or objective, but self-reported data must be assumed to accurately represent participants'

true, stable experiences of the phenomenon of interest for the findings to have any

meaning (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this study, the threats to credibility and

dependability associated with reliance on participants' self-reports were mitigated by identifying themes across two data sources (individual interviews and focus groups) and multiple participants within each case. The identification of themes that incorporated the experiences of multiple participants minimized the potential for inaccuracies or biases in individual participants' responses to influence the findings.

Data were collected from small samples of Caucasian, Hispanic, and AA students in Title I high schools. The delimitation of the study to small samples of students in Title I schools might limit the transferability of the findings to other settings and populations. For example, data collected in a high school setting might not hold true in an elementary school setting, and data collected from AA, Caucasian, and Hispanic students might not reflect the views of student populations of other races, such as Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islander student populations.

A further limitation was that researcher bias had the potential to threaten the confirmability of the findings. This limitation was a consequence of using a qualitative methodological approach. The reflexivity protocol (see Appendix J) described in the data analysis section of this chapter was used to mitigate this threat to confirmability. There may also have been potential for the researcher's race (African American) to influence the openness of participants of the same or different race in making their responses, as by causing AA participants to be more open, or by causing Caucasian participants to self-censor. Moreover, the concept of race studied in this dissertation might have represented another limitation, as Caucasian students and AA students might have a power struggle among them in the classrooms based on their own biased views of one another or teachers based on race. This possibility could have influenced how students answered the

interview questions, causing them to limit their answers or even adjust the way they would normally answer if concerned their honesty would not be taken so well by the researcher or others involved in the study.

Data collection in this study was delimited to two data sources per case, including individual interviews and focus groups. The lack of a third data source for triangulation was not expected to reduce the trustworthiness of the findings. However, relying on two data sources per case instead of three may have limited the richness of the thick descriptions of the findings. In a case study design, comparing and contrasting findings across multiple sources of data enables the researcher to develop a more robust description of the phenomenon of interest that incorporates multiple perspectives (Yin, 2014). Findings from different sources may reinforce one another or provide valuable qualifications to one another, and the use of multiple sources of data can also support thick description by enabling the researcher to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the cases from which the findings were drawn (Yin, 2014). Thus, while nothing was found in the data to suggest that additional sources would have changed the findings, the use of two data sources per case rather than three or more may have limited thick description in the presentation of the findings by limiting the amount of contextual information and support available.

Summary

Two research questions were used to guide this study. The first research question was the following: How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions? The cross-case theme that emerged to answer the research question was the following: Students are expressive and engaged when they view teachers as welcoming and

validating. The findings indicated that when teachers validated students by welcoming and respecting their ideas and opinions by soliciting student participation and maintaining a classroom culture of openness and respect, students responded by expressing themselves freely to the teacher and putting forth more effort in the class. When students viewed teachers as engaged with teaching, enthusiastic about the subject and the learning process, and happy to be teaching, students became more engaged with the curriculum and work, attending and participating in the class. Students were comfortable initiating interactions with approachable teachers because the interactions were expected to be positive, warm, and validating for students. The teachers were viewed as approachable when they manifested vulnerability and seemed friendly, welcoming, and personable. When teachers were viewed as unbiased, students expressed themselves more openly, which promoted engagement.

The findings associated with the cross-case theme of students were expressive and engaged when they view teachers as welcoming and validating also indicated that when students viewed teachers as judgmental or invalidating, students tended to disengage through silence in class and declining work effort. When teachers appeared disengaged and apathetic, students did not care as much about the subject or the work, and they disliked attending the class. The students tended not to ask questions of or attempt to bond with or talk to teachers whom they viewed as unapproachable, unfriendly, and rigid in expectations and outlook. When teachers were perceived as having a strongly biased perspective (e.g., bias against the student's race, rigid insistence on religious views), they argued with the teacher and/or disengaged from the learning process by giving less attention and effort to it.

The cross-case analysis findings further indicated that AA students appeared to place more importance on teachers' welcoming students through signals of receptivity. In contrast, the Caucasian students appeared to place more importance on teachers actively engaging the class through performative behaviors that signified enthusiasm, dedication, and concern for student preferences and needs. AA students also appeared to place a higher importance on validation in the form of explicit guarantees, expressions of support and respect, and active eliciting of student contributions, while Caucasian students appeared to place more importance on teachers refraining from invalidating student expressions through active suppression.

The second research question was the following: How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers? The cross-case theme used to answer this question was the following: Racialization makes student-teacher interactions antagonistic and obstructive to learning. Racialization was experienced as antagonism toward AA students, often in the form of open derision or manifestations of stereotyping. This antagonism became the experience that characterized all interactions with the teacher, as well as the class. This shift of focus diverted attention from learning and positive classroom engagement. The teacher-student interactions became barriers to rather than facilitators of learning.

The Caucasian students perceived racialization as discriminatory treatment in the form of teacher disengagement from members of a racial group and favoritism toward another. The students were offended by racialization and alienated from teachers who imposed it. The students associated their alienation with feelings of discomfort and anger toward the teacher, whether the discrimination was directed against them. Although the

AA students needed to divert energy inward, into self-soothing disengagement to mitigate the pain of racial attacks, the Caucasian students associated their disengagement with an outward focus of their attention on feelings of alienation, disgust, antagonism, and indignation toward their teachers. Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the implications of the data and data analysis as answers to the research questions.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction and Summary of Study

One of the most passionately discussed and most spiritedly debated issues since the early 1990s has been the declining social, economic, and educational status of young AA students in the United States (Pitre, 2014). Despite the numerous reform efforts, such as the legislative interventions of NCLB (2002), AA students continue to underachieve (NCES, 2015). The achievement gaps between AA students and their Asian, Hispanic, and Caucasian counterparts have been well documented for the past 20 years (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015; Campbell et al., 2000). Barbarin and Aikens (2015), Kenyatta (2012), and Spring (2006) asserted that issues lamented in performance disparities stemmed from a combination of teacher expectations, inadequate school relationships, and cultural insensitivities of teachers and leaders.

The research problem was it was not known how racialization impacted AA and Caucasian students' views of teachers and how those views influenced teacher-student interactions (Brittian & Gray, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012). Further research is needed to explore how students' racial background shapes their views of teachers according to their perceptions (Brittian & Gray, 2014). The purpose of this qualitative descriptive case study was to explore how racialization influenced the views of AA and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influenced student-teacher interactions in secondary schools. The target population for this study was AA and Caucasian students between the ages of 18 to 19 attending a Title I secondary school in Houston, Texas. For this multiple case study, the views of ten AA and eight Caucasian students were explored using semi-structured interviews and focus groups. The results of this

study may inform educational leaders on how they can foster student-teacher interactions that help narrow the achievement gap between AA and Caucasian students.

RQ1 showed how students' views influenced student-teacher interactions. RQ2 showed how racialization impacted student interactions with teachers. The researcher used thematic coding to discover trends and patterns in the data and analyzed the meaning of data within each theme and the significance to the research questions. Within and cross-case analyses were used to determine the differences between the AA and Caucasian students.

Chapter 5 includes a summary of the findings and conclusion; limitations of the study; recommendations for future practice and future research; and theoretical, practical, and future implications. In the summary of findings and conclusions section, the results of the study are compared to the findings presented in the literature and interpreted in the context of the research questions. The theoretical and practical implications delineate applications of new insights derived from the findings to solve real and significant problems and improvements in theoretical understandings of the phenomenon under investigation. The recommendations for future research are based on the limitations of the study, while the recommendations for future practice are based on the results of the study.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

The two cases in the multi-case study included AA students and Caucasian students. Data for each case included individual interviews and a focus group. Six AAs and five Caucasians were interviewed individually. Within-case analyses were

conducted, followed by a cross-case analysis. The summary of findings is organized by research question.

Research Question 1

RQ1 was the following: How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions? The summary of findings and conclusions related to this research question are organized into three major sections. The first section is a discussion of the AA within-case analysis findings. The second section is a discussion of the Caucasian within-case analysis findings. In the third section, the findings and conclusion of the cross-case analysis are presented.

African American Within-Case Analysis. Two within-case themes were identified during data analysis. The following subsections are discussions of the themes and how they relate to the literature and to theory. Furthermore, the significance of the findings is provided.

Within-Case Theme 1: Students Express Themselves Freely and Work Harder When They View Teachers as Validating. The first within-case theme for AA students was students expressed themselves freely and worked harder when they viewed teachers as validating. The findings indicated that when teachers validated students by welcoming and respecting their ideas and opinions, soliciting student participation, and maintaining a classroom culture of and putting forth more effort in the class.   These findings are significant to this study because they indicate when teachers exhibit behaviors that are welcoming and respectful students are motivated to work harder leading to student academic success (Byrd & Chayous, 2011). For example, DaDarian stated that his view of a teacher as validating and nonjudgmental affected interactions by making him

comfortable speaking with the teacher: "I know that that's a person that I can go to after class and talk to them that is a person that I'm safe with." These findings aligned with Byrd and Chayous (2011), who confirmed that when people and students perceived that their lives and experiences were valued, they were more likely to put forth effort and contribute to classroom discussions.

Conversely, when AA students viewed teachers as judgmental or invalidating because the teachers appeared uninterested in or hostile to students' ideas and opinions, the students tended to disengage through silence in class and declining work effort. For example, Ty described an incident in which his view of a teacher as invalidating caused him to stop contributing to the class discussion: "The teacher called on students to give ideas. Students shared ideas. Teacher states, 'No, not the answer.' Students feel dumb. And if a teacher makes me feel dumb, I guess I should not say anything at all." These findings contributed to the advancement of scholarly knowledge in the field of education by narrowing a gap in the literature identified by Brittian and Gray (2014), who referenced a need for researchers to determine the influence that negative race-related experiences had on the perceptions of AA students, particularly in secondary schools.

Within-Case Theme 2: Students Avoid Teachers Who They View as Unapproachable. The second within-case theme for AA students was students avoided teachers who they viewed as unapproachable. The findings indicated that when students viewed teachers as unapproachable (e.g., "strict," "unfriendly," and "mean"), they avoided those teachers, sometimes seeking help from a different teacher when they had questions about material in the unapproachable teacher's class. The students tended not to ask questions of or attempt to bond with or talk to teachers who seemed unapproachable,

unfriendly, and rigid in expectations and outlook. For example, Ty said that viewing a teacher as unapproachable in these ways caused students either to disengage or find illicit means of succeeding academically because they did not want to approach the teacher: "It makes students disengage, start talking, lack of attention, getting on the phones, and cheating by going online to get answers. Students will say that they understand when they don't just to move on." These findings aligned with those by Kenyatta (2012), who found that teachers' attitudes influenced learning experiences in the classroom and were related to student success rate. Furthermore, Riley and Wright (2011) found that a teacher's relatability influenced interactions, thereby impacting the academic success of students. These findings expanded Riley and Wright's work by showing that approachability had similar effects on secondary students' success, providing an empirical link from perceived teacher unacceptance to student engagement and achievement.

Teachers were perceived as approachable when they manifested vulnerability and seemed friendly, welcoming, and personable. The students were comfortable initiating interactions with approachable teachers, and the interactions were positive, warm, and validating for students. According to Brianna, viewing a teacher as open and approachable made her more likely to rely on the teacher for assistance: "Favorable teachers are understanding. They are able to work with you if you are not able to do something such as offering to stay after school to help you understand." Identifying teacher approachability as a factor that influences AA academic success filled a gap in the literature discovered by Brittian and Gray (2014), who suggested a need to understand the role that teacher differential treatment played in the production of educational disparities of AA students.

Caucasian Within-Case Analysis. Two within-case themes were identified during data analysis. The following subsections are discussions of the themes and how these relate to the literature and to theory. Furthermore, the significance of the findings is provided.

Within-Case Theme 1: Students Engage with Learning When They View Their Teachers as Engaged. The first within-case theme for the Caucasian students was students engaged with learning when they viewed their teachers as engaged. The findings indicated that when the students perceived teachers as engaged with teaching, enthusiastic about the subject and the learning process, and happy to be teaching, the students became more engaged with the curriculum and work and enjoyed attending and participating in the class. For example, Mariana added that viewing teachers as passionate made students more enthusiastic about attending class and learning the content: "I would be excited to learn for the day. If teachers are passionate about the work, it will show. And the students will want to go to their class." These findings supported Bottiani et al. (2016), who identified that students' perceptions of teachers' caring and enthusiasm levels influenced student-teacher relationships.

When teachers appeared disengaged (low energy, appearance of job dissatisfaction, and "lazy" about varying lessons and teaching actively as opposed to giving brief prewritten lectures and then assigning classwork), students did not care as much about the subject or the work, and they disliked attending the class. For Harper, the effect of viewing a teacher as disengaged was that she also became disengaged: "If the teacher doesn't care, then I am not going to care. I would walk into the class and I would not pay attention and just blow it off. Teachers should show that they want to be there."

These findings supported the results of Bottiani et al. (2016), who found that supportive relationships with staff at learning institutions and teacher engagement were critical to student engagement during adolescent years. These findings also extend these results, finding differences in the experiences of AA and Caucasian students. While Caucasian students emphasized difficulty with teachers on the basis of perceived engagement, AA students focused on teacher behaviors conveying unapproachability or a lack of acceptance. It was not possible to determine whether the same teacher behaviors elicited these different interpretations; for both groups of students, however, the behaviors resulted in student disengagement from learning. Finally, these findings connect to the significance of this study in that for supportive interactions to exist in the classroom, both teachers and students should exhibit behavioral characteristics that foster an engaging environment (Warren, 2015).

Within-Case Theme 2: Students are Less Cooperative with Teachers Who They View as Biased. The second within-case theme for Caucasian students was students were less cooperative with teachers who they viewed as biased. The findings indicated that when teachers were perceived as having a strongly biased perspective (e.g., bias against the student's race, rigid insistence on religious views), they argued with the teacher and/or disengaged from the learning process by giving less attention and effort to it. For example, Elexys described a conflict with a teacher that caused her to view the teacher as biased: "My [art] teacher did not agree with what I thought. The teacher did not agree with how I chose to express myself because according to the teacher it was wrong in the art world." Elexys said her view of the teacher as biased caused her to become less cooperative than with teachers who were more open to students' expressive styles: "I felt

that because she didn't like the way that I expressed my feelings so I am not going to interact with you the same way as those who like how I express my feelings."

In contrast, when teachers were viewed as unbiased, students expressed themselves more openly, which promoted engagement. For example, Tina reported that when she viewed a teacher as unbiased, "I don't think there was a time when I felt uncomfortable to share my ideas. I was very open in the classroom. There was nothing I ever didn't say." These findings were supported by the work of several authors who found that perceptions of trust and acceptance influenced the relationships between students and teachers, as well as student engagement (Jong et al., 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Smith & Skrbiš, 2017). The findings also answer a call for research to gain a deeper understanding of how AA and Caucasian students view and respond to teachers and how better understanding on how biased views influence student-teacher interactions (Griffin et. al, 2016). In this study, the teacher-student relationship was influenced by perceived teacher bias.

Cross-Case Analysis Theme: Students are Expressive and Engaged When They View Teachers as Welcoming and Validating. The central cross-case theme to answer research question one was students were expressive and engaged when they viewed teachers as welcoming and validating. The findings associated with this theme indicated that the reverse was also true: Students were inhibited and avoidant when they viewed teachers as invalidating and unapproachable. This exploration of AA and Caucasian students showed the specific teacher behaviors that influenced teacher-student interactions, as suggested by Griffin et al. (2016) as an area in need or further research. The results of this study, through the lens of CRT, indicate teachers may be invalidating

and unapproachable toward AA students (an experience not reported by Caucasian students) because of racial inequities ingrained in American society and maintained over time (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Research Question 2

RQ2 was the following: How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers? The summary of findings and conclusions related to this research question are organized into three major sections. The first section is a discussion of the AA within-case analysis findings. The second section is a discussion of the Caucasian within-case analysis findings. In the third section, the findings and conclusion of the cross-case analysis are presented.

African American Within-Case Analysis. One within-case theme was identified during data analysis related to the second research question. The following subsections are discussions of the themes and how they relate to the literature and to theory. Furthermore, the significance of the findings is provided.

Within-Case Theme 3: Racialization Makes Teacher-Student Interactions a Distraction from Learning. The third within-case theme for AA students was racialization made teacher-student interactions a distraction from learning. Racialization was experienced as antagonism toward AA students, often in the form of open derision or manifestations of stereotyping. This antagonism became the experience that characterized all interactions with the teacher, as well as the class and the students' engagement with it. This shift of focus diverted attention from learning and positive classroom engagement. Teacher-student interactions became barriers to rather than facilitators of learning. For example, Josephine said the following of one teacher's displays of racial bias and their

effect on producing antagonism between the teacher and the students: "It's kind of like her perceptions made the learning environment feel not like a learning environment, and more like a battlefield. More like a war between the students and the teacher."

Kamille also described an encounter with racialization from a teacher: "This teacher would respond to me in slang. She would make racist remarks. She would make remarks that were targeted at my skin." The effects of racialization caused Kamille intense stress and diverted much of her time, attention, and energy from learning: "I was targeted . . . I had Caucasian teachers trying to get me kicked out for the dumbest things. A teacher tried to fail me multiple times and tried to get me in trouble with my family." Terri described racialization as influencing her interactions with teachers when "they just go with what they believe instead of looking at the bigger picture and noticing that I am working hard." This finding relates to the findings of Seaton et al. (2008), who reported that AA students felt that their teachers treated them with less respect than other students.

According to Wallace and Brand (2012), how individuals are perceived by an observer often shapes relationships. In the case of AA students, the research indicates that teachers perceive AA students as aggressive and hard to teach, and thus treat them differently by not acknowledging them (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Soumah & Hoover, 2013). Furthermore, teachers continue to be susceptible to racial stereotypes that disadvantage minority students, particularly AA students (McGrady & Reynolds, 2013).

The results of this study expanded previous literature by indicating that students recognized these underlying racial perceptions among teachers and that recognition influenced teacher-student interactions. Furthermore, these findings are significant in filling a gap in the literature regarding the need to know more about the impact that

teacher behaviors and expectations have on AA students' desire to learn as well as student-teacher relationships. (Jong et al., 2014; Kenyatta, 2012). Additionally, Brittian and Gray (2014) suggested a need to understand the role that teacher differential treatment played in producing educational disparities of AA students in secondary schools. In this case, teacher racialization contributed to the educational disparities of AA students.

Caucasian Within-Case Analysis. One within-case theme was identified during data analysis related to the second research question. The following subsections are discussions of the themes and how these relate to the literature and to theory. Furthermore, the significance of the findings is provided.

Within-Case Theme 3: Racialization Alienates Students from Teachers. The third within-case theme for Caucasian students was racialization alienated students from teachers. Racialization, manifested as discriminatory treatment in the form of teacher disengagement from members of a racial group and favoritism toward another, caused the Caucasian students to be uncomfortable with teachers, whether the discrimination was directed against them. The students were offended by racialization and it alienated them from teachers who imposed it. Carolyn (focus group) described herself as alienated from teachers who expressed prejudicial views by feelings of discomfort and disgust: "I felt extremely uncomfortable in myself at that time. It caused me not to want to talk to anyone. I was very disgusted."

Similarly, Elexys perceived some teachers as discriminating against her because they perceived as privileged because she was Caucasian, which alienated her from teachers by causing her to feel indignation at their hypocrisy as sources of that privilege:

"They think I have more opportunities, but they're the ones giving the opportunities. They think I have more privilege, but they're my teachers and everyone else's. If I have privilege, then it's you who are giving it to me."

According to the literature, several researchers reported that teachers' racialization and cultural inequalities negatively influence the achievement of minority students (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Pershey, 2011). However, the results of this study indicated that teacher racialization also negatively affected the students not being victimized as members of a minority group. These stereotypic images supported the beliefs of inadequacy experienced by students to include AA and Caucasian students (see Byrd & Chavous, 2011). The results also provided a deeper understanding of how AA and Caucasian students view and respond to teachers and how better understanding on how biased views influence student-teacher interactions (Griffin et. al, 2016). In this study, the teacher-student relationship was influenced by stereotypic images and beliefs of inadequacy. The findings also relate to the significance of this study in that a learning environment that is culturally responsive for all students would foster effective learning (Kenyatta, 2012; Soumah & Hoover, 2013).

Cross-Case Analysis Theme: Racialization Makes Student-Teacher Interactions Antagonistic and Obstructive to Learning. The central cross-case theme to answer research question two was racialization made student-teacher interactions antagonistic and obstructive to learning. The students experienced racialization, when it manifested as prejudice and discrimination, as antagonistic toward them. For the AA and Caucasian students, the students' focus on racialized situations shifted from learning to

defending themselves against this antagonism. The students defended themselves by disengaging to buffer the antagonism toward themselves.

This findings in this study helped answer a call for qualitative research dedicated to capturing the influence that racialization had on student-teacher interactions (Gans, 2016; Kenyatta, 2012). Like Gans (2016) and Kenyatta (2012), Watkins and Aber (2009) recommended future researchers should explore how students perceived teachers and the influence that these views had on student-teacher interactions. Researchers also noted that capturing the experiences of AA and Caucasian students would provide a deeper understanding of how racialization influences the views of students (Bottiani et al., 2016; Kenyatta, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995; O'Connor, 2006). The results of this study expanded previous literature by capturing how students perceived teachers and the influence that these views had on student-teacher interactions.

Researchers suggested that the underachievement of AA students resulted from a devaluation of self-image and self-esteem experienced in a variety of environments to include the student-teacher interactions (Ryan et al., 2013). Brittian and Gray (2014) also suggested that student achievement was a reflection of self-image. For example, successful students often reported feeling supported and rated themselves with higher self-images (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015). According to Byrd and Chavous (2011) and Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) , members of minority groups tend to internalize constructed stereotypical images to devalue self-worth. The results of this study indicated that racialization among teachers could influence students' academic success by altering students' self-perceptions.

Implications

This section provides the theoretical, practical, and future implications derived

from the study's findings, as well as a description of the study's strengths and

weaknesses. The theoretical implications involve an interpretation of results as related to

the research questions that guided the study. The practical implications presented in this

section were developed from the new insights derived from the findings to solve real and

significant problems. The future implications are recommendations for future research

based on factors relevant to the topic that went unexplored in this study. The discussion

of the study's strengths and weaknesses is based on the limitations of the study and the

significance of findings.

Theoretical Implications

A central assumption of CRT is that racism is institutionalized, systemic, and

integrated into the organization of society (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Through the

lens of CRT, teachers may not be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to teach

ethnically and racially diverse classrooms because the teacher education system is a

product of a racist society (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Ladson-Billings's (2005) work

corresponded with the quest to understand how racial inequalities were interpreted by the

AA and Caucasian students in instructional settings in this study. This study expanded

previous literature that used CRT as a theoretical foundation (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz,

2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Pershey, 2011; Soumah & Hoover, 2013) by establishing links

among institutionalized racism, teacher-student interactions, and academic success.

Students in the study reported responding negatively to teachers perceived as close-

minded or biased against students' perspectives. For AA students, this experience aligned

with teachers' race-based antagonism, transforming the classroom into what one student described as "a battlefield." In these situations, students reported feeling alienated and unable to learn and succeed academically.

CRT theorists can challenge the claims of objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy in society. In other words, they may highlight the intricate tapestry of how race is interwoven with ethnicities, genders, classes, and other systems of authority. A few researchers have reported racialization and cultural inequalities as negatively influencing achievement of students (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Pershey, 2011). Researchers have used the CRT as a framework to evaluate and analyze educational practices further. For example, Wallace and Brand (2012) used the CRT tool to explore the influence that race identities had on teachers' perceptions and practices. The researchers found that the beliefs and practices of teachers were informed by the teachers' critical awareness of social constraints imposed on AA students' identities. The findings indicated a correlation occurred between social awareness and the way teachers instructed and managed students, which led to educational inequity. In the current study, when teachers were perceived as having a strongly biased perspective (e.g., bias against the student's race, rigid insistence on religious views), they argued with the teacher and/or disengaged from the learning process by giving less attention and effort to it.

The cross-case analysis findings further indicated that AA students appeared to place more importance on teachers' welcoming students through signals of receptivity. In contrast, the Caucasian students appeared to place more importance on teachers actively engaging the class through performative behaviors that signified enthusiasm, dedication, and concern for student preferences and needs. AA students also appeared to place a

higher importance on validation in the form of explicit guarantees, expressions of support

and respect, and active eliciting of student contributions, while Caucasian students

appeared to place more importance on teachers refraining from invalidating student

expressions through active suppression, supporting the framework used of CRT. The

Caucasian students perceived racialization as discriminatory treatment in the form of

teacher disengagement from members of a racial group and favoritism toward another,

further supporting and adding to the framework of CRT used in the study. For example,

Caucasian students were offended by racialization and alienated from teachers who

imposed it. The students associated their alienation with feelings of discomfort and anger

toward the teacher, whether the discrimination was directed against them. Although the

AA students needed to divert energy inward, into self-soothing disengagement to mitigate

the pain of racial attacks, the Caucasian students associated their disengagement with an

outward focus of their attention on feelings of alienation, disgust, antagonism, and

indignation toward their teachers. These findings supported CRT researchers who defined

racialization and cultural inequalities as negatively influencing students' achievements

(DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012; Pershey, 2011).

Practical Implications

The findings drawn from this study have implications for practice in the field of

education. First, the findings showed that supportive teachers fostered better student-

teacher interactions, and for supportive interactions to exist in the classroom, teachers

should exhibit behavioral characteristics that would foster trust and acceptance. Leaders

can establish these healthy behaviors by enhancing teachers' cultural and racial

awareness and culturally responsive teaching practices through professional development

opportunities. In other words, the learning environment must transform into a culturally responsive learning environment to narrow the academic achievement gap for minority students, including AA students (Kenyatta, 2012; Soumah & Hoover, 2013).

Furthermore, the results of this study indicated that for an optimal learning environment, teachers should become better aware of their biases that might lead to unequal treatment among students in their classrooms. Again, this implication for practice leads back to providing teachers with the education and resources they need to recognize the racial meaning that they attribute to students' identities.

Future Implications

The implications for future research are drawn from factors relevant to the research topic not explored in this study. This researcher did not explore other factors that could influence student-teacher interactions and academic success, such as students' level of autonomy, teaching style, and characteristics of the classroom environment. Buehler et al. (2015) asserted that students' perceptions of the classroom environment influenced their level of engagement with their teacher. Furthermore, Hafen et al. (2012) contended that students' perceived levels of autonomy in coursework influenced student-teacher interactions, and these interactions differed among Caucasian, Hispanic, and AA students. Finally, Johnson-Bailey (2015) noted that student-teacher interactions were influenced by the systematic racial-ethnic differences in the quality and style of teaching. Future researchers could explore these factors that relate to academic success to gain a better understanding on how these influence student-teacher interactions and how such influences differ for AA and Caucasian students.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study

One of the limitations of this study was that the researcher only explored the perceptions of AA, Caucasian Non-Hispanic, and Caucasian Hispanic students from Title I high schools in one district located in South Texas. The experiences of these AA and Caucasian students might be specific to Title I campus settings; therefore, the results of this research could not be generalized to other populations. The use of interviews to capture accounts of participants' perceptions also limited this study. When using a descriptive multi-case research design to capture views, it was crucial to consider the ability of participants to clearly express themselves. The participants might have listened and responded to what was easily understood and easily articulated. The participants might also have poor recall of experiences, leading to bias. Therefore, the researcher elicited more detail by employing the *pause-and-wait* technique (refraining from speaking for several moments after an interviewee's response), using overt encouragement (responding with a short affirmative, such as "Okay"), providing elaboration and/or clarification, and paraphrasing the responses. Additionally, the researcher utilized audio recordings to accurately capture participants' responses. Because this study involved interviews with high school students, the participants could preview the questions before responding. The participants were also permitted to provide written and oral explanations of their responses.

An additional limitation of qualitative research is its susceptibility to research bias. Because the researcher was an administrator at a Title I school, the researcher took measures to reduce the effect of researcher bias by using bracketing, multiple data sources, and a PDC. The PDC provided suggestions on researcher's thoughts and

behaviors to minimize bias. Furthermore, the researcher was a school administrator with experiences in both elementary and secondary campuses; therefore, the interpretation of the day could be slightly biased. The bracketing process was used to reduce biased interpretation of student testimonies by ensuring that potential deleterious preconceptions were mitigated.

A further limitation regards the lack of a third data source for the study. Using only two data sources per case prevented the researcher from achieving triangulation. A best practice in a case study, triangulation enables a researcher to develop a more robust understanding of each case, and thus compare and contrast findings across cases, through accessing multiple perspectives regarding the phenomenon of interest (Yin, 2014). In this study, the findings from the two sources of data reinforced one another, and it is not expected that findings from a third source would have challenged those findings. However, the lack of a third source of data is still a limitation for the current study.

Finally, the unequal power between a child and an adult researcher limited this study. The students might have provided the researcher with responses they believed the researcher desired. Additionally, participants could have been hesitant to share responses due to the researcher's ethnicity. During the study, the researcher established a safe environment to encourage open and truthful dialogue.

Despite the limitations, this researcher contributed to knowledge in the field by elucidating that students are expressive and engaged when they view teachers as welcoming and validating. Furthermore, the results of this study showed that racialization made student-teacher interactions antagonistic and obstructive to learning. This multiple case study was unique in its contribution to the field because the cross-case and within-

case analyses showed that the AA students expressed themselves freely and worked harder when they viewed teachers as validating and avoided teachers who they viewed as unapproachable. Conversely, the Caucasian students engaged with learning when they viewed their teachers as engaged and were less cooperative with teachers who they viewed as biased. Furthermore, the results of this study expanded knowledge in the field by showing that AA students believed racialization made teacher-student interactions a distraction from learning, while Caucasian students believed racialization alienated students from teachers. Finally, these results emerged from a robust set of interviews and focus groups, another strength of the study. Students shared candidly of their experiences and views, enabling the insights articulated in the study's findings.

Recommendations

This section includes the recommendations for future research and practice. The recommendations for future research are based on the limitations of this study and areas of research that need further examination based on the study's findings. The recommendations for future practice include ideas derived from the findings that practitioners can implement in educational settings.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future researchers could expand this study by addressing its limitations. First, future researchers could replicate this study using samples from student populations in non-Title 1 high schools to enhance the generalizability of findings. Furthermore, future researchers could enhance the generalizability of results to a broader population by using a lager sample size. Another recommendation is to explore the perceptions of student-teacher interactions among other minority groups, such as Hispanic and Asian students.

When reviewing the literature relevant to this study, an additional area of research that needs further examination was identified. Additional research is needed that explores the views of both teachers and students across various ethnic and racial minority groups with regard to their perceptions of bias in the school culture, level of diversity in classrooms, perceived cultural differences in the learning environments, and staff behaviors (Jong et al., 2014; McGrady & Reynolds, 2013; McKown, 2013). Including the perceptions of teachers regarding the influences of racial bias on academic achievement can develop a more holistic understanding of racial stereotypes that disadvantage minority students.

Recommendations for Future Practice

Educational leaders who aim to create equality in school systems may benefit from this study. First, the findings showed that supportive teachers fostered better student-teacher interactions, and for supportive interactions to exist in the classroom, teachers should exhibit behavioral characteristics that foster trust and acceptance. This finding could be established in the way of enhancing teachers cultural and racial awareness and culturally responsive teaching practices through professional development opportunities. In other words, the learning environment must transform into a culturally responsive learning environment to narrow the academic achievement gap for minority students, including AA students.

Furthermore, the results of this study indicated that for an optimal learning environment, teachers should become better aware of their biases that may lead to unequal treatment among students in their classrooms. Again, this implication for practice leads back to providing teachers with the education and resources they need to

recognize the racial meaning that they attribute to students' identities. The research problem was it was not known how racialization impacted AA and Caucasian students' views of teachers and how those views influenced teacher-student interactions (Brittian & Gray, 2014; Kenyatta, 2012). The research problem addressed in this study was situated in a problem space identified in the literature. Researchers suggested that further research was needed to explore how students' racial backgrounds shaped their views of teachers according to their perceptions (Brittian & Gray, 2014). The results of this study showed that racialization makes student-teacher interactions antagonistic and obstructive to learning.

This multiple case study was unique in its contribution to the field in that cross-case and within-case analyses showed that the AA students expressed themselves freely and worked harder when they viewed teachers as validating and avoid teachers who they view as unapproachable. Conversely, the Caucasian students engaged with learning when they viewed their teachers as engaged and were less cooperative with teachers who they viewed as biased. Furthermore, the results of this study expanded knowledge in the field by showing that AA students believed racialization made teacher-student interactions a distraction from learning, while Caucasian students believed racialization alienated students from teachers.

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Appendix A.

Site Authorization Form

Site authorization(s) on file with Grand Canyon University.

Appendix B.

District Approval

Site authorization(s) on file with Grand Canyon University.

Appendix C.

Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INTRODUCTION

The title of this research study is, "Descriptive Multi-Case Study: How do African American and Caucasian Students View Teachers in Title I Schools?"

My name is Connie Smith. I am a doctoral student under the supervision of Dr. Ajay Das in the College of Doctoral Studies at Grand Canyon University. The purpose of this study is to explore how racialization influences the views of African American and Caucasian students and how these views about racialization influence student-teacher interactions in secondary schools RESEARCH

KEY INFORMATION

This document defines the terms and conditions for consenting to participate in this research study.

- *How do I know if I can be in this study?* You are eligible to participate in this study if you are 18 years old and have an ethnicity of African American or Caucasian.
- *What am I being asked to do?* If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:
  - Participate in a 60 minute individual semi-structured interview or focus group.
  - The interview will be conducted on campus in a private room designated by the building Principal. The focus group will be conducted via video conferencing.
  - The semi-structured interview will be conducted before or after-school.
  - The researcher will use an interview protocol to document your experiences/views.

  Audiotaping:

  I would like to use a voice recorder to record your responses. You can still participate if you do not wish to be recorded. Your identity will be protected through the use of coding.

- *Who will have access to my information?* The following people will have access to your information- myself, my dissertation chair, and my dissertation committee.

Participation is voluntary. You can leave the study at any time, even if you have not finished, without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to stop participation, you may do so by verbal and written communication. If you decide not to participate, I will not use the information that I gathered from you.

- *Any possible risks or discomforts?* There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with this study.
- *Any direct benefits for m*e? There are no direct benefits for me.
- *Any paid compensation for my time?* Participants will not get paid for their participation
- *How will my information and/or identity be protected?* Documents linking specific participant information will be encrypted using alphanumeric coding and securely stored in a separate file in a locked cabinet in an undisclosed area to be viewed only by the designate researcher. Data will be locked in a secured place for 3 years. Only the researcher will have access to the original research data collected during the study.

PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION COLLECTED

The data collected from this study will be presented as a dissertation. The data will be presented individually and by groups.

PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY

- *Will researchers ever be able to link my data/responses back to me?* The data will be encrypted in the study and will not be linked to individual students.
- *Will my data include information that can identify me (names, addresses, etc.)*? No
- *Will researchers assign my data/responses a research ID code to use instead of my name?* Yes
    - *If yes, will researchers create a list to link names with their research ID codes?* Yes. The researcher will create a list to support confidentiality.
    - *If yes, how will researchers secure the link of names and research ID codes? How long will the link be kept? Who has access? Approximate destroy date?* The researcher will secure the link of names and research ID codes in locked cabinet in an undisclosed area with access by the researcher only. The link will be kept for 3 years. The approximate destroy date is April 2023.

- *How will my data be protected (electronic and hardcopy)? Where? How long? Who will have access? Approximate destroy or de-identification date?* The data will be encrypted in both version- electronic and hardcopy. The files will be stored in a locked cabinet in an undisclosed area for 3 years. The researcher will be the only one with access. The destroy date – April 2023.
- *Where and how will the signed consent forms be secured?* The consent forms will be stored in a locked cabinet in an undisclosed area for 3 years

FUTURE RESEARCH
Once participant names are removed from these data collected for this study, the de-identified information could be used for future research studies or distributed to other investigators for future research studies without additional informed consent from you or your legally authorized representative.
STUDY CONTACTS
Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before or after your consent, will be answered by Connie Smith, csmith171@my.gcu.edu, and ██████ ████████ If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the College of Doctoral Studies at IRB@gcu.edu; (602) 639-7804.
VOLUNTARY CONSENT
PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS   - You have been given an opportunity to read and discuss the informed consent and ask questions about this study;   - You have been given enough time to consider whether or not you want to participate;   - You have read and understand the terms and conditions and agree to take part in this research study;   - You understand your participation is voluntary and that you may stop participation at any time without penalty.   Your signature means that you understand your rights listed above and agree to participate in this study _____ _____ Signature of Participant   Date
INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT
"I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Grand Canyon University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have provided (offered) you a copy of this signed consent document." (Your signature indicates that you have ensured the participant has read, understood, and has had the opportunity to ask questions regarding their participation.) Signature of Investigator_____Date_____

Appendix D.

Interview Protocol

1. Describe what you believe is meant by the word "racialization."

2   a.   Explain how "race" may influence people.

    b.   How do you feel about races that are different from your own?

    c.   Do you believe your teacher being from a different race affects your

            academic performance? Why or why not?

3   a.   How might "behaviors" differ among your teachers?

    b.   In what ways, do the "behavior(s)" of your teachers promote openness and

    a safe   classroom/school environment?

    c.   Describe a time when your teacher(s) made you feel really comfortable to

    share your ideas and opinions.

    d.   Describe a time when your teacher(s) made you feel uncomfortable to

    share your ideas and opinions.

4   a.   What is your favorite subject?

    b.   Why is this your favorite subject?

    c.   Describe the characteristics of favorable teachers

    d.   Explain how these characteristics influence your interactions with

    teachers.

    e.   What is your unfavorable subject?

    f.   Why is this an unfavorable subject?

    g.   Describe the characteristics of unfavorable teachers.

f.   Explain how these characteristics influence your interactions with teachers.

5 a.   How do you think people describe you?

b.   How would you describe your race?

c.   How would you describe yourself?

d.   Share a time when you felt like your teacher(s) allowed their perception/beliefs to shape their interaction with you.

e.   Describe what that interactions feel, look like, and sounds like.

f.   How do teacher perceptions influence your beliefs towards school and learning?

Appendix E.

Focus Group Protocol

1. Describe what you believe is meant by the word "racialization".

2 a.   Explain how "race" may influence people.

   b.   How do you feel about races that are different from your own?

   c.   Do you believe your teacher being from a different race affects your

   academic performance? Interactions? Why or why not?

3 a.   How might "behaviors" differ among your teachers?

   b.   In what ways, do the "behavior(s)" of your teachers promote openness and

   a safe   classroom/school environment?

   c.   Describe a time when your teacher(s) made you feel really comfortable to

   share your ideas and opinions.

   d.   Describe a time when your teacher(s) made you feel uncomfortable to

   share your ideas and opinions.

4 a.   What are the characteristics of unfavorable teachers?

   b.   What are the characteristics of favorable teachers?

5 a.   How do you think people describe you?

   b.   How would you describe your race?

   c.   How would you describe yourself?

   d.   Share a time when you felt like your teacher(s) allowed their beliefs to

   shape their interaction with you.

   e.   Describe what that interactions feel, look like, and sounds like.

   f.   How do teacher behaviors influence your beliefs towards school and

learning?

Appendix F.

Demographic & Academic Data Sheet

Participant's Historical Information

Participant's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Participating Campus: _____

Grade Level: _____   Overall GPA: _____

Ethnicity: _____

# of years attending Houston ISD public schools: _____

# of discipline infractions: _____ Assigning staff member (s): _____

Participant's Academic Historical Information

Current Content Area	Grade	Additional notes
ELA		
Math		
Science		
Social Studies		
Elective		

Alphanumeric Code Assignment: _____

Appendix G.

Expert Panel Validation Rubric

Survey/Interview Validation Rubric for Expert Panel - VREP©
By Marilyn K. Simon with input from Jacquelyn White

http://dissertationrecipes.com/

Criteria	Operational Definitions	Score 1=Not Acceptable (major modifications needed) 2=Below Expectations (some modifications needed) 3=Meets Expectations (no modifications needed but could be improved with minor changes) 4=Exceeds Expectations (no modifications needed)				Questions NOT meeting standard (List page and question number) and need to be revised. Please use the comments and suggestions section to recommend revisions.
		1	2	3	4	
Clarity	• The questions are direct and specific. • Only one question is asked at a time. • The participants can understand what is being asked. • There are no *double-barreled* questions (two questions in one).				X	
Wordiness	• Questions are concise. • There are no unnecessary words				X	
Negative Wording	• Questions are asked using the affirmative (e.g., Instead of asking, "Which methods are not used?", the researcher asks, "Which methods *are* used?")				X	
Overlapping Responses	• No response covers more than one choice. • All possibilities are considered. • There are no ambiguous questions.				X	
Balance	• The questions are unbiased and do not lead the participants to a response. The questions are asked using a neutral tone.				X	
Use of Jargon	• The terms used are understandable by the target population. • There are no clichés or hyperbole in the wording of the questions.			X		What do you mean by 'describe'? Do you mean teaching approach, physical description, attitude? Teenagers can be very

						single minded about terms.
Appropriateness of Responses Listed	• The choices listed allow participants to respond appropriately. • The responses apply to all situations or offer a way for those to respond with unique situations.		X			See above
Use of Technical Language	• The use of technical language is minimal and appropriate. • All acronyms are defined.				X	
Application to Praxis	• The questions asked relate to the daily practices or expertise of the potential participants.				X	
Relationship to Problem	• The questions are sufficient to resolve the problem in the study • The questions are sufficient to answer the research questions. • The questions are sufficient to obtain the purpose of the study.		X			See Jargon
Measure of Construct: A: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.*[Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					
Measure of Construct: B: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct. *[Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					
Measure of Construct: C: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.* [Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					
Measure of Construct: D: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.* [Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					

* The operational definition should include the domains and constructs that are being investigated. You need to assign meaning to a variable by specifying the activities and operations necessary to measure, categorize, or manipulate the variable. For example, to measure the construct *successful aging* the following domains could be included: degree of physical disability (low number); prevalence of physical performance (high number), and degree of cognitive impairment (low number). If you were to measure creativity, this construct is generally recognized to consist of flexibility, originality, elaboration, and other concepts. Prior studies can be helpful in establishing the domains of

Survey/Interview Validation Rubric for Expert Panel - VREP

By Marilyn K. Simon with input from Jacquelyn White

http://dissertationrecipes.com/

Dr. Darelyn David
(713) 732-8500

Criteria	Operational Definitions	Score 1=Not Acceptable (major modifications needed) 2=Below Expectations (some modifications needed) 3=Meets Expectations (no modifications needed but could be improved with minor changes) 4=Exceeds Expectations (no modifications needed)				Questions NOT meeting standard (List page and question number) and need to be revised. Please use the comments and suggestions section to recommend revisions.
		1	2	3	4	
Clarity	• The questions are direct and specific. • Only one question is asked at a time. • The participants can understand what is being asked. • There are no *double-barreled* questions (two questions in one).				X	
Wordiness	• Questions are concise. • There are no unnecessary words				X	
Negative Wording	• Questions are asked using the affirmative (e.g., Instead of asking, "Which methods are not used?", the researcher asks, "Which methods *are* used?")				X	
Overlapping Responses	• No response covers more than one choice. • All possibilities are considered. • There are no ambiguous questions.				X	
Balance	• The questions are unbiased and do not lead the participants to a response. The questions are asked using a neutral tone.				X	
Use of Jargon	• The terms used are understandable by the target population. • There are no clichés or hyperbole in the wording of the questions.				X	

Appropriateness of Responses Listed	• The choices listed allow participants to respond appropriately. • The responses apply to all situations or offer a way for those to respond with unique situations.				X	
Use of Technical Language	• The use of technical language is minimal and appropriate. • All acronyms are defined.				X	
Application to Praxis	• The questions asked relate to the daily practices or expertise of the potential participants.				X	
Relationship to Problem	• The questions are sufficient to resolve the problem in the study • The questions are sufficient to answer the research questions. • The questions are sufficient to obtain the purpose of the study.				X	
Measure of Construct: A: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.*[Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]				X	
Measure of Construct: B: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct. *[Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					
Measure of Construct: C: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.* [Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					
Measure of Construct: D: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.* [Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					

* The operational definition should include the domains and constructs that are being investigated. You need to assign meaning to a variable by specifying the activities and operations necessary to measure, categorize, or manipulate the variable. For example, to measure the construct *successful aging* the following domains could be included: degree of physical disability (low number); prevalence of physical performance (high number), and degree of cognitive impairment (low number). If you were to measure creativity, this construct is generally recognized to consist of flexibility, originality, elaboration, and other concepts. Prior studies can be helpful in establishing the domains of a construct.

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Comments and Suggestions
1. The revised version has eliminated all double-barreled questions

Survey/Interview Validation Rubric for Expert Panel - VREP©

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http://dissertationrecipes.com/

Criteria	Operational Definitions	Score 1=Not Acceptable (major modifications needed) 2=Below Expectations (some modifications needed) 3=Meets Expectations (no modifications needed but could be improved with minor changes) 4=Exceeds Expectations (no modifications needed)				Questions NOT meeting standard (List page and question number) and need to be revised. *Please use the comments and suggestions section to recommend revisions.*
		1	2	3	4	
Clarity	• The questions are direct and specific. • Only one question is asked at a time. • The participants can understand what is being asked. • There are no *double-barreled* questions (two questions in one).			X		Question 4- Consider that relationships often impact outcome (favorite teacher-favorite subject)
Wordiness	• Questions are concise. • There are no unnecessary words			X		
Negative Wording	• Questions are asked using the affirmative (e.g., Instead of asking, "Which methods are not used?", the researcher asks, "Which methods *are* used?")				X	
Overlapping Responses	• No response covers more than one choice. • All possibilities are considered. • There are no ambiguous questions.				X	
Balance	• The questions are unbiased and do not lead the participants to a response. The questions are asked using a neutral tone.				X	
Use of Jargon	• The terms used are understandable by the target population. • There are no clichés or hyperbole in the wording of the questions.			X		3b- Will students understand "openness"?

Survey/Interview Validation Rubric for Expert Panel - VREP©

Appropriateness of Responses Listed	• The choices listed allow participants to respond appropriately. • The responses apply to all situations or offer a way for those to respond with unique situations.				X	
Use of Technical Language	• The use of technical language is minimal and appropriate. • All acronyms are defined.				X	
Application to Praxis	• The questions asked relate to the daily practices or expertise of the potential participants.				X	
Relationship to Problem	• The questions are sufficient to resolve the problem in the study • The questions are sufficient to answer the research questions. • The questions are sufficient to obtain the purpose of the study.			X		See above
Measure of Construct: A: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.*[Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					
Measure of Construct: B: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct. *[Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					
Measure of Construct: C: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.* [Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					
Measure of Construct: D: ( )	• The survey adequately measures this construct.* [Include Operational Definition and concepts associated with construct]					

* The operational definition should include the domains and constructs that are being investigated. You need to assign meaning to a variable by specifying the activities and operations necessary to measure, categorize, or manipulate the variable. For example, to measure the construct

Appendix H.

Interview Excerpt

In what ways do the behaviors of your teachers promote openness and save classroom environments?

Mason

With the professional one there is always the aspect of learning but when the teacher becomes more open the students get to see that the teacher is ok with sharing and listening to the students' point of view it allows the students to feel comfortable and safe. It is much easier for students to talk about political ideals when the teacher is comfortable with discussions and peer reviews.

 Researcher: Q3c

Describe a time when teachers made you feel really comfortable to share your ideas and opinions.

Mason

In History class, the teacher had a personal relationship with students and personal teaching style. During a unit on political beliefs, the teacher gave an option on the completion of the quizzes. She shared her quiz results. After sharing her results, the teacher responded to student questions about her answers selected during the political quiz. After sharing her results and being open to answering our questions, she gave us the option to take the political quiz. A different teacher, after reading a paper on mental illness and women rights. The teacher gave us an opportunity to discuss and ask questions. So, the teacher was willing to open up so the students were willing to open up.

Researcher: Q3d

Describe a time when your teachers made you feel uncomfortable to share your ideas and opinions.

Mason

I don't know if my teacher has ever made me feel uncomfortable but they're definitely times where it was not an atmosphere that was conducive to sharing.   It was more of a professional relationship whereas the conversation never allowed for conversations that would give personal views. The topics were mandated by the State. The teacher never shared personal beliefs so we never got that personal lens nor perspective that you get from the personal teaching styles. There are times where teachers have not been opened to sharing.

Appendix I.

Sample PDC

Date of Review: _May 8, 2020_
Reviewer's Name: ███████████████████

Participant's Name or Focus Group _Caucasian_
Interview Date: _May 8, 2020_

Question #	% Accuracy				Notes-
	0%-40%	41%-60%	61%-80%	81%-100%	Remind +
1				/	
2a				/	Student was able to share experience.
2b				/	
2c				/	
3a				/	
3b				/	
3c				/	
3d				/	Remind Student to share names before sharing experiences.
4a				/	
4b				/	
4c				/	
4d				/	
4e				/	
4f				/	
4g				/	
4f				/	
5a				/	
5b				/	
5c				/	
5d				/	
5e				/	
5f				/	

_____ May 8, 2020
Signature
Date

Appendix J.

Reflexivity Protocol

Reflexivity Protocol Sheet

"Writing to Learn"

Activity I: Brain Dump

Q: What is my perspective on racialization?

Activity II: Life's Milestones

Steps:

1) Quickly (without much thought) create a list of milestones in your life and career.
2) Review the list to self. Revise list as needed- delete, add clarifications comments and/or events
3) Identify obstacles in milestones
4) Choose 1 and write a brief piece about it.

Appendix K

Codebook

Research question	
Case (AA / Caucasian)	*n* of transcript excerpts included
Theme	
Initial code grouped to form theme (listed alphabetically)	
RQ1. How do students' views influence student-teacher interactions?	71
African American	
Within-case theme 1: Students express themselves freely and work harder when they view teachers as validating	37
Being silent around teachers viewed as judgmental	15
Expressiveness and effort with teachers viewed as validating	22
Within-case theme 2: Students avoid teachers who they view as unapproachable	9
Avoiding teachers viewed as unapproachable	6
Spontaneity around teachers viewed as open	3
Caucasian	
Within-case theme 1: Students engage with learning when they view their teachers as engaged	14
Disengaging from teachers who are viewed as apathetic	7
Engaging with teachers who are viewed as enthusiastic	7

Research question	
Case (AA / Caucasian)	
Theme	*n* of transcript excerpts included
Initial code grouped to form theme (listed alphabetically)	
Within-case theme 2: Students are less cooperative with teachers who they view as biased	11
Defying or disengaging from teachers viewed as biased	7
Openness toward teachers viewed as unbiased	4
RQ2. How does racialization impact student interactions with teachers?	45
African American	
Within-case theme 3: Racialization makes teacher-student interactions a distraction from learning	20
Absence of racialization promotes focus on learning	9
Racialization as a barrier to learning	11
Caucasian	
Within-case theme 3: Racialization alienates students from teachers	25
Racialization as favoritism	6
Racialization as teacher disengagement	6
Students engage when they do not perceive racialization	13