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THREE PRONGS OF KNOWLEDGE FOR BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
PARENTS IN PREPARATION TO ASSIST YOUNG
BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN
NAVIGATE THROUGH SYSTEMIC RACISM

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PARENTS IN PREPARATION TO ASSIST YOUNG
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NAVIGATE THROUGH SYSTEMIC RACISM

A Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Faculty of
Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development

at

Southern Methodist University
in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Liberal Studies

by

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The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.

– Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The journey through the Doctor of Liberal Studies Program has been most rewarding. It is difficult to discuss just one aspect of the program that has given me the most joy. What I know is the totality of the experiences received in this program made the journey fulfilling. As with any academic knowledge, it is the people that make the courses relevant and ignited learning. I am grateful to each professor whose scholarship was evident in each class and through each assignment. Additionally, the knowledge I received from the assigned cohort was insightful, thoughtful, and provided an indelible bond. Cohort Two is the best!

With great esteem, I express gratitude to the initial Graduate Liberal Studies team comprised of Michele Mrak, Dr. Kate Montgomery, Rose Summers, and Dr. John Mears. Their visionary leadership, and thoughtful creation of a program that merged the best of interdisciplinary subjects, gave foundation to intellectual rigor and exposure to topics that I would not have ordinarily connected. Moreover, having a program that offered the freedom to select courses to develop a degree that would satisfy one's interest is remarkable.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the research librarians in Fondren Library. They were invaluable throughout the process of research. I especially must recognize the patience and teaching of Rebecca Graff. Without question, I would not know as much about research options was it not for her guidance.

In conclusion, it is with overwhelming appreciation that I acknowledge my dissertation co-advisors, Dr. David Deggs and Dr. Sherril English. Their unique ability to convey their expertise in their respective disciplines gave focus and guidance throughout this process and exceeded my expectations. I am more knowledgeable, wiser, and more confident because they believed in the importance of the subject and the good that it could bring to others. Their scholarship and wise counsel greatly enhanced my journey through the dissertation phase of the process. With the addition of Dr. Deidre Stewart's expertise as the tertiary reader, I could not have had a better team! I will miss our visits and discussions, but I know we will remain in contact. Thank you to David, Sherril, and Deidre, who are stellar in so many ways! May blessings continue to reign on them as they continue to teach and bless others with their incredible knowledge.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on three prongs of knowledge in parent education programs for Black/African American parents. These three prongs of knowledge fortify and enhance Black/African American parents' effectiveness in their role. This dissertation focuses on Black/African Americans' parenting experience because of the unique challenges they and their children face in a country that does not always value them or respects their humanity. Living in a country where systemic racism is foundational, Black/African American parents and their children have added challenges presented by this reality. It is systemic racism that creates the need for additional knowledge to ensure that Black/African American parents prepare to address race and racism concerns with their children to protect them and keep them safe as they journey through life in this country. These three areas of knowledge will benefit Black/African American parents and their parenting experiences.

Studies identified using the research methodology of qualitative meta-synthesis to support each of the three-prong knowledge areas. The researcher viewed studies through the theoretical lens of critical race theory and critical race parenting. Themes emerged to tie the three regions together and emphasize important characteristics to reinforce the need for parental education. Themes that emerged resulted in identifying areas that will require further research to focus on the Black/African American parenting experiences. Additionally, the studies' analysis led to a 'call to action' to face and address the systemic racism that displays itself in this country. To provide parents with what they need to address issues they meet in parenting, especially while being Black/African American, requires examining systems. The struggle

continues, but Black/African American parents will not be deterred, as the research revealed. In the studies, Black/African American parents shared their thirst for knowledge and ways to ensure their children will survive to have opportunities for the future they deserve.

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DEDICATION

My heart of different ages – Yoruba Proverb

With great honor, I dedicate this dissertation to those who have come before me, to those who are with me presently, and to those who are yet unborn. My heart does not forget!

To the past, I honor the memory of my ancestors who continue to live in my heart and mind, especially my parents, Aquilla and Maurine Miles, who now reside with the "great cloud of witnesses" and watch over me every day. Their teachings and examples of character and values continue to guide my life. Additionally, my parents prophetically gave me a name that produced the initials "d.r."

To the present, I honor those who, through their love, prayers, encouragement, and expressions of pride, enhanced my resolve to push forward to attain this goal. Among those, I say the names of Johnlyn Mitchell, Dr. Michael G. Ford (des.), Thomas Jefferson "Jeff" Gilmore, III, Professor Barbara Hill Moore, Johnice Ingram Parker (des.), Reginald Harvey, Michelle Renata Thomas, Rev. Dr. Kevin Rae Miles Johnson, Whitney Maurine Miles, Kimya Pendleton Johnson, Carol E. Brooks, Dr. Cynthia LeBlanc, Ocie Kazee, and Shirley Ison Newsome.

To the future, I pray the legacy of love, self-respect, family values, faith, commitment to excellence in all things, continuous learning, and those intergenerational communications continue to be reality. I look to you, the best we have now, as you continue onward, and to those who are yet unborn. I say the names of Brechelle, Triston, Shaniya, Miles, Laila, Lena, Gabriel,

Tevis, Zyred, Zomora, and Zain. I look to you to continue struggling to alleviate metastatic systemic racism to make the world better for all. I pray that the Hand with a power greater than all of us be your guide and protector!

I also dedicate this to Black/African American families. May they continue in their quest to love, care for and protect, value and respect, teach, learn, model, and not be deterred by anyone or any circumstance. Nature's sun has kissed a blessing on our skin! Celebrate who you are! Your life has a purpose. Claim it!

CHAPTER ONE

Black/African American Parenting for Today and the Future

Our job as black mothers is to keep pushing the liberation ball down the court. Our obligation is to leave the world better for them and to ensure that they are equipped with the tools they need to fight. . . We don't live for the I. We live for the we.

-Cat Brooks in *We Live for the We: The Political Power of Black Motherhood*.

(McClain, 2019, p. 4)

The daily greeting offered by the Maasai tribe in West Africa is "Kasserian Ingeri," which translates to mean, "Are the children well?" It helps keep the Maasai tribe focused on the future and what is most important in the present. This tribe has historically placed and still places a high value on children's well-being. It is also true of warriors without children who are within the tribe. Traditionally the response is: 'All the children are well.' The meaning is that peace and safety prevail; the priorities of protecting the young and the powerless are in place; that the Maasai people had not forgotten their reason for being, their proper function, and their responsibilities. It means that daily struggles of existence do not preclude appropriate care for the young. (O'Neill, 2015, para. 2)

It is the value that this strong tribe places on their children that keeps them ever mindful of their humanness. This beautiful and heartfelt sentiment expressed in this daily greeting is centering. The reference of this greeting serves as a reminder of how far American culture is from valuing all her children and having them know they are loved and hope for a future in a world that will ensure their safety, where they are cared for, have resources. They guide those who have less than they to become better, accepting all humans. Regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender preference, religion, zip code, or economic status, they should receive others. It

seems that valuing human life in the human experience should be strived for as everyone journeys through this complex world. This complex yet straightforward and comprehensive greeting centers the Maasai tribe, providing social constructs for their behavior and communication.

What would happen if there was a daily greeting in America to remind us of children's importance and welfare in the present and future? How would this focus assist in ensuring efforts to care for children currently present and those yet to be born? This researcher's concern that children, especially Black/African American children in America, needed more care and focused help to ensure their place globally. The impetus for this study centered on assisting Black/African American parents to gain knowledge about the importance of child development, education of truths about the history and culture of Black/African American people and being prepared with practical strategies to assist children in facing a world that continues to regard them as "others." The ultimate hope is to hear the response, "All the children are well."

This dissertation focused on providing Black/African American parents in urban America with the knowledge that will empower their strength, enabling them to raise self-aware children who will face systemic inequalities that continue to be in America's DNA. In addressing this problem, the researcher examined three areas interested in having parent education programs in American urban centers included in their program agendas. The three prongs of advocacy are:

1. Knowledge of early childhood development with an emphasis on brain and social-emotional development.
2. Knowledge of the rich history and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans to the development of this country.

3. Knowledge of strategies for parents to assist Black/African American children in navigating through systemic racism.

It is the belief of this researcher that teaching these three components to Black/African American parents, other racial and ethnic groups will also benefit. It takes commitment from those in groups not considered "others" to learn about the people considered as "others." Fear is the opposite of love. It is fear that prevents people from knowing and accepting someone who is not in their group. Ignorance is rampant when fear holds people hostage and prevents them from seeking the truth. Knowledge of the Black/African American experience can effectively transcend all groups of people. The byproduct of this knowledge will reduce the fear that often prevents people from connecting because their understanding of each other is limited, and they have not sought to learn. Making more information available to all races and ethnic groups about each other can assist in creating a more cohesive and unified populous. Love can replace fear.

Research Problem Statement

The problem statement that guided this research was that parent education programs had not provided Black/African American parents with combined knowledge in three critical areas of parenting children's development. This knowledge will assist parents in helping children know their value and worth in a world that does not always acknowledge their humanness. Knowledge in these three areas:

1. Early childhood development focused on the brain and social-emotional development.
2. The rich history and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans influencing the development of this country.

3. Strategies for parents to assist children in navigating systems of inequality that they will face in America through parent education programs within early learning centers and other venues where parents gather.

Black/African American parents must have the knowledge to combat racism. Race, a social construct, leads to racism which has influenced the treatment of Black/African American people for centuries. Racism continues to be alive and well in this country and affects decisions personal and political. As a sociologist, Wilson (2015) indicated: One would be naïve to say that race is no longer a factor in American life. This talk about a post-racial society is silly. Race and racism continue to be foundational in American life. That is just part of the overall problem (para. 2).

What is known is that many decisions rest on "race," a concept that is without biological validity. The science of genetics offers no basis for separating people based on visible features but validates that all humans share genes at the rate of 99.9 percent. Racism, on the other hand, is real ascribing to grouping people based on physical appearance for discrimination (Perry, 2007). Black/African American parents need to be empowered, despite racism, to teach their children that they are loved and valuable in society when they are very young. This message is crucial for children's learning. Unfortunately, they may receive contrary reactions because of the color of their skin and all the attendant circumstances associated with race.

In addressing the central problem of empowering Black/African American parents with knowledge in the three critical knowledge areas, the following three prongs will delineate their importance.

Prong One: Knowledge of Early Childhood - Brain and Social-Emotional Development

Parenting is one of the most, if not the most challenging and vital, experiences to impact the human condition. The first critical knowledge area for parents emphasized brain and social-emotional development in the early childhood years. Research reveals those ages zero to three are most important (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2016; Cherry, 2018; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Parents who know what child development includes in those early years better grasp a child's wellness. Parents must consider the effect of interdependent skills in children, such as sensorimotor, cognitive-language, and social-emotional functioning. They depend on a children's physical well-being, family context, and more extensive social network (Engle & Black, 2008).

It is interesting to observe children's behavior as they develop. If the child does not fit expectations based on research, parents may become concerned, especially if they are knowledgeable about developmental milestones. Knowledge of child developmental milestones will assist parents in being proactive in addressing perceived concerns by seeking medical and psychological attention for the child if indicated.

Research emphasizes that a child's development in the first three years "gives the child a greater chance of growing up emotionally healthy, happy, secure, and resilient" (Komisar, 2017, p. 32). Mothers must be present in the first three years of a child's life because of the emotional and physical presence vital to the child's growth. Mothers are to be there for their children. Parents must learn how their earliest relationships with a child can influence healthy brain development and social and emotional skills. Parents' education programs must focus on sharing

with Black/African American parents marginalized by racism in American society. The imperative is for Black/African American parents to recognize and understand their critical role in their children's development and be empowered to make a difference in their children's lives by being ever-present.

The loss of the extended family to the Black/African American family unit left single mothers feeling isolated and alone, thereby negatively impacting parent efforts in Black/African American families. This loss further emphasizes the importance of child development in Black/African American parenting. Black/African American families valued extended family and community networks, educational pursuits, and religious and spiritual support. They confirmed the oppressiveness and related disparities under which racial minorities and women lived in the United States (Thomas, 2000). Extended families were relatively common in Black/African American communities and aided in children's social-emotional development. Children had multiple adults to look after and rear them. The dismantling of the extended families left a void of uniqueness in the Black/African American experience. As Marion Wright Edelman (1992) stated: The adults in our churches and communities made children feel valued and important. They took the time and paid attention to us. They struggled to find ways to keep us busy. And while life was hard and resources scarce, we always knew who we were, and the measure of our worth was inside our heads and hearts and not outside in our possessions and on our backs. (p. 5)

The connection between parents or parent surrogates and children supports the learning process spoken and revealed through behavior. Adult attitudes and behavior influence and affect

the attitudes of children. Regardless of the parents' circumstances, they have significant responsibilities to ensure healthy and well-adjusted children.

The prophetic voice of the courageous novelist, essayist, and civil rights activist James Baldwin (1961) said, "Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them" (p. 73). As a Black/African American, Baldwin's voice continues to garner respect and impacts intellectual thought. This statement speaks volumes to the reason that supports the need for further research on strengthening the parental role to assist young Black/African American children in navigating systems that can often dehumanize them.

Prong Two: Knowledge of the Rich History and Cultural Contributions of Black/African Americans to the Development of this Country

With knowledge, one gains power. The second area of this dissertation suggests delivering through parent education programs focused on knowledge of Black/African Americans' rich history and cultural identity of Black/African Americans to strengthen the sense of self in Black/African American parents and children. Carter G. Woodson, known as the father of Negro History Week, which is now known as Black History Month, helped all Americans know the past contributions of Black/African Americans to this country's development. Unfortunately, textbooks and lessons taught in schools across this nation omit Black/African American peoples' contributions (Woodson, 1933).

Lonnie Bunch, Founding Director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., argues: "There is no more powerful force than a people steeped in their history. And there is no higher cause than honoring our struggle and ancestors by remembering" (para. 3). Therefore, the search to identify parent education

programs that include in their focus curricula of historical knowledge and cultural values that emphasize education related to the Black/African American experiences in this country is necessary. Parents and children must know the contributions made by Black/African American people that assisted in developing and building this country which will add to their pride and self-aggrandizement. Parents can pass on this sense of self to their children.

The discussion of the importance of knowing Black/African American history continues due to the omission of vital records in the story of America. This struggle for truth and recognition has been an ongoing conversation with Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. DuBois, who pushed for justice regarding educating Black/African American children after their observation of school systems. The school systems in the country districts of the South is a disgrace and, in few towns and cities are the Negro schools what they ought to be. We want the national government to step in and wipe out illiteracy in the South. Either the United States will destroy ignorance, or ignorance will destroy the United States. Education is the development of power and ideal. We want our children trained as intelligent human beings should be. We will fight for all time against any proposal to educate Black/African American boys and girls simply as servants and underlings or simply for other people's use. They have a right to know, think, and aspire (Webb-Johnson & Rochon, 2005, para. 1).

It is the right to an education of truth that all children should have. There is no good reason to continue to hide contributions that have been made by Black/African American people and those made by other people. To know true history only serves to strengthen a person's sense of self. The value of prong two calls to consciousness the necessity to assist Black/African American parents in knowing their history and culture. The knowledge gained can be passed on

to their children. The power of knowledge comes from many directions, not confined to schools. DuBois stated, "We want our children educated" (Webb-Johnson & Rochon, 2005, para.1).

Prong Three: Knowledge of Strategies for Parents in Preparation to Assist Black/African American Children Navigate Through Systemic Racism

Parenting is important because it serves to buffer children against adversities (DePouw, 2018). It is paramount to ensure that Black/African American parents are equipped with strategies to impart knowledge to their children regarding navigating through systemic racism they will undoubtedly face. Studies indicate that the lives of children are traumatized by racism categorized as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). The effects of ACE could result in health issues, i.e., heart disease, cancer, that may not reveal themselves until a person is older. The factors of discrimination, bullying, and verbal or physical violence are added to the screening tool for ACE because they also increase the risk for toxic stress in children and youth (Burke-Harris, 2018). The adversity of a hostile culture that in every avenue speaks to the "less thanness" of the child is also an essential factor that Black/African American parents must help children buffer. It is not only the internal adversities but external adversities that are just as devastating. It is the responsibility of adults to protect and nurture children, not to collect this emotional baggage to carry into their psyches for life.

In focusing on Black/African American parenting, some distinctions to be made reveal challenges for these parents that create the need for survival strategies that may not necessarily be challenges for parents of other racial and ethnic groups. One significant distinction is the emotion of fear. Fear prevalent in the Black/African American experience is based on the reality that, at any time, because of skin color, a White person may react negatively, without cause, to

seeing a Black/African American person. The reaction makes Black/African Americans fear that they will be victims in some way that may include death. As a result, Black/African American parents often find it necessary to prepare their children for experiences that they will face in a society inherently oppressive because of their racial identity.

Fear punctuated this dissertation. Stacey Patton's (2017) book, *Spare the Kids: Why Whipping Children Won't Save Black America*, gives an example. She provides a reason for how Black/African American parenting differs from other ethnic groups seeking to protect their children. Fear leads to an authoritarian approach that many Black/African American parents exhibit through spankings or "whuppings," expected in the Black/African American community.

These beatings were born of a fear that if, as a Black parent, you did not go to great lengths to teach your children their place, then some White person would someday do so with much more violence and far more severe consequences. Thus, the violence inflicted by Black parents on their children was born out of both love and a deep, abiding fear for that child's ability to survive the American caste system that devalues Black life. And while some may associate the need for such tough love with the conditions of slavery or the Jim Crow era, many Black families understand that caste system and the risks inherent to it survive to this day (McCain, 2019, p. 41).

Other strategies focused on practical methods, including conversations designed to help children understand what was crucial to their survival. Those strategies intend to teach resilience and instill pride and values around compassion and love. Programs for parent education provide resources for parents to access and for institutions to reference as they designed programs to support child development from infancy to adolescence. It is collective efforts that will bring

solutions to problems addressing Black/African American parent empowerment. When Black/African American parents strengthen their resolve to create a world where Black/African American children will realize a society where they belong, their contribution will be notable.

In summary, the well-being of children is critically important. All people have a responsibility to help ensure that the well-being of children is of utmost importance. What is poured into them will be returned to the world in many ways. Just as the Maasai tribe expresses its concern about children in their daily greeting, that same concern should be in the spirit of people everywhere. The 2016 study by DePouw and Matias emphasizes this requirement: We as parents must continue to protect our children regardless of the oppressive state of society. The focus is twofold: We must continue our struggle to affirm and maintain our humanity and our children under a racist state and its institutions. We work to avoid uncritical investment in solutions that rely on idealistic "change of heart" or interpersonal colorblindness as the key to ending institutional racism and White supremacy (p. 240).

At the root of this struggle is what Matias and Allen (2013) call a "humanizing love," in which "those involved in personal or collective relationships give love to foster mutual growth and healing of one another depending on their respective relational needs within traumatizing systems of oppression" (p. 286). "Our love for our children is not only personal, but also connective to collective persistence, resistance, and growth" (DePouw & Matias, 2016, p. 241).

This doctoral dissertation was to lift the consciousness of all people, especially Black/African American parents, regarding their role in helping young children develop in ways that will aid their survival in a world that is not always kind or accepting of them. Parents and children will benefit when they are provided knowledge in three areas: child development in the

early years, zero to three years old; the rich history and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans; and practical strategies to combat inequalities inherent in American society.

Goals of the Study

This study's primary goal was to identify practical components of parent education programs that included three primary foci projected to assist Black/African American parents in raising their children to be confident in facing systems of inequality.

Specific goals of the study include:

- Presenting a clear account of why the early years, ages zero to three years old, of a child's life are critically important to development and learning.
- Fortifying the self-image of Black/African American people by presenting historical accounts of contributions that continue to have a sustaining impact on this country's development.
- Highlighting strategies for parents to implement, giving them a voice in conversations to determine what will best prepare their children for the overtness and covertness of systemic racism.

Application of Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) was the interpretive framework for this study with its subset, Critical Race Parenting (CRP or ParentCrit). This researcher's conjecture was by identifying the impact of Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Parenting, which engages both parent and child in the process of teaching and learning about race and racism, they would better ensure that conversations regarding race and racism would not get obscured as if they do not exist.

Furthermore, CRT needed to be embedded and applied to recognize and understand how inequalities in American society befell children of color, especially Black/African American children, to avoid repeating omissions in the future.

CRT has been applied to social science research but was developed for studies in law. Inniss (2012) explains, "first, CRT was developed to address the extent to which Critical Legal Studies (CLS), despite its goal of challenging the hegemony of mainstream thought, failed to give a sufficient account of the role that race played in mainstream formulations" (p. 70). Second, although CRT was a theory introduced in education through a legal scholarship movement, it has morphed into the social sciences to describe inequities that impact human behavior in its social and cultural aspects. Ladson-Billings (1998), who introduced CRT to the field of education, explained that "critical race theory begins with the notion that racism is normal in American society" (p. 7). With the belief that racism is foundational for oppression through systems in this nation, it is the backdrop that necessitates assisting Black/African American parents in obtaining strategies to aid their young children as they navigate through these systems that embrace racism, whether overtly or covertly (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Taylor (1998) quotes philosopher, political activist, author, and social critic, Cornell West as saying, "critical race theory compels us to confront the most explosive issue in American civilization critically: the historical centrality and complicity of law in upholding White supremacy" (p. 122). This compulsion influenced a pedagogical process termed Critical Race Parenting (CRP), which is applicable as an identifiable strategy engaging parents and children in learning how to deal with race and racism. This process Matias (2016a) states, "debunks dominant messages about race. And, in doing so, both parents and children have a deeper

commitment to racial realism that does not allow for colorblind rhetoric to reign supreme"(p. 32).

Central Research Questions and Supporting Research Questions

Baldwin's suggestion that parents must improve their parenting practices so that children do not imitate negative images assisted in determining this section of the research.

Therefore, the central research question for this study was:

- How will Black/African American parents be strengthened in parenting knowledge by receiving information through parent education programs emphasizing child development with foci on brain development; historical and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans to the development of this country; and learning strategies to assist them in guiding their children in overcoming adversities of systemic racism?
- What strategies will Black/African American parents need to help them with implementation to protect their children from mental and emotional harm as they journey through life in a society that is not always welcoming to those who are non-White?

In addition to the central research questions, the researcher addressed these supporting research questions as they corroborate findings and development of effective strategies:

- Does understanding the stages of child development enhance Black/African American parents' resolve to be the best parents for their children?
- Does a strong sense of self result from knowing one's history and culture?

- Will Black/African American parents with a strong sense of self influence their children's strong sense of self by providing strategies to combat racial inequalities?
- Will the strategies presented to Black/African American parents assist them in alleviating fear in their efforts to protect their children's survival as they face systemic racism?

Relevance and Importance of the Study

If opening the conversation about race and racism will allay fears that have prevented people, seasoned and young, from discussing and addressing these issues head-on, this doctoral dissertation will have accomplished its mission and given added knowledge to what it is to be human. This study opens a forum for meaningful dialogue with evidence-based results to give Black/African American parents an avenue to accept new and additional information about themselves. And child development theories, history and culture, and strategies to guide their children in facing systems of inequality. The evidence of parents' willingness to enhance their knowledge in support of their children will be when parents accept the opportunities to learn through seminars, participation in discussions in schools, churches, hospitals, early learning centers, and wherever parents enter learning spaces made available to them.

The study aimed to assist Black/African American parents, mothers, fathers, and those who care about children and their future. Parents, by their role, are expected to prepare young children for a journey that is not always smooth as they will experience what it is to be human. The complexity of parenting for people of color, especially Black/African American families, has many layers that research must unravel. Knowledge and preparation are essential to ensure

that parent's empowerment assists their children in knowing how to mediate situations in a nonconfrontational manner.

The expectation was that this research provided information to prepare parents to raise children in today's world successfully. Information to be shared through seminars will be cathartic as it will help parents understand they are not alone in the struggle to be the best parents they can be. The hope is that the collective consciousness of those who mother and father will bring a new sense of what it means to be a Black/African American parent in these critical times.

The topic is relevant to help save the lives of Black/African American children so that they may expect the bright futures they deserve. Information from experts in early childhood development, both historical and contemporary, is sought. They have a platform to provide knowledge about the importance of early childhood development should not live with verbal regrets like T. Berry Brazelton admitted. Brazelton, the Harvard-trained pediatrician and well-regarded authority on child development through his programs, Touchpoints©, acknowledged that neither he nor eighty-two-year-old Benjamin Spock nor any of the other most-cited experts, still referenced today, spoke of poor people. I wish we did; he says. But the poor in this country don't have enough self-image left even to know what they want to do for their children. It's been taken away from them. There is absolutely no feeling of importance. Therefore, many of the findings apply primarily to White middle-class families (Berry, 1993, p. 29).

Comments like Brazelton's, regardless of how many years ago made, compelled this researcher to ensure that poor people, mainly people of color, are provided knowledge that will assist them in understanding how they make critical impacts on the development of children.

Action to save children is a must. Without positive action, children may perish, and their demise will be because those who could have done something remained silent and did not act.

Research Design Approach

This doctoral dissertation utilized the qualitative meta-synthesis approach to generate a theory regarding effective programs that may assist Black/African American parents and families in navigating systemic racism. The studies sourced several disciplines, including sociology, psychology, history, science, and education, in context with the interdisciplinary emphasis of liberal studies. Finfgeld-Connett (2018) asserts that meta-synthesis as the umbrella methodology generated theories that "have the potential to guide decision-making and action in real-world situations" (p.1). There are several research types of meta-synthesis, including meta-ethnography, meta-study, and qualitative research synthesis. Meta-ethnography best describes this doctoral dissertation with the goal of "synthesizing qualitative findings across investigations to create new holistic interpretations" (p. 2).

An outcome of the research was to advocate for parent education programs to address Black/African Americans, including the three prongs of knowledge discussed in this research. The belief that these three areas give a valuable knowledge base for Black/African American parents. Without this knowledge, parents may experience a deficit in what could be critical to developing children to be self-assured and confident in who they are. They live in a world that too often presents obstacles to their being.

Qualitative meta-synthesis provided an opportunity to "integrate findings across qualitative studies to discover patterns and common threads within a specific topic or issue"

(Erwin et al., 2011, p. 186). The rationales for utilizing qualitative meta-synthesis with a specific focus on meta-ethnography include:

- Increased interest and application of qualitative research over the past decades,
- qualitative meta-synthesis allowed for a broader approach to evidence-based research, practice, and policy by expanding how knowledge can generate for use,
- movement from knowledge generation to knowledge application had become even more complicated with growing overloads of information requiring new ways of managing and making sense of an explosion of research findings.

As such, qualitative meta-synthesis is not "an assimilated literature review," but rather as "an interpretation of the findings of selective studies" where researchers were "actively engaged in complex and in-depth analysis and interpretation of data" (p. 188).

Study Delimitations

The following delimitations made by the researcher and provided boundaries for this study:

- The study focused on Black/African American parents in the wake of many Black/African American children's lives lost to police brutality in the United States of America. The loss of Black/African American lives due to police brutality is the reality that started the movement, #BlackLivesMatter (Taylor, 2018). Whereas police brutality directed toward Black/African Americans is real, this dissertation will not delve into the pathology of this reality.

- The study focused on Black/African American mothers as the primary care provider to young children.
- The study focused on urban communities to address a larger group of Black/African American families to apply to American urban families to transfer to smaller communities.
- The primary focus was on research within the last twenty years, with scholarly references relevant to the topic written in years before the twenty-year mark.
- The focus was on providing resources and not written curricula for the history and culture of Black/African American Americans.
- The focus suggested that early learning centers would be one venue to provide the three prongs of knowledge to assist Black/African American parents.

Target Audience

The target audience was Black/African American parents, emphasizing mothers, whether biological or assuming parenthood by other means. Parents included single parents, traditional parents, non-binary parents, LGBTQ parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, and foster parents.

The study involved searching for parent education programs that specifically focused on expanding the knowledge of Black/African American parents. Projected that if program outcomes were effective for Black/African American parents, other groups representing multi-ethnicities would also benefit from the knowledge. What was clear was the need to identify effective strategies that address issues that are realities in today's world that cause Black/African American parents and children concern. The resources found provided information for

developing or lifting strategies to be cataloged to assist Black/African American parents. They talk to their children to allay fears that they might experience by hearing and observing their inequality-related actions. It is difficult to shelter children from the harsh realities faced daily but preparing them is paramount.

Also included in the targeted audience were those involved by their position as members of a race that is not Black/African American but subsumed in the oppressive race. That group may not have been directly a participant in creating racial tension for Black/African American people, but they know that actions and words from their race can be harmful. Having them exposed to this study should foster awareness about the outgrowth of racism and its effects. Knowledge is power, and knowledge leads to action that may aid conversations toward solutions.

Operational Definitions

The following operational definitions were adopted and provided explanations applicable to this study.

African American – refers to an ethnic group of Americans with total or partial ancestry from any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It typically refers to descendants of enslaved Black people who are from the United States. Thus, the term reflects their origin in the African continent and their history of the American continent (Simms, 2018).

Black/African American – refers to people who are Black and African American. It is a term that conjoins the two to make it more supportive of both descriptions.

Black People – refer to people who are racially classified based on dark skin color. They may come from various geographical locations throughout the world, including SubSaharan Africa, the indigenous people of Oceania, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, Europe, the Caribbean, etc. It is a more inclusive term to describe the collective experiences of the U.S. population (Simms, 2018).

Critical Race Parenting – supports more historically situated, contextual, and complex engagements with the interplay between race and parenting children of color (DePouw & Matias, 2016).

Critical Race Theory - recognizes that institutional and systemic racism embeds in the fabric and system of American society. It is an intellectual movement that seeks to understand how White supremacy is reproduced and maintained in legal, cultural, social, educational, and political systems in the United States. CRT not only seeks to understand race and racism but

also how to remedy its effects. CRT is the analytical lens used in examining existing power structures. CRT identifies that these power structures are based on White privilege and White supremacy, perpetuating the marginalization of people of color (De La Garza & Ono, 2016).

Fathering – is a male parent who has raised a child specifically through skills and activities involved in being an active and caring father.

Inequality - infringement upon fundamental freedoms by a cultural context of class, race, and gender disparities impacts the global movement toward equality in human relations (Bank, 2007).

Marginalized – is both a condition and a process that prevents individuals and groups from full participation in social, economic, and political life enjoyed by the wider society (Alakhunova et al., 2015). Treating someone or something as if it is not of value or not important. It is making a person or group powerless in an unfair way.

Mothering – often in the Black/African American community, some step in as mothers.

Mothering provides immediate or additional support to children because nurturing or protective behavior is reminiscent of what a literal mother would perform (Collins, 1987).

Nigrescence – the process of becoming Black/African American through a racial identity model (Cross, 1991).

Parenting – includes any person or persons who support raising a child or children. It is inclusive of biological parents, especially mothers, but not limited to those who gave birth.

Parenting practices worldwide share three primary goals: ensuring children's health and safety,

preparing children for life as productive adults, and transmitting cultural values (Kazdin, 2000). These responsibilities can begin a birth or any time during the child's development.

Race – is a social construct without biological meaning. The modern definition of the term race concerning humans began to emerge in the 17th century. Since then, it has had a variety of purposes in the language of the Western world. However, what most definitions have in common is an attempt to categorize people by their physical differences. For example, in the United States, the term race generally refers to a group of people who have in common some visible physical traits, such as skin color, hair texture, facial features, and eye formation (Wade et al., 2020).

Racism - is often interpreted by various groups to suggest that anyone can be racist, including the group on which racism targets, i.e., African Americans, Latinos, etc. For this study, the definition centered on a meaning that focused on those who have grabbed power and determining control for their excellence, i.e., White people who consider themselves as the majority group to subordinate others based on what is known as race. The working definition used in this study combines several scholars' definitions. Racism is any action or attitude, conscious or unconscious, that subordinates an individual or group based on skin color or race. It can enact individually or institutionally.

Racism is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call 'race') that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resource (Jones et al., 2008).

Systemic racism – includes the complex array of antiblack practices, the unjustly gained political-economic power of whites, the continuing economic and other resource inequalities along racial lines, and the white racist ideologies and attitudes created to maintain and rationalize white privilege and power. *Systemic* here means that the core racist realities manifest in each of society's major parts [...]. Each major component of U.S. society—the economy, politics, education, religion, the family— reflects the fundamental reality of systemic racism (Feagin, 2006, p. 32).

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

The improvement of life for children who are Black/African Americans was the goal of this research and sharing findings to support that improvement will occur when Black/African American parents provide knowledge to assist in empowering them to be effective in their role as parents. Essential knowledge for parents to understand in becoming effective in their roles includes knowledge of mothers as parents. Additionally, knowledge of child development emphasizes brain and social-emotional development; knowledge of historical and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans in developing America; and knowledge of strategies implemented by parents for the survival of Black/African American children have an impact.

In reviewing these topics, they affect Black/African American parenting, the Critical Race Theory (CRT) theoretical framework, and the supporting theory of Critical Race Parenting (CRP or ParentCrit) tested the topics raised. It was imperative to track whether research provided Black/African American parenting information to ensure that there was a standard for Black/African American parents that may be recognized and appreciated to educate toward self-aggrandizement as they raise their children. Studies on Black/African Americans juxtaposed to studies based on White middle-class Americans as the norm served to emphasize structural inequality in America.

Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Parenting

An overview of Critical Race Theory (CRT) contextualized the theoretical framework for reviewing sources identified in discussing Black/African American parents, especially Black/African American mothers, and their relationship with their children. Ladson-Billings and Tate, in their 1995 article, "Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education," provided the foundation for arguments regarding the impact of White normativity on educational institutions, the use of education as an instrument of White supremacy, and the role of race in the social and political structures of American society. For society to attempt to mute Black/African American parents' voices, their ability to have the education needed to enhance their knowledge of themselves and their role in child development is compromised. In developing parent education programs for Black/African American parents, their voice is encouraged and sought. CRT uses voice or "naming your reality" to ensure that the parent's perspective is heard and understood (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Bell (1993), one of the seminal scholars of CRT, encouraged that Black/African Americans should not disown their racial status but accept it realistically; thus, he called it the "racial realism theory" (pp. 98-99). His argument moved toward getting the subordinate status because, in America, Black/African Americans will have difficulty combating the power of White supremacy that has gripped this country (Curry, 2008). Although Bell's point regarding "racial realism" cannot be ignored in the context of repeated mistreatment of Black/African Americans in this country, it does not prevent highlighting race and racism when presented or when they appeared in studies. CRT scrutinizes the multiple ways ethnic minorities are affected by race and racism directly and indirectly (Yosso, 2005). Essentially, CRT is how to identify the functions of racism as an institutional and systematic phenomenon (Parker & Lynn, 2002; Stovall, 2005), emphasizing three primary objectives: (1) to give voice to people of color

in telling their stories about discrimination; (2) to make a case for eradication of racial subjugation through acknowledging that race is a social construct; and (3) to highlight other matters of dissimilarity that have resulted in injustices experienced by communities due to sexuality and class (Parker & Lynn, 2002). The objectives of CRT also highlight other matters that create injustices related to the intersectionality of race, gender, and class.

Critical Race Parenting (CRP or ParentCrit) has positioned parents more broadly toward eliminating all forms of oppression (DePouw, 2018). ParentCrit is deeply rooted in a commitment to racial realism and social justice (DePouw & Matias, 2016). It draws from the experiences, knowledge base, values, and behaviorism of families and communities of color (DePouw & Matias, 2016; Matias, 2016a). Through studies where both parent and child are engaged in teaching and learning about race, they are fortified not to be objectified. The outcome sought through this dissertation highlight strategy that advocates including learning environments to foster parent and child communication regarding race and racism and how they impact their lives.

The literature review centered around three prongs that included the knowledge areas identified to empower Black/African American parents in assisting their young children in navigating systems of inequalities in America. These three prongs were:

1. Knowledge of the importance of the brain and social-emotional development of young children ages zero to three.
2. Knowledge of contributions of Black/African Americans past and present development of this country.
3. Knowledge of effective strategies for Black/African American parents to assist them in preparing their children to face a world that does not always value their humanity.

Although each prong links to the other, they were reviewed separately with some cross connection to emphasize the importance of tying them together to gain parental empowerment.

Prong One: Knowledge of Early Childhood - Brain and Social-Emotional Development

Discussion of the first prong provides three specific points to assist Black/African American parents' understanding regarding child development in those early ages. Although there are many factors to consider, this researcher chose to highlight a few that were most impactful to Black/African American parents as they develop a relationship with their young children.

1. In Black/African American families, some challenges need to be recognized as influencers in understanding child development.
2. In Black/African American families, parenting is more often the role of the mother, as revealed by demographic data.
3. In Black/African American families, providing information on the importance of brain social-emotional development at an early age is critical and impactful to understanding behavior and life-long influences.

Challenges Faced by Black/African American Parents

Although parenting is one of the most challenging opportunities a person can experience, it is one of the most important. The importance centers on ensuring that children have every chance to develop physically, emotionally, safely, and in an environment that will be productive and positively filled with love, care, and sensitivity. Black/African American parents, especially Black/African American single mothers, are stigmatized by demographic data. Data indicates

that raising children alone as a family unit will make them dysfunctional (McLanahan & Percheski, 2008).

History shares the model, created during the industrialization period, of a two-parent family with the father as breadwinner and the mother as a homemaker. After enslavement, Black/African American people were in slavery when the model of the family ideology emerged. With their legal status as property untenable, Black/African American families were under the control of the slave owner to conform to the cultural ideal of the family. The slave owners decided who could marry, when they could marry, their roles in the family, and control the slaves' children (Blassingame, 1972). What was central in slavery was female-centered families and the mother-child relationship. Families equated as a mother and her children. Having children and raising them was demanding and demeaning, but children were valued and loved by their parents (Blassingame, 1972). After slavery, the newly freed Black/African Americans sought to emulate the family and gender roles they witnessed of Whites. Now free, they could choose who to marry, and the two-parent nuclear family became more of the norm (Gutman, 1976). The role of the breadwinner was a challenge to a strict two-parent family. Too often, Black/African American men could not find jobs to pay family wages allowing them to support their families. Without the male, it created the need to continue the role of the Black/African American women as being critical to the survival of the family (Burgess, 1995).

Today the scenario continues as a challenge supplemented by Black/African American men not being available due to what continues to be the racial caste system. Michelle Alexander (2010), in her book, *The New Jim Crow*, provides some sobering facts that focus on today's system that replaced the design of the Jim Crow era that lasted approximately 100 years

from 1865 to 1968. Some of the facts cited in her work speak to the absence of Black/African American men is summarized:

- The number of Black/African American adults under some form of correctional control exceeded the number enslaved in 1850, ten years before the Civil War ensued.
- The Fifteenth Amendment ratified in 1870 prohibited laws that denied the right to vote. During the Jim Crow era, post-Civil War until 1968, Black/African Americans were denied voting rights through poll taxes and literacy tests. Today more Black/African American men are disenfranchised than in 1870 through felon disenfranchisement laws used to accomplish what poll taxes and literacy tests ultimately could not.
- In large urban areas of the United States, most working-age Black/African American men have criminal records.

Alexander (2010) states that those with criminal records, often cycle in and out of prisons today, are part of the undercaste – not the class, caste – a group of people, defined mainly by race, who are relegated to permanent second-class status by law. They are denied the right to vote, and they are automatically excluded from jury duty. Further, they are legally discriminated against in employment, housing, access to education, and public benefits, much as their grandparents and great-grandparents were during the Jim Crow era (Alexander, 2010).

These facts continue to challenge Black/African American men who are not available for the family model they tried to replicate after slavery. It impacts the family unit, but it is the situation that adds to the cause of family identification being mothers with children.

Black/African American parents, specifically mothers, face critical economic, parental, and community resources. The loss of resources affects cognitive development and future opportunities. Parents' responsibility for ensuring children have options for positive action centers on the understanding that they are valued. Too often, the self-esteem of the child reflects the self-esteem of the mother. Mother and child must understand their importance. Social psychologist William Cross (1991) offers the theory of racial identity development. In his model, he refers to it as the psychology of *nigrescence*, or the psychology of becoming Black/African American. Black/African American parents must assist children in accepting themselves in a world where race is still deciding their treatment. Children must be able to function in two worlds. It goes back to what DuBois (1903) called "double-consciousness," as stated in his seminal work, *The Souls of Black Folk*.

The Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world, - a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder (p. 9).

This sense of self may be one of the most significant challenges in raising a Black/African American child in America. Black/African Americans have survived enslavement, slavery, Jim Crow, and there is still race and racism in America that courses

through the politics and policies affecting Black/African American lives (E. Taylor, 2018).

Black/African American parents must continue in the struggle to ensure that their children can exist and thrive in a society that continues to profile them as “others” and not fully accepting of who they are as human beings who belong because they are human beings.

Although additional research is needed, there is an increased interest in understanding Black/African American parenting which is crucial to determining ways to assist parents in gaining critical knowledge about the development of their children. What is known is Black/African American parents, like all parents, want to be the best they can be for their children. Understanding that parenting is not easy; therefore, imparting knowledge about critical stages of development in children’s lives and providing this information to parents will assist them in being better prepared. Knowledge will influence parents' decisions regarding their children’s physical, emotional and social development at the critical stages of children’s development. The challenge of assisting children in navigating through race-based thinking that is pervasive in this country depends on teaching children to value themselves because of the richness of their history and culture. Parents must lead the way.

Demographics Affecting Black/African American Parents and the Single Mother

Demographics do not dictate destiny; attitudes, leadership, and values do.

-Marion Wright Edelman, Children’s Defense Fund

There is saying the mother is the child’s first teacher. Hearing and learning from parents is critical when the children are raised in single-parent households that females most likely head. The focus on single Black/African American parents, especially mothers, was supported by data provided by the Pew Research Center in their 2017 analysis which indicates that one-third of today’s children are living with an unmarried parent. Livingston’s 2018 study reveals single-

parent households had increased from 13% in 1968 to 32% in 2017. Of those households, 58% of Black/African American children live in single-parent homes, with 47% with solo moms. The breakdown of other ethnic groups studied help keep the change in parenthood in perspective: 36% of Hispanic children live with an unmarried parent; 24% of White children live in single parent homes; 13% of Asian children live in single-parent homes. The implication for economic situations is tremendous, and it impacts the resources available to children for health, shelter, education, and their future.

The proliferation of single-parent households, especially households where children have never had a father present, is a significant contributor to the growth in inequality in childhood environments (McLanahan et al., 2013). What is trending is the growing interest that fathers who live in the home participate more in their children's lives (Livingston & Parker, 2019). While fathers' participation is encouraging, the fact remains that more and more children are growing up without a father in the home. Data analyzed by the Pew Research Center from 2010 - 2018 for 130 countries and territories worldwide indicate that the United States ranks highest in having children living in single-parent households (Kramer, 2019). Children living in single parent households is significant and strongly correlates with child poverty. As a group, documentation reveals that children of single parents are less likely to succeed in life than children from stable two-parent households and are impacted mainly by less income (McLanahan & Percheski, 2008). A household's economic status helps to define the child's family dynamics. An analysis of the living arrangement found that 30% of solo mothers and their families live in poverty. Poverty affects 17% of families of lone fathers compared to 55% of solo mothers (Livingston, 2018). The evidence of poverty and the gaps in the overall success of Black/African American children to other groups has elevated the need for focus on early

child development for Black/African American children. This evidence and the evidence that gaps in advantage are growing across generations has prompted the increased interest in improving the early-life opportunities of disadvantaged children (Putnam, 2015). Those children considered poor are primarily among Black/African American and Latinx groups.

From 2005 to 2018, the U.S. Census data tracking poverty in Black/African American families presents a picture of how poverty affects family types. The data supports the prevalence of Black/African American mothers raising children as solo moms. Additionally, the data show that Black/African American child poverty is higher than any group, even when child poverty rates in the U.S. are the third largest in the world.

Poverty rates for Black/African American families show variances based on the family type. According to the U.S. Census Bureau ACS study revealed through Black Demographics (2013 - 2017), Black/African American families show 23% of all Black/African American families live below the poverty level. Within that 23%, 7% of married couples are impoverished, while 31% of families headed by single Black/African American women live below the poverty line. Black/African American families headed by single women with children under 18 years of age have the highest poverty rates at 39%. The statistic is significant, with more than 55% of all Black/African American families headed by single women.

It is increasingly important to study parenting among Blacks/African Americans and other ethnic groups because demographic studies also reveal their rising numbers. The ethnic groups once considered minorities, in a few years, will be the majority group (Craig & Richeson, 2014; Ortiz & Jani, 2010). Demographic data indicate that non-White youth will soon reach the majority because their numbers are growing exponentially over White youth. Demographer Frey's 2018 analysis confirms the projection that the nation will become

“minority White” in 2045 (Frey, 2018). The forecast reveals that Whites will comprise 49.7 percent of the population in contrast to 24.6 percent for Hispanics, 13.1 percent for Black/African Americans, 7.9 percent for Asians, and 3.8 percent for multiracial people. Some may ask why this population change? What is forecasted is the combined racial minority population between 2018 and 2060 to be at 74 percent.

Additionally, the aging White population will have modest gain through 2024 and then a decline through 2060, based on more deaths than births which charted to show the annual growth rate of these population changes. These changes will impact raising children. The family composition will reflect children’s standards.

Parents are categorized differently because the composition of families has changed and continues to evolve. Parents identify as any person or persons who support raising a child or children. It includes biological parents, especially birth mothers and grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, adoptive parents, foster parents, neighbors, older siblings, etc. As referenced in the *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, parenting practices throughout the world are focused on three primary goals for their children: ensuring their health and safety, guiding children to be productive adults, and conveying cultural values (Kazdin, 2000). Regardless of the category of parents, their responsibilities are consistently the same. These responsibilities begin at birth or any time during the child’s development when a parent assumes them.

Population projections and family compositions matter in studying parenting because they are essential in increasing Black/African American parenting studies. The more knowledge gained about how Black/African American parents by information provided them regarding the critical cycles of growth that young children go through, the more likely parents will understand their role in stimulating the development of their children.

Most studies of early childhood and what has resulted through research have centered on the White middle-class and have made those findings the norm on which other ethnic groups are measured (Coll & Pachter, 2002). A study by Coll and Pachter indicates limitations to research strategies based on results referenced as normative. In their examination of changes in parenting practices of diverse populations, these researchers emphasize the importance of understanding the development of ethnically diverse children who represent an increasing percentage of the United States population. Critical race parenting theory would recognize this limitation of research on ethnic diversity as ignoring necessary unique conditions of Black/African American parents as fostering racism (Montoya & Sarcedo, 2018).

An example of a unique condition faced by Black/African American parents is discontinuity. Discontinuity is a struggle between Black/African American culture and social capital with mainstream culture and institutions. One example found in work by Delgado-Gaitan (1991) exemplified discontinuities between home and school that created negative interactions experienced by some minority parents with their children's school. Too often, Black/African American parents' discomfort regarding the reception they receive from school personnel continues to exist. Discontinuities are not just a matter of cultural, socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic differences, but it gins up as deficiencies and impact other consequences for Black/African American families in terms of opportunities, resources, and reinforcements for their success.

Significance of Understanding Brain Development in Early Ages

What should parents expect from their children during the first three years? The most rapid period of brain development is during the early years. During the period between conception and age three, a child's brain goes through remarkable changes. Newborn babies

have all the brain cells known as neurons that they will have throughout their lives. The brain will double in size in the first year, and by age three, it will have reached about 80 percent of its adult volume (Rakic, 2006). The connections between these cells are what make the brain work. It is the early childhood years that are crucial for making these connections. More importantly, connections of nerve cells or neurons known as synapses are formed faster during the early years. The brain creates more synapses than is needed between the ages of two and three, more than twice as many as it will have in adult life. A process known as synaptic pruning causes the elimination of synaptic connections beginning in early childhood (Huttenlocher, 2002).

Brain development in early childhood is crucially important and can have lasting effects throughout a lifetime. Positive experiences produce positive results, but neuroscientists can now identify patterns in brain activity associated with negative experiences that occur in early life (Lipina & Colombo, 2009). The period between conception to age three is critically essential to affect healthy brain development throughout a person's life (Fox et al., 2010). Black/African American parents need to have this knowledge and support in ensuring that their children have the attention to properly enhance cognitive gains that are important in setting the foundation for learning and success (Combs-Orme et al., 2013). The emphasis from a study of Black/African American mothers' knowledge about the first three years revealed that parenting education interventions might be better targeted and more effective when parents receive education about early brain development (Combs-Orme et al., 2013).

Information regarding experiences provided to children is vital in guiding exposures children receive. With this knowledge, parents can monitor themselves and interact with their children to help ensure that they shape the child's brain in the best possible way. Learning is also essential to aid in efforts to shield children who are in risk cautious situations. Drawing on

the demographic studies presented previously in this document gives attention to families where their living circumstances may cause them to be more predisposed to adverse treatments of children due to the tension created by their oppressed events.

Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)

In 1998, a report on the study of adverse childhood experiences, known as the ACE Study, was released in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. This study provided information on the linkage between childhood abuse and household dysfunction that led to causes of bad health outcomes, which led to death in adults. Between 1995 and 1997, data collected from 17,421 members of Kaiser health plan members participated in a study to understand how childhood experiences affected health. (Felitti et al., 1998). The screening survey questionnaire, provided by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, resulted in revealing the prevalence of adversity in childhood centering around abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction obtained from ten specific questions listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - What Is an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Score

An ACE score calculates the maltreatment or traumatic experiences a child may have based on ten categories. A person's ACE score can be determined using a screening survey as part of the original study conducted by the CDC and Kaiser-Permanente. It comprises ten questions asked to determine this score. For each "yes" answer, one point adds to the individual's score.

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often: swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? Or act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often: push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? Or ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

3. Did an adult or person at least five years older than you ever: touch or fondle you or have you sexually touched their body? Or attempt or have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?
4. Did you often or very often feel that: no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? Or your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
5. Did you often or very often feel that: you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? Or your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
7. Was your mother or stepmother: often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? Or sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? Or ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?
10. Did a household member go to prison?

These ten questions reflect the ten categories listed under broad categories of abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. The researchers' goal was to determine the level of exposure of patients to any of the ten categories before eighteen. An ACE score calculates the

maltreatment or traumatic experiences a child may have based on ten categories. The ACE scores correlated with health-risk behaviors and health outcomes. The study discovered that 67% of those studied had at least one class of ACE and 12.6% presented four or more ACE categories. The survey further found that the higher the ACE score, the greater the health risk (Burke-Harris, 2018; Felitti et al., 1998).

The ACE Study provides powerful reasons for assisting parents in helping to ensure a positive environment and experiences for their children because of the connection to behavioral or mental-health outcomes. It also reinforces how the adversities in childhood are risk factors for many of the most common and acute diseases in the world regardless of economic status, race, or access to health care. There is a connection between trauma in childhood and unsavory behavior in adulthood. In children, early signs of trauma are high rates of obesity and asthma (Burke-Harris, 2018).

To reinforce the need to provide as many positive experiences as possible for the very young child is essential knowledge for Black/African American parents regardless of the oppressive situations they may experience. Understanding what occurs in the brain during ages zero to three becomes critical information for parents, especially Black/African American parents. As stated in the report released by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Science and the Institute of Medicine in 2000, edited by Shonkoff & Phillips, early experiences affect the development of the brain. These scientists recognize the period of zero to three as a critical period in brain development. But it is highly problematic because the disproportionate attention given by Black/African American parents during these three years begins too late and ends too soon. Among the other notable findings, the report states an abundance of evidence provided by the behavioral and neurobiological sciences documenting a

wide range of environmental threats to the developing central nervous system. The threats are poor nutrition, specific infections, environmental toxins, drug exposures, chronic stress from abuse or neglect beginning early in the prenatal period that continues throughout the early childhood years and beyond. The period at the beginning of a child's life has many factors that influence it positively or negatively. Educating Black/African American parents on effects on the brain helps provide them with ways to ensure better their children's brains developed sufficiently for their present and future.

Construction of the brain is a process that begins before birth and continues through adulthood. References continue to show that scholars in the fields of child psychology, child development, and neuroscience provide research to support that children's brains develop mainly during the prenatal stage to age three (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2016). Prenatal and early childhood periods represent what is known as "critical and sensitive periods" of development. A "critical period" is when the presence or absence of an experience may result in irreversible changes and close at its end. A "sensitive period" is when the brain is exceptionally responsive to an environmental stimulus; however, its window does not close. It just gets smaller. Over a succession of "sensitive periods," the brain is developed. Each period is associated with the formation of specific circuits that are related to abilities. These are times of maximal neuroplasticity when the brain can rewire or reorganize itself in response to stimuli (Nelson & Gabard-Durham, 2020). As an example, language development in children is more accessible during the sensitive period. Parents must assume a pivotal role in providing appropriate stimuli to help ensure sound brain development (Ettinger et al., 2018).

Black/African American parents need reinforcement in their knowledge of actual thresholds anticipated as the child grows. During the critical years up to age three, parents must

focus on essential activities to sharpening and strengthening the child's brains. Additionally, in social-emotional development, it is also critical that parents provide a sound foundation for the child as they continue to develop and grow (Ettinger et al., 2018). Early experiences create the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior, and physical and mental health (Burke-Harris, 2018). A strong foundation in the early years increases the probability of positive outcomes. The converse is true. If there is a weak foundation, it increases the chances of difficulties later in a person's life (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Evidence of the rapidity of change that children experience between zero and three continues to reinforce the need for parents to know what to expect from children and how parents are to assume responsibility in ensuring their preparation with emotional and intellectual intelligence to guide their children's development.

Eight Essential Factors Regarding Early Childhood Development

The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, in 2016, outlined *8 Things to Remember about Child Development* as essential factors to be mindful of as children develop.

Eight characteristics in summary are:

1. Infants and young children are adversely affected by significant stresses affecting their family and caregiving environments disrupting the brain that can last a lifetime.
2. The atmosphere of a child's development before and after birth provides a powerful experience that chemically modifies life outcomes that are not solely dependent on one's genes.
3. Children's attachments to parents are essential, but extensions to significant caregivers inside and outside the family are keenly crucial to the social and emotional developmental process.

4. A substantial part of brain architecture occurs during the first three years, especially seeing, hearing, and acquiring some emotional development. After year three, evolution does not stop higher-order functions; there is continued growth in adolescence and early adulthood.
5. Children experiencing severe neglect, health-wise and developmentally, are impacted just as physically abused and perhaps to a greater extent.
6. Children experiencing toxic stress or adversity are not doomed if they receive highly specialized interventions as early as possible by reliable and nurturing relationships with appropriate caregivers and receive appropriate treatments as needed to ensure no developmental delays better.
7. Children in dangerous situations should have their sense of safety, control, and expectations restored as soon as possible. However, removal does not reverse the impact of the negative experiences that will require therapeutic intervention.
8. Children are resilient and can overcome adversities not alone but with the interaction of supportive relationships.

According to a researcher, Cherry (2018), failure to act on the evidence of brain development during the ages zero to three will result in a crisis for families and ultimately for the nation. Everyday experiences with the human touch are most important in brain development. Experiences are essential to convey to Black/African American parents that children can thrive with loving, supportive adults. If the child does not receive encouragement, they will doubt their success (Cherry, 2018). Primary emotions from love and support are necessary for growth.

It is early brain development that gives the foundation for human adaptability and resilience. The experiences that a child goes through have the tremendous potential to affect brain development, influencing how the children will experience the rest of their life. Experiences have a mysterious connection to the child's chances for achievement, success, and happiness. This message is critically important to convey to parents as they prepare and go through these first years of a child's life. Their future is in the parents' hands.

Significance of Understanding Social-Emotional Development in Early Ages

It is equally vital for Black/African American parents to know how critical social-emotional development is during children's early years. Zero to Three, the nationally regarded early childhood organization, expanded on the definition of social-emotional development. The child can form relationships that give them a sense that they are loved, cared for, secure, safe, and permitted to experience and express emotions that may be adjusted as they explore and learn from interacting with those in their environment. In their early years, babies learn who they are by their treatment. Social-emotional development helps shape a child's skills for interacting with others and is critical for setting the stage for future academic and personal outcomes. It is crucial as children develop in areas that help them gain confidence and competence needed to develop relationships, solve problems, and cope with emotions (Denham & Brown, 2010; Denham, 2006; Konold & Pianta, 2005; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2000).

Research findings indicate that infants began to connect with people in their environment who care for them. They can recognize familiar voices and voice tones to facial expressions (Weissberg et al., 2015). The brain is designed for the newborn to make connections with people who take care of them. As the infant's brain matures through interaction with caregivers and the environment, they can communicate their emotions and needs to the adult to respond to those

needs. This communication pathway leads to learning through physical, cognitive, and emotional means. Emphasis on the significance of parenting is vital in influencing all areas of a child's social-emotional development. Early relationships lay the foundation for healthy or unhealthy brain development, impacting social-emotional development, affecting future learning and school performance (Combs-Orme et al., 2013).

Emotions are individual and are expressed differently by individuals depending on their reaction to what they are experiencing. Children need to develop and be permitted to speak various emotional responses to learning how to adjust to new situations and achieve their desired results. The positive outcome of this expression of emotion is a more prosperous social environment and a more satisfying relationship with those around the child.

There is the converse to positive social-emotional development. For those children not well-developed in this area, they are severely compromised. Children may reveal the compromise through their interactions or lack of interactions with others at an early age. Children who are lacking in social-emotional skills have challenges in school that often lead to failure. They are unable to make and keep friends, and they express negative feelings about themselves. They do not interact well with their peers. Research findings support those children from low socioeconomic circumstances are more likely to have negative social interactions upon entering pre-school. (Blair & Diamond, 2008; Herbert-Myers et al., 2006; Konold & Pianta, 2005). This critical skill is incumbent on parents to know the effects and increase their knowledge of ensuring that their children's social-emotional development is intact from a very early age.

Parents should be attentive to the way children express their social-emotional skills and competencies and how soon they reveal what they have acquired. In the study by Duran et al.,

(2009), many factors may affect how a child expresses their social-emotional status. Factors affecting the expression include: 1) environmental risk factors influenced by the safety, security, and positiveness of the child's living circumstance, including the care and resources available to the child, family, and the community, 2) the emotional health of the caregivers, especially the mother and behavior of others surrounding the child, and 3) the of the child's risk factors revealed through their temperament, developmental milestones, and physical health. Parents' awareness of these and other indicators of social-emotional development are vital in determining appropriate strategies to intervene to help improve in areas where the child needs support. Intervention can help enhance social-emotional skills and competencies if addressed early.

Five Core Social-Emotional Competencies Known as CASEL 5

One recognized source on social-emotional learning is Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). The CASEL 5 addresses five broad and interrelated areas of competence and highlights illustrative examples for each: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These are applicable in developmental stages from childhood to adulthood, and they transcend diverse communities. In referencing these five core competencies, they are helpful to parents as they seek to develop their children to have the skills and competencies necessary to ensure their future. Without question, the five core areas are among those essential for children's developmental success. In delineating what they mean to development, each one holds value and is necessary to what is needed to interact in relating to others:

1. Self-awareness offers children the ability to understand their own emotions, thoughts, and the value they can use to influence behaviors of self and others.

2. Self-awareness opens children's ability to understand others of diverse backgrounds, cultures, history, social traditions, and norms.
3. Self-management gives children the ability to manage themselves in different situations where emotions, thoughts, and behaviors impact achieving set goals and aspirations.
4. Relationship skills allow children to create and sustain healthy and supportive relationships among diverse individuals and groups to solve problems and negotiate cultural and social demands and opportunities to benefit those in need.
5. Responsible decision-making allows children to reach diverse situations to make decisions that reflect caring and constructive choices regarding personal behavior and social interactions.

With these five core competencies, it will be imperative for Black/African American parents to know what they mean to the development of young children throughout their growth. Developers of parent education programs should consider the inclusion of these five core competencies. Research indicates that evidence-based Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs are more effective when implemented in schools and homes (CASEL). The partnership between parents and learning venues leads to impactful social-emotional learning where the child benefits and the parent.

As Black/African American parents get immersed in a parenting program that emphasizes these core competencies, it will start grounding young children in skills essential for life as they move through social settings. In addition to the child's needs, through social-emotional learning, parents will have an opportunity to ensure better culturally responsive

education that is equitable and inclusive of incorporating the racial lens into social-emotional learning.

Robert Jagers, CASEL's vice president of research, emphasizes the importance of including the social construct of race and equity. He has labeled it *transformative social and emotional learning*. "The concept of transformative SEL is a means to better articulate the potential of SEL to mitigate the education, social, and economic inequities that derive from the interrelated legacies of racialized cultural oppression in the United States and globally" (Jagers et al., 2019, p. 3). Through this process SEL researchers and practitioners are addressing issues of "power, privilege, prejudice, discrimination, social justice, empowerment, and self-determination" (Jagers et al., p. 3). The push is toward closing the gaps in understanding how to advance optimal academic, social, emotional competence development of all children and adults from diverse backgrounds and circumstances to contribute to a more equitable learning experience and outcome for all. Learning institutions should engage Black/African American parents in gaining knowledge of the significance of social-emotional development and being involved as participants in the transformation of social-emotional development and its impact on the lives of children and families.

CASEL'S SEL framework sums up its mission with this statement which speaks to the significance of social-emotional development that begins with young children. Students, families, schools, and communities are all part of broader systems that shape learning, development, and experiences. Inequities based on race, ethnicity, class, language, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other factors are deeply ingrained in the vast majority of these systems and impact young people and adults' social, emotional, and academic learning. SEL alone will not solve longstanding and deep-seated inequities in the education system. It can

create the conditions needed for individuals and schools to examine and interrupt inequitable policies and practices, create more inclusive learning environments, and reveal and nurture the interests and assets of all individuals (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, CASEL-SEL-Framework-11.2020.pdf. p. 4).

Prong Two: Knowledge of the Rich History and Cultural Contributions of Black/African Americans to the Development of this Country

Knowledge is the hallmark of civilized human life. . . Knowledge is the capacity to know oneself and to have the ability to communicate that knowledge to others.
(Akbar, 1999, v.)

Overstating the importance of child development is not possible. It is a vital fact for parents to understand. The specific focus on the Black/African American mother as the parent most often providing the foundation for a child's life beginning at inception is supported by data. The child's outcome will reflect how the parent applies the knowledge received about being physically present and providing a positive environment and positive experiences. The impact of emotional, physical, and cognitive experiences shapes the child during the early years. Parents will not create a perfect world for their children, but it is the goal to help to ensure that the answer to the question, "Are the children well?" will have a positive response, "Yes. The children are well."

To enhance positiveness, Black/African American parents must have a strong sense of who they are. How a parent identifies is reflected in how they relate to others and especially to their child. Identity centers on self-esteem. Black/African American people, victimized and marginalized since being brought to what became known as America, with knowledge of the contributions made to this country through their rich history and culture, would strengthen Black/African American parents' identity and self-esteem. Parents who have strong identities

and positive self-esteem will be model parents for their children. Modeling a positive and strong sense of self is likely to be imitated by the child. Harken back to Baldwin (1961), who said, “Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.”

Prong Two provided a focus on the connection between elevating the identity of Black/African American parents through value gained through allowing increasing their knowledge of the history and culture of Black/African American people. This section did not offer Black/African American history and culture curricula for Black/African American parents. This researcher intended to encourage raising the consciousness of parents by asserting that Black/African American history and culture be a component of parent education programs in learning venues, including early learning centers. Additionally, the transfer of knowledge of Black/African American history and culture from mother to child strengthens the sense of self for both parent and child. Through strengthening identity, parents provide the shield needed to combat the sting of systemic racism.

Identity through Education

Akbar (1999) argues that the first function of education is to provide identity, which sets the foundation for what people can do and what they must learn. People can only belong to themselves if their identity is an outgrowth of their history, culture, reality, and survival needs (Akbar, 1999). Assisting Black/African American mothers in strengthening their identity is paramount to enhancing the identity of the Black/African American child. Identity is a self-concept or self-perception that is both existential and categorical, both individual and sociocultural, fluid, and evolves (Urrieta & Noblit,

2018). The concept of identity is complex. To posit it as necessary in strengthening how Black/African American mothers perceive themselves as influencers in combating the tentacles of racism marked with socially constructed labels based on race, gender, class, and sexuality impacts their self-understanding (Holland et al., 1998). When Black/African American mothers' identities are not recognized, they experience denial of their identity to others. Identity is rooted in power. Power determines who counts (Urrieta & Noblit, 2018). Inclusion enhances the identity of a person to reinforce their value and have them know they are valuable. This researcher contended that Black/African American mothers needed to learn more about themselves and their history to enhance their identity and self-esteem. Could it be that the elevation of Black/African American mothers will occur through corrected education would boost their children to present a more confident and self-assured presence in the world? The height would come from learning historical truths omitted in their matriculation through schools. The contributions through history and culture of individuals of African descent to the United States and the world are significant and worth sharing (Webb-Johnson & Rochon, 2005).

Elevating the identity of the Black/African American mother is tied to education. Society values education because it serves critical functions that enhance future opportunities; therefore, Black/African American parents value education. Studies indicate that Black/African American parents embrace and appreciate educating their children, as do other parents. They invest whatever resources they must to help their children obtain a good education (Allen & White-Smith, 2017; Leighton, 2019). Significantly, an education that is culturally responsive by the inclusion of contributions of Black/African American people supports the value placed on education. The observation is the diminishing effect on the psyche of people who never see themselves as essential or belonging due to the lack of knowledge about their history and culture

(Akbar, 1999). Black/African American parents went through an educational system that was glaringly racist and intentionally focused on the contributions of White people. What is known is anyone who has gone through systems of education received indoctrination in history and culture focused on one group (Webb-Johnson & Rochon, 2005). Being inundated as a child and throughout education with images of authority, beauty, goodness, and power attributed to Whiteness has a castigating effect on identity (Powell, Hopson & Hopson, 1990). Not seeing yourself in the chronicles of history or having inaccurate depictions of Black/African Americans and African history leads to learning to accept the inferior status given by mainstream discourses (Woodson, 1933). The subordinate status impacts identity.

DuBois (1903) stated emphatically, over 100 years ago, “we want our children educated,” as noted from the social justice imperative of the Niagara Movement, a civil rights organization that began in 1905. The ideals of the Niagara Movement ultimately led to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909.

Today, Black/African American parents want the best for their children, just like parents from any ethnic group. To present corrections to the omissions sought for decades to parents through parent education programs is one way to address the issue early during children’s foundational years. Parents can learn and assist in teaching their children in concert with teachers.

Although educators and researchers have sought to address omissions for decades, the gap remains. It was the recognition of the consequences of losing self-knowledge of Black/African American contributions and highlighting overwhelmingly knowledge of

White contributions that inspired Woodson's (1933) description of what he called "miseducation of the Negro." Woodson saw that Black/African Americans were being indoctrinated rather than being taught through a process that can undermine the human endeavors of any people (Akbar, 1999). To be educated, Black/African American children must know their people and their culture to imprint their identity and self-esteem. Could correcting the omissions make Black/African American mothers' identities stronger giving them a better sense of self if they knew more about the contributions to history and culture that their forefathers and foremothers made to the development of the United States? This researcher argued, yes.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) identifies this lack of inclusion in education as deliberately racist. Excluding contributions of any group from the documenting history of a country is to disregard who they are. Exclusion in this regard is by design to ensure that Black/African American people are not in a position as equals. Critical race theorists acknowledge racism as integral in the life, law, and culture of the United States. As postulated by Crenshaw et al. (1996) in their compilation of writings about CRT, it is still true today that racism's integral nature and eradicating racial inequalities must be grounded in the sociohistorical legacy of racism. CRT challenges racial oppression in legal, institutional, and educational domains by questioning the positionality and privilege of Whiteness and the legacy of racial discrimination and exclusion (Crenshaw et al., 1996). The challenge was necessary to address because the tenets of racism through omission of salient history impact how parents relate to their children and their way of being. The observance of Black/African American mothers who have a sense of self that reinforces the quest for knowledge and the assurance that learning takes place may not always be apparent. Black/African American mothers who exercise their agency to ensure the

teaching they seek for their children reflect positive images broader than the limited history presented based on Whites' decisions, which reinforces inferiority (Selig, 2008).

The inclusion of Black/African American history in parent education programs can be an avenue to assist Black/African American mothers in gaining a stronger sense of self and identity through encouraging them to learn more about who they are and their legacy. Through the search for and exposure to stories that tell of the rich history and culture of Black/African American people, they will find themselves. Critical Race Parenting (CRP) provides the lens to focus on holding parents accountable for choosing what is right over what is comfortable. It is crucial to prepare parents for the resilient and ethical commitment they will need to have conversations with their children about race and act on their behalf (DePouw, 2018). Matias (2016a), in her book, *Feeling White*, says CRP is more than a discussion. It connects the intimate relations of power, ways of being, and ways of knowing to an educational praxis in the broader movements to transform and eliminate oppression in all forms. The quest to transform education from omission to admission is needed to provide Black/African American parents with knowledge that affirms their children's need for a direct and critical conversation about race (DePouw, 2018; Matias, 2016b). To affirm identity gaining knowledge will bring Black/African American mothers to a greater sense of self. Strengthening the identity of mothers can transfer to their children to achieve the same for them in knowing who and whose they are.

In the discussion of child development, the child's potential to be human is not observable at birth. The point of assisting Black/African American parents in understanding the criticalness of those first years is to respect life from the beginning and gain their commitment to

responsibly nurture and provide a positive foundation for children to help them achieve their full humanity. To be human, it is the identity that is the consciousness of a person's true nature.

History and Culture Enhances Personal Identity

Knowing the humanity of a person is defined and distinguished by self-knowledge. A person must know who they are and the history of their being. Black/African American parents brought up in an educational system that did not address the complete American story have a weakened sense of self. Including the historical and cultural contributions of Black/African American people would enhance their sense of self. Self-knowledge reinforces identity. It is necessary to combat negative images through media and vitriolic language and actions perpetrated on Black/African Americans because of their skin color. Black/African American history and culture's emphasis on racial identity, self-esteem, and self-efficacy of Black/African American mothers may lack these traits. Children will benefit from the knowledge gained by the mother. Studies report that children are helped at home by parents reading stories, discussing their homework, and providing tutoring when necessary (Latunde & Clark-Louque, 2016). Additional research affirms that Black/African American families bring cultural capital to schools, notably their education value (Louque & Latunde, 2014; Yosso, 2005).

To have children secure in who they are is incumbent on parents being secure in who they are no matter what life serves them. Providing learning materials that teach and reinforce the true story of a person's history helps fill in the blanks omitted in the human story. For the most part, the account is written and told only from the vantage point of a few, primarily White Anglo-Saxon People (Akbar, 1999). It is incumbent on non-White Anglo-Saxon People to research and ensure stories about others who inhabited this land (Woodson, 1933; maahc.si.edu). For the sake of children, to know who they are, where they come from, what their ancestors

contributed can only be strengthening to their self-esteem (Boutte & Strickland, 2008; Wright Edelman, 2005). Parents and children needed to see positive, accurate depictions of Black/African American and African history lest they tacitly learn to accept the inferior status bestowed on them by mainstream discourses (Woodson, 1933). As Wright Edelman (1992) states in advocating for making visible people of courage who paved the way in this country: “You can’t be what you can’t see” (p. 83).

Parents felt the yearning of young Black/African American children for identity after viewing the movie *Black Panther* (Coogler, 2018). Comments by young children expressed their desire to go to a place like Wakanda. Children and their families attended the screening in African dress and pridefully assumed stances of the African people in the movie, enhancing the need for more research to present positive images for children and adults. *Black Panther* provided children and adults a superhero they could identify with because he instilled pride, self-respect, and dignity by representing historical progress and achievements (Prabasmoro et al., 2019).

Black Panther stirred the imagination of many children that caused some to ask their parents, “Can we go to Wakanda?” Wakanda represented a place where there were no social issues of poverty, poor education, famine, unemployment, oppression, or judgment based on skin color. It was a place where people lived sovereign, independent, and happy lives (Coogler, 2018; Prabasmoro et al., 2019). These children did not know the fictional African kingdom of Wakanda was not far from the truth. This lack of knowledge supports the case for parents knowing the true history of Africa and African descendants to share the stories of the rich legacy of people who look like them. Without positive images, children receive a negative sense of self.

Black/African American children's negative self-image revisited the 1940's legacy study of symbolic annihilation conducted by Drs. Kenneth and Mamie Clark. Their doll experiments presented identical dolls to children except for light and dark skin colors. Children answered questions related to dolls that exposed their decision that dark skinned dolls had negative traits. The kind of racial implication through doll selection reveals children's exposure to and what is transmitted from the images they see, leading to their preference for something outside themselves (Philogene, 2004). If Black/African American children grow up witnessing the presentation of Black/African Americans having negative traits, children can conclude that they are objects of negative labeling. Parents and those who influence children must present more positive images of what it is to be Black/African Americans to help children overcome subordination and a low sense of self (Akbar, 1999; DePouw, 2016; Matias, 2016b; Selig, 2008; Wright Edelman, 1992).

Wakanda was not far off being a place where Black/African American people were strong achievers and controlled their destiny. The sense that children received from being enthralled with images in *Black Panther* enhances the need for more positive images through various genres. Studying the history of Africa before the transatlantic slave trade reveals impressive people, much like those depicted in the land of Wakanda. Knowledge of African people supersedes the enslavement stories told in the history of African people brought to this land in 1619. For centuries American history books focused on the dark history of Black/African American people beginning with the transatlantic slave trade from Africa to European countries couched in colonialism. During this long history of enslavement, African people suffered mental and physical oppression from those who deemed themselves owners of these captured people (Morgan, 2000). What was not told is African people were on the land in the New World before

1619, albeit they were brought to these shores to work and share technical know-how planting and growing crops (Gates & Yacovone, 2012; Hannah-Jones, 2019; Van Sertima, 1976).

Africans were removed from their land, and their actual history was left there and hidden or erased to leave little trace of who they were (Hannah-Jones; Gates & Yacovone; Van Sertima). The true stories of African people will matter in shaping the knowledge and pride in the minds of Black/African American youth.

Black/African American parents can provide lessons, information, and images of that history which will be enlightening to all, including non-WASP and others not of African origin. What needs to be shared is why Africa became so crucial to European colonizers? What did they find when they traveled to Africa? As one account renders: There were many forms of government in Africa before Europeans knew it, ranging from powerful empires to decentralized groups of pastoralists and hunters. In West Africa, archaeological excavations at Old Jenne (modern Djenne, in Mali) have uncovered a sophisticated urban settlement dating from the 3rd century BC. The ancient kingdom of Ghana was based on the gold trade and flourished from at least as early as the 8th century AD. In the Middle Ages, much of modern Senegal and Mali was governed by a confederation of states known as the Mali empire (The National Archives, 2013).

The truth of sophisticated governance, systemic food source development and gathering, an abundance of precious metals, and the value are some of the historical information that needs presentation to young people. As explorers and travelers to Africa discovered, the continent of people was astonishing. The evidence of royalty and wealth was apparent to early travelers.

As captured in John Iliffe's (1995) book, *Africans (The History of a Continent)*, "the narrative of the Arab geographer Al-Bakri tells of the scene at the royal court of

Ghana: ‘Behind the king stand ten pages holding shields and swords decorated with gold, and on his right are the sons of the [vassal] kings wearing splendid garments and their hair plaited with gold.’” Could this visual not be presented to young Black/African Americans as a mirror image of the visual introduced in the movie *Black Panther*?

Early travelers communicated the luxury of Ghanaian people seen in the areas they had seen. It created an attraction to the continent for those whose lives were defined by greed and power. That sense of White privilege began with the colonizers who boldly determined what they should take and who they should control. The blame cannot rest on the colonizers’ shoulders. Some dark-skinned people allowed themselves to be convinced to work with the colonizers and thereby relinquished their people for whatever bribes were offered (Iliffe, 1995; Van Sertima, 1976).

Setting the story straight and intentionally teaching the truth to Black/African American youth is a tall order. Still, it continues to be an important one as students of color demand to understand why they receive mistreatment. They also demand to be treated with the respect and dignity they so deserve (Howard, 2016; Matias, 2016b; Taylor, 2018). It is challenging to explain to children why skin color factors into the treatment that they witness as children victimized by racial schisms have resulted in the death of Black/African Americans, as seen on social media. Adults must take the reins to protect children from the viciousness of society. Sharing the truth of the history and culture of Black/African Americans serves to lift the image of a people. In the book coauthored by psychiatrists Poussaint and Comer (1992) titled *Raising Black Children*, they state:

Black parents’ question and have mixed feelings about passing on the values and ways of a society that says in so many ways, ‘We do not value black men and

women, boys and girls, as much as we do whites.’ The need to preserve our culture and community springs from a desire to maintain a real and psychological place where we are accepted, respected, and protected. For this reason, we are concerned about whether ‘white psychology and child-rearing approaches’ will change us, hurt us, destroy our culture. (pp. 182 -183)

The advocacy for parents to learn Black/African American history and culture enhances the relationship between parent and child based on the natural connection between them. Evidence supports that the mother-child relationship is most confident in parenting in Black/African American families. Ensuring that the Black/African American mother provides knowledge to impart to her child can help elevate that child’s identity and hers. Learning must be beyond the discussion that schools limit to units on slavery and the civil rights movement. The observance of Black History Month in February has its relevance, but the limitation to one month does not need to be a restriction. Black/African American parents’ knowledge of history and culture will remain shallow if knowledge does not go deeper than presentations in one month. Parents must learn more than the cursory presentation about Black/African American people. Reactions from the movie *Black Panther* are just one form of evidence of people’s desire for more information to instill pride in belonging to a people who have accomplished and are making meaningful contributions.

Although the focus is on Black/African American children, it is imperative to know the true stories of any ethnic group. Those true stories will strengthen and encourage all children that people do matter, and their stories matter. What is learned and shared will also benefit persons whose ethnic group is not Black/African American.

Black/African American Knowledge is Black/African American Wealth

This researcher did not intend to provide curricula for Black/African American parent education programs. Tables present denoting people, their focus, and resources to assist in beginning the quest for more knowledge. These resources offer incorporation into an education program for parents. Parents can also initiate a study by researching subjects and names of Black/African American people who have contributed and are still contributing to the development and evolution in the United States. The tables are organic and not exhaustive but include some familiar names and names omitted to celebrate Black/African American history.

Focus is on Black/African American mothers because of their primary role in raising children as solo moms. Highlighting mothers is not to say that Black/African American fathers or other parent types who raise Black/African American children are not important in imparting knowledge. They are certainly valued and respected for being present in children's lives. However, to drive the point across regarding the importance of learning to undergird self-esteem and identity, Black/African American mothers will be leading examples for correcting miseducation by omitting Black/African American people in telling America's story. With the strength of knowing the richness of the history and culture of Black/African American people, Black/African American mothers gain fortification in who they are, and they can share these authentic stories with their children. Children can stand tall against adversity, and mothers can feel more confident that their children will have a greater chance of survival in a world that is not always kind and accepting of people clothed in dark skins (Gates & Yacovone, 2012).

All Black/African American parents and those involved in parenting Black/African American children can learn from the emphasis on identity education. This section offers random examples of Black/African American women who have made their mark in various

fields such as written and spoken word; science, technology, engineering, math, medicine; social justice and human rights; and the arts. These references intend to be starting points in highlighting Black/African American women and their spheres of influence. These are not exhaustive resources as they focus on some Black/African American women. Still, their design reinforces Black/African American women's contributions as an encouragement to Black/African American mothers who represent the solo parent and the person who most often is accessible to the child. Black/African American women listed in Appendices A - D intend to honor and elevate Black/African American mothers.

Prong Three: Knowledge of Strategies for Parents in Preparation to Assist Black/African Children Navigate Through Systemic Racism

Raising Black children – female and male – in the mouth of a racist, sexist, suicidal dragon is perilous and chancy. If they cannot love and resist at the same time, they will probably not survive. And in order to survive, they must let go. This is what mothers teach – love, survival. . .

(Lorde, 2012, p. 74)

Strategies to prepare Black/African American parents for their fight for liberation and justice to guide their young children were the focus of Prong Three. In seeking strategies, there were several topic areas that this researcher included for discussion. The topics include: Anticipate – Black/African American Children Will Experience Racism; Prepare – Knowledge of the Black/African American Experience Will Fortify Parents and Children; Conversate – Open Conversations Will Help Parents and Children; Listen – Let Children Speak – Remain Silent While They Talk; Age- Appropriate – Truth Told in Ways Children Can Understand; Accurate – Explain the Situations without Superficiality; Think – Children Should be Encouraged to Think Critically; Empower – Lead Children in Knowing They Can be Part of the

Change; Resilience – Parents Need to Reflect On and Share the Heritage of Fore Parents and Their Survival; Encourage – Parents Need to Know They are Not Alone in the Struggle for Equality and Fairness.

Anticipate that Black/African American children will have experiences with inequality, and therefore racism is inherent in America's systems. Black/African American parents must face the fact of this eventuality and not deny that it will happen. If not a direct experience, it will be an indirect experience. Black/African American children without experiences or the exposure to influence and the benefits of resources that will foster and facilitate their human development will have a more challenging time achieving their full potential (Loury, 2019). Personal, racial discrimination characterizes and influences life options for many children of color in American society. Still, racial discrimination at the institutional level causes disparities in material conditions, e.g., poverty, education, employment, health care that affect the lives of children (Sanders-Phillips et al., 2009). As challenging as it is, Black/African American parents must face the importance of socializing their children to cope with culturally relevant experiences that manifest themselves as racial discrimination. As Smalls-Glover et al. (2013) observed, an increasing body of work identifies racism as a stressor for Black/African American parents that causes their reaction with strategies ranging from approaching to avoiding the problem. It is better to face the reality of the beast of racism than to prevent it. Anticipating race-based events in the lives of Black/African American children and living this reality in their own lives is a cause for seeking and understanding strategies needed to combat the conditions that children will face.

Anticipating that children will face racism, Black/African American parents are responsible for protecting and serving as a buffer for the consequences that may result from negative experiences that occur in children.

Some researchers have viewed Black/African American families as coping with racism in one of two ways. One way is to *approach coping*, which includes problem solving – taking on the problem head-on to change the stressor of racism. The other way is *avoidant coping*, characterized by denying, ignoring, or trying to dismiss the stressful situation (Compas et al., 2001). Researchers further found that *approach coping* with combating strategies perceived racism positively associated with Black/African American adults with higher self-esteem and positive identity (Utsey et al., 2000). By contrast, *avoidant coping* strategies used by Black/African American adults with lower life satisfaction, lower self-esteem, and higher psychological distress when confronted with racial discrimination (Barnes & Lightsey, 2005; Utsey et al., 2000). These findings give credence to the researcher’s argument for the need for parent education programs that focus on strengthening Black/African American parents’ sense of self.

Prepare to know to manage the conditions of mothering by understanding child development and historical experiences of Black/African American people from their beginning as enslaved on the land now called America. It is critical to know the true history of the Black/African American experience to instill knowledge and pride that will enhance the identity of mothers and their children. The genius and assurance that America is America because of the contributions of African and Black/African American people must be told and reinforced. Black/African American mothers are encouraged to refer to history and share cultural

experiences with their children (Akbar, 1999; DuBois, 1903; Gates & Yacovone, 2012; Woodson, 1933; Wright Edelman, 2005).

Four tables regarding Black/African American women and their contributions are provided in Prong Two to assist in achieving the purpose of educating Black/African American mothers about history and culture. These tables represent a sample of the contributions made historically and currently. Still, they are to serve as one model for gaining additional knowledge regarding the rich history of Black/African American people. The extension to include Black/African American men is the challenge lifted to continue the education and the preparation for sharing with children. Children's participation in the research helps to close the gap in the education that is so vitality needed to reinforce how Black/African American lives matter and for the celebration of what the lives of Black/African American people have given and continue to give to the history and future of America.

Additionally, Black/African American parents must insist that early learning centers and schools have what some scholars label "African diaspora literary centers." (Johnson et al., 2018, p. 10). These centers should include information to help children connect to the rich heritage of Black/African American histories, languages, and cultural traditions omitted from early learning centers and schools (Johnson et al., 2018). Other tools to help prepare to discuss race and racism can be found in children's literature and are an excellent way to begin. Children's literature is a perfect way to open dialogue about racial identity and racism. There are numerous books on anti-racism and books that represent the diversity of affirming experiences to children. Appendix E of this dissertation provides a list as a start for parents and classrooms. Children's books allow children to see themselves in the pages, which heightens their interest in the subject and supports early literacy (Klefstad & Martinez, 2013).

Conversate in a meaningful way with children, especially when they are very young. Adults may feel young children may not understand or be ready for discussions about race and racism, but research supports these discussions. Silence about race does not prevent children from noticing differences in people by what is known as race, and it does not prevent children from developing racial biases and prejudices (Aboud, 2005; Tatum, 1997). Psychologist Beverly Tatum (1997) indicates that keeping silent about race or avoiding the topic often enough causes children to learn not to raise the subject at all. Their questions will not go away, and children will cease asking them. It is better to engage children in the conversation in an open, honest, age-appropriate way as often as the topic presents itself (Tatum, 1997). Issues about race, racial differences, racial inequalities, and racism have been associated and shown to be lower levels of bias in young children (Katz, 2003). When Black children are in social settings with other children, i.e., early learning centers, shopping, museums, parks, libraries for story time, playgrounds, etc., they may encounter levels of bias from other children. Research has shown that young children notice race and develop their conclusions about the differences they see (Aboud, 2008; Hirschfeld, 2008; Katz, 2003; Patterson & Bigler, 2006; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001). To avoid conversations about race only encourages, to use the scholars' phrase, "prevalent stereotypes [to] remain unchanged" (Katz & Kofkin, 1997, p. 56). To conversate about race does not put the topic in children's heads; it is already there.

With the force of racism and racist systems ever-present in American society, Black/African American parents face the need to accept the agency to address these societal ills for the sake of protecting and preparing their children to live in this world. It is what a child will experience in the world that becomes of more significant concern for Black/African American parents with the forces of racism ever-present in American society.

What is known as racial and ethnic socialization is a cultural practice implemented in Black/African American families to reinforce positive environments and experiences that will equip children with strategies to navigate through racism they will undoubtedly experience (Caughy et al., 2002). The term refers to transmitting information regarding race and ethnicity from adults to children (Hughes et al., 2006a). It dates back as far as slavery with the efforts of Black/African American parents seeking to, as Blassingame (1972) states, “cushion the shock of bondage by teaching their children values different from those that were presented by the slave masters” (p.151). Racial socialization continues through generations with education and counter-narratives to build self-concepts in parents and children through Black/African American history and culture. Children have a more advanced ethnic identity when their mothers tell them about Black/African American history and culture and encourage them to be proud of their heritage (McHale et al., 2006; Seaton et al., 2012). The knowledge of Black/African American history and culture provides strength to combat the negative images and miseducation imparted through various means that support the social hierarchy of some groups over others (Aldana & Byrd, 2015). Scholars realized that racial socialization is how Black/African American parents maintain children’s high self-esteem and prepare them to face systemic racial barriers in America (Peters, 2002; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990). Ethnic socialization focuses on children’s cultural retention, identity achievement, and group affiliation to maintain social status. Although racial socialization, according to research, mainly focuses on the Black/African American experience, it reflects the entrenched constructions of problems that continue to exist between Black/African Americans and Whites. Additionally, it considers the exposure to cultural values and objects, efforts to instill pride and knowledge of the Black/African American

experience, discussion about discrimination and prejudice and how to cope with it, and strategies on gaining success in American society (Hughes et al., 2006b).

Listen to children. Listening is key to the racial socialization process. Conveying to Black/African American parents and their children the importance of listening is an essential strategy. It is vital to give children space to talk and share what they are thinking, what sense and meaning they are making of what they are experiencing. Listening to a child makes them feel important. If they are ignored or told to be quiet, they will feel their feelings and thoughts do not matter. Black/African American parents and others who parent must listen to the first-person accounts of children's experiences to better understand how to shape their social spaces. Children can enact social areas that may result in their engagement or disengagement, achievement, or withdrawal. Children should be encouraged to share their perspectives, and parents must be open to listening to their experiences and observing their ways of being (Kane, 2012). Let children speak. Parents listen.

Listening to a child holds a lot of importance, as it helps the child build a bond with the parent and develop trust. Through bonding in a relationship, children build confidence. Listening requires patience as children express their thoughts and feelings. It is essential to respond sensitively regardless of whether what is said is good or bad. People can pick up non-verbal cues from body language and actions. Black/African American parents can get information from their children regarding how the world treats them, which is crucial to understanding how and when to intervene. If Black/African American parents do not have children's trust, it will be difficult to receive information about what may be affecting them. Listening is vital to open engagement in the socialization process in teaching children how to cope.

Age-appropriate information should be shared with children, even the youngest.

Children begin to discern differences at a very early age. As a study by NAEYC researchers, Derman-Sparks et al. (2020) reveals, children become aware of gender, race, ethnicity, and disabilities between the ages of two and five. They are also sensitive to both positive and negative attitudes and biases attached to gender, race, ethnicity, and disabilities by the identity their families and society place on them. Young children develop what these researchers label as “preprejudice,” meaning misconceptions, discomfort, fear, and rejection that could develop into actual prejudice if parents do not intervene. Research by Derman-Sparks et al. also states that in addition to young children recognizing differences, they absorb values about which differences are positive and not.

With the knowledge of young children’s awareness, it is incumbent on parents to react to the ideas that young children express because it will significantly affect the feelings they will form. To assist children in learning to like themselves and to value diversity, parents need to help them resist the biases and prejudices that continue to prevail in society. Parents must know the influence they have on their children’s lives and thinking. The role of parents in transforming negative behavior is crucial in the development of their children.

There are age-appropriate books referenced in Appendix E in this document. These books represent a start to compel Black/African American parents to search and add their resources to assist in discussions they will have with their children. The appropriateness of conversations and “the talk” is crucial, but it is not to suggest that age-appropriate conversation and resource materials should be oversimplified. It is also important to include books and films that portray the positive side of the Black/African American experience. It is imperative that children not feel that Black/African American experiences are only about pain and suffering.

“The talk” is one critical conversation Black/African American parents have had for years with their children, especially the male child, regarding behavior when confronted by the police or persons in similar roles. An example of “the talk” is in Appendix F.

Hirschfeld (2008) observes that adults tend to dilute the discussion of race with young children believing they cannot understand the issue's complexity. This approach lends itself to a superficial representation of the problem, focusing on cultural celebrations and superheroes or persons of historical importance and discussing systemic inequalities (Hirschfeld, 2008; Lewis, 2003; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001).

Kendi's (2020) book, *Antiracist Baby*, addresses the issue of age appropriateness. This picture book targets young children as a tool for parents to use to discuss how to be an antiracist. It aims to assist those involved in parenting to educate children about race and racism early in life. Setting the platform for becoming a more just country, he believes, must begin with new generations. This book provides a tool for parents to discuss racism with very young children before they can even understand it. His idea is to have children hear about racism so much that it will not be anything mysterious to them when they are older. Books for children addressing the issues of race and racism helps to educate parents about racism and antiracism to assist children with experiences they will have.

Accurate information should be shared. Accuracy of data based on truths presented from knowledge gained through reading and references is reported in the media to ensure that information is factual. Accuracy is essential in verifying what children are sharing in their stories about their experiences. Researchers contend that information presented accurately provides descriptions of the nature and scope of systemic racial inequalities to allow children to appreciate the group nature of racial prejudice (Hirschfeld, 2008; Poussaint & Comer, 1992).

Children should be encouraged to understand that negative racial talk or discriminatory actions do not necessarily emanate from people who are not mentally well or from persons who have learned bad behavior. Real talk with children should explain that the world in which we live is often unfair to Black/African American people and people of color, and it has been the tone of this country since its beginning.

Current events viewed and visible to children impact the lives of children and families. Black/African American parents are asking what they should tell their children about blatant incidences that take the lives of Black/African American people and create the massive protests witnessed in the media. It is difficult to hide the truth and not address it.

The following prose sums up an accurate portrayal of why adults must address questions raised by children with accuracy. Children are watching and asking the question – why? What do you tell the children?

You want to know why Black people are angry . . .

We can't be handcuffed and put in the police car unless we are dead

(#GeorgeFloyd)

We can't go bird watching in Central Park (#ChristianCooper) We can't go jogging (#AmaudArbery).

We can't relax in the comfort of our own homes (#BothemJean and #AtatianaJefferson).

We can't ask for help after being in a car crash (#JonathanFerrell and #RenishaMcBride).

We can't have a cellphone (#StephonClark).

We can't leave a party to get to safety (#JordanEdwards).

We can't play loud music (#JordanDavis).

We can't sell CD's (#AltonSterling).

We can't sleep (#AiyanaJones).

We can't walk from the corner store (#MikeBrown).

We can't play cops and robbers (#TamirRice).

We can't go to church (#Charleston9).

We can't walk home with Skittles (#TrayvonMartin).

*We can't hold a hairbrush while leaving our own bachelor party
(#SeanBell).*

We can't party on New Year's (#OscarGrant).

We can't get a normal traffic ticket (#SandraBland).

We can't lawfully carry a weapon (#PhilandoCastile).

We can't break down on a public road with car problems (#CoreyJones).

We can't shop at Walmart (#JohnCrawford).

We can't have a disabled vehicle (#TerrenceCrutcher).

*We can't read a book in our own car (#KeithScott). We can't
be a 10-year-old walking with our grandfather
(#CliffordGlover).*

We can't decorate for a party (#ClaudeReese).

We can't ask a cop a question (#RandyEvans).

We can't cash our check in peace (#YvonneSmallwood).

We can't take out our wallet (#AmadouDiallo).

We can't run (#WalterScott).

We can't breathe (#EricGarner).

We can't live (#FreddieGray).

We're tired.

Tired of making hashtags.

Tired of trying to convince you that our #BlackLivesMatter too.

Tired of dying.

Tired.

Tired.

Tired.

So very tired.

(Author Unknown, 2020)

**We can't proclaim Mama, I am dying (#George Floyd). (*Researcher, 2021)*

Society should also make a case for reformation to eradicate racial and ethnic prejudice and discrimination. Acknowledging this would take all people working together to see that change occurs to ensure that children are not victims of racism (Johnson et al., 2018; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001). Parents can share their experiences with their children as examples of how they are still functioning in a world that has not always been kind to reinforce that they too will survive and thrive.

Think of ways to challenge children to participate in solving problems that may confront them. Children can be given scenarios and asked to indicate what they would do if they were in the situation. Aboud (2008) argues that just providing children with information is not enough

because if the evidence goes against their in-group biases, the group will reject information. Parents should help children see the problem of racism beyond race. They should help to see multiple reasons that they will face challenges of bias because of the history of discrimination in this country. Some cases to ignite thinking could center around: How do you feel when you are not selected to play with the group? Why do you think the group chose that child to be the leader?

Black/African American parents should not answer every issue that confronts children as they move through life. Even at a very early age, children should be allowed to stumble and fall and figure out how to return to an upright position. Parents are to help children think for themselves. Regarding race and racism, children must have the opportunity to un-learn and re-learn their understandings of race and the effects of learning the emotions and behaviors that influence racist ideologies (Matias, 2016b). This influence manifests itself in the choices Black/African American children make about who they are and why they devalue themselves, as revealed in the results of the classic doll study of Clark and Clark (1939). Posing hypothetical situations for children to react to will initiate children's thinking, as revealed in the doll study. Black/African American parents must assist children in thinking well of themselves so that they do not grow up recycling or internalizing race messages that support the superiority of one group over another.

Critical Race Parenting (CRP) is a teaching process that can disrupt how children think who are impacted by race. Using counter stories (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) has effectively opened the conversation between parents and children. This process feeds into the racial and ethnic socialization method that effectively brings parents and children closer together. Through productive talk, children can express what they would do when they are in a situation that makes

them uncomfortable. Parents can listen to children's responses and not be judgmental but share their perspectives on what they would do in a similar situation. The point is to get children to think and to respect their opinion.

Empower children by sharing with them ideas on how to fight against racist inequality and discrimination. Seek anti-racist role models in the community and throughout the world for children to hear their stories (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001). By having children hear the stories of role models and how positive change happened because of their involvement, children learn how they can help and get involved in projects that will assist in making positive change. Modeling the strength of identity through self-efficacy provides an example to children (Urrieta & Noblit, 2018).

Empowering children helps them believe in themselves and flourish and survive whatever they face within society. Therefore, parents must help children develop confidence, courage, and the feeling that they can achieve whatever they put their minds to and not allow any obstacle to deter them, including race-related issues and attitudes.

Although Black/African American parents have had their experiences with racism, it is through continually seeking ways to break the cycle of internalized racism that they can assist their children in navigating the racism journey. CRP provides the platform for parents to continue learning how to assist their children in managing society's ills, and it helps parents know there is no end to the discovery of methods that work. By empowering children with racial knowledge and vocabulary, they will be able to deconstruct, resist and defy what the dominant race puts before them (Matias, 2016b). Empowered children are resilient.

Resilience is the hallmark of Black/African Americans. The history and legacy of ancestors who endured and persevered for hundreds of years confined to chattel slavery and

other atrocities of oppression after being forcibly brought from Africa to the shores of what is now known as the United States is testimony to the resilience of this racial group (Akbar, 1999; Gates & Yacovone, 2012). Resilience is a positive characteristic of Black/African Americans. While it is considered positive, it is the positive side of this attitude that parents can embrace for themselves and share with their children. It is about survival and not being deterred by obstacles of inequalities that continue to reveal themselves in the daily experiences of Black/African Americans in this country. Black/African Americans are not a monolith as it regards racism and oppression. Other ethnic groups experience this treatment and must deal with it in their spheres. However, whereas Black/African Americans have shown resilience for centuries, the cause for the need to draw on that characteristic does not dissipate when social inequalities remain in this country.

Some research is now exploring the long-lasting effects of resilience on the overall health and mental well-being of Black/African American families (Anderson et al., 2018). It is a clarion call to scientists and practitioners to engage in social justice work that opposes systemic oppression that affects Black/African American families daily. To mention resilience in this regard acknowledges that there is another side to resilience's impact on Black/African Americans: overlooking society's ills does not resolve to obtain equality for all people. As Anderson argues, it is vital to balance promoting agency and empowerment of the marginalized while advocating and being involved in activism with families and communities for change.

For the sake of strategies in this discussion, resilience assists in ensuring that Black/African American parents find value in it as they seek strength by navigating through systemic racism that they and the young will experience.

Encourage yourself and know you are not alone. Black/African American parents have a common denominator with other parents who are non-Black/African American, their children. Black/African American parents love and care about their children. They want the best for them and want them to be safe and have opportunities to live, grow and develop to be their best selves.

Black/African American parents must remain encouraged that there are means to provide strategies to their children to cope with inequalities in American society. To give a pedagogy for parenting children through challenges that race and racism present is not new. The communication process that has become central to parenting in Black/African American families and other ethnic groups is racial and ethnic socialization. This process is a strategy presented as a means by which parents will prepare their children to negotiate contexts characterized by high racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity (Hughes et al., 2006b). With parents' knowledge of the importance of responsible care of children during the early years, responsibility must continue throughout children's growth and development as they become members of the more prominent human family. With the force of racism and racist systems ever-present in American society, Black/African American parents face the need to accept agency in addressing these societal ills for the sake of protecting and preparing their children to live in this world. This responsibility is not one Black/African American parents can ignore, especially with continual evidence that racism is alive and well in America. The intention of underlining this reality is not to discourage Black/African American parents. It is a truth that encourages Black/African American parents to remain aware that children need to be prepared and protected.

Drawing on the experiences of Black/African American ancestors, encouragement came from being deeply spiritual and the belief in a power greater than themselves. It was that strength of hope that helped them survive the tenets of slavery and Jim Crow segregation. It is that strength of hope that draws on the strategy of encouragement. Hope will reassure parents that knowledge of what and how to provide positive references that honor humans and their human spirits must be as important to them as it did to their ancestors. Parents must reinforce with their children that they are human. Their lives matter regardless of what adverse reactions they receive by some to race, ones' religion, economic status, level of education, gender, geographical location, sexual preference, and politics. The hope is that all people learn and practice acceptance. Whether perpetrators of negative behavior reveal that to a person because of their skin color, it is incumbent on parents to model behavior to their children that shows honor and value toward others. Hope fuels the expectation and desire to have integrity and value realized for all Black/African Americans. Encouragement is a strategy for parents couched in hope. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated, "We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope" (King & Washington, 1986, p. 723).

Summary

Chapter Two presented three prongs focusing on knowledge to strengthen the responsibility of parenting. Although the focus was on Black/African American parents, there are lessons that all parents can gain understanding from in their parenting role. Parenting is complex for every parent. What is clear is parents want to be the best parent they can be for their children.

Black/African American parents encounter challenges with society's ills of race and racism. In facing these challenges, this researcher proposed that through parent education

programs, Black/African American parents should be given additional knowledge in three primary areas:

- critical knowledge of the importance of child development during early years, ages zero to three, emphasizing brain and social-emotional development
- fortification of pride, identity, and self-esteem of Black/African American people by providing knowledge of historical and cultural accounts of contributions made from the African diaspora to the development of this country omitted from educational institutions resulting in miseducation regarding the Black/African American experience
- provision of strategies Black/African American parents can implement to give them a voice in the conversations, including “the talk” with their children, prepares them for the overt and covert racism of systemic racism

Chapter Two relied on various resources to cover these three prongs. Although the information found through research provided valuable information to support the thesis, it is clear to this researcher that more study and data are needed to ensure Black/African American parents know research areas to be more effective in their roles. The other void discovered was the need to develop parent education programs with pedagogy that provides critical knowledge in preparing parents to assist their children in facing racial realism that continues to find Black/African American children at the bottom of the well (Bell, 1993). Black/African American parents seek to respond to the question: “Are the children well?” with an affirmative answer: “Yes, the children are well.”

CHAPTER THREE

Qualitative Meta-Synthesis Supporting Parent Education

The previous chapters provided information regarding the need for a study of parent education programs for Black/African American parents in American urban centers whose agendas include three prongs: (1) knowledge of early childhood with an emphasis on brain and social-emotional development, (2) knowledge of contributions past and present of Black/African American to the history and development of this country, and (3) knowledge of strategies for parents to use in preparation to assist Black/African American children in navigating through systemic racism in America. The theoretical framework of critical race theories justified looking at the issue through these lenses. This chapter further served to expand upon the need for parent education programs with substantive content. It also explained using qualitative meta-synthesis as the selected research methodology for exploring focus in the three-prong knowledge areas, reinforcing the parent-child dynamic's influence on combating racism in addressing the central research question. Finally, the researcher's positionality statement shed light on personal experiences that compelled this research study.

Research Problem Statement

The problem statement guiding this research centered on whether Black/African American parents are provided critical information from parent education programs about the foundational role in developing their children's lives from inception forward? The postulation is that three areas are essential for Black/African American parents in strengthening their parenting knowledge and skills.

- Parents must know about early childhood with an emphasis on brain development and social-emotional development.
- Parents must know about the rich history and culture of Black/African Americans omitted from educational systems from grade school through universities.
- Parents must know about strategies needed to share with their children to navigate systems of racism they will face in the world throughout their lives.

Researcher's Positionality Statement

Overlaying this snapshot of my positionality statement was to assist in understanding my selection of the research question for this dissertation. As a person sensitive to the human condition, I started my journey in the Doctor of Liberal Studies program with the desire to be a conduit to assist young children in being kinder, respectful, caring, and accepting individuals. My resolve continued through the courses taken, the research, and writing completed in the required 36 hours program. The doctoral coursework has inspired my decision to focus on programs that create supportive systems for Black/African American families in America. The focus on Black/African American families led to my doctoral dissertation that drawing on interdisciplinary treatments of race and racism and synthesizes scholarly literature to address the intersectionality of race, class, and gender and their impact on parents and their influence on their children. The elimination of racism has not happened, but knowing how to navigate it will help assuage the fear and confusion that exists and continues to grow in this nation.

I intend to share some of my personal stories to hope that someone may be inspired, knowing that nothing should prevent parents or their children from being the best they can be. It is not an easy world for persons endowed with melanin. I have witnessed the same reaction to brown skin in many places and on several continents. It has never been, and it seemingly will

never be easy living while Black/African American. However, what is true is there are examples of people who look like us that overcame the ignorance of racism. There are opportunities for parents and children to forge ahead and remain firm in their sense of self to overcome any adversity. Ours is to draw on our strengths to overcome that which tries to defeat us. As Baldwin (1960) said: *It took many years of vomiting up all the filth I'd been told about myself, and half-believed before I was able to walk on the earth as though I had the right to be here.* (para 39) These words speak to the impetus for my interests in offering strategies to help Black/African American parents navigate systemic racism. The current state of America causes me to be more determined to do something to raise awareness in Black/African American parents rather than sit back and be frustrated and enraged.

In reflecting on my growth years and experiences with my parents, I learned what was possible. Although I do not know of a perfect family, mine was perfect for me. I know I experienced many things that provided the foundation that supported the development of my character and values. I want children to have some of the opportunities I had due to the direct connections I had with my parents. My relationship with my parents provided me knowledge and encouragement that assisted me in being the person I am today. I learned I could be anything I wanted to be and that there were no obstacles that I should allow to cause me to lose sight of my goals. I had only to imagine and dream and know that all things are possible.

I grew up in a family of five. There were my parents, two older brothers, and me. As the youngest and only girl, you can imagine the protection and love I received. My Daddy, Aquilla, called me "Daughter," and my brothers called me "D." To my Mom, Maurine, I was Diane, and sometimes she called me my middle name, Renefenet. I knew if something that I did not please her, I would hear my full name. Being called by one's full name is an experience

that many children remember. My parents built a house for us in a neighborhood in North Dallas known as Elm Thicket, one of several areas in Dallas known as Freedman's Town. It was a Black/African American area of Dallas that was almost as far North as its development in the 1950s. Our neighborhood had the only Black/African American golf course. There were doctors, schoolteachers, a jazz musician, a nurse, and several domestic workers for very wealthy White people on our street. My Daddy worked for one of the affluent White families for over 50 years.

Additionally, to make extra money, he had his own landscape business. My Daddy took care of our family. My Mom was able to be a housewife. She was at home with us and ensured that we were schooled, involved in many activities at church and school, participated in chores around the house, and monitored our homework. They bought a piano so that I could take private piano lessons in our home. Piano lessons were given to me weekly by a White man, Bertrand T. Wheatley. My Mom insisted that I practiced piano every day in preparation for Mr. Wheatley. She listened to my practicing, and you would have thought she was the piano teacher because she could tell if I played a piece wrong. She would have me play it again or replay the phrase that I did not play well. Piano lessons enhanced my interest in the arts. My parents were creative, and we attended many arts events and venues, even in segregation. The piano lessons continued from the age of 4 to 17 years. Can I play today – not really. It was good discipline, though!

My brothers had their activities. My older brother, Elston, was fifteen years older than me. When I was three years old, he went away to Southern University, a historically Black/African American college in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to pursue his interest in becoming a dentist. That left me and my brother, Michael, a year and a half older than me, at home. We attended kindergarten. My parents believed in educating their children, and we started learning

very early at home. As it was called then versus pre-school as it is now, kindergarten was a big part of our development. We looked forward to being picked up at our house by Mr. Figures on the church school bus. When we arrived at school, our teachers were there as we deboarded. We had most of the day in school with lessons, reading, rhyming, learning numbers and songs, walking to a nearby park to play. I loved my teacher, Mrs. Walker! I just wanted to stay by her side all the time. At the end of the school day, we boarded the church school bus for home. Mom was there when we arrived. My brothers participated in scouting, choir, sports, ROTC, and of course, church activities. Our family was busy and involved. My Mom ensured that we did our homework, and she was always available to be a parent who assisted at our schools with PTA, school events, and parent-teacher conferences. Teachers and principals knew my mother, and my mother knew them. We would see many of these adults not only at school but also as neighbors and church members. The neighborhood culture was the setting from kindergarten through high school. Our village was vast and consistent. We had no opportunity to misbehave because someone was always watching. We also were told by our parents, "Remember who you are. Do not embarrass our family."

Additionally, we heard from our parents, schoolteachers, and administrators that we were excellent, and we could do and be whatever we chose. We were exposed to literature by Black/African American writers, poetry, music, and dance. Memorizing poetry and verse was part of our development. My parents provided books for us to read and learn poetry. The exposure we had to fine arts via books at home and in the library was impactful. We enjoyed theatre performances, heard symphonies, operas, jazz, and gospel, and visited museums. My parents ensured our exposure to many opportunities through summer camps and visits with relatives in different states.

I share these experiences provided by my parents, not to brag or overemphasize my developmental experiences, but as an example of what parents can do for children who know that positive experiences and environments are critical to a child's development. When I grew up in segregated Dallas, parents like mine were determined to ensure that their children had the best they could provide. Although our parents sheltered us from the ugliness of racism, we knew and heard the underlying message to let nothing or no one make us feel that we could not do and be whatever we wanted to do because of the color of our skin.

Not only did we receive the message of staying focused on our dreams at home, but we also received this message at school. I will never forget those positive affirmations from our teachers and principals.

Dr. John Leslie Patton, Jr. was our high school principal who led the school in Dallas in 1892 for Black/African Americans. The school remains today and bears the name Booker T. Washington. Attending that high school provided excellent teachers who were intentional on students succeeding in school and life. However, Patton also cared about our success. He wrote a book, provided a curriculum, and taught Black/African American history. He wanted us to know who we were as a people even though we were unaware of the omission of our stories from our torn and tattered textbooks handed down from White schools. As a result, there was Black/African American pride instilled in us. Our charge was to remember that we had to work twice as hard to be our best to compete in American society,

I faced situations of racism growing up in Jim Crow segregation. I had to ride in the back of the bus. Some stores would not permit entry, and if it were possible to enter, we could not try on clothes. Bathrooms and water fountains were separate and too often disgustingly nasty, and therefore, I refused to use them. There was one time, at the age of 11 or 12, that I decided to see

what the difference was between the White-water fountain and the Black/African American, *aka* Colored water fountain. I was with friends in a department store. I told them I would taste the water with a sign that read, “For Whites Only,” which was next to the water fountain marked with a sign that read, “For Colored Only.”

My friends stood by and watched and warned me that a security person was standing nearby. I walked to the “For Whites Only” fountain and walked up the steps to take a drink. I turned the handle and leaned down to get a sip of the water. As I took a sip, the security guard came over and said, “You are not to drink from that fountain.” I got down and said, “I just wanted to see what was different.” I joined my friends, and he did not pursue me any further. I could not tell the difference in the taste of the water. The only difference was the appearance of the water fountain itself. The one marked “For Colored Only” was not as clean, and it was not as new. I told my parents about my experience, and they were visibly concerned. They gave me “the talk” about different treatment for Black/African American folk and how we had to be careful. They hoped one day we would not be faced with that kind of separatism and discrimination. They were fighting for a change in the treatment of Black/African Americans. It was then that I decided I needed to join the fight against different treatment. I started sitting at the front of the bus when I got on. There were no White people on the bus at the beginning of my bus line. So, I reasoned, why should I go to the rear of the bus? The bus driver would say, “You know when the bus starts to pick up other people, you will need to move to the back.” I was compliant but wondered when would rules like that end. It was not until I was in college in the mid-'60s that I began to sense a change. I continued to communicate with my parents about my experiences at a predominately White undergraduate college. It was not always easy, but it never is for those of us with more melanin in our skin.

I want Black/African American parents and their children to know that regardless of how things are better regarding the absence of signs designating division between races, racism still exists. It is not something we can ignore or pretend that does not exist. It plays out daily, and through media, we witness the sting and tragedy of racism. Therefore, I hope to assist Black/African American parents in being armed with strategies that will benefit them in helping to raise the awareness of their children. In doing so that they will not fall victim to racism by being deterred by the inequalities that continue to exist in America.

Drawing on personal narratives about some experiences that have been impactful on the journey that shaped my life may assist in creating an understanding of why the topic is so important to me. As a Black/African American person living through various periods of civil and human rights denials, the teachings and behavior of significant persons in my life helped to protect me. It provided the resilience, not deterrence, in seeking to realize any dream I could imagine. The strength of hope that remains instilled in me is the foundation on which I continue to push forward toward my goals. It is that strength that I pass on to my children and their children.

Although my children live differently, I am proud of their values, and those poured into their children. They understand the significance of education. It is a value that threads through our family. Each child has a degree, two have master's degrees, and one child has a doctorate. Their children are excelling in school and are finding their paths in determining their purpose. They are leaders, honor students, creative, caring, and giving children. They see the need to right the wrongs perpetrated on people of color and participate in movements promoting social justice. We are carrying the legacy of our parents and ancestors before us. We are prideful

people, and we have too many role models that revealed that we cannot and will not have anyone or anything deter us from that which we seek.

In that spirit of not turning back, I seek to provide Black/African American parents who feel defeated by unjust systems that they too will be able to reach whatever goals they set for themselves. This mindset is key to helping Black/African American parents because they need to be stalwart in providing their children with survival strategies. When Black/African American parents think they do not have what it takes to guide their children, I want them to know they do have what is necessary. If they can show their child or children love as they reach for their dreams, they will create a positive environment and experience for them that will be the basis of causing the family to push forward. Pressing forward is the strength of parenting! Pressing forward is the strength of family! Pressing forward is why we are still here as resilient people!

Application of Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is the interpretive framework for this study. Referencing the CRT assisted in understanding inequities that befall children of color, Black/African American children. As listed by Delgado (1995), one of the originators of CRT, among the attributes of critical race scholars the following:

- (1) insistence on “naming our reality”;
- (2) the belief that knowledge and ideas are powerful;
- (3) a readiness to question basic premises of moderate/incremental civil rights law;
- (4) the borrowing of insights from social science on race and racism;
- (5) critical examination of the myths and stories powerful groups use to justify racial subordination;
- (6) a more contextualized treatment of doctrine;
- (7) criticism of liberal legalisms; and
- (8) an interest in structural determinism—how legal tools and thought-structures can impede law reform.

Ladson-Billings (1998) saw the need to introduce CRT into education for the same reasons the theory was influential in the legal sphere that racism is a norm in American society and impacts every system. As racism foundationally creates oppression in this nation, it necessitates those Black/African American parents are not blinded. They must obtain strategies to assist them in preparing to aid their children to navigate through systemic racism whenever and however it presents itself. As one principal originator of CRT, Bell (1995) clarified that critical race theorists sought a specific, more egalitarian situation. They sought to empower and include views traditionally excluded. He further argued that the focus for American educational systems should be on improving the quality of education provided by Black/African American students. The belief in collective wisdom compelled the push for the idea of all-inclusiveness.

This compulsion influenced a pedagogical process called Critical Race Parenting (CRP), a strategy to engage the dyad between parents and children to learn how to deal with race and racism. Matias (2016b) saw this as a process to have parents and children gain an opportunity to understand the reality of racial rhetoric to demystify messages regarding race. The discussions between parents and children through CRP were important ones to have and were encouraged through CRP.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) identifies this lack of inclusion in education as deliberately racist. To exclude contributions of any group from the history of a country is to disregard who they are. Exclusion ensures that Black/African American people are not in a position as equals. Critical race theorists acknowledge racism as integral in the life, law, and culture of the United States. As postulated by Crenshaw et al., 1996, in their compilation of writings about CRT, and it is still true today, racism's integral nature and inequalities are rooted in the history and legacy of racism. CRT challenges racial oppression in legal, institutional, and educational domains by

questioning the positionality and privilege of Whiteness and the legacy of racial discrimination and exclusion (Crenshaw et al., 1996). The challenge is critical to address because the tenets of racism through omission of salient history impact how parents relate to their children and their way of being. Black/African American parents who have a sense of self that reinforces the quest for knowledge and the assurance that learning takes place may not always be prominent.

Black/African American parents exercise their agency to ensure the teaching they seek for their children reflects positive images broader than the limited history presented based on Whites' decisions which reinforce inferiority (Selig, 2008).

Goals of the Study

The primary goal of this study was to identify components of parent education programs that have been effective for Black/African American families. This researcher argued that parent education programs in early learning centers could be an avenue to assist Black/African American parents in gaining knowledge about child development, history and culture, and strategies for teaching children how to overcome racism. Parents need to have a stronger sense of self and identity, which will fortify them in gaining knowledge that will impact how they parent. Critical Race Parenting (CRP) is the lens that focuses on holding parents accountable in choosing what is right over what is comfortable. It is in preparation for the resilience and ethical commitment necessary to have conversations with their children about race and act on their behalf (DePouw, 2018).

Specific goals of the study included:

- presenting a clear account to parents of why the early years, ages zero to age three of a child's life are critically important to development and learning was crucial

- guiding the narrative regarding the historical accounts of contributions made from the African diaspora to the development of this country had a lasting impact to fortify the pride and self-images of Black/African American people
- highlighting strategies Black/African American parents can implement to give them a voice in the conversations and “the talk” with their children to prepare them for the overt and covert racism

If opening the conversation about race and racism will allay fears that have prevented people, seasoned and young, from discussing and addressing these issues headon, this project will have accomplished its mission and added knowledge to what it is to be human. The study design created a forum for meaningful dialogue with results to show that Black/African American parents are open to accepting new and additional information about child development, their history and culture, and acquiring strategies to navigate through inequality systems. Parents’ willingness to receive information through seminars and discussions in schools, churches, hospitals, early learning centers, and wherever parents are open to learning spaces made available to them will be evident by their participation.

Central Research Questions

Two central research questions (RQs) guided this research study. Additionally, further emphasis on components needed to ensure better that Black/African American parents have cognitive intelligence to better assist in the development of their children.

The central research questions were:

RQ1: How will Black/African American parents be strengthened in parenting knowledge by receiving information through parent education programs emphasizing child development with foci on the brain and social-emotional development; historical and cultural contributions of

Black/African Americans to the development of this country; and learning strategies to assist them in guiding their children in overcoming adversities of systemic racism?

RQ2: What strategies will Black/African American parents need to assist them with implementation to protect their children from mental and emotional harm as they journey through life in a society that is not always welcoming to those who are non-white?

Through these central research questions, additional information was garnered regarding mechanisms to support Black/African American parents to create equitable opportunities for their children. By identifying strategies that are useful to Black/African American parents in knowing ways to navigate systemic racism, they will be better able to ensure the protection and survival of their children. Additionally, these strategies will assist in protecting parents and children from mental and emotional harm as they journey through life in a society that is not always welcoming to non-White.

Research Methodology

This doctoral dissertation utilized the qualitative meta-synthesis approach to generate a theory regarding effective programs to assist Black/African American parents and families in navigating systems of inequality. Finfgeld-Connett (2018) asserts that meta-synthesis caused views “to have the potential to guide decision-making and actional in real-world situations” (p. 2). There are three types of meta-syntheses, including meta-ethnography, meta-study, and qualitative research synthesis. Meta-ethnography best describes this doctoral dissertation with the goal of “synthesizing qualitative findings across investigations to create new holistic interpretations” (p. 3).

The Rationale for Selecting Meta-Synthesis

Qualitative meta-synthesis provides an opportunity to “integrate findings across qualitative studies to discover patterns and common threads within a specific topic or issue” (Erwin et al., 2011, p. 186). The rationale for utilizing qualitative meta-synthesis included increase interest and application of qualitative research over the past decades. As such, qualitative meta-synthesis allowed for a broader approach to evidence-based research, practice, and policy by expanding how knowledge can generate for use. There is a movement in research from the knowledge generated to knowledge application that has become more complicated with growing overloads of information requiring new ways of managing and making sense of an explosion of research findings. Thus, qualitative meta-synthesis is not “an assimilated literature review.” Instead, it is “an interpretation of the findings of selective studies” where the researchers are “actively engaged in complex and in-depth analysis and interpretation of data” (p. 188).

Qualitative meta-synthesis was chosen as the research method because of the human element of the problem addressed. As discussed in previous chapters of this dissertation, to seek to have the three knowledge areas included in parent education programs is paramount to strengthening the knowledge base for Black/African American parents. The research method exposed the need for the three knowledge areas for inclusion in program offerings in parent education programs. Knowledge is vital in preparing parents to be effective as they navigate through systemic racism. This methodology will impact policy and practice regarding parent education programs through whatever means they are delivered. In either case, this is a qualitative meta-synthesis result (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010).

Meta-Synthesis Procedures

Using Erwin et al., (2011) procedures in conducting a qualitative meta-synthesis provided a pathway for gaining knowledge regarding the central question of this dissertation. Using the following procedures:

1. Formulated an apparent research problem and question,
2. conducted a comprehensive search of the literature,
3. conducted careful appraisal of research studies for possible inclusion,
4. selected and worked meta-synthesis techniques to integrate and analyze qualitative research findings,
5. presented synthesis of results,
6. reflected in the process.

Identifying Studies

The central research questions and the three knowledge prongs guided the identification of studies. A key characteristic of qualitative meta-synthesis is the explicit search strategies that account for what is being researched and selecting relevant studies (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010). The provision of detailed information of the audit trail for others to duplicate strategies in their research on this topic. In determining an identification of studies, several critical components are evident: parameters set for obtaining source materials, determining search strings, establishing criteria for inclusion and exclusion, and appraising standards for the quality of studies (Major & Savin-Baden, 2010).

Major and Savin-Baden's suggestion to identified criteria for what studies should be included or excluded in meta-synthesis assisted the decision. The table below outlines the

inclusion criteria for studies selected for the qualitative meta-synthesis. These inclusion criteria are in alignment with the primary research questions for this study.

Table 1 - Inclusion Criteria for Parent Education Studies Reviewed through Qualitative Meta-Synthesis

Criteria	Inclusion
Emphasis on child development with a focus on brain and social-emotional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent education programs • Parent population 50% Black/African American • Program offering include the importance of brain development during the early childhood ages • Program offering include the importance of social-emotional development at early ages
Historical and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans to the development of this country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the history and culture of Black/African Americans to enhance self-image and self-esteem • Exposure to a random sample of Black/African American women past and present in four selected contribution areas to encourage additional research • Parents, especially mothers, learning about the women included in the tables will instill pride • Encourage additional studies of other African Americans and their contributions
Presentation of strategies to assist parents in guiding their children in overcoming adversities of systemic racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies for Black/African American parents to assist them in preparing to share with their children • Strategies to assist with calming parents as they and their children face systemic racism • Knowledge sharing with their children to not instill fear, but courage to not be bullied by the ignorance that racism elevates in others

Documents excluded those that did not offer information to support the criteria for searches related to Black/African American parent education programs whose agenda included the three-prong knowledge areas. Excluded studies were those that did not specify the research methodology. Too often, studies were not inclusive of focus on Black/African American parents but based on the normative standard of Whiteness.

Studies that blurred the lens of race and racism, i.e., Critical Race Theory and Critical Race Parenting, did not contribute to the knowledge of what Black/African American parents needed to be empowered to support their children. Finally, studies excluded those that were quantitative and not qualitative. In conducting research, it was intentional to make exhaustive research of the topic areas. Assistance in ensuring that goal was met, in consultation with the university's research librarians, the following research guides included Education Source, ERIC, APA PsycINFO, Google Scholar, Web of Science, and JSTOR. In addition to searching through research guides, field experts made requests for their input regarding the plan of parent education programs. They considered the three knowledge-prong areas for inclusion in the parent education programs in seeking their feedback.

Specific data sources referred from journal articles and scholarly sources. Most citations were published no earlier than 2000, although relevant academic authorities were dated before 2000 and published in English. The researcher selected studies conducted in the United States with a preference for studies conducted in an urban setting focusing on the Black/African American experience. In addition, studies of other minority groups were considered provided that the findings were transferable to Black/African American families.

Appendix G includes a table that outlines the studies selected for this meta-synthesis. This table consists of the essential elements of all studies included in the meta-synthesis, including sample, setting, methods, data collection, validity, positioning of the researcher, and central themes/concepts identified by authors. Using the format adopted from the model from Major and Savin-Baden (2010), additional information in the table includes the study's title, the abstract, and the conclusion cited in the journal reference.

Table 2 below indicates the number of studies identified and included in the meta-synthesis by criteria established for this study.

Table 2: Number of Studies Identified vs. Included in Meta-Synthesis

Criteria	Number Identified	Number Included
Emphasis on child development with a focus on brain development and social-emotional development	11	4
Historical and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans to the development of this country	7	4
Implementing strategies to assist parents in guiding their children in overcoming adversities of systemic racism	9	4

Data Analysis, Synthesis, and Interpreting Findings

In providing guidance for data analysis, synthesis, and interpreting the findings of this study, the researcher followed four significant steps. These steps include the following:

1. Beginning the process:
 - a. Determining what to consider data
 - b. Making a comparison of studies
 - c. Positioning the studies
 - d. Identifying the findings
2. Analysis
 - a. Finding the themes that connect the studies
 - b. Ordering themes according to priority
3. Synthesis
 - a. Synthesizing data across studies
 - b. Ordering second-order themes

4. Interpretation
 - a. Interpreting data across studies
 - b. Ordering third order themes

Data Validity and Transferability

Validity strategies used in evaluating the studies chosen included several as discussed in work by Creswell and Miller (2000). The validity definition provided clarity to their function, discussion, and use in selected strategies outlined by Creswell and Miller (2000. Researcher Reflexivity (p. 127) – the lens of the researcher used to provide self-disclosure regarding personal beliefs, assumptions, and biases. It is the expectation that the researcher reveals preferences and ideas early in the research process to expose the reader to the position taken and aid their understanding of the social, cultural, and historical impact that influences the interpretation of the studies.

1. Audit Trail (p. 128) – permits documentation for the basis of all research decisions and activities. It considers the process the researcher uses to identify studies to determine their trustworthiness. Steps in identifying studies assist auditors should they wish to examine the process for credibility.
2. Peer Debriefing (p. 129) – provides the opportunity to review the research process with someone familiar with the research project. Having open discussions with selected others is valuable to the researcher because of the support and challenges they offer to the researcher. The push they give helps to crystalize the researchers' thinking and enhances the credibility of the outcome.

Summary

This chapter sought to identify research on the topic of Black/African American parent education emphasizing three-prong areas: child development with an emphasis on brain and social-emotional development; the influence of history and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans to the development of the United States; and strategies that Black/African American parents can implement to assist children in navigating systems of inequalities. Although the topic is specific to Black/African American parents, it has ramifications for parents of all races and ethnicities and other social identities that can assist parents in developing socially aware and prideful children as they journey through life. Children are essential to the future of this country, and it is incumbent on those who have the privilege and distinction of imprinting them to apply very sound knowledge to aid in their development. The parent's role is crucial. The parent is broadly defined and is not limited to the biological parent but includes anyone who influences guiding a child's life.

Using the steps advised by Erwin et al. (2011), this researcher gained knowledge to address the central research question: How will Black/African American parents be strengthened in parenting knowledge by receiving information through parent education programs emphasizing child development with foci on the brain and social-emotional development; historical and cultural contributions of Black/African American to the development of this country; and learning strategies to assist them in guiding their children in overcoming adversities of systemic racism? The studies of focus are listed and further analyzed in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings

*Our children's lives matter! Our parents' knowledge of parenting matters!
To merge the two is essential to the survival of both!
– drmiles, 2020*

Children and parents hold special meanings to the human experience. What cares for is valued. To care means time and investment ensures the best protection and is appreciated. In this world, to do less for children is a travesty. Children must know and feel they are loved, cared for, made to feel safe, meet their needs, and have opportunities to grow and develop to be influential adults in making the world a better place for themselves and others.

Black/African American children expect being children. To best ensure the future of Black/African American children, their parents must understand the significance of their role. It is major! Not unlike the responsibility of parents of other ethnic groups, there are added dimensions to the Black/African American parenting experience that different ethnic groups will not experience. The added dimensions of Black/African American parenting were reasons for the focus of this dissertation.

What Black/African Americans have faced this country since being brought as Africans to these shores even before Virginia in 1619 and enslaved initiated new dimensions to their lives. Experiences positioned the captured as “less than” by controllers because of the darker hue of their skin. This realization created efforts to combat systems of inequality fought today. These stories of combating inequalities to survive and make life better have been told and retold for their children. The resilience and strength of their ancestors have provided models of

courage to go forth—survival of parents and children matters. Survival was one of the compelling reasons for this study.

Problem Statement

The problem addressed in this study centered on the search for parent education programs whose programmatic emphasis provides significant knowledge to Black/African American parents. Teaching parents about child development, history and culture of Black/African Americans, and strategies for parents to assist in preparing their children to navigate in a world that is not always kind to them, is the goal. The role of parenting gains strength by including these three knowledge prongs to ignite the parents' role in the child's developmental process. A logical place for parental learning is early learning centers, although parent education through other venues, including online courses, is possible. However, learning opportunities present themselves; parents must take advantage of learning for their betterment and the betterment of their children.

Parent-child relationships have been made stronger through parenting classes and seminars. Studies emphasize the importance of learning about early childhood development and the impact of learning for both the child and the parent. Fostering children's early education learning may encourage parents to strengthen their role modeling to support their children's learning. Parental education raised expectations as a byproduct, and their education has been advanced (Chase-Lansdale & Brooks-Gunn, 2014). If early education learning is encouraged and results in a stronger relationship between child and parent, it is the content of parenting programs and seminars that requires examining. Whatever is being offered and taught to parents should be information that will enhance the knowledge and skills of parents to assist them in providing emphasis to positive child development. Although there are parent education

programs that support families' learning about children and their behaviors, the challenge was to find those programs that offered the three-prong areas of knowledge emphasized in this study. Those three areas of expertise will strengthen the program and the parents in their quest to be the best parents they can be to their children.

Research Questions

Two central research questions focused on the discussion. The research used the meta-synthesis method to obtain answers. Through this method, ethnographic narratives found within the studies provided insight into the thinking of Black/African American parents. In the main, the parent most often included in the studies was the mother. Her awareness lent itself to determine that it could be a source for reinforcing topics needed to fortify program offerings in parent education programs.

RQ1: How will Black parents be strengthened in parenting knowledge by receiving information through parent education programs emphasizing child development with foci on the brain and social-emotional development; historical and cultural contributions of African American/Black to the development of this country; and learning strategies to assist them in guiding their children in overcoming adversities of systemic racism?

RQ2: What strategies will Black parents need to assist them with implementation to protect their children from mental and emotional harm as they journey through life in a society that is not always welcoming to those who are non-white?

These central research questions guided the research and examination of the content of the selected studies. Just as the studies needed to focus on Black/African American parents, it was also essential to know the effect of parenting on children and the lasting effects as the children developed into adults. The narratives shared in the studies gave further evidence of the

acute effects of parenting. The studies also reinforced parents' interest in acquiring knowledge that will assist them in being better parents. Through confirmation presented in the literature, researchers revealed the need to continue to provide Black/African American parents venues to obtain knowledge. Ensuring the inclusion of the three-prong knowledge areas presented throughout this dissertation in the parenting programs is challenging.

The researcher argued that one of the more direct avenues for parents to receive additional knowledge is through parent education programs offered through early learning centers. Parents who seek to identify early learning centers for their children should raise questions regarding parent education program offerings. An evidence-based educational program robust in its programmatic emphasis for children at young ages is paramount. Parents should expect to be engaged in the learning process and the learning center environment or other educational venues.

Emergent Themes

The thematic analysis applied to qualitative data to discover thematic codes from topics, ideas, and meaning patterns resulted in eight reviews. The themes identified and discussed list in priority order based on the researcher's findings to support the three prong knowledge areas in addressing Black/African American parents. Each theme was analyzed and supported by codes and exemplar quotes from study participants as revealed in the research.

These themes transcend each of the three-prong knowledge areas. In discussing the three-prong knowledge areas, each prong's themes' impact is identified and reinforced by the dissertation's studies and literature review. Quotes from study participants gave further credence to the themes. What resulted is the need for additional support for parents in the learning process to ensure that their young children are supported and cared for in their development. With the

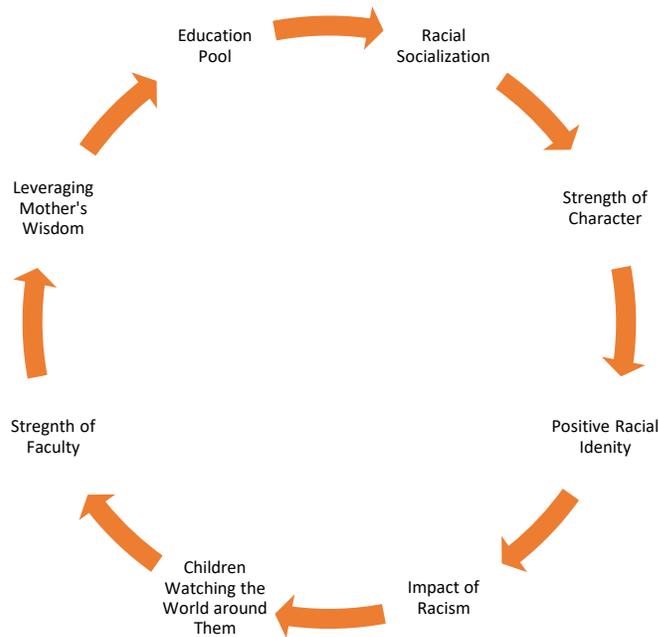
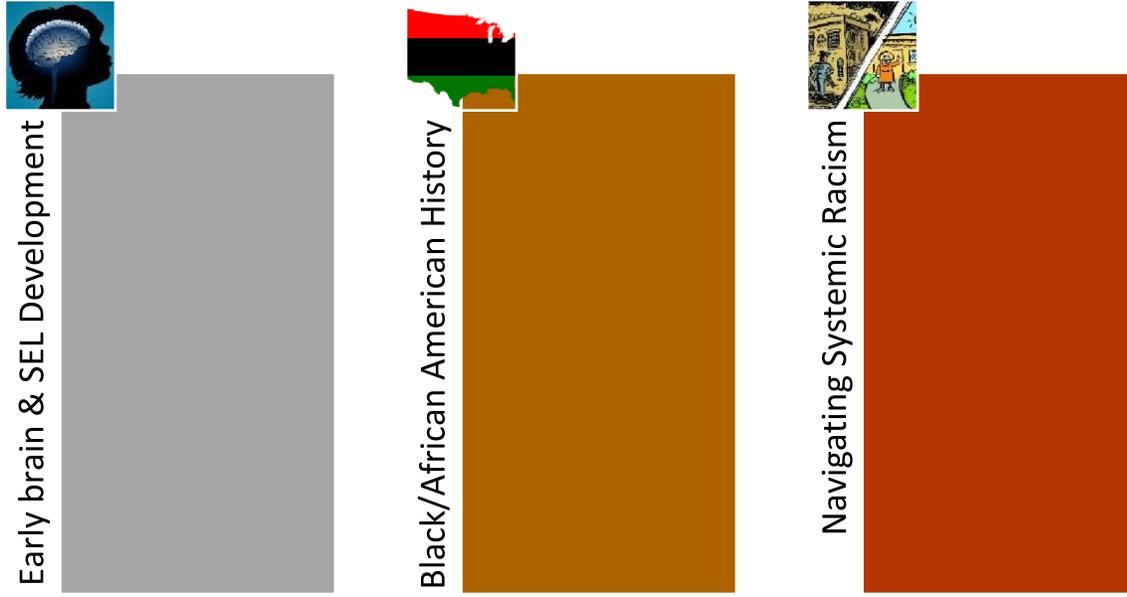
three-prong knowledge areas, it was the submission of the researcher that Black/African American parents will gain knowledge and skills needed to realize the goal of better parenting.

- **The Strength of Family** – is inclusive of all configurations of family units.
- **Leveraging the Mother’s Impact on the Family Unit** – the mother’s knowledge, and those who assume the mothering role, can impact the necessity of the family unit in supporting the development of children.
- **Education Pool** – the value of education and its impact on the tie that binds families.
- **Racial Socialization** – a process that parents use to teach their children how to respect Black/African American identity.
- **Strength of Character** – characteristics that are important to strengthen the identity and self-esteem of parents that they can model for their children.
- **Positive Racial Identity** – factors instilled in Black/African American parents and children revealing models of persons who have succeeded in contributing to the development of the United States.
- **Racism’s Impact** – evidence that racism is alive and well in this country, and in overt and covert ways, impacts the lives of Black/African American people.
- **Children Watching** – the awareness that children may not listen to what is said, but they observe and take in what they see.

The studies cited reinforced these themes and quotes from participants in the studies and gave credence to the themes that emerged. In connecting the three-prong knowledge areas to the qualitative studies and literature reviewed in Chapter Two, there was a synchronous connection to the themes depicted in Figure 2 below. The discussion that follows captures some of the key

findings from studies and literature review, supporting the importance of the eight themes that emerged.

Figure 2: Three Prongs of Knowledge with Emerging Themes to Prepare Parents



Prong One: Knowledge of Early Childhood Emphasizing Brain and Social-Emotional Development

Of the eight themes that emerged from the qualitative studies, the following five themes were most impactful as they related to the critical importance of early child development: the strength of family, leveraging the mother's impact on the family, education pool, racial socialization, and strength of character. These specific themes are critical in the child's developmental years as they affect early experiences for healthy brain and social-emotional development affected by human touch and loving support. Research is clear that a child's earliest years are the most crucial. The period between conception and age three is critically important to developing a healthy brain (Fox et al., 2010). It is those years in which a child has all the brain cells they will have for the rest of their lives (Rakic, 2006). The brain creates more synapses, that small gap between two nerve cells that help nerve impulses pass from one to another, than is needed between the ages of 2 and 3 years old and more than twice as many as it will have in adult life (Huttenlocher, 2002). It is the connections between these cells that make the brain work. Brain development in early childhood is crucially important and can have effects that last throughout a lifetime. Black/African American parents' understanding of the timeline and critical value of the brain and social-emotional development will assist parents in taking care of their young in those early years.

Theme One – Strength of Family

In the Black/African American community, family always included other mothers, “women who assist blood mothers by sharing mothering responsibilities” (Collins, 1990, p. 119), extended family, and fictive kin. This network of relationships was necessary for the

survival of the Black/African American family and spoke to the roots of African descendants in the Diaspora (Collins, 1990).

I did have a play mamma that I could talk to. She used to live across the street from us and sometimes I would go and talk to her. She was real nice, and I use to pretend she was my mother and [that] I could stay with her anytime I wanted to . . . Whenever I go home, I go to see her. I'll go see her before I go see my own mamma (Gichia, 2000, p. 92).

Families influence a child's coping behaviors through three avenues: socialization of coping, parental modeling, or establishing a supportive, cohesive, and structured family environment (Everet et al., 2016).

Counterbalancing the Eurocentric perspective necessitates understanding family processes within Black/African American families and other ethnic minority families. Highlighting the developmental tasks and methodologies particular to Black African/American families and their children open new perspectives on parenting (Hughes et al., 2006a). It is the strength of families that will reinforce the healthy brain and social-emotional development of children. As evident by the responses of Black/African American mothers participating in the studies, there is an understanding of the importance of early childhood brain development (Webb et al., 2015).

In the first years, the baby's brain is growing at an incredible rate. The more stimulation the baby has, the quicker he learns. It is important to read to your child because it helps them with their brain. Reading the same book repeatedly and repeating it helps their brain get stronger and understand more (Webb et al., p. 119).

Theme Two – Leveraging the Mother’s Impact on the Family

Some mothers patterned their family based on the family structure they experienced as a child. In contrast, others seek to improve the family patterns they experienced after being exposed to new ideas and lifestyles (Gichia, 2000). “I try to keep clean and be the best I can. . . I don’t ever want my children to come up as I did” (Gichia, 2000, p. 91). Although preparation for motherhood was diverse, mothers drew on internal reserves and assimilated principles about successful ways to mothers based on what they considered valid and adjusted according to their circumstances (Gichia, 2000).

Black/African American mothers are more likely to engage in positive emotional talk. It is a cultural tradition. Mothers are available to listen, which promotes open parent child communication (McKee et al., 2015). “Because we communicate a lot so I don’t ever want to act not interested in what he’s saying because one day we may not have that open communication” (McKee et al., 2015, p. 643). Mothers reinforce the need for positive experiences for children in their development which is the cornerstone of Black/African American interactional style known as emotion-relevant parenting behavior (ERP). Transmitting values around emotions impacts children at different ages (McKee et al., 2015).

Theme Three – Education Pool

Evidence of understanding the brain that mothers revealed in their comments resulted from their participation in parent education on the brain through a curriculum, “Touch, Talk, Read, Play,” offered to low-income mothers (Webb et al., 2015). These results also gave further testimony to the value of parent education. Practitioners are working with Black/African American families to develop culturally sensitive parenting programs to enhance their responses to positive effects in parent-child relationships (Metzger et al., 2013). Parent

education programs are imperative. The content must be considered to influence programs that speak to an understanding of Black/African American parents and those who work with them. “I’m not my mother, so I’m getting these [toys and books] for my child to make sure his brain develops good so when he gets older, he will be able to read” (Webb et al., p. 120).

Theme Four - Racial Socialization

Through social-emotional development, Black/African American families must submit to the challenge of racial socialization. To address this challenge at an early age is vital, as argued by Kendi (2020) *Anti-Racist Baby*, a picture book primer written as he thought about explaining to his four-year daughter about being anti-racist. Kendi understands the research that indicates that by two years old, children are already consuming racist ideas. They already decide whom to play with based on a child’s skin color (Derman-Sparks et al., 2020). Parents need to be prepared to discuss race early in a child’s life versus later when it may be a lost cause. Black/African American children must understand their own culture, getting along with those in what is known as mainstream society, and deal with racism, prejudice, and discrimination (Phinney & Chavira, 1995).

Theme Five - Strength of Character

Black/African American parents significantly impact a child’s early development years. With the strength of character portrayed by families through their resilience to endure oppression and adversity, it is one characteristic that sustained Black/African Americans. One son expressed intergenerational values told to him: “Survival of the Black family . . . slavery . . . civil rights . . . whatever happens, the Black family will survive – it is from historically being forced to develop alternative means of survival that we survived” (Mosley-Howard & Evans, 2000, p. 439).

Additionally, the responses from the participants revealed the transmission of self-esteem from generation to generation. They reinforced that one should “feel” their worth and value themselves and their capacity as human beings.

The one good thing I can recall about my mom is she told me that I was just as good as anybody else. And that is something I have always held in my heart. And that I could be anything I wanted to be (Everet et al., p. 343).

Identity is a characteristic that supports how families assist children in developing a sense of self. It aids the self-concept and serves to help understand the influence of role modeling. Children need to see positive role models to assist them in their identity development. Collins submits that role models “foster an early identification. . . which can lead to a greater sense of empowerment. . .” (Bell-Scott et al., 1993, p. 54).

Coping is another characteristic that draws on principles to help manage a situation. One Black/African American mother stated, “You never have these actually learned, like A through Z, lessons on how to cope with life. You go through it, and you watch your aunts; you watch your sister. Like, you just – you learn through other people’s example” (Everet et al., p. 346).

Social-emotional development requires competencies in five areas to promote equity and excellence in children, according to research by Weissberg et al. (2015). Those five areas are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Ensuring parents’ intervention to assist children and themselves transformed by these competency areas is key to their growth and development.

Prong Two: Knowledge of the Rich History and Cultural Contributions of Black/African Americans to the Development of this Country

Of the eight themes that emerged from the qualitative studies, each impacted the critical importance of parents knowing the historical and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans in developing the United States of America. Understanding the historical and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans in the development of this country is grounded in the themes that emerged from the qualitative studies. To push for the inclusion of Black/African American contributions and accomplishments to correct the exclusion of the rich history and culture of people of African descent is keenly vital for families in sharing a more accurate story of how America became America. Since for too long, the omission of these contributions from history books and school curriculum, facts shared through parent education and presentation through early learning venues are imperative. Scholars mentioned in this dissertation, including DuBois, Woodson, Akbar, Edelman, Gates, and others, have reiterated the actual stories. The clarion cry stated that contributions through history and culture of individuals of African descent to the United States and the world are significant and worth sharing (Webb-Johnson & Rochon, 2005).

Those indoctrinated through education systems in this country received the knowledge of just one group. Through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT), the view is deliberately racist. To omit critical facts of history limits the knowledge that parents can share with their children. For children's sake, Black/African American parents must provide an accurate understanding of history and culture to share with their children to instill pride in both parents and children.

Theme One – Strength of Family

The family has a significant role in demonstrating the significance of relationships in the Black/African American family. The family lays the foundation for learning what is essential to the family, including traditions, culture, history, habits, interactions, and expectations.

Black/African American parents want their children to learn. The dissemination of family traditions is a significant avenue to transmit culture, building identity and interpersonal connections (Mosley-Howard & Evans, 2000).

Being connected to a family and a community beyond my family is important. I now recognize the importance of knowing family history and communicating that to my children. I understand why my mother would take me to my great-grandmother's house (Mosley-Howard & Evans, 2000, p. 442).

Mosley-Howard and Evans continued discussions regarding intergenerational interaction: the direct or indirect interaction between grandparent, parent, and child creates a shared sense of responsibility, power, accountability for family survival, and enhanced knowledge of strategies for family success. A village environment in which all contribute to the growth of others is the result of such relationships (p. 442).

In considering the influence of the strength of the Black/African American family, it is essential not to overlook the father. Both fathers and mothers strongly influenced a child's self-esteem. Although statistics report the father as often absent in the Black/African American family, studies reveal the strong influence on a child's self-esteem when present. Good fathers were a source of inspiration and support (Byrd & Shavers, 2013). "He is deceased now, but he was great. He would say, 'If nobody don't love you, I do'" (p. 256).

Theme Two – Leveraging the Mother’s Impact on the Family

Mothers have a crucial role in the family. Much of the teaching, modeling, and communicating to the child comes from the mother, especially in single-parent homes, primarily solo mom households. Mothers also are sought to provide emotional support and advice on coping with discrimination, racism, and sexism (Byrd & Shavers, 2013). Mothers are strong, and studies show that 71% of Black/African American women look to their mothers as role models and want to be like them (Byrd & Shavers, 2013). “My mother was a wonderful mother. I depended on her for all my needs. She was my best friend” (p. 256).

Research has shown that Black/African American mothers are most prevalent in deficient wealth families. Livingston’s (2018) study reveals single-parent households had increased from 13% in 1968 to 32% in 2017. Of those households, 58% of Black children live in single-parent homes, with 47% with a solo mom.

Theme Three – Education Pool

This theme encapsulates the focus of prong two. The education target pushes for correction of fractured and omission of facts related to Black/African Americans contributions and accomplishments that ensured the development of this country that became known as the United States of America. Without the inclusion of the Black/African American experience in America’s story, it is an omission that is as vacuous as not including the indigenous people on this soil before colonial settlers came to claim it. It intends to educate Black/African American parents to know their rich and abundant history and share their knowledge with their children and children’s children. Correcting the omission requires research and insisting on having education programs for parents and children to expose them to the complete history of America.

The qualitative studies reinforced the prong regarding this knowledge area. In the study of the Freedom Schools, one of the main objectives was to introduce Black/African American students to history and heritage through a sophisticated cultural program. The program design includes having students learn and then teach one another (Street, 2012). The program was able to motivate Black/African American children by providing history and achievements of their ancestors and current history makers, making it seem they could attain the same in their lives (Sturkey, 2010). It was also crucial in the school that parents had opportunities to be involved in the educational process. Included in the program for parents was information on communication, proper forms of discipline, ways to affirm children, and relieve stress. Resources were available to strengthen the connection between parents and children (Green, 2014).

Theme Four – Racial Socialization

Critical race theorists stress the essentiality of teaching children how to embrace their culture and racial identity in a dominant Eurocentric culture without ‘becoming willing participants in their own subordination’ (Collins, 1990, p. 123). CRT advocates for Black/African American mothers imparting knowledge from parent to children. It is advocates who exercise their agency to ensure that the learning they seek reflects positive images that are broader than the limited history presented based on Whites' decisions, which have served to reinforce inferiority (Selig, 2008). Black/African Americans must take charge of the knowledge imparted to their children through text, classrooms, visual and social media. Parents who fail to advocate subject children to a less-than status. Being exposed to the rich history of their people negates sinking to a low level. DePouw’s 2018 study argues that it is the quest to transform education from omission to admission that is needed to provide Black/African American parents

with knowledge that is affirming as they connect with their children's need for a direct and critical conversation about race.

Theme Five – Strength of Character

To enhance the strength of character, children must know who they are, where they come from, and what their ancestors contributed to this country (Boutte & Strickland, 2008; Wright Edelman, 2005). Studies supported what Woodson (1933) posited when he pushed truthful education. He saw the importance of having parents and children exposed to positive, accurate depictions of Black/African Americans and African history lest they tacitly accept the inferior status bestowed on them by mainstream discourse.

Yosso (2005) attributed resistance capital as a characteristic that would provide knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality through verbal and non-verbal skills. Green (2014) brought forth factors based on Yosso's findings, including aspirational capital as the ability to maintain hopes and dreams despite racial barriers that would assist families in their quest to marshal through inequalities. The site coordinator for the Freedom School stated:

We're looking to help them pinpoint what their purpose is because if I know what I'm for, I am not going to be as easily distracted by gangs, drugs, and just common misbehavior, because I'm focused on something. I have something I'm going after, versus I'm just aimlessly wandering around trying to figure out where I fit. So, anybody can tell me that this is what I am supposed to do because I grew up in this neighborhood, or this is what I'm supposed to do because I come from this type of family (Green, p. 168).

Theme Six – Positive Racial Identity

The racial identity focuses on how a person identifies with a collective racial group (Cross, 1991). Most Black/African Americans identify with other Black/African Americans, supporting the Black/African American pride. For those, race does not influence self-esteem (Byrd & Shavers, 2013).

No, race does not influence my self-esteem, but perception of race can have an influence if a person feels Black is negative. I'm proud of being Black. I don't feel less because of my race. I don't let other people affect how I feel about myself. My self-esteem comes from my family and God (Byrd & Shavers, p. 257).

Black/African Americans have the added responsibility of valuing a dual identity.

DuBois, in 1903, in his seminal work, *The Souls of Black Folk*, called it “double consciousness” (p.9). Most parents teach their children about the complexity of their identity because they are both Black/African and American. As Mosley-Howard and Evans found in their 2000 study, Black/African American families must embrace one's historical family of origin and constantly rediscover themselves within the evolutionary context. Knowing from whence they came leads to a definition of self that is dynamic versus static. With this knowledge, Black/African American families were highly concerned about their children's self-perception, identity, and achievement. Participants in their study were clear on instilling pride in cultural heritage. Their children needed to know the history of African and American heritage and feel pride in both. Having the history of origin created a sense of belonging to this country, and it could help buffer the harmful effects of racism and discrimination. “I want my children to know this country was built from our work too. We fought for this country. They are Black and American both” (Mosley-Howard et al., p. 443).

Theme Seven – Racism’s Impact

As racism is a constant in the fabric of American society, children’s literature does not escape its effect. It is crucial in researching materials to encourage Black/African American parents to screen the literature to know the contents and leanings. Brooks and McNair (2009) examined issues of cultural authenticity focused on speech patterns, values, cultural practices, and perspectives of the accuracy of Black/African Americans portrayed in children’s literature. In children’s literature, researchers consistently found in children’s books, mainly “those written by Whites, the representations of African American protagonists were consistently found to reflect White supremacist thought” (Brooks & McNair, p. 130). This caution is shared because parents want their children to recognize themselves in a positive light. Narratives should represent multiple portrayals of Black/African American life and cultural practices that communicate specific values, knowledge, and social practices (Brooks & McNair, p. 144). As an example, to understand what Black/African American third graders recognize as “powerful” about Black/African American literature, they surmised that it is being able to “identify with characters and events, passing stories on, and connecting to cultural heritage” (Brooks & McNair, p. 144).

Theme Eight – Children Watching

Black/African American children, like all children, are great imitators of what they see. Imitation is not an unusual phenomenon as it dates to behavior during the evolutionary time in the development of human beings. What is imperative is to protect children from what they see that may hurt them in their development. A child throughout education with images of authority, beauty, goodness, and power attributed with Whiteness has a castigating effect on identity (Powell-Hopson & Hopson, 1990). The study by Smith et al., 2009 revealed racial identity

development positively correlated with self-esteem among school-age children. Identity is crucial in ensuring the heightening of children's self-esteem by what they see and experience. It is incumbent on Black/African American parents to be conscious of children's experiences in their development.

Prong Three: Knowledge of Strategies for Black/African American Parents to Prepare to Assist Black/African American Children Navigate Through Systemic Racism

Of the eight themes that emerged from the qualitative studies, the eight themes impacted the critical importance of parents knowing strategies to assist them in guiding their young children through systemic racism that they will face as they journey through this country. The journey of Black/African American parents and children through American society of inequalities is a difficult one. Racism continues to confront the experiences of living while being Black/African American in this country. America has its declaration that “all [men] are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” (Preamble to the Declaration of Independence). This declaration does not always include people of a darker hue. For this reason, it is incumbent on Black/African American parents to prepare themselves with knowledge and skills to guide their children through a journey that may not always be kind to them because of the color of their skin. It is a problematic task to undertake, but it is a legacy task from generation to generation that must be assumed to protect children and families.

What strategies are needed for Black/African American parents to assist them in ensuring their children's survival? This question is striking but necessary given the history of Black/African Americans in this country.

Research bears witness to parental preparation's imperative with strategies to help protect their children. The continuance of racism that breeds inequalities in America is long-standing. Research provides studies that indicate that Black/African American parents either react to the challenges of racism by approaching it or avoiding it. As the survey by Smalls-Glover et al., 2013 revealed, racism is a stressor for Black/African American parents, but it is better to face the reality of the beast of racism than to avoid it.

This researcher offered twelve strategies for initial consideration. As parents discuss the twelve strategies, they will be organic and evolve to as many as Black/African American parents feel will assist them in caring for their children. The twelve strategies submitted to face the issue of racism are: (1) anticipate race-based events in the lives of Black/African American children; (2) prepare by knowing what the Black/African American experience has been and understand what helped those who survived to overcome the adversities; (3) conversate through open communication between parents and children - topics of race and racism are not to be bypassed; (4) speak openly and truthfully about them with children even at early ages; (5) listen to children as they share their experiences and remain silent while they talk; (6) ensure children that their experiences are important to share and that as parents they will be heard; (7) age appropriate truths can be shared with children, but communicate information so as not to overwhelm them and to better ensure that what it conveyed is understood; (8) accuracy of the knowledge that is shared is critically important - truths should be shared and researched to be sure information is factual; (9) thinking critically on the part of parents and children is vital to the discussion – encourage children to work through situations for themselves; (10) empower children in understanding that they are a vital part of the change that is sought in making the world better in accepting others; (11) resilience to survive whatever they are faced with in this society; (12)

encourage everyone that they are not alone in the struggle for equality and fairness. Parents and children seek to right the wrongs that confront them without retreating and continue onward through the strength of hope.

Theme One – Strength of Family

Studies indicate that family is vital to the learning process about race and racism. Participants in the studies tell, without exception, that they learned from their parents in several ways about racial systems and their dangers. Some participants learned not to trust White people, as evident in this quote from Bray's participant.

I didn't know any white people then. But even at six, I knew they ran the world.

The white man was slick, [Daddy] told us, always trying to put you in what he called a 'trick bag,' that dreaded place of low expectations and limited options. It didn't matter how hard you worked or how well you did your job. White people were determined to do wrong, could never be trusted, and, when push came to shove, would turn their backs on you in a heartbeat for someone white (Rosenblatt & Sims, 2016, p. 139).

Theme Two – Leveraging the Mother's Impact on the Family

Mothers characterized as having internal fortitude shape them into persons who do not give up or raise their children. They serve as advocates for their family, especially their children, in the face of adversity, as stated by Participant 10. "I think . . . as African American women to go ahead and be mothers in a world that we live in, it's a combination of crazy and brave" (Joe et al., 2019, p. 75). Mothers set the model for the family by taking responsibility for providing their children with as many opportunities as possible, teaching them skills, building social support networks, and ensuring that they remain a priority in their lives (Joe et al., 2019).

Mothers emphasized the importance and value of education. Participant Kelly stated: “Mom. . . understood the power of education. I consistently heard her say, ‘Get yourself an education. The only way you will escape discrimination is to get yourself an education’” (Rosenblatt & Sims, 2016, p. 141).

Theme Three – Education Pool

Education has always been a constant denominator. Black/African American parents place value in educating their children. Although the realization of racism was a continual reminder, parents instilled hope that a good education would lead their child to a better life, as stated by participant Bray.

Education is the only thing a white man can’t take from you, [Daddy] used to tell us. It was the first of a thousand such cautionary moments, in which he tried to make it clear that the stakes for my life were higher than I knew (Rosenblatt & Sims, p. 141).

In referencing the 1997 memoir by Hayre and Moore, the study by Rosenblatt and Collins Sims emphasized that parents taught their children about Black/African American achievers and achievement. They stated:

Before I went to school, I knew the life stories of Phillis Wheatley, Frederick Douglass. To grow up knowing that I belonged to a wonderful race of people served to ensure self-esteem and became a bulwark against future hurt. (Rosenblatt & Sims, pp. 143-144).

Some Black/African American parents socialized their children by taking them to hear prominent Black/African American speakers or to programs where they could experience

positive racial images of successful Black/African Americans. Education among Black/African Americans proved to be a viable characteristic in families over centuries.

Theme Four – Racial Socialization

Studies supported themes of strategies for coping with racism. Seven broad themes emerged in the survey by Snyder (2016). Those themes are internalization and avoidance, anger and violence, education, advocacy, seeking culture and community, chameleon identities, and race. These themes resulted from individuals moving through situations that caused them to cope with racism.

A different study by Joe et al. emerged with six themes to illustrate the experiences of Black/African American mothers exposed to community and state violence while raising their sons. These themes are psychological distress, physical manifestations of stress, parenting behaviors, empathic isolation, coping strategies, and strengths. As mothers went through their experiences, the results manifested themselves in synchronous responses as defined by the themes.

Theme Five – Strength of Character

Character traits that get socialized into Black/African American children from their parents were racial pride maintained through education, setting high expectations, and doing well in the face of racism stated participant, Ringgold. “Our parents raised us to understand that we had to be twice as good to go half as far” (Rosenblatt & Sims, p. 143).

In the study conducted by Joe et al., parents listed their strengths as responsibility, morality, unconditional love and acceptance, integrity, thinking big, being open and honest in communication, remaining informed and educated, having the ability to see purpose and strengths in their children, flexibility, resourcefulness, and resilience.

Theme Six – Positive Racial Identity

In some of the studies, participants discussed being socialized for solid racial identity, to be proud and assured about who they were as Black/African Americans. Some parents found it was not a simple matter to instill pride in a child growing up in a system designed to humiliate and oppress those considered lesser (Rosenblatt & Sims, 2016). The participants shared what assisted them in obtaining pride. Eubanks learned that with pride comes confidence in oneself.

The behavior [Daddy] expected from me around white people was the same as it was around black people: perfect. There was no double standard. You showed the same face to the white man as you showed to the black man. No mask was to be worn in the presence of the white man. White people were not mysterious creatures to be feared or to be emulated; they were just people. (Rosenblatt & Sims, p. 143).

Theme Seven – Racism' Impact

Studies revealed the pain that Black/African American parents experience because of having to confront racism as it impacted their children. Parents' messages emphasized racial barriers and protocols that they had to share with their children related to functioning in the world. Black/African American parents understand the importance of talking with their children about racism.

You know you are going to be singled out, so don't feel so bad. You are always going to be singled out because you are black. Another parent conversation with a six-year-old stated, “. . . it's going to be hard. I've explained how there are people that don't like us, and my six-year-old has cried, and she's like, 'Why, mommy? Why is it like that?' And I had to explain to her that there was slavery, and even now,

unfortunately, some people look down on us, you know, as black people (Coard et al., 2004, p. 284).

Other mothers express fear and psychological distress over the murders of Black/African American boys and men. Participant 2 expressed fear.

I see the pictures of those young men daily in my mind. “. . .my fear is that one of my sons is going to be murdered by a police officer.” “I don’t even know what our children have to do to convince the world that they are children or even that they are human” (Joe et al., p. 72)

Theme Eight – Children Watching

Black/African American children are often puzzled by the differences and attitudes that adults display in response to race. Children learn from parents in one way or another about race and the dangers associated with race. The 1990 autobiography of a Black/African American militant, written by Seller and Terrell, is referenced by Rosenblatt & Sims to emphasize that Black/African Americans learned to be alert and pay attention to their parents' actions and other adults when they are around Whites.

You could tell by the way they walked and talked and the way they always managed to be completely aware of where they were and what they were doing. They were always urging us to be careful.’ (Rosenblatt & Sims, 2016, p. 139).

Concluding Thoughts

Black/African American parents have the complex task of parenting, unlike other ethnic groups. The social construct of race adds a layer of complexity. In juxtaposing race to caste, it imposes a hierarchical structure to position persons of a darker hue to a status below those who have taken the rein of being superior. With knowledge of set positions for Black/African

Americans, it was imperative to address the issue from a perspective of education. Parent education is crucial to assist Black/African Americans to gain knowledge that will strengthen and fortify their resolve to make life better for their children.

Early learning centers were considered one venue for imparting knowledge to Black/African American parents. They embraced the need to have their children in a learning environment that will give them a head start. As children are engaged in learning, parents could also be involved in learning through the same venue. With the advent of the intrusive coronavirus in 2020 that impacted every facet of living, other venues can provide education to parents. Not excluding early learning centers; however, technology and other online resources make for parental access.

Although this study did not provide curricula, it became essential that parent education curricular include the three-prong knowledge areas. By examining the studies related to the three-prong knowledge areas, Black/African American mothers' comments indicated their resolve to learn and provide knowledge to their children to ensure their future better. To further discuss parent education programs, this researcher reinforced the need for parent education inclusive of the three-prong knowledge areas in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

Action Forward to Produce More Knowledge Regarding Black/African American Parents

This dissertation focuses on advocating for essential knowledge for Black/African American parents to ensure their poise for parenting in today's world. Systemic racism continues to weave itself into the context of what is yet to be the United States of America. Black/African American parents will need to gain additional knowledge to address the issues created by systemic racism they and their children will face. This researcher set out a course of study to identify vital focus areas to enhance parenting knowledge critical for Black/African Americans. Fortifying parents with knowledge and skills to assist them in helping their children obtain a strong sense of self and confidence in who they are is predicated on parents knowing more about the critical early childhood years, identity, and value in the child development experience.

To that end, there were three key foci areas explored in the study. Those three areas were: early child development emphasizing brain and social-emotional development; reinforcing the rich history and culture of Black/African Americans in their contributions in building the United States; and strategies for Black/African American parents to assist young children in navigating systemic racism in American society. The three areas are imperative for the complex task of preparing Black/African American parents to parent. Parenting responsibilities transcend to all parents raising children.

While Black/African American parents face unique challenges, some experiences affect parents of other racial and ethnic groups. It is essential to know what needs are for Black/African American parents apply to all parents of any socially constructed persuasion.

To assist Black/African American parents, it was also essential to identify venues that would be natural locations for parents to obtain the knowledge. Suggested venues include early learning centers, churches, social service agencies, non-profit agencies focused on children and parenting, hospitals, social work agencies, etc. Providing opportunities for learning through parent education programs would assist their quest to be the best parents to their children. It was not a goal of this researcher to provide curricula for parent education programs; nevertheless, the goal was to highlight areas that will significantly enhance parent programs delivering knowledge for Black/African American parents.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to identify practical components of parent education programs that include an emphasis on the three prongs of knowledge deemed critical in strengthening Black/African American parents' participation and support of their children's development. The three-prong knowledge areas presented throughout this research enhance knowledge areas that Black/African American parents should have to boost the guidance they will give to their children.

The research does not imply that Black/African American parents do not have the knowledge and skills to parent. Providing additional expertise through the three-prong knowledge areas and program areas emphasizing effective parenting and reinforcing their identity will significantly support the crucial role in developing their children. The

Harlem Children's Zone's Baby College (HCZ) is a parent education program that prides itself on best practices that provide expectant parents and parents of children zero to three a solid understanding of child development and the skills to raise happy, healthy babies. The HCZ program includes workshops and home visits for a 9-week term. Parents gain information in several areas, including child behavior and safety, communication and intellectual stimulation, linguistic and brain development, health, and nutrition (Starr, 2015; McKee et al., 2015). Prong One gives focus on the most critical ages for children, zero to three, that Black/African American parents need to understand how the developmental periods lay the foundation on which a child's life will be impacted forever (Combs-Orme et al., 2013; Fox et al., 2010).

A strong sense of self provides the model for parents to exhibit their strength to their children. Prong Two emphasizes knowing more of the history and culture of Black/African Americans and serves to reinforce who and what their ancestors and present-day contributors delivered to the development of this country. With the omission of the history of Black/African Americans from textbooks and presentations in classrooms about the development of this country, it is crucial to convey truth and provide accounts of the extraordinary contributions and accomplishments made by Black/African Americans along with others. Parents have witnessed the mistreatment and too often tragic situations that occur in this country far too often. The research in Prong Three advocates for Black/African American parents to receive strategies they can use to prepare themselves to assist their young children in being conscious of systemic racism they will face to protect them for survival.

Significance of the Study

Black/African American parents confront some of the most challenging experiences facing humankind. The significance of this study was to provide Black/African American

parents with the knowledge to assist them in the development of strong, knowledgeable, confident children. To witness through so many venues the treatment and mistreatment of Black/African Americans in these dis-United States and to have their children see the same is a call to action.

This study is needed to reinforce why parents must assume the responsibility to ensure that children have a strong sense of who they are and that they are protected as they grow to embrace opportunities to better society. As parents, they must know their crucial role in child development, knowledge of their identity, and knowledge of best strategies to assist in developing children to combat those systems that may deter them as they journey through life. A parent who has a strong sense of self and purpose can guide a child to the same end.

Central Research Questions

Two central research questions guided the research and discussion:

RQ1: How will Black/African American parents be strengthened in parenting knowledge by receiving information through parent education programs emphasizing child development with foci on the brain and social-emotional development; historical and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans to the development of this country; and learning strategies to assist them in guiding their children in overcoming adversities of systemic racism?

RQ2: What strategies will Black/African American parents need to assist them with implementation to protect their children from mental and emotional harm as they journey through life in a society that is not always welcoming to those who are non-white?

These central research questions guided the research. An evidence-based educational program that is robust in its programmatic emphasis for children at young ages is paramount.

Still, parents should also expect to be engaged in the learning process through the learning center environment and other educational venues.

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspective applied to investigate this study was purposed in the Critical Race Theory (CRT) with a subset of Critical Race Parenting (CRP or ParentCrit). The researcher's review of these two theories enhanced the arguments for knowledge for Black/African American parents. This focus presented the opportunity to identify studies that researched the needs of Black/African Americans. As the paradigm shifts concerning population classifications, researchers have more outstanding advocacy for studies to understand Black/African American parents and other groups (García Coll et al., 1996). This researcher found that child development topics and the need for parent education programs were based on European standards as the benchmark for parenting and gaining parent knowledge. Researchers continue to rely on literature that focuses on comparing one group to another, often majority to minority, making the majority the standard or the normative group to which other groups are compared (Mann et al., 2007). Black/African American parents require additional knowledge and skills to equip them to manage the systems that challenge the control of themselves and their children. The critique of studies through CRT assisted in selecting to ensure that those systems that perpetuated racism were recognized and identified to not have them overshadow truths that needed in addressing the Black/African American experience. Additionally, it was essential to ensure that ParentCrit included providing the dyad whereby parent and child engaged in learning about race and racism without obscuring the conversation.

Research Method

The research method used in this study was qualitative meta-synthesis. Finfgeld-Connett's (2018) work, *A Guide to Qualitative Meta-synthesis*, asserts that meta-synthesis is the umbrella methodology that can guide decision-making and action in a real-world situation. Searching for parent education programs to include the three-prong knowledge areas identified throughout the dissertation lent itself well to the meta-synthesis methodology.

The approach used involved using multiple research guides to identify qualitative studies related to the three-prong knowledge areas. The researcher read over eighty studies to find qualitative ones and ones focused on the Black/African American experience. In analyzing the studies selected, the test was for information related to how Black/African American parents could obtain knowledge or had obtained knowledge in the three-prong knowledge areas. Additionally, common themes ran through the studies. The themes that emerged, and were discussed in Chapter Four, were Strength of Family, Leveraging the Mother's Impact on the Family Unit, Education Pool, Racial Socialization, Strength of Character, Positive Racial Identity, Racism's Impact, and Children Watching. These themes reinforced the goal of generating a theory or practice regarding knowledge areas included in parent education programs that would assist Black/African American parents, and families navigate systemic racism.

Summary of Findings

This study emphasized providing three-prong knowledge areas that would enhance any parent education program and precisely where Black/African American parents were encouraged to participate. The study sought to prove the reason to include the three-prong knowledge areas in parent education for parents of young children. Engaging parents in learning

as their young children were involved in early learning programs was essential in providing the foundation for the educational journey. The results of this study can be a guide for developing parent education programs inclusive of the three-prong knowledge areas.

The studies highlight testimonies of Black/African American parents, revealing their thirst for additional knowledge of how-to better parent in guiding their child to a more successful life. A quote representing parents' feelings stated, "I want my baby to turn out better than we turned out" (Webb et al., p. 120). It is statements like this that compels the impetus to have education for parents to obtain what they need to excel in being the best parent. The studies and the literature reviewed refocused the need for revitalizing parent education programs emphasizing the three-prong knowledge areas discussed throughout this dissertation.

Findings Supporting Prong One

The findings supported prong one by clarifying the importance of Black/African American parents' knowledge of child development, emphasizing brain and social-emotional development. It was of considerable significance that prong one presents to those considering having a child and those with young children. The science is precise that the early years, zero to three years of age, of children's lives lay the foundation that will impact their lives in the future (Combs-Orme et al., 2013; Fox et al., 2010). With research labeling the brain during the early childhood period as "critical and sensitive periods" of development, parents need to know the window of opportunity for appropriate experiences, and environmental stimuli are narrow (Burke-Harris, 2018; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

Findings further confirmed social-emotional development is necessary for providing the foundation a child needs to develop and grow (Ettinger et al., 2018). A parent expressed the importance of social-emotional development: ". . .having self confidence in themselves, and in

what they can do, is meeting other people, in developing social skills. Which I think is why . . . preschool . . . can develop those social skills” (McAllister et al., 2005, pp. 619-620).

Findings Supporting Prong Two

As for the critical emphasis on prong two regarding having Black/African American parents provided with the knowledge to deepen their understanding of the rich history and cultural contributions made by Black/African Americans to develop this country, the analysis of the studies gave credence to this crucial prong of knowledge. Researchers and critical race theorists emphasized that overt negation of the contributions and accomplishments made by Black/African Americans to the development of this country from the history books, literature, science, and other academic disciplines taught in schools. The critical race theorists were poignant in their critique of information provided in the discourse of learning that gave evidence to racism due to the elimination of knowledge such as Black/African American people (Parker & Lynn, 2002; Stovall, 2005). Education that excludes any ethnic group’s contribution is “miseducation” to underscore the language of Carter G. Woodson, the academic and creator of Negro History Week, as labeled at its inauguration in 1926 (Woodson, 1933). As more recent researchers revealed, anyone who has gone through education systems has indoctrination in history and culture focused on one group (Webb-Johnson & Rochon, 2005).

For Black/African American parents, knowledge of who contributed and the contribution and accomplishment can only strengthen their identity, pride in the family and community, and provide coping skills to forge through the challenges of racism from the dominant society (Mosley-Howard & Evans, 2000). Findings confirmed the importance of families' education for adults and children to explore further and celebrate their African and Black/African American heritage (Mosley-Howard et al.). Parent education programs are encouraged to include a

curriculum about and for Black/African Americans. It is without question that as parents learn, children will also learn and vice versa.

Findings Supporting Prong Three

In support of prong three regarding providing strategies to Black/African American parents to assist their children in navigating systemic racism, references to studies and literature review revealed the need. The revelation that parents felt it essential to develop knowledge and skills to guide their children because parents are more and more aware of the need to assist their children in surviving in a world that reacts with fear to those whose skin is darkened by nature's sun. Parents express worry and concern that their children may not survive in this world of racial oppression and because of the adverse reactions of people who categorize them as "other" and "less than."

By incorporating racial socialization strategies in parent education programs, Black/African American parents will have some essential knowledge of the characteristics and skills they must possess in relating to their children. Racial socialization includes teaching children values and dispositions to help them function in a racialized society (Rosenblatt & Sims, 2016).

Although this researcher provided twelve strategies, parents are encouraged to add more as they deem helpful. The point of including this knowledge area was for the survival of parents and their children. The world continues to reveal challenges of being Black/African American in this country and the world. When assaults on the lives of Black/African Americans occur, it is as if Black/African American lives do not matter. Too often, the attacks have a tragic end at the hands of police and other persons bent on eliminating those persons they hate. Parents must understand fear but not give into paralysis by it. Understandably, parents face tremendous

challenges in raising their children, and they want to protect them. As one mother in the study stated: “. . . if I could have, I would have locked him in my house and just kept him there. . . I don’t want that for him, but at the same time I need him to be alive” (Joe et al., 2019, p. 73).

Prong three emphasizes that Black/African American lives matter, and there are ways to ensure that they are respected. Parents must continue to exhibit and reinforce how they love and value their children by every means necessary.

Call to Action

The findings reinforced that Black/African American parents want the best for their children. They want them to know who they are and the value they bring to the world. To keep them safe from the impact of systemic racial ideologies that are dehumanizing is a responsibility discussed in the three-prong knowledge areas. The need is substantiated. The call to action is now.

The task is to provide venues that can deliver these three-prong knowledge areas to Black/African American parents to strengthen their identity and the family unit that are important to the development of young children. There are avenues of delivery of knowledge to be explored. The most obvious has been through parent education programs; however, given the rapidly changing world, including the impact of the 2020 pandemic of the coronavirus known as Covid-19, the use of technology to communicate learning modules and openness to multiple venues must be considered. The point remains, parents want to know and learn how they can be the best parents to support and care for their children. Black/African American parents' love for their children is the strength of hope that pushes them to expect more from themselves and the institutions that serve them.

The call to action is for agencies serving families with children to *take the lead*.

Take the lead in having outreach programs to support Black/African American parents. Parents must have guidance to help them save their children, but first by assisting them in protecting themselves. The model proposed emphasizes the need to have parents understand their critical role in ensuring that their children are developed well from the inception of their lives.

Childbirth is a greater responsibility than conception, and parents need to know all that is required when one brings a life into this world. Health, nutrition, safety, shelter, support, and love from family, including the extended family, are essential to a child's well-being. Agencies, such as hospitals, mid-wives, churches, social work services, child-care centers, and schools, must communicate children's well-being to parents. Future parents and current parents can receive the information needed to help them succeed in the most critical tasks and responsibilities in caring for a child.

Take the lead as agencies to research and ensure that resources are available and included in parent education programs to inform them of the history and culture of Black/African Americans who have developed this country and how they did it. Knowledge of history and culture will also enlighten those charged with sharing how to better relate to parents in their development of self-esteem and purpose. Researching and providing resources through books, music, film, and the internet will reveal a lot to strengthen the relationship between the teacher and parents and parents and children. An authentic relationship with parents opens the opportunity for listening and sharing their thoughts.

Take the lead in ensuring Black/African American parents' lives matter and that the lives of their children matter. Learn strategies that will better equip parents in ensuring the safety of their children is vital. Witnessing mistreatment because of a person's skin color is due to fear, which prevents a relationship with them. In an agency or organization to assist parents, building

relationships instills trust. When there is trust, parents will be opened to working with agencies to secure their children's safety and survival.

The call to action is – *take the lead*. It is incumbent on everyone involved in caring for children to find best practices to help parents help their children develop well and survive. A child that is well developed and exposed to positive experiences and positive people will add value to the home, community, and the nation. It is the village that must ensure that children are well.

Implications for Practice

In consideration of ways to enhance parent education programs to include the three-prong knowledge areas, the leadership of programs imparting knowledge must be willing to take bold steps and *take the lead* to improve knowledge areas for Black/African American parents. Leadership in childcare services is one targeted group, but it also extends to policymakers, heads of education departments, and philanthropic organizations. Support from various entities will be essential to address the needs of Black/African American parents. It is also necessary that leaders recognize that information provided to Black/African American parents will help those parents and benefit all parents.

As a result of findings through research that revealed common themes, the implications for practice are evident. Those implications continue to focus on the three prong knowledge areas discussed throughout this dissertation. The consequences of those three knowledge areas center on a mandate as we advance to ensure more assertive parenting of Black/African Americans. From these three prongs of knowledge, the overriding implications revealed through what continues to be issues that must be addressed and resolved:

1. The central issue in this country continues to be systemic racism. It cannot be denied and must be dealt with to provide a level playing field for all. The denial of racism prevents impactful conversations and actions from ridding the country of this ill. Racism impacts Black African/American parents and their children in multiple ways daily. Some ways that families are affected are lack of economic support needed for healthcare to ensure healthy births; lack of quality childcare to provide a sound foundation for children in preparation for learning; lack of resources in the home to instill an encouraging loving and learning environment; food insecurities for nutritional needs appropriate for healthy bodies and the void in the community to support the needs of families.
2. Another major issue revealed in these findings is the objectification or devaluing of human life. To continue, we find that Black/African Americans not given dignity to their humanity or personhood is very telling about what group of people thought to be less valuable. The findings show the standard continues to be set by the White middle-class, and all other ethnic groups measured against that standard. This blatant disregard for Black/African Americans indicates that knowledge about them is not on par with the understanding gained about the White middle-class. Devaluing Black/African Americans is revealed by the lack of studies focused on the Black/African American parenting experience. The mistreatment that is spoken of by parents who, when they seek help, are treated with disdain adds to feelings of marginalization. Until Black/African Americans are valued and efforts made to learn more about this group of people, it will continue to be an issue of how and what is needed to ensure that effective parenting is a standard based on the unique characteristics possessed by this group. It must become a vital

learning area to learn how and what is needed to assist Black/African American parents become more successful parents in guiding their children to quality and secure lives.

3. The third major issue revealed through these findings is the prevalence of violence in this country that keeps Black/African American parents fearful for their children's lives. The point of violence perpetrated on Black/African Americans and emboldened by the vitriolic rhetoric heard through multiple means by those in leadership positions must be addressed. The fear that Black/African American parents feel daily when their children leave their homes is real. People must accept one another and not fear others who do not look or love or worship or live the same economically. Openness to learning about others and their customs and traditions will allay fears. People avail themselves of opportunities to understand others' humanness. They produce growth and understanding of other people.
4. Legislators must develop policies to ensure that children from their inception receive quality and affordable healthcare. They must stand firm behind the right of everyone to have healthcare that provides means for prevention and ongoing care. It is important for parents not to worry about quality healthcare costs for themselves and their children. The importance of the early years of life dictates that the best care, environment, resources, and opportunities for supportive systems are available to parents for their children.
5. Teachers must be knowledgeable about the early care needed for children. Teachers are extensions to those who parent from pre-birth through the early years zero to three. With the early years being the most critical in the lives of children, those serving parents must have the best disposition to work with and relate to Black/African American parents. The support systems parents receive must be encouraging to ensure that parents are open to

receiving information and guidance on child-care from the providers. Teachers as an extension play a significant role in supporting learning and developing professional relationships with parents and children.

6. Agencies whose mission is early learning childcare must be equipped with qualified staff and resources to ensure children's best environment and experiences. Black/African American parents entrust their children to these agencies while they work or attend a school or search for opportunities to help them support their children. While they leave their children in agencies, they must have peace of mind that children receive love and care that is positive and developmental. The early ages are when learning is most important for cognition, language, and developing social-emotional skills.
7. Everyone involved in any way with children and their families must be in a constant state of learning. It is not enough to continue to implement the knowledge that is dated and not updated. As science evolves and research provides findings of best parenting practices, those involved in children's lives must include training and meaningful professional development focused on how best to relate to parents and their children. It is essential to know the practices implemented to reveal to the child and their parents that they are valued and respected.

To the leaders of venues supporting Black/African American parents' learning, they must be encouraged to assess what they currently offer in their parent education programs and determine ways to involve parents in discussing what they need. Without the voice of the parents served, it is likely areas of interest will be overlooked. It is also crucial that leaders share why they feel specific programs may be helpful to parents. It is an opportunity to develop programs where there is buy-in from all involved. Developing a solid parent education program

that emphasizes the needs of Black/African American parents opens an opportunity to obtain funding from philanthropists and grants. Creating reliable and informed parents assists in developing well-cared-for children physically, cognitively, and socially. Cooperation between program developers and parents has an impact on the future of our community and the nation.

The overall intent of this study was to find answers to the two central research questions.

RQ1: How will Black/African American parents be strengthened in parenting knowledge by receiving information through parent education programs emphasizing child development with foci on the brain and social-emotional development; historical and cultural contributions of Black/African Americans to the development of this country; and learning strategies to assist them in guiding their children in overcoming adversities of systemic racism?

RQ2: What strategies will Black/African American parents need to assist them with implementation to protect their children from mental and emotional harm as they journey through life in a society that is not always welcoming to those who are non-white?

The findings provided the desired answers.

Although the researcher initially proposed to target parent education programs in early learning centers, thinking has evolved through studying this issue that there are broader opportunities inclusive of early learning centers but not limited to that one venue.

Among other locations that can provide educational support are hospitals, churches, schools, community centers, community colleges, and non-profit agencies with social service components.

Implications for Further Research

The research conducted for this study provided support for the need to have parent education programs that emphasize the Black/African American parenting experience. As

critical as raising a child is, parents must realize that they must know to ensure better that they are providing the love and care that children need to give them the best chance of being well-developed. There is respect for knowledge on child-rearing received from families, extended families, and other role models. However, there is information to appreciate from science and results from years of study by those whose life's work has been focused on discovering best practices for early child development.

The findings of the study revealed the need for further research. Three of the areas highlighted for further research are listed. Research is needed in many more Black/African American parenting areas to receive the attention it deserves. To unpack the three areas suggested given the consideration, they are briefly discussed but not necessarily in the order of priority.

Standardization on One Group

For too long, research has focused on elevating what it knows about the human condition on one group. The normed group is the White middle-class. It was evident that most studies of early childhood development centered on the White middle-class as the norm on which other ethnic groups were to be measured (Coll & Pachter, 2002). Research is to expand to examine Black/African American parenting practices and other ethnic groups, including traditions and customs. Family traditions and knowledge are sacred and connect next generations. How they merge with studies based on White middle-class pedagogy on child development will be interesting to know. At the least, the historical and cultural habits of Black/African Americans deserve respect. Underrepresentation of Black/African American women in research on the life transforming movement to parenthood is concerning (Fouquier, 2013).

Facing Negative Experiences

The treatment described by some Black/African American mothers served as a deterrent for them to participate in parenting classes. In the studies, mothers indicated that they did not want to contact them because of the treatment they received by healthcare and social services agencies. Researchers stated the ethnically diverse and low-income parents were more difficult to recruit into early intervention programs (Tamis-LeMonda & Kahana-Kalman, 2009).

Responses from these parents indicated they received treatment with racist behavior, including condescension, disrespect, and lack of attention. They were dissatisfied and did not trust the people to assist them. They did not feel accepted, and neither did they trust the healthcare workers because of their attitudes and behavior toward them as they were seeking information about caring for their children. With responses like these by parents, research must focus on what to do to ensure a more cordial relationship between Black/African American parents and those whose profession assists them. It is imperative to know the behaviors and needs of Black/African American parents to assist in understanding how to help them best. Without trust, there can be no learning.

Dissolution of the Extended Family

One of the most vital support arms of the child-rearing experience was ‘the village’ that a family had when Black/African American neighborhoods were more cohesive. There is a need for continuous information on gentrification's impact that created separation, causing a lack of community support from neighbors, teachers, and churches.

The research speaks to the role models that children had in addition to their parents. Studies also tell of neighbors who watched over them and shared stories about their lives and their traditions called intergenerational history. “Children look to important adults’ insult and

assault their self-image" (Wright Edelman, 1999, pp. 21-22). The dismantling of the extended families left a void that defined a uniqueness in the Black/African American experience.

Further research can provide information to assist in understanding how childrearing has changed due to the dissolution of the extended family known as 'the village.' Additionally, it will be essential to understand what enhances child-rearing in the absence of 'the village.'

Influence of Black/African American Teachers

There is a need for research regarding the effects of desegregation on Black/African Americans resulting from *Brown vs. the Board of Topeka* in 1954. Whereas there were gains in children of all races and backgrounds to have equal opportunity and access to education, it presented a problem for many Black/African American families, students, and teachers. What was lost was the relationships of role models who knew the students, their parents, and their families. There was a unique understanding of communities, cultural identities, traditions, histories, and circumstances related to the families. Teachers were well trained and well regarded. Parents' voices received respect, and the administration sought support from parents to ensure that the school's reputation remained a beacon in the community. Further research is encouraged on where do children and families find support in today's setting? What assurances do parents and children have that they have the caring presence with high expectations once ingrained in the culture of the Black/African American experience?

Concluding Thoughts

These future research areas are critically important: focus on Black/African American parenting to create a new paradigm that sets a standard beyond the White middle-class; determining how healthcare and other support services personnel can better relate to Black/African American parents in assisting them versus intimidating them; to determine how

the dissolution of the extended family has impacted child-rearing in the Black/African American community; and the impact of the loss of support after desegregation from Black/African American teachers. Further research in these areas will aid in understanding the Black/African American parenting experience.

There are many other areas to consider in gaining knowledge that will be important in closing the gap that exists regarding how Black/African Americans parent their children. Documentation from this research will assist parents in understanding the knowledge that will be helpful to them in their development of becoming more vital in the most critical role that impacts children's lives. Further research will also provide essential knowledge to those who assist in working with Black/African American parents.

Conclusion

The subject chosen for this dissertation focused on Black/African American families who are continuing to face mistreatment and devastating experiences in a country that their ancestors did not choose but brought to these shores under duress. To lose their identity in this land and suffer the humiliation of not being accepted as human beings deserve to be loved, treated fairly, and valued continue to have its scars. Black/African Americans witness the continuation of tragedies perpetrated on them through profiling by law enforcement, by ordinary White citizens, politicians, religious leaders, educators, employers, medical professionals, laws, policies, and many other ways. Systemic racism and practices by those with an elevated sense of superiority victimize those whose skin color contains more melanin. This reality compelled this researcher to seek ways to support Black/African American families. It was imperative to find ways to assist parents with young children. To instill knowledge in parents that would make

them more robust in the most critical role of any they would have in life seemed to be the best place to concentrate the research.

To say children are our future' has become a cliché, but it could not be more authentic. Lifting Black/African American parents to ensure that their children have a lot became more crucial given the many unnecessary deaths of children and young people. To see scenes of vitriolic language from the nation's leaders that emboldened the hatred for those considered different from them and classified them as "the others" engendered a call to action on the part of this researcher. The hypothesis offered that providing critical knowledge to parents in three areas focused on young children would be an essential start.

Three-prong knowledge areas proved to be most impactful to the research and discussion of what will assist Black/African American parents become more knowledgeable in strengthening their identity and resolve to be the best parents to guide their children's development. Through significant research and desire by Black/African American parents for fortification, they exercised their parenting responsibilities. As the research and studies revealed, there is more to learn regarding this three-prong knowledge. Other areas surfaced as essential to pursue further to enhance understanding of Black/African American parenting. The study continues.

The research concludes as it began. This quote by a Black/African American mother is quite revealing about the resolve of parents and the value they place on loving, learning, and protecting their children.

Our job as black mothers is to keep pushing the liberation ball down the court. Our obligation is to leave the world better for them and to ensure that they are equipped with the tools they need to fight. . . We don't live for the I. We live for the we.

-Cat Brooks in *We Live for the We: The Political Power of Black Motherhood*.

(McClain, 2018, p. 4)

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Black/African American Women Contributors to Written and Spoken Word

NAME	BIRTH – DEATH	CONTRIBUTION(S)	QUOTES & REFERENCES
Phillis Wheatley	1753 – 1784	First Black/African American to author a book of poetry	<p>“In every human Best, God has implanted a Principle, which we call Love of Freedom; it is impatient of Oppression, and pants for Deliverance.”</p> <p>Wheatley, P. (1773). <i>Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral</i>. W. H Lawrence & Co., Denver, Co.</p>
Jarena Lee	1783 – 1864	First Black/African American woman to preach the gospel publicly and to have a published her autobiography	<p>“For as unseemly as it may appear now-a-days for a woman to preach, it should be remembered that nothing is impossible with God. And why should it be thought impossible, heterodox, or improper for a woman to preach? seeing the Saviour died for the woman as well as for the man.”</p> <p><i>The Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee, a Coloured Lady, Giving an account of her call to preach the gospel</i>. Published in 1836.</p> <p>Frederick Knight. (2017). The Many Names for Jarena Lee. <i>The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography</i>. 141(1). 59-68. doi: 10.5215/pennmaghisbio. 141.1.0059</p>
Isabella Baumfree, aka, Sojourner Truth	1797 – 1883	Abolitionist, women’s rights activist, orator. Baumfree gave herself the name Sojourner Truth after becoming convinced that God called her to leave the city and go into the countryside, “testifying the hope that was in her.”	<p>“Ain’t I a Woman?” saying: "Dat man over dar say dat woman needs to be helped into carriages and lifted over ditches . . . Nobody eber helps me into carriages, or ober mud-puddles . . . and ar'n't I a woman?" The landmark speech made a women’s rights convention in Akron, Ohio in 1851.</p> <p>Painter, N. (1997). <i>Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol</i>. Norton.</p>

Maria Miller Stewart		American activist, abolitionist, lecturer, and educator	<p>“I have never been very shrewd in money matters; and being classed as a lady among my race all my life, and never exposed to any hardship, I did not know how to manage.”</p> <p>Collins, P. (1990). <i>Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment</i>. (1st ed.) New York: Routledge.</p>
Harriet Jacobs	1813 – 1897	Abolitionist and author, born into slavery whose early life spent at the hands of her master; Jacobs birthed two children by the slave master, who threatened to sell them. She felt she had to save her children by leaving them. For seven years, she hid in an attic of her grandmother’s house. She wrote and published the first slave narrative, considered an American classic is chronicling the abuse and sexual harassment in her life and what she had to endure to ensure safety for her children and herself.	<p>“If you want to be fully convinced of the abominations of slavery, go on a southern plantation, and call yourself a negro trader. Then there will be no concealment, and you will see and hear things that will seem to you impossible among human beings with immortal souls.”</p> <p>Jacob, H. (1861), <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i>, (Self-published). Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.</p>
Gertrude Bustill Mossell	1855 – 1889	Journalist, author, teacher, and activist.	<p>“. . .brings together intellectual goals and black feminist politics in the spirit of racial uplift.”</p>

			Mrs. N. F. Mossell, Gertrude E. H. Bustill Mossell, N. F. Mossell, (1894). <i>The Work of the Afro-American Woman</i> . Ferguson Company, Philadelphia.
Ida B. Wells-Barnett	1862 – 1931	Teacher, investigative journalist, civil rights pioneer, and suffragist - As an investigative reporter, she was on a mission to tell the truth and seek justice for her community. She posthumously was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 2020.	<p>“I felt that one had better die fighting against injustice than to die like a dog or rat in a trap. I had already determined to sell my life as dearly as possible if attacked. I felt if I could take one lyncher with me, this would even the score a little bit.”</p> <p>“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.”</p> <p>Wells, I.B., (1970). Alfreda M. Duster, ed. <i>Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells</i>, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.</p>
Mary Church Terrell	1863 – 1954	One of the first to earn a college degree – Oberlin College; first woman to serve on a school board of a major city; civil rights activist	<p>“Stop using the word ‘Negro.’ The word is a misnomer from every point of view. It does not represent a country or anything else. . . I am an African American.”</p> <p>“Seeing their children touched and seared and wounded by race prejudice is one of the heaviest crosses which colored women have to bear.”</p> <p>Terrell, M.C. (1940). <i>A Colored Woman in a White World</i>. Humanity Books.</p>

<p>Jessie Redmon Fauset</p>	<p>1882 – 1961</p>	<p>Literary editor of NAACP’s <i>The Crisis</i>; a significant player in the Harlem Renaissance: first Black/African American woman elected to Phi Beta Kappa</p>	<p>“The remarkable thing about this gift of ours is that it has its rise, I am convinced, in the very woes which beset us. . .It is our emotional salvation.”</p> <p>Fauset, J., (1924). <i>There Is Confusion</i>, Boston: Northwestern University Press.</p>
<p>Zora Neale Hurston</p>	<p>1891 – 1960</p>	<p>Author, anthropologist, filmmaker</p>	<p>“Sometimes, I feel discriminated against, but it does not make me angry. It merely astonishes me. How can any deny themselves the pleasure of my company? It’s beyond me.”</p> <p>Hurston, Z., (1937). <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott</p>
<p>Daisy Lee Bates</p>	<p>1914 – 1999</p>	<p>Journalist, newspaper publisher, civil rights activist, member of the Little Rock Nine who integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957</p>	<p>“No man or woman who tries to pursue an ideal in his or her own way is without enemies.”</p> <p>Bates, D., Gatewood, W., & Carson, C. (1986). <i>The Long Shadow of Little Rock School Crisis</i>. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press.</p>
<p>Gwendolyn Brooks</p>	<p>1917 – 2000</p>	<p>First African American to win a Pulitzer Prize for poetry on themes of ordinary lives of urban Black/African Americans</p>	<p>“We real cool. We Left school. We Lurk late. We Strike straight. We Sing sin. We Thin gin. We Jazz June. We Die soon.”</p> <p>Brooks, G. (1949). <i>Annie Allen</i>. New York: Harper Brothers.</p>

Lorraine Hansberry	1930 – 1965	Writer, playwright, first to have a play, <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> , performed on Broadway	<p>“I am a writer. I suppose I think that the highest gift that man has is art, and I am audacious enough to think this of myself as an artist – that there is both joy and beauty and illumination and communion between people to be achieved through the dissection of personality.”</p> <p>Patterson, L (1971). <i>Black Theater: A 20th Century Collection of the Work of Its Best Playwrights</i>. New York: Dodd, Mead.</p>
Toni Morrison	1931 – 2019	First Black/African American woman to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature; professor, book editor	<p>“If there’s a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.”</p> <p>Morrison, T. (1987). <i>Beloved</i>, New York: Alfred A. Knopf.</p>
Audre Lorde	1934 – 1992	“Black-lesbian feminist mother lover poet”	<p>“It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.”</p> <p>Lorde, A. (1982). <i>Zami: A New Spelling of My Name</i>, Watertown, MA: Persephone Press.</p>
Angela Davis	1944 -	Activist, professor, author	<p>“We have to talk about liberating minds as well as liberating society.”</p> <p>Davis, A. (1981). <i>Women, Race & Class</i>. New York: Vintage Books.</p>
Alice Walker	1944 -	Novelist, activist, womanist, poet, Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for <i>The Color Purple</i>	<p>“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.”</p> <p>Walker, A. (1992). <i>Possessing The Secret of Joy</i>. California: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.</p>

Octavia Butler	1947 – 2006	Science fiction author was the first to receive a MacArthur Fellowship; Through fiction about the direction of U.S. politics and an alternate future, Butler's predictions have elevated her reputations, posthumously, because of the uncanny closeness to experiences today.	<p>“Kindness eases change. Love quiets fear. And a sweet and powerful positive obsession blunts pain, diverts rage, and engages each of us in the greatest, the most intense of our chosen struggles.”</p> <p>Butler, O. (1993). <i>Parable of the Sower</i>. New York, NY: Four Walls Eight Windows.</p>
bell hooks	1952 -	Author, academic, feminist, social activist	<p>“I will not have my life narrowed down to somebody else’s whim or someone else’s ignorance.”</p> <p>hooks, b. (1994). <i>Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom</i>. New York: Routledge.</p>
Ntozake Shange	1952 – 2018	Playwriter, author, feminist, Obie Award play, <i>for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf</i>	<p>“I write for young girls of color, for girls who don’t even exist yet so that there is something there for them when they arrive.”</p> <p>Shange, N. (2010). <i>Some Sing, Some Cry</i>. New York: St. Martin’s.</p>

Appendix B: Black/African American Women Contributors to Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, and Medicine

NAME	BIRTH – DEATH	CONTRIBUTION(S)	QUOTES & REFERENCES
Rebecca Lee Crumpler	1831 – 1895	First Black/African American woman Doctor of Medicine in the United States	The book was dedicated “to mothers, nurses, and all who may desire to mitigate the afflictions of the human race.” Crumpler, R. (1883). <i>A Book of Medical Discourses in TwoPart</i> . Boston, MA: Cashman, Keating & Co., Printers.
Mary Eliza Mahoney	1845 – 1926	First to Black/African American women to earn a professional nursing license in the U.S. Admitted to the New England Hospital professional nursing school at 33 in 1878. She was one of four out of forty-two students admitted to graduating from the program in 1879.	“Work more and better the coming year than the previous year.” Jacksonville University. “Mary Eliza Mahoney Biography: The First Black Nurse.” Accessed July 10, 2017. https://www.jacksonvilleu.com/blog/nursing/mary-elizamahoney/
Josephine Riley Matthews	1875 – 1969	For four decades, a licensed midwife delivered more than 1,000 babies, black and white, in rural South Carolina. She graduated from high school in 1971 at the age of 74. In 1976, the state of South Carolina named her Woman of the Year and Outstanding Older American.	“I was supposed to retire when I was seventy-two years old, but I was seventy-seven when I retired. On my seventy-sixth birthday, a lady had triplets. It was quite a birthday present.” Lanker, B. (1999). <i>I Dream A World</i> . New York, NY: Stewart, Tabori & Chang.

Alice Augusta Ball	1892 – 1916	Developed a successful treatment for Hansen’s disease (leprosy), later known as the “Ball Method.” Pharmacist and chemist	“It cannot be denied that our people, through forcer of circumstance, occupy a peculiar status in this country. We are not thoroughly known.”
Marie Maynard Daly	1921 – 2003	First, to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry in the U.S. committed to developing programs to increase the enrollment of minority students in medical school and graduate science programs.	Brown, M.C. (1996). “Marie Maynard Daly: Biochemist” <i>The Faces of Science: African Americans in the Sciences</i> . Archived from the original on 2006-10-23. Retrieved 201803-21.
Mary Jackson	1921 – 2005	Taught math and science in a public school in Calvert County, Maryland; Recruited in 1951 to work as a research mathematician and human-computer at the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA), which became the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in 1958. She took engineering classes and became NASA’s first female engineer.	<p>“Every time we get to the finish line, they move it. Every time.”</p> <p>Shetterly, M.L. (2016). <i>Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race</i>. New York, NY: Harper Collins.</p> <p>Shetterly, M.L. (2018). <i>Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race</i>. Juvenile Non-Fiction. New York, NY: Harper Collins.</p>

<p>Jane C. Wright</p>	<p>1919 – 2013</p>	<p>From a family with a strong history of academic achievement in medicine, Dr. Wright completed her medical degree in 3 years with honors at New York Medical College. She joined the Cancer Research Center at Harlem Hospital founded by her father, Dr. Louis T. Wright. Her achievements in the cancer field were many, including the first doctor to use clinical trials to make cancer treatments more effective; developed a nonsurgical procedure using a catheter to deliver toxic chemotherapy drugs to tumors; turned chemotherapy from an untested therapy into one of the most effective, life-saving methods of attacking cancer. Founded the American Society of Clinical Oncology in 1964.</p>	<p>“I know I’m a member of two minority groups, but I don’t think of myself that way. Sure, a woman has to try twice as hard. But – racial prejudice? I’ve met very little of it. It could be that I get it – and wasn’t intelligent enough to recognize it.”</p> <p>Wright, J.C., Cobb, J.P., Gumpert, S.L., Golomb, F.M., & Safadi, D. (1957). Investigation of the relation between clinical and tissue-culture response to chemotherapeutic agents on human cancer. <i>The New England Journal of Medicine</i>, 257(25), 1207–1211. doi: https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJM195712192572502</p> <p>Large, H. “Jane C. Wright: The Woman Who Changed the Landscape of Oncology.” Article Mar 08, 2020. https://www.technologynetworks.com/tn/articles/jane-cwright-the-woman-who-changed-the-landscape-of-oncology331263</p>
<p>Katherine Johnson</p>	<p>1918 – 2020</p>	<p>Mathematician whose calculations of orbital mechanics as a NASA employee were critical to the first and subsequent space ventures in the U. S.</p>	<p>“We will always have STEM with us. Some things will drop out of the public eye and will go away, but there will always be science, engineering, and technology. And there will always be mathematics. I was excited at something new, but give credit to everybody who helped.”</p> <p>Johnson, K. (2019). <i>Reaching for the Moon: The Autobiography of NASA Mathematician Katherine Johnson</i>. New York, NY: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.</p>

Gladys West	1930 -	Mathematician known for satellite geodesy models, which incorporate the basis for Global Positioning Systems (GPS) used widely today. West programmed an IBM computer to deliver a precise model of the shape of the Earth. West's terminal degree is from Virginia Tech University.	<p>“Always doing things just right, to set an example for other people who were coming behind me, especially women.”</p> <p>Williams, T. (2018). <i>Power in Numbers: The Rebel Women of Mathematics</i>. New York, NY: Race Point Publishing.</p>
Joycelyn Elders	1933-	Pediatrician and public health administration, Elders was the first Black/African American woman to serve as the U. S. Surgeon General in 1993. Elders was the first person ever in Arkansas to receive its board certification as a pediatric endocrinologist. Elders' obtained her medical degree from the University of Arkansas Medical School.	<p>“I feel that we can't educate children who are not healthy, and we can't keep them healthy if they're not educated. There is a marriage between health and education. You can't learn if your mind is full of unhealthy images from daily life and confusion about right and wrong.”</p> <p>Elders, J. (1996). <i>Joycelyn Elders, M.D.: From Sharecropper's Daughter to Surgeon General of the United States of America</i>. New York, NY: William Morrow & Co.</p>
Marilyn Hughes Gaston	1939 -	First Black/African American woman to direct the Bureau of Primary Health Care in the United States Department of Health and Human Services; she dedicated her career to caring for poor and minority families and campaigns for health care equality for all Americans. Her 1986 study of sickle cell disease led to a nationwide screening program to test newborns for immediate treatment.	<p>“One day I was in the living room with my mother and she fainted. I was very frightened and did not know what to do. In those days we did not have 911. She had cancer of the cervix. We were poor, we were uninsured, she was not getting health care. . . that is why she fainted. And from that point on, I knew that I wanted to do something to change that situation.”</p> <p>Gaston, M. (1986). “Prophylaxis with Oral Penicillin in Children with Sickle Cell Anemia.” <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i>. 314 (25): 1593-1599.; Porter, G. K. and Gaston, M. H., (2003). <i>Prime Time: The African American Woman's Complete Guide to Midlife Health and Wellness, One World/Ballantine</i>; Revised, Updated Edition.</p>

<p>Patricia Bath</p>	<p>1942 – 2019</p>	<p>Ophthalmologist, inventor, humanitarian, and academic, Bath received her medical degree from Howard University. An early pioneer of laser cataract surgery, among Bath’s five patents, one is for her invention of the Laserphaco Probe for cataract treatment in 1966. Co-founder of the American Institute for the Prevention of Blindness established that “eyesight is a basic human right.”</p>	<p>“Believe in the power of truth. Do not allow your mind to be imprisoned by majority thinking. Remember that the limits of science are not the limits of imagination.”</p> <p>Mosca, J. F. (2017). <i>The Doctor with an Eye for Eyes: The Story of Dr. Patricia Bath</i>. New York, NY: Innovation Press.</p>
<p>Evelyn J. Fields</p>	<p>1949 -</p>	<p>Rear Admiral retired from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The first woman and first African American to head NOAA. A math major at Norfolk State University, she credits her elementary school teachers for instilling in her love of math. After college, as a civilian cartographer, she was only one of two women working on nautical charts at the Atlantic Marine Center.</p>	<p>“I didn’t set out to be a groundbreaker, but certainly that is what happened . . . But just about every job I’ve been in has been groundbreaking because when you’re one of the first women to come into a work situation – that’s going to happen automatically.”</p> <p>Watson, D. (5 February 2008). “Norfolk’s Evelyn J. Fields: Innovator for NOAA’s research fleet.” <i>African American Today</i>.</p>

<p>Alexa Canady</p>	<p>1950 -</p>	<p>The First Black/African American woman neurosurgeon in U.S. Medical studies was at the University of Michigan with a specialty in pediatric neurosurgery. She was certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery in 1984. During her career, she was involved in research to make advances in neurosurgical techniques. She shares a patent on a programmable antisiphon shunt to treat hydrocephalus, an abnormal accumulation of fluid inside the brain.</p>	<p>“Surgery is a service business. You provide a service as unobtrusively as possible. But you must be human. In order to provide good quality care, it is so important that patients are able to talk to you and not regard you as some deity above them.”</p> <p>Biography.com Editors. “Alexa Canady,” July 29, 2019. A&E Televisión Networks, https://www.biography.com/scientist/alexa-canady.</p>
<p>Marian Croak</p>	<p>1955 -</p>	<p>Vice President of Engineering at Google. With a doctorate from the University of Southern California, specializing in social psychology and quantitative analysis. She developed Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), also called IP telephony, that offers voice communications and multimedia sessions over the Internet Protocol (IP) networks. She holds over 200 to 500 patents in several areas, but the majority are in VOIP. She has supervised over 500 world-class engineers and computer scientists.</p>	<p>“People are going to accept you, and people are going to want (and value) your contributions because you are unique and, therefore, so are your thoughts. Our society is desperate for your minds and energy.”</p> <p>Johnson, J. (2018, December 25). Marian R. Croak (1955-). Retrieved from http://www.blackpast.org/african-americanhistory/croak-marian-r-1955/</p>

Mae Carol Jemison	1956 -	Engineer, physician, and former NASA astronaut, she is the first black woman to travel into space on the Space Shuttle Endeavor in 1992 with six other astronauts. In space, she conducted studies on weightlessness and motion sickness on the crew and herself. She now works on a project to advance technology in developing countries.	<p>“Never limit yourself because of others’ limited imagination; never limit others because of your own limited imagination.”</p> <p>Ahmed, R. (2020). <i>Mae Among the Stars</i>. New York, NY: Harper Collins.</p> <p>Lassieur, A. (2016). <i>Astronaut Mae Jemison</i>. New York: NY: Lerner Publication.</p>
Chavonda Jacobs-Young	1967 -	With a BS degree in Paper Science and Engineering from North Carolina State University, M.S. in wood and paper science, and a Ph.D. in paper science, Jacobs-Young is a government executive in the U. S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service.	<p>“Be true to yourself. If you speak and act authentically, life and work are much less stressful. When we act like something we are not, things become exponentially more difficult.”</p> <p>Weston, M. (2020-03-12). “Celebrating Women in STEM. Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young – University News. University News-University of Missouri-Kansas City.</p>
Ayanna MacCalla Howard	1972 -	Robotician, Researcher in Artificial Intelligence and computer vision, after spending 12 years at NASA as a senior robotics researcher, Howard chairs the School of Interactive Computing at Georgia Tech University. Her work involves developing personalized educational technologies that address the needs of children with differing abilities.	<p>“Women have a unique power of being able to look at the world’s problems and discovering solutions that transform lives and make the world a better place.”</p> <p>“Ayanna Howard The HistoryMakers.” April 15, 2011. www.historymakers.org</p>

<p>Ashanti Johnson</p>	<p>1975 -</p>	<p>First Black/African American female chemical oceanographer and the first to earn a Ph.D. in oceanography from Texas A&M University. Johnson is also the chief of science and research for Black Girls Dive, which inspires young girls and women to explore aquatic-based activities and careers.</p>	<p>“The idea of being able to do something I love and help others realize their dreams, it’s the perfect solution for me, the perfect dream.”</p> <p>Ignatofsky, R. (2016). <i>Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers who Changed the World</i>. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.</p>
<p>Lisette Titre-Montgomery</p>	<p>1977 -</p>	<p>Video game artist. Graduated with a degree in computer animation from Miami International University of Art and Design in 2000. Some of her projects include Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2007, Dante’s Inferno, Zombie Apocalypse. She was invited to the 2016 White House LGBTQ Tech and Innovation briefing. She is a member of Blacks in Gaming.</p>	<p>Harris, M. K. (13 February 2018). “15 Black Women Who Are Paving the Way in STEM and Breaking Barriers.” <i>Essence</i>.</p>
<p>Melanie Harrison Okoro</p>	<p>1982 -</p>	<p>Marine estuarine and environmental scientist, Okoro, received her Ph.D. from the University of Maryland. She is the founder, CEO of Eco-Alpha Environmental & Engineering Services. Okoro’s company focuses on environmental aquatic biogeochemistry, professional natural resources management, and STEM diversity initiatives.</p>	<p>“As an African American female scientist, I am thankful for those who made it possible for me to walk my path, even if it is the road less traveled, a road that gives me a hand in protecting something greater than myself.”</p> <p>Bolden, T., (2020). <i>Changing the Equation: 50+ US Black Women in STEM</i>. New York, NY: Abrams.</p>

Appendix C: Black/African American Women Contributors to Social Justice and Human Rights

NAME	BIRTH – DEATH	CONTRIBUTION(S)	QUOTES & REFERENCES
Maria W. Stewart	1803 – 1879	Freeborn and became a teacher, journalist, lecturer, abolitionist, and women’s rights activist. She supported herself by teaching in the public schools in New York and Baltimore to advocate for literacy and educational opportunities for Black/African Americans and women.	<p>“It is not the color of the skin that makes the man or the woman, but the principle formed in the soul. Brilliant wit will shine, come from whence it will, and genius and talent will not hide the brightness of its luster.”</p> <p>Stewart, M. (1879). <i>Meditations from the Pen of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart</i>. Boston, MA: Garrison and Knapp.</p> <p>Richardson, M. (1987), Maria W. Stewart, America’s First Black Woman Political Writer: Essays and Speeches. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.</p>
Septima Poinsette Clark	1898 – 1987	An educator and civil rights activist. Clark developed workshops for literacy and citizenship which were important in voting and civil rights for Black/African Americans in the Civil Rights Movement. She was called the “Mother of the Civil Rights Movement.”	<p>“I believe unconditionally in the ability of people to respond when they are told the truth. We need to be taught to study rather than believe, to inquire rather than affirm.”</p> <p>Clark, S. (1986), <i>Ready from Within: Septima Clark and the Civil Rights Movement</i>, Navarro, CA: Wild Trees Press.</p>

Harriet Tubman	1822 – 1913	Abolitionist, Conductor of the Underground Railroad to free the slaves; An armed scout and spy in the Union Army.	<p>“When I found I had crossed that line, I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything; the sun came like gold through the trees, and over the fields, and I felt like I was in Heaven.”</p> <p>Clinton, C. (2004). <i>Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom</i>. Boston, MA: Little Brown.</p>
Ella Baker	1903 – 1986	For more than five decades, civil rights leader and human rights activist began her quest for human dignity through her work with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Baker helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee by promoting grassroots organizing, radical democracy, and the ability of the oppressed to understand their world and advocate for themselves.	<p>“Until the killing of black men, black mother's sons becomes as important to the rest of the country as the killing of a white mother's son, we who believe in freedom cannot rest until this happens.”</p> <p>Ransby, B. (2003). <i>Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement</i>, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.</p>
Dorothy Height	1912 – 2010	Civil Rights and women's rights activist primarily on improving the circumstances of and opportunities for Black/African American women. Directed the integration of all YWCA centers in 1946. Height served as president of the National Council of Negro Women.	<p>“I have been in the proximity of, and threatened by, the Klan; I have been called everything people of color are called; I have been denied admission because of a quota. I've had all of that, but I've also learned that getting bitter is not the way.”</p> <p>Height, D. (2005). <i>Open Wide the Freedom Gates: A Memoir</i>. New York, NY: Public Affairs.</p>

<p>Dovey Johnson Roundtree</p>	<p>1914 – 2018</p>	<p>Civil Rights Activist, ordained minister, criminal defense attorney, and Army veteran. Spelman College and Howard University School of Law. A protégé of Mary McLeod Bethune was selected for the first class of African American women to be trained as officers in the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps during World War II. As an attorney, she won many cases, including one against the Interstate Commerce Commission to end Jim Crow laws in public transportation. First Black/African American in the Washington D C Women’s Bar Association. Recently \$40 million by Netflix was contributed to her alma mater, Spelman College, and named it for her.</p>	<p>“The promise of the law <i>lifted</i> me when so much else weighed me down. . . surety I believe that God gives persons who are telling the truth.”</p> <p>Roundtree Johnson, D., McCabe, K. & Jones, T. (2019), <i>Mighty Justice: My Life in Civil Rights</i>, Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books.</p>
<p>Florynce “Flo” Kennedy</p>	<p>1916 – 2000</p>	<p>Black/African American feminist lawyer and civil rights activist, one of the founders of the National Organization for Women and the founder of the National Black Feminist Organization. Kennedy nominated Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm as President of the United States in 1972. Kennedy was one of the first Black women to graduate from Columbia Law School in 1951.</p>	<p>“Everybody’s scared for their ass. There aren’t too many people ready to die for racism. They’ll kill for racism, but they won’t die for racism.”</p> <p>Kennedy, F. (1976). <i>Color Me Flo: My Hard Life and Good Times</i>. Englewood, NJ: Prentice-Hall.</p>

<p>Fannie Lou Hamer</p>	<p>1917 – 1977</p>	<p>A civil rights activist who led the voting drives and co-founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party to challenge the all-white Mississippi delegation to the Democratic National Convention in 1964.</p>	<p>“I am sick and tired of being sick and tired.” “One day, I know the struggle will change. There’s got to be a change – not only for Mississippi, not only for the people in the United States but people all over the world.”</p> <p>Mills, K. (2007). <i>This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer</i>. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky.</p>
<p>Althea T. L. Simmons</p>	<p>1924 – 1990</p>	<p>A chief congressional lobbyist for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People from 1979 to 1990. She won victories like the 1982 extension of the Voting Rights Act.</p>	<p>“We still have not determined that America is for everybody. I have not given up hope. I am an incurable activist. I can’t believe American people are so closed-minded that they can’t see the necessity to use all our human sources. ”</p> <p>Bell Cheatham, J. (2002). <i>Till Victory Is Won: Famous Black Quotations from the NAACP</i>. New York, NY: Washington Square Press.</p>
<p>Shirley Chisholm</p>	<p>1924 – 2005</p>	<p>First Black/African American congresswoman and first major-party black candidate to make a bid for the U.S. presidency. Chisolm fought for educational opportunities and social justice throughout her career.</p>	<p>“If they don’t give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.”</p> <p>Chisholm, S. (1970). <i>Unbought and Unbossed</i>, New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.</p>

Coretta Scott King	1927 – 2006	Civil rights activist and wife of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. Founded the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and later lobbied for Dr. King’s birthday to be recognized as a federal holiday.	<p>“Struggle is a never-ending process. Freedom is never really won; you earn it and win it in every generation.”</p> <p>King, C.S, (2017), <i>My Life My Love My Legacy</i>, New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company.</p>
Myrlie Evers	1933 -	Civil rights activist and journalist who worked for over three decades seeking justice for the murder of her husband, Medgar Evers.	<p>“I never thought this would happen . . . for the people who hold the palm of Mississippi in their hands, for their wisdom and strength, for them to vote the way they did is all but unbelievable to me, but I am ever so thankful for that vote.” On Mississippi, legislators voting to remove the state’s Confederate flag and commissioned a new design.</p> <p>Evers-Williams, M., (1967; 1996), <i>For Us, the Living</i>, Oxford, MS: University Press of Mississippi.</p>
Barbara Jordan	1936 – 1996	Lawyer, politician, professor, first Southern African American woman elected to U. S. Congress since Reconstruction, first Black/African American woman in the Texas legislature. Jordan played a vital role in the Watergate hearings on President Richard Nixon and was a keynote speaker at the 1976 and 1992 Democratic National Convention.	<p>“My faith in the Constitution is whole, it is complete, it is total, and I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution. It is the reason and not passion which must guide our deliberations, guide our debate, guide our decision.”</p> <p>Jordan, B. (1976). <i>Barbara Jordan: A Self Portrait</i>, New York, NY: Doubleday Books.</p>

Mary Frances Berry	1938 -	Historian, writer, lawyer, activist, and professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania since 1987. Berry served under three presidential administrations. From 1980 to 2004, she was a member of the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights and served as a chair from 1993 to 2004. An outspoken advocate of the Equal Rights Amendment. She is the author of twelve books and numerous articles	<p>“Defining childcare primarily as women’s sphere reinforces the devaluing of women and prevents their equal access to power.”</p> <p>Berry, M.F. (2018). <i>History Teaches Us to Resist: How Progressive Movements Have Succeeded in Challenging Time</i>. New York, NY: Beacon Press.</p>
Frances Beal	1940 -	Founding member of Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) Black Women’s Liberation Committee. Beal is a Black/African American feminist and a peace and justice political activist. The first to explain the “triple oppression” of race, class, and gender.	<p>“The new world we are attempting to create must destroy oppression of any type. The value of this new system will be determined by the status of the person who was low man on the totem pole.”</p> <p>Beal, F. (1969). Black Women’s Manifesto; Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female,” included in Morgan, R. (1970), <i>Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings from The Women’s Liberation Movement</i>. New York, NY: Random House.</p>
Claudette Colvin	1939 -	March 2, 1955, at age 15, in Montgomery, Alabama, Colvin was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a crowded, segregated bus to a white woman. She was a pioneer of the 1950s civil rights movement, and her refusal preceded that of the famous Rosa Parks.	<p>“I knew then and I know now that, when it comes to justice, there is no easy way to get it. You can’t sugarcoat it. You have to take a stand and say, ‘This is not right . . .’”</p> <p>Hoose, P. (2009). <i>Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice</i>. New York, NY: Square Fish.</p>

<p>Bernice Johnson Reagon</p>	<p>1942 -</p>	<p>Writer, composer, scholar, and social activist, earning a Ph.D. degree from Howard University. Reagon was one of the founding members of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee's Freedom Singers. Reagon, for more than a half century, has been a prominent cultural voice for freedom and justice. Through her songs, teachings, speaking out against racism, and organized inequalities of all kinds, it has been her life's work. She formed the internationally renowned Black/African American women's <i>a cappella</i> ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock and led the group until her retirement in 2004.</p>	<p>"Life's challenges are not supposed to paralyze you, they're supposed to help you discover who you are."</p> <p>Johnson Reagon, B. (1993). <i>We Who Believe in Freedom</i>, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan: Anchor Books.</p>
<p>Marsha P. Johnson</p>	<p>1945 – 1992</p>	<p>Gay rights and HIV/AIDS activist and one of the prominent figures in the Stonewall uprising of 1969 in New York City. She threw a shot glass at police inside the Stonewall Inn as an act of resistance against police who were harassing patrons. The uprising is considered the catalyst that launched the modern L.G.B.T. civil rights movement. Marsha led the fight in the streets. She and co-founder Sylvia Rivera established one of the country's first safe spaces for transgender and homeless youth, Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR).</p>	<p>"History isn't something you look back at and say it as inevitable. It happens because people make decisions that are sometimes very impulsive and of the moment, but those moments are cumulative realities."</p> <p>Netflix Film: <i>The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson</i>, 2017. LGBTQ Documentaries.</p>

Kamala Devi Harris	1964 -	Sworn on January 20, 2021, as the first female Vice President of the United States of America, the highest-ranking female official in U.S. history, and the first Black/African American and first Asian American vice president. Harris has an impressive career of service to the people, including U. S. Senator (2017 - 2021); Attorney General of California (2011 - 2017); San Francisco District Attorney's Office (2004 - 2011)	<p>"I was raised by a mother who said to me all the time, 'Kamala, you may be the first to do many things — make sure you're not the last.'" "I was raised to be an independent woman, not the victim of anything."</p> <p>Harris, K.D., (2019). <i>We Hold These Truths: An American Journey</i>. New York: Penguin Press</p>
Alicia Garza	1981 -	Civil rights activist, writer, co-founder for the international Black Lives Matter movement with Opal Tometi and Patrisse Cullors. Established other organizations such as Supermajority to train and mobilize women to become organizers, activists, and leaders, emphasizing women's issues like voting rights, gun control, paid family leaves, and equal pay.	<p>"I continue to be surprised at how little Black lives matter. . .Our lives matter."</p> <p>Garza, A. (2020). <i>The Purpose of Power: How We Come Together When We Fall Apart</i>. London, WC: One World.</p>

Appendix D: Black/African American Women Contributors to the Arts

NAME	BIRTH - DEATH	CONTRIBUTION(S)	QUOTES & REFERENCES
Gertrude Pridgett aka “Ma” Rainey	1866 – 1939	First-generation professional blues singer to record. Known as the “Mother of the Blues.”	<p>“They hear it come out, but they don’t know how it got there. They don’t understand that’s life’s way of talking. You don’t sing to feel better. You sing ‘cause that’s a way of understanding life.”</p> <p>Lieb, S. (1981). <i>Mother of the Blues: A Study of Ma Rainey</i>, Cambridge, MA: University Massachusetts Press.</p>
Mamie Smith	1883 – 1946	First Black/African American vocal blues recording artist. Her million-copy hit was, “It’s Right Here for You (If You Don’t Get It, ‘Tain’t No Faulty of Mine).” Her success opened the door for other Black/African American female blues singers to be sought after by record labels. She acted in films: <i>Paradise in Harlem</i> and the last one was <i>Because I Love You</i> in 1943.	<p>“Human laws pattern divine laws, but divine laws use only originals.”</p> <p>Kernfeld, B. D. (2002). “Mamie Smith”. <i>The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz</i>, vol. 3(2nd ed.). London: Macmillian. P. 615. ISBN 1-56159284-6.</p>
Laura Wheeler Waring	1887 – 1948	Artist and educator. Known for her paintings of prominent Black/African Americans during the Harlem Renaissance. Taught for over 30 years at the first historically black college, Cheyney University, Cheyney, PA.	<p>“I thought again and again how little of the beauty of really great pictures is revealed in the reproductions which we see and how free and with what ease the great masters paint.”</p> <p>Kirschke, A. (2014). <i>Women Artists of the Harlem Renaissance</i>. Oxford, MS: University Press of Mississippi.</p>

<p>Florence Cole Talbert-McCleave</p>	<p>1890 – 1961</p>	<p>An American operatic soprano, coloratura, music educator, and musician. One of the first Black/African American women opera artists performing abroad who received success and critical acclaim. The National Negro Opera Guild called her “The First Lady in Grand Opera.” She became a legendary figure within the Black/African American music community, earning titles of “Queen of Concert State” and “Our Divine Florence.” Credit given to her for encouraging Marion Anderson to pursue a career in classical music.</p>	<p>“Her voice was pure and high and held an appealing expression that was exquisite at times, then full of the sunlight or spring, or again told this gripping tale with pathos and sympathy.” -<i>The Washington Times</i></p> <p>Rogers, B. (2009, March 29) Florence Cole Talbert (1890-1961). Retrieve from https://www.blackpast.org/african-americanhistory/cole-talbert-florence-1890-1961/</p>
<p>Ida Prather aka Ida Cox</p>	<p>1896 – 1967</p>	<p>Vaudeville performer, composer, and pioneering blues singer. Cox touted as the “Uncrowned Queen of the Blues.” A savvy businesswoman who was her manager and produced her stage shows.</p>	<p>“Oh, the blues ain’t nothin’ but a slow achin’ heart disease. Just like consumption, it kills you by degrees.”</p> <p>Sliwicki, S., “Cold and Blue; Ida Cox – the Uncrowned Queen of the Blues,” <i>Goldmine The Music Collector’s Magazine</i>, Aug 31, 2011.</p>
<p>Tressie Souders</p>	<p>1897 – 1995</p>	<p>First known Black/African American female to direct a feature film, “A Woman’s Error.” Her legacy is memorialized by The Tressie Souders Film Society, which grew from the International Black Women’s Film Festival founded in 2001. Film awards are known as “Tressies.”</p>	<p><i>The Billboard</i> referred in a review of “A Woman’s Error,” as “the first of its kind to be produced by a young woman of our race. . .” [There are no quotes found by Tressie Souders.]</p> <p>Morgan, K. “Tressie Souders.” In Jane Gaines, Radha Vatsal, and Monica Dall’Asta, eds. <i>Women Film Pioneers Project</i>, New York, NY: Columbia University Libraries, 2013.</p>

<p>Mary Lou Williams</p>	<p>1910 – 1981</p>	<p>Jazz pianist, composer, arranger, and band director, Duke University established the Center for Black Culture in her honor. Williams wrote hundreds of compositions and recorded more than one hundred records. She wrote and arranged for Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman among others.</p>	<p>“Anything you are shows up in your music – jazz is whatever you are, playing yourself, being yourself, letting your thoughts come through.”</p> <p>Dahl, L. (2012). <i>Morning Glory: A Biography of Mary Lou William</i>. New York, NY: Knopf Doubleday.</p>
<p>Camilla Williams</p>	<p>1919 – 2012</p>	<p>First Black/African American to receive a regular contract with a major American opera company – New York City Opera as a soprano, Williams was the first Black/African American to sign a significant role with the Vienna State Opera. First Black professor of voice at Indiana University. She was the soloist at the 1963 March on Washington and sang just before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech.</p>	<p>“My grandparents and parents were self-taught musicians; all of them sang, and there was always music in our home. We were poor, but God blessed us with music.”</p> <p>“Bite off more than you can chew, then chew it.”</p> <p>Williams, C. (2011). <i>The Life of Camilla Williams, African American Classical Singer, and Diva</i>. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press.</p>

<p>Elizabeth Catlett</p>	<p>1915 – 2012</p>	<p>Graphic artist and sculptor. She was known for depicting Black/African American experiences related to race and feminism. Catlett grew up with grandparents who had been slaves, and that provided her an awareness of the injustices against Black women. Her work is a mixture of abstract and figurative in the Modernist tradition. The purpose of her work is to convey social messages rather than pure aesthetics. Having moved to Mexico to work with a graphic group of artists, her activism in the strike regarding the railroad caused her to be under surveillance of the U.S. government which barred her from entering the country. She became a citizen of Mexico.</p>	<p>“No other field is closed to those who are not white and male as is the visual arts. After I decided to be an artist, the first thing I had to believe was that I, a black woman, could penetrate the art scene, and that, further, I could do so without sacrificing one iota of my blackness or my femaleness or my humanity.”</p> <p>Herzog, M. (2000). <i>Elizabeth Catlett: An American Artist in Mexico</i>. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.</p>
<p>Cicely Tyson</p>	<p>1924 -</p>	<p>Oscar-nominated actress for over 60+ years, Tyson continues to remain active in cinema and TV. As a recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors, Tony Award for Best Lead Actress in a Play, Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance, NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in Motion Picture, three-time Emmy Award winner.</p>	<p>“The moment anyone tries to demean or degrade you in any way, you have to know how great you are. Nobody would bother to beat you down if you were not a threat.”</p> <p>Tyson, C. (2021). <i>Just As I Am</i>. New York, NY: Harper Collins.</p>
<p>Camille Billops</p>	<p>1933 – 2019</p>	<p>Sculptor, filmmaker, printmaker, archivist, and educator. Founded the Hatch-Billops Collection, an African American archive collection of oral histories, books, slides, photographs, and other historical references. Film credits include Finding Christa in 1992; Older Women and Love in 1987; A String of Pearls, 2002.</p>	<p>“It is important to write our own histories, otherwise, they will say we were never here.”</p> <p>Billops, C. & Hatch, J. (2012). <i>The Art of Remembering</i>. Raleigh, NC: Duke University Press.</p>

<p>Eunice Kathleen Waymon, aka, Nina Simone</p>	<p>1933 – 2003</p>	<p>Pianist, singer, songwriter, and activist, Waymon graduated valedictorian of her high school and continued her studies at Julliard in New York. She was an accomplished classical pianist. Her dreams of a career as a classical pianist were dashed when she was denied admission to the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. She claimed racism was the reason for the denial. Although that dream was unfulfilled, she ended up with an incredible worldwide career as Nina Simone.</p>	<p>“This is the world you have made yourself, now you have to live in it. I spent many years pursuing excellence because that is what classical music is all about. . . Now it was dedicated to freedom, and that was far more important.”</p> <p>Simone, N. (1992). <i>I Put a Spell on You: The Autobiography of Nina Simone</i>. New York, NY: Pantheon.</p>
<p>Emma Amos</p>	<p>1937 – 2020</p>	<p>Amos used her art to explore themes of race and sex. She contended that being a Black/African American artist was political. She incorporated other subjects of color in her work, including images of the Ku Klux Klan, to challenge the assumption that Black/African American artists were expected to paint only subjects of color.</p>	<p>“My work reflects my investigations into the otherness often seen by the white male artists, along with the notion of desire, the dark body versus the white body, racism, and my wish to provoke more thoughtful ways of thinking and seeing.”</p> <p>Amos, E. & hooks, b. (1994). <i>Emma Amos: Changing the Subject: Paintings and Prints, 1992 – 1994</i>. New York, NY: Art in General</p>
<p>Jesse Norman</p>	<p>1945 – 2019</p>	<p>An American soprano opera singer who performed dramatic roles with her commanding presence and voice. As a recitalist, she sang other genres not to be limited to just one voice type. She also used her voice to engage in social issues in the struggle for civil rights.</p>	<p>“Art makes each of us whole by insisting that we use all of our senses, our heads and our hearts, that we express with our bodies, our voices, our hands, as well as our minds.”</p> <p>Norman, J. (2014). <i>Stand Up Straight and Sing</i>, New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.</p>

<p>Carrie Mae Weems</p>	<p>1953 -</p>	<p>A contemporary artist developing a complex body of work using photographs, text, fabric, audio, digital images, video, Weems' work reveals an investigation of family relationships, cultural identity, sexism, class, political systems, and the consequences of power.</p>	<p>“Despite the variety of my explorations, throughout it all, it has been my contention that my responsibility as an artist is to work, to sing for my supper, to make art, beautiful and powerful, that adds and reveals; to beautify the mess of a messy world, to heal the sick, and feed the helpless; to shot bravely from the rooftops and storm barricaded doors and voice the specifics of our historic moment.”</p> <p>Weems, C., (1996), <i>Carrie Mae Weems: The Kitchen Table Series</i>, New York, NY: Damiani.</p>
<p>Viola Davis</p>	<p>1965 -</p>	<p>First Black/African American actress to achieve the “Triple Crown of Acting.” She has won an Academy Award, an Emmy Award, and two Tony Awards. She describes her early years as living in abject poverty, surviving rat infested and condemned apartments, and having to scrounge for food. Her determination to remove herself from her impoverished conditions caused her to excel through her intellect and talent. Majoring in theatre at Rhode Island College and attending Juilliard School, she distinguished herself and continues to excel at her craft.</p>	<p>“All dreams are within reach. All you have to do is keep moving towards them.”</p> <p>Davis, V. (2018). <i>Corduroy Takes a Bow</i>. New York: Penguin Press.</p>

Kara Walker	1969 -	Conceptual artist, silhouettes, printmaker, installation artist, Walker has gained national and international recognition for her cut-paper silhouettes depicting historical narratives of psychological injury caused by slavery, sexuality, violence, racial and gender stereotypes.	<p>“I think really the whole problem with racism and its continuing legacy in this country is that we simply love it. Who would we be without the “struggle”?”</p> <p>Walker, K. (2007). <i>Kara Walker: After the Deluge</i>. New York, NY: Rizzoli.</p>
Shonda Rhimes	1970 -	The first Black/African American woman to create and executive produce a Top 10 network series and have three different award-winning series running on network television at the same time – Grey’s Anatomy, Scandal, and How to Get Away with Murder. She is the winner of numerous awards and nominations. 2020 she left ABC for Netflix.	<p>“Badassery: the practice of knowing one’s own accomplishments and gifts, accepting one’s own accomplishments and gifts, and celebrating one’s own accomplishments.”</p> <p>Rhimes, S. (2015). <i>Year of Yes: How to Dance It Out, Stand in the Sun, and Be Your Own Person</i>. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.</p>
Ava DuVernay	1972 -	An American writer, director, and filmmaker is the first to win the directing award for the dramatic film at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival, she is the first Black/African American female to be nominated for the Golden Globe and an Oscar. Among the films she directed is “Selma” (2014) and “13 th ” (2016). She also has written and directed TV episodes, including “When They See Us,” about the five teenagers wrongly convicted of rape and assault of a jogger.	<p>“As a Black woman filmmaker, I feel that’s my job: visibility. And my preference within that job is Black subjectivity. Meaning I’m interested in the lives of Black folk as the subject. Not the predicate, not the tangent. [These stories] deserve to be told. Not as sociology, not as spectacle, not as a singular event that happens every so often, but regularly and purposefully as truth and as art on an ongoing basis.”</p> <p>Moening, K. (2020). <i>Ava Duvernay Movie Director</i>. Hopkin, MN: Bellwether Media.</p>

<p>Misty Copeland</p>	<p>1982-</p>	<p>First Black/African American Female Principal Dancer promoted in 2015 in the 75- year history of the prestigious American Ballet Theatre. Copeland began ballet training at age 13, which is considered late age for a ballerina. Despite her age challenges in her early life, Copeland excelled and exceeded expectations and performs in her greatness.</p>	<p>“Decide what you want. Declare it to the world. See yourself winning. And remember that if you are persistent as well as patient, you can get whatever you seek.”</p> <p>Copeland, M. (2014). <i>Firebird: Ballerina Misty Copeland Shows a Young Girl How to Dance</i>. New York: Penguin.</p>
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Appendix E: Children’s Books Affirming Who They Are and Can Be

TITLES	AGE GROUP	AUTHORS	TOPICS
Baby Says	0 – 3	John Steptoe	The baby wants attention from his older sibling. It is a tender story of a caring relationship between an older brother and his baby brother.
Hair Love	2 – 12	Matthew A. Cherry	A story of a father-daughter relationship that bonded them around the care of her hair, the dad uses creativity and imagination to provide a perfect style for his daughter’s hair while the mom is away. The day ends with a great surprise.
Dream Big, Little One	3 – 6	Vashti Harrison	Features 18 trailblazing Black/African American women.
Sisters and Champions: The True Story of Venus and Serena Williams	3 – 6	Howard Bryant	A sports biography of two great female tennis players and their journey to becoming number one ranked women in tennis.
Mommy’s Khimar	3 – 6	Jamilah Thompkins Bigelow	A young Muslim girl enjoys wrapping herself up in her mother’s colorful khimars (headscarves). She feels her mother’s love as she tries on everyone.
The Undefeated	3 – 6	Kwame Alexander	This poem captures historical figures and events expressing self-love and empowerment of persons who rose to be whatever they set their minds to be. They were not deterred by a world that seeks to negate African history and culture.
I Am Enough	3 – 6	Grace Byers	Inspiring children to love who they are, respect others, and be kind to one another.

All the Colors We Are Todos los colores de nuestra piel	3 – 6	Katie Kissinger	The story of skin color and how it is determined by our ancestors, the sun, and melanin
Brown Boy Joy	3 – 6	<i>Thomishia Booker</i>	This is a book about all things that little brown boys want. It follows the boy who refers to himself as a little brown boy. He talks about what he likes to do and what he hopes to achieve in his future. He demonstrates how one should be proud of who one is and where one comes from.
Sulwe (Star)	3 – 6	Lupita Nyong’o	With skin the color of midnight, she learns to accept herself and her unique beauty.
She Persisted Around the World	3 – 6	Chelsea Clinton	Thirteen women shaped history across the globe without being deterred by anyone or anything.
Martin’s BIG Words – The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	3 – 6	Doreen Rappaport	The words of Dr. King are woven into his life story to tell the story of a man whose dream changed the world.
Antiracist Baby	3 – 6	Ibram Kendi	Offers nine steps to assist in making equity a reality by teaching children to celebrate the differences in people, talk about racism and understand that people are not the problem
Superheroes Are Everywhere	3 – 6	Kamala Harris	Through the story of the life of Vice President Kamala Harris, she shares her discovery that superheroes were wherever she looked, and they inspire you to be the best that you can be.

Shades of Black: A Celebration of Our Children	3 – 6	Sandra L. Pinkney	A poetic book that provides affirmation for Black/African American children, the photographs celebrate the descriptions of skin tones, hair texture, and eye color that support the strong sense of pride in the unique heritage of Black/African Americans.
They, She, He easy as ABC	3 – 7	Maya Christina Gonzalez	This book uses pronouns to model gender inclusion. Diversity is celebrated while learning the alphabet and encourages everyone to be who they are.
ABC of African American Poetry	4 – 8	Ashley Bryan	Combining poetry with his art, Ashley Bryan provides inspiring excerpts from poems by some of the most celebrated Black/African American poets.
I Promise	4 – 8	LeBron James	Encouraging and boosting reminders that success is in the grasp of everyone who seeks it
We Shall Overcome: The Story of the Song	6 – 10	Debbie Levy	Singing has always been a hallmark of Black/African Americans. When songs are sung, there are messages in their meaning. From the era of slavery through the civil rights movement to today, “We Shall Overcome” has represented the fight for equality and freedom around the world.
Different: A Story About Loving Your Neighbor	6 – 10	Chris Singleton	Be proud of who you are and accepting others for who they are.
Separate Is Never Equal – Sylvia Mendez & Her Family’s Fight for Desegregation	6 – 10	Duncan Tonatiuh	The story of a family’s fight for justice and equality helped end segregated schooling in California in 1947.

a kids' book about racism	6 – 10	Jelani Memory	Description of what racism is, how it makes people feel when they experience it, and how to spot it when it happens
Genesis Begins Again	8 – 12	Alicia D. Williams	A novel about a thirteen-year-old girl who is filled with self-loathing by counting all that she hates about herself, she learns to love herself by overcoming internalized racism and the abuse of a dysfunctional family.
Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library	9 - 12	Carole Boston Weatherford	Arturo Schomburg was a law clerk whose life's passion was to collect books, letters, music, and art from Africa and the African diaspora and bring to light the achievements of people of African descent through the ages. His groundbreaking collection, known as the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, has become a beacon to scholars worldwide.
Black Girl White School	12 -16	Olivia V. G. Clarke	A collection of poems, anecdotes, and narratives written by Black/African American girls and women navigating predominately white institutions offers support and guidance through their experiences.

Appendix F: “The Talk”

‘The talk’ consists of explaining specifically to young Black/African American males and all Black/African American children what they should do when they encounter police. ‘The talk’ is given one-on-one. Sometimes information is written and given to young men to read, and then a discussion follows. There are video links, e.g., <https://www.nbcnews.com/now/video/black-parents-describe-how-they-approach-thetalk-with-their-kids-about-racism-85108805715>, that are available for viewing on this topic. The point is the talk’ is an essential conversation in the Black/African American community and can benefit any community. It is a difficult conversation, but children must learn they will be treated differently for one main reason: their skin color. ‘The talk’ has been given to generations after generations. ‘The talk’ is given because parents want their young men to be safe. Some of the points that consistently made are:

- Stay safe.
- Be prepared and be on your guard.
- Do not run from the police.
- Do not make any sudden moves.
- Stay calm and do not engage in argumentative speech with the police.
- Keep your hands in plain view so law enforcers can see them.
- Do not reach for anything! If your license and car registration are in a location, asked for assistance in getting them if you do not have them in hand. State calmly where they are and ask if you may retrieve them or offer for the officer to retrieve them from your wallet or glove box.
- Ask: Officer, am I free to go?
- Ask: Why am I being stopped?

- Ask: Am I under arrest?
- Say: Officer, I do not consent to a search. (Unless there is probable cause, they cannot search.)
- Use an iPhone or recording device to capture the experience.

Although the talk' is necessary. It is also crucial that Black/African Americans know not all police officers are bad. Their mission is primarily to protect the safety of citizens, the city, and the community. It is a mission that most officers uphold.

Appendix G: Studies Used in Meta-Synthesis Research

Author(s)	Sample Description	Research Setting	Data Collection Methods	Notion of Validity	Main Themes and Concepts Identified
Comb-Orme et al. (2013)	222 Black/African American mothers	Six pediatric waiting rooms	Survey Latent Class Analysis	Understanding the importance of the brain in the early years	Brain development
Joe et al. (2019)	19 Black/African American mothers	Telephone interviews	Phenomenological methodology	Trustworthiness; reflexivity	Hypervigilance in parenting strategies
Coard et al. (2004)	15 Black/African American women	Location of participants choosing	Grounded theory	Participant validation; multiple researchers for validation	Racial socialization
Green, (2014)	12 people associated with school	Baton Rouge Freedom School	Ethnographic; Constant Comparative Method	Trustworthiness	Cultural identity and history
McAllister et al. (2005)	150 parents participated in early head start (birth to age 3); ethnographic case studies of 7 families	Homes where participants used cameras to record family activities	Variation of a methodology known as “photovoice”; audiotaped interviews transcribed and coded	Triangulation; reflexive approach	Parents’ concerns about social-emotional development; views of school environment challenging and threatening; the transition from early

					childhood to elementary school
Moseley-Howard & Burgan Evans, (2000)	14 participants from 4 families	Locations of the participants choosing	Videotaped interview using 11 questions resulting in thematic responses	Participant validation; multiple researchers for validation	Cultural identity, traditions, family bonds, education, spirituality, teaching about racism
Rosenblatt & Sims, (2016)	41 autobiographies of childhood racial socialization	University libraries	Autobiographies	Narrative	Parent education about white racism; parent endorsement of the value of education and efforts to protect the child from educational racism; socialization for a strong racial identity;

Snyder, (2016)	21 adults with one Black/African American birth parent and one who was not	Location and time convenient for the participants	Interviews in person and audio-recorded and transcribed, nine interviewed over the phone and recorded	Longitudinal and reflective	Internalization and avoidance; anger and violence; education and advocacy; seeking culture and community; chameleon identities and performing race
Byrd & Shavers, (2013)	16 Black/African American women	Homes of the participants	Interviews	Triangulation based on grounded theory methodology	Black/African American women's self-worth comes from family and role models
McKee et al. (2015)	20 single Black/African American mothers	Participants homes	Semi-structured interview transcribed and analyzed with thematic analysis approach	Theoretical and ethnographic	Behavioral responses and affective responses
Webb et al. (2015)	65 participants Black/African American pregnant women	Social service center	Interviews were recorded using vignettes for participants to finish the story	Phenomenological methodology	Five themes: baby's development; baby's safety/security; child to feel love; knowing the do's and don'ts of childcare; raising child better than parent experienced

Gichia, (2000)	15 new mothers with families and significant others	Homes and communities	Semi-structured interview with open-ended questions	Ethnographic	Four steps in developing the maternal role – preparing, checking, becoming, and evaluating
Everet et al. (2016)	17 Black/African Americans between mothers and daughters	Homes, churches, workplaces, colleges, and a coffee shop	Audio interviews with transcripts	Reflexive and recursive	Development of resilience, coping, and self-worth

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