How Can Restorative Practices Decrease "School to Prison

Pipeline" Occurrences for Black Male Students?

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Dedication

In devoted memory of my father, Paul Jones, you saw the teacher in me since my preschool days. I am thankful for your leadership, your life lessons, your vista and dogged persistence that I become a teacher. I thank God for placing you in my life.

In honorable memory of four Great Matriarchs: Clara Rascoe Smallwood, my grandmother; Clara Smallwood Fortune and Naomi Smallwood Cherry, her elder daughters; and Queen Esther Russell, my grandmother in law. All of you have been a tremendous source of wisdom, encouragement, spiritual nourishment and guidance. Your striving to raise horizons for your sons and grandsons was not in vain. I thank God for giving me your wings.

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"The death of *a seed* is the burial of *a forest*" – Dr. Myles Monroe

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Abstract

In-depth interviews were conducted with nine Black male students who graduated from Restorative Practices schools. In-depth interviews were also conducted for 15 professionals who served as advocates for Black male students at Restorative Practices schools. An online focus group was also implemented. The three primary questions explored were how do Restorative Practices impact the "School to Prison Pipeline" as viewed by Restorative Practices Professionals, how do Restorative Practices impact Trauma and Intergenerational Trauma as it relates to Black male students, and how do Black males who attended a Restorative Practices school view their experience. Seven findings resulted from this study: 1) Zero tolerance as often applied has racial bias against Black male students; 2) Black male students face unacknowledged and unaddressed trauma that is caused by disenfranchisement, racial profiling, violence, erroneous identity; 3) Unacknowledged and unaddressed trauma often leads to a cycle of trauma; 4) Study only minimally affirmed that theories of Intergenerational Trauma is a "lived experience" of Black male students; 5) Restorative Practices was found to address the manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma which were primarily the same behaviors related to trauma response found in previous studies; 6) Some school models of Restorative Practices encompass cultural immersion education (referred to as Cultural Restorative Practices in this study); and 7) Cultural Restorative Practices that involved heritage immersion as an important component of Restorative Practices offered the greatest benefit for assisting Black male students with finding their authentic identities and healing from racial trauma.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Education being a violation of civil liberties is particularly concerning, as it relates to Black male students in American public schools (Chavis, 2010; Dillon, 2010; Dyson, 2008; DeGruy, 2004). The "No Child Left Behind Act", a national initiative under the administration of President George W. Bush that was purposed to guarantee that every child in America will be on a steady path of progress to meet national academic standards within 12 years (Matthis, 2003). Although there is the "No Child Left Behind Act", Aarons (2010), indicates that America's young Black male students have been left far behind his peers in an *Education Week* dossier online article titled *Black Male Achievement in a 'State of Crisis'*. Aarons(2010) reported on the research findings from a detailed report (Uzzell, Simon, Horwitz, Hyslop, Lewis & Casserly, 2010) titled, *A Call for Change: the Social and Educational Factors Contributing to the Outcomes of Black Males in Urban Schools* and published by the Council of Great City Schools. As a result of this report's findings a White House summit was formed in order to draw attention to the educational crisis of Black male students. Aaron (2010) cited the following dismal statistics.

> Just 12 percent of black male 4th graders nationally and 11 percent of those living in large central cities performed at or above proficient levels in reading on the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), compared with 38 percent of white males in that grade nationwide, according to the report from the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of the nation's urban school districts (Aarons, 2010, Opening section, Para. 2).

The report further denotes that white male students, with learning disabilities, on average

achieve higher than Black male students of urban America (Aarons, 2010). Upon reading the social and educational statistics reported in The Council of Great Schools study(Uzzell et al, 2010), which delineated the above 2009 National Standard Achievement tests' results, it is evident that educational leaders must seek to understand any possible underlying variables that may impact on the low achievement of Black male students. According to Flores-Ragade & Williams (2010), more than 50% of Black males who "Drop Out" of school have either repeated a grade and/or failed more than one major subject such as mathematics, science, English and social studies. Therefore, academic failure appears to have an impact upon graduation and dropout rates for Black male students. At a time when even college trained men may find it difficult to obtain employment, more than 50% of Black male students in urban America fail to graduate from high school (Flores-Ragade & Williams, 2010).

Black males, who fail to graduate high school, represent students who either dropped out of school or students who have been "pushed out" of school for an array of discipline or even crime related reasons. Furthermore, statistics indicate that one quarter of these students who do not complete high school will receive a prison sentence (Curry, 2011). This dismal phenomenon of students leaving classrooms to enter courtrooms is referred to as the "School to Prison Pipeline". The "School to Prison Pipeline" refers to the set of policies and practices that make the criminalization and incarceration of children and youth more likely and the attainment of a high-quality education less likely. According to a collaboration of advocacy groups (Advancement Project, et. el, 2011), the "School to Prison Pipeline" suggests that a school places an emphasis of punitive consequences, student exclusion, and justice-system intervention over students' right to an education (Advancement Project, et. el., 2011).

Statement of Purpose

There are three areas of inquiry in this research: 1) Exploring zero tolerance discipline practices and their impact on the "School to Prison Pipeline" occurrences for Black male students; 2) Examining racial trauma and Intergenerational Trauma as a possible variables to the "School to Prison Pipeline" occurrences for Black male students; and 3) Exploring Restorative Practices as a potential intervention to decrease occurrences of the "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students. The first query aims to examine research on zero tolerance disciplinary programs having "Push Out" outcomes for Black male students that may lead to "School to Prison Pipeline" occurrences. A review of literature will also include studies on what educators refer to as "at-risk" behaviors being compared to manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma and racial trauma response behaviors. The study's second query will examine the possible associations of racial trauma and/or Intergenerational Trauma with occurrences of the "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students. Behaviors associated Intergenerational Trauma will be compared to behaviors associated with Black males who may be considered "at-risk" of becoming part of "School to Prison Pipeline" syndrome. Because Restorative Practices in schools was noted in research by Lewis (2009), to reduce "Push Out" outcomes, the final inquiry of this study is to conduct a Phenomenological study to explore Restorative Practices as a possible intervening variable for trauma, racial trauma, and Intergenerational Trauma. This study looked at Restorative Practices possibly being an intervening variable that may decrease "School to Prison Pipeline" occurrences for Black male students.

In research performed by Lewis (2009), a school that was on Pennsylvania's list of persistently dangerous schools experienced drastic reductions in student "at-risk" behaviors

within the first year of Restorative Practices being implemented at the school. The "at-risk" behaviors of the students as identified by the study included behaviors such as assaults on students, assaults on teachers, use of weapons, setting of fires and other property destruction. After the implementation of Restorative Practices in less than one year, this school's data indicated a marked reduction in violence, a reduction of police reports and a discernible reduction of student arrests. Similarly, school administrators of other schools in this study offered evidence of improvement in school climate, after using Restorative Practices (Lewis, 2009).

Due to the serious matter of Black male students on the average failing to graduate school and because those who do not graduate high school becomes potential candidates for a prison sentence, this dissertation research aims to better understand the role Restorative Practices may play in increasing the graduation rates of Black males. This research also seeks to explore the possible role Restorative Practices play in reducing potential harmful maladaptive behaviors that sometimes lead to the "Pushed out" syndrome. This study will explore Restorative Practices as seen through the reflective lenses Black male graduates who experienced Restorative Processes prior to their graduating high school. In addition, this study aims to hear directly from the voices of Restorative Practices educational staff and experts who serve as advocates of Black male students.

"School to Prison Pipeline" and "Pushed Out" Syndrome

According to Darensbourg, Perez & Blake (2010), zero tolerance school discipline practices often results in a high representation of Black male students being expelled from school. According to a report titled *Test, Punish and Push Out: How Zero Tolerance and High Stakes Testing Funnel "School to Prison Pipeline"* authored by the Advancement Project (2010),

the term "pushed out" is descriptive of practices where students are mandated to leave school due to expulsion or similar discipline sanctions. The Advancement Project is a civil rights and policy advocacy organization for disadvantaged citizens in the United States. This phenomenon, where students' education is interrupted with an arrest, conviction and prison sentencing, is referred to by social equity activists as the "School to Prison Pipeline". The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) are among numerous human rights advocacy organizations that seek to dismantle the "School to Prison Pipeline". These organizations focus on reducing or ending zero tolerance policies in schools. The policy of zero tolerance is to punish students for breaking serious safety rules the first time, which many believe often lead suspended, arrested and/or expelled from school for various rule violations (Advancement Project, 2010). What makes this problem a critical and a complex socio-educational issue is that of these 50% or more students who dropped out or were pushed out, one-out-of-four of them will be adjudicated and sentenced to serve time in state prisons and federal penitentiaries (Curry, 2011).

Yet, some may question whether removing zero tolerance policies will prevent administrators from keeping their schools safe. Typical behaviors that were identified as reasons for expulsion of Black male students were violence, insubordination, bullying, threats, chronic truancy, weapons and drug offenses (Youth United for Change & the Advancement Project, 2011). Consequently, school officials find themselves in a quandary between maintaining safe schools and avoiding overly punitive responses to those who endanger other students and staff. Therefore, there is an identifiable need in educational research to examine underlying causes or reasons associated with the "at-risk" behaviors that most frequently lead to school expulsion because addressing such "at-risk" behaviors may reduce the occurrences of students encountering the "School to Prison Pipeline".

A study conducted by Youth United For Change & the Advancement Project (2011) on

students whom they described as being "Pushed Out" of school, indicated that while Latino males were twice as likely to be placed in police custody than white male students but Black males were four times more likely to be removed from school to police custody than white male students. The study conducted by Youth United for Change & the Advancement Project (2011) further reports that based on the school to police custody rates, Black males are most frequently" identified as the perpetrators of the behaviors associated with a crime. The report (Youth United for Change & The Advancement Project, 2011) also revealed that when schools report dropout rates, the school reported dropout rates are inflated by the school's "Push Out" rates that include expulsions and other mandated punishments as a discipline response to the "at-risk" behavior.

In dealing with this socio-educational crisis of Black male students , could it be that the "at-risk" behaviors, which often lead to punitive consequences causing students to be dropped from schools and possibly later involved in the criminal justice system, be identified as what some social science experts and trauma scholars refer to as Intergenerational Trauma? Intergenerational Trauma is described as unresolved distress, shock or suffering imposed on a collective body of people due to enduring political violence, atrocities related to racism and oppression wherein such traumatic experiences are carried from one generation to the next (Atkinson, 2002; Danieli, 1998; DeGruy, 2004; Duran, Duran, Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1998; Weingarten, 2003). Scholars further denote that Intergenerational Trauma may later evolve or manifest as "adaptive" behavior symptoms encompassing emotional, psychological and/or physical disorder (DeGruy, 2004; Duran, Duran, Yellow Horse & Brave Heart, 1998). When there is no acknowledgement or treatment for the trauma, the transmission of trauma can evolve as recursive trauma that continues to successive generations (DeGruy, 2004; Danieli, 1998; Carter & Helms, 2009; Weingarten, 2003). DeGruy (2004) explains that recursive trauma occurs when overt trauma (trauma caused by witnessing or experiencing direct violence or violation), which children and adolescents may experience regularly in their schools or communities becomes blended with covert trauma (trauma caused by institutionalized or racist practices such

as inequality in educational resources, inequitable distributions of punitive measures or racial profiling). Recursive trauma, accordingly to DeGruy (2004), is inadvertently transmitted from generation to generation have manifestations that can generally be identified with Black males living in urban cities. DeGruy (2004) cites numerous examples of how racism has often blatantly but also discreetly inflicted trauma upon the emotional welfare of black American males. One example is joblessness of Black males in comparison to black American females. This gives the male the emotional sense of helplessness of caring for one's family (DeGruy, 2004; Carter & Helms, 2009).

"At-risk" Behaviors Compared to Symptoms Intergenerational Trauma

There is a behavior set, which appears to be key reasons for Black male students to be part of the "School to Prison Pipeline" and these same behaviors are described as manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma (Carter, 2005; DeGruy, 2004; Kunjufu, 2005; Small, 2001). According to DeGruy (2004) and Noguera (2002), what social scientists, behaviorists and psychologists refer to as maladaptive behaviors may very well be adaptive behaviors to racism. Examples of harmful such maladaptive or adaptive behaviors are quick anger response, fighting, property damage, self-denigration, verbal abuse directed at others, threats or assaults towards others, challenging those in authority, inciting violence, drug use, alcohol abuse, and engaging in criminal activities(DeGruy, 2004; Graham, 2011; Gump, 2010; Noguera, 2002; Small, 2001). Often times, these harmful maladaptive behaviors are described by a number of social science scholars as manifestations or symptoms of Intergenerational Trauma or Multigenerational Trauma (Brasfield, 2001; Brave Heart, 2003; Carter, 2005; Danieli, 1998; DeGruy, 2004; Small, 2001). If educators are ever to transform the negative statistical realities of Black male students in America, identifying the maladaptive behaviors and understanding why their "at-risk" behaviors persist is principal. Equally essential is acknowledging and replicating school models that demonstrate success at reducing the "at-risk" or harmful maladaptive behaviors.

While there are many variables that may be attributed to the high rate of "at-risk" behaviors associated with Black male students, social science scholars (DeGruy, 2004; Danieli, 1998; Gump, 2010; Small, 2001) assert that these behaviors may be related to a phenomenon described as Intergenerational Trauma. These scholars further state that ""at-risk"" behaviors such as violence, bullying, assaults on staff, assaults on students, destruction of property and other forms of anger expressed behaviors in schools are similar behaviors noted as manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma (DeGruy, 2004). If this is the case, then there is a needed response directed at healing, intervening or resolving the trauma. The issue of concern is that the school responses for these "maladaptive", "adaptive" or "at-risk" behaviors often involve punitive measures that include arrests, a high number of suspensions and expulsions. (Darensbourg, Perez & Blake, 2010; Davis, 2009; DeGruy, 2009; Gump, 2010)

When observing data displayed by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Graham, 2011) in an article titled, *"Assault on Learning"*, a table delineating each high school in Philadelphia along with its rate of violence indicated that the Pennsylvania Department of Education 2010's listing of 25 most persistent violent schools were all except one located in Philadelphia and 85% of them were located in communities where black or Hispanic Americans were predominate. There is a need to help educational leaders consider alternative responses to pervasive wrongdoing of students so that educators may reduce the behaviors of Black male students that may lead to school expulsion or police involvement. A potential underlying cause of the noted ""at-risk"" behaviors may possibly be associated with Intergenerational Trauma.

If black boys are dealing with Intergenerational Trauma as the reason or cause of their "at-risk" or adaptive behaviors, then one of the major responses to address the needs of black boys may require an intervention referred to as Restorative Practices. Restorative Practices is an emerging social science approach to making, maintaining, repairing and restoring relationships (McCold, 2008; Watchel, 1997; Zehr, 1990). This holistic approach may best meet the needs of

black youth who are possibly reacting to and/or experiencing any aspect of Intergenerational Trauma.

Restorative Practices as Possible Response to Intergenerational Trauma

Restorative Practices involve all those who have been affected by the actions or wrongdoings of an individual or individuals. All parties must come together – the victim(s), the offender(s) and the stakeholders in order that a process or practice is considered being Restorative. According to McCold & Wachtel (2004), the conclusion or the resolution of a Restorative Practices process seems to leave all affected with a better feeling of well-being. Restorative Practices derived from the criminal justice practice of Restorative Justice. Restorative Justice is a theory of criminology, which provides a more holistic vista regarding how victims, offenders, and the community are supported when responding to a wrongdoing, mainly involving juvenile delinquents. Understanding Restorative Practices begins with understanding the Social Discipline Window (Figure 2).

Restorative Practices are rooted in Restorative Justice, where victims of crime, offenders, and communities of care are viewed in a holistic and inclusive worldview and where relationships and personhood have been positively impacted upon like never before (Zehr, 1990). In many cases, the philosophical bases of the school form its mission and the mission infiltrates throughout the entire operation and management of the school. Restorative Practices are a holistic vista where its proactive application may help to avoid its reactionary appliance as in the case of Restorative Justice.

Restorative Practices have garnered accolades across the world for restoring relationships

and healing victims of trauma (Angel, 2005). The following statements were provided by a

school administrator after the first year of implementation of Restorative Practices:

> Restorative Practices is what you need in an urban environment, because you
>
> have students who have so many social concerns, so many things that get in the
>
> way of learning. Restorative practices have given us a way to help the kids
>
> process the things in the front of their minds that make learning secondary to
>
> them. In the classroom, it's about getting to a state where we can work, rather than
>
> seeing how much punishment we can heap on a student. The more kids
>
> understand that, the more they're willing to own their actions and become
>
> productive members of their class (Lewis 2009).

The above quote was stated by Saliyah Cruz who was the principal of West Philadelphia

High School during the school years of 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 when the Lewis (2009)

research was conducted. West Philadelphia High is one of five high schools in Pennsylvania

where Restorative Practices has been implemented and reports of positive changes in school

culture have been noted. Prior to the implementation of Restorative Practices at West

Philadelphia High School, student statistics were grim for its 98% Black American population of

students. West Philadelphia High School reported 52% decrease in school violence in its first

year and an additional 40% decrease in the second year of its implementation (Lewis, 2009).

The school's local police statistics reported student on student assaults declined from 43 to 18

incidents and student on teacher assaults declined from 25 to 6 after first year of implementation

(Lewis, 2009). Student assaulting peers and teachers as well as being arrested on school grounds

for disorderly conduct are possible manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma which are sample

behaviors that urban schools across our nation encounter. Ms. Cruz further shared her

observations of Restorative Practices while in place at West Philadelphia High School

>
> This is different from the model that says, you're going to get a detention and a
>
> suspension, whether it's going to help you or not,' over and over and over again.
>
> Now the kids have the authority to make their own corrections. We didn't really
>
> believe that we could get our kids to the point where they could express remorse,
>
> sympathy and respect. Now the kids have embraced restorative practices even
>
> more than the adults (Lewis, 2009).

Therefore, if Restorative Practices can increase behaviors such as empathy and social accountability and also reduce such behaviors, Restorative Practices may have an impact on Intergenerational Trauma; perhaps it is an implementation worthy of further research and study.

Gaps in the Research

Social and educational equity studies have recommended the implementation of Restorative Practices as a means to reduce occurrences of "School to Prison Pipeline" and possibly may increase graduate rates of Black male students (Mezzacappa, 2010; Mezzacappa, 2012; National Economic and Social Rights Initiative, 2012; Youth United for Change & the Advancement Project, 2011). Because of the positive reports provided regarding Restorative Practices as well as positive feedback from school officials regarding Restorative Practices, the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Young People (Barr, 2007) in Australia, has dedicated tremendous resources to researching the impact of Restorative Practices and youth transformation. Studies of this kind are needed in the United States to explore the possible impact of Restorative Practices may have with Black male students who face the potential of moving from school enrollment to prison cells more than any other student population in

American schools. Research data has been collected, reported and published by varying school officials and researchers to indicate that Restorative Practices yield improved school climate (Lewis, 2009; McClusky, 2008). Yet, there is a lack of research where Black male students who experienced Restorative Practices and later graduated where their reflections, thoughts and opinions regarding their experience with Restorative Practices was examined. There is a lack of formal educational research on Restorative Practices in American schools to specifically address Intergenerational Trauma. In addition, there is very limited educational research looking at Intergenerational Trauma and Black male students.

This study seeks to explore Restorative Practices and Black male student and any possible emerging themes by use of case study methodology. First, based on the voices of black male graduates who experienced Restorative Practices, this study aims to bridge the gap of understanding the impact of Restorative Practices on Black males. Secondly, this study seeks to identify any possible emerging themes or new evidence relating to decreasing "at-risk" behaviors or improving likelihood of Black male students to graduate high school which may result during in depth interviews of these graduates and conducting a focus group with Restorative Practices educators who serve as advocates for Black male students. While this study confirms that there are numerous published works that demonstrate that some Black males may be victims of Intergenerational Trauma, there are no studies that investigate Intergenerational Trauma as a possibly variable contributing to the "School to Prison Pipeline" or that Restorative Practices may have an impact on Intergenerational Trauma.

Research Questions

This study's research questions are based on the data documenting that Restorative Practices improved school culture and possibly yield positive transformations of Black male

students by reducing harmful maladaptive behaviors that are commensurate with behaviors described as symptoms of Intergenerational Trauma by DeGruy (2004). The primary intention of this qualitative study is to explore the following overarching question: How can Restorative Practices Decrease Occurrences of "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students? There are supplementary questions to this research, which are:

1) How does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact the "School to Prison Pipeline" as viewed by Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) Professionals?

2) How does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact Trauma and Intergenerational Trauma as it relates to Black male students?

3) How do Black males who attended a Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) school and later graduated high school view their experience in a Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) school?

Significance of the Research

A "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students is well documented (Coleman & Lipper, 2009; Dyson, 2008; Noguera, 2002; Small, 2001; Sum et al 2009). The underlying reasons for the "at-risk" behaviors that sometimes lead Black males to "Drop Out" or to be "Pushed Out" of school represent a need for further research. Trauma scholars (Brave Heart, 2003; Carter & Helms, 2009; DeGruy, 2009) identified symptom behaviors of Intergenerational Trauma maybe comparable to the "at-risk" behaviors often related to the "School to Prison Pipeline" Restorative Practices in some urban school settings have documented a decrease in the "at-risk" behaviors, this study would like to explore possible emerging themes that may or may not lead to grounded theory between these three

conceptions. Most significant is that this study may lead toward an eventual application of best practices in American schools that may lower occurrences of Black males leaving schools and entering prisons.

Operational Definitions

Chronic Trauma: a succession of trauma upon a person without intervention or healing (Brave Heart 2003; DeGruy, 2004).

Maladaptive Behavior: An inappropriate behavior response in attempting to adapt to an unfavorable circumstance, such behaviors that inhibit a person's ability to adjust to particular situations (DeGruy, 2004, Small, 2001).

Manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma*:* Behaviors which have been identified as characteristic symptoms relating to a collective group who have a history of political violence (Brasfield, 2001; Brave Heart, 2003; DeGruy, 2004; Weingarten, 2002).

Narrative Therapy: Narrative therapy holds that our identities are shaped by the accounts of our lives found in our stories or narratives. A narrative therapist is interested in helping others fully describe their rich stories and trajectories, modes of living, and possibilities associated with them. At the same time, this therapist is interested in co-investigating a problem's many influences, including on the person himself and on their chief relationships (White, 2007).

Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (P.T.S.S.) is a condition that exists as a consequence of multigenerational oppression of Africans and their descendants resulting from centuries of chattel slavery, a form of slavery which was

predicated on the belief that Black Americans were inherently/genetically inferior to whites.

This was then followed by institutionalized racism which continues to perpetuate injury

(DeGruy, 2004).

Intergenerational Trauma: Unresolved chronic trauma imposed on a collective of people

from one generation to the next, without an intervention; the transmission of the chronic

trauma to successive generations (DeGruy 2004; Weingarten 2003).

Trauma: A serious wound or shock that creates substantial, lasting damage to the

psychological development of a person, often leading to neurosis (DeGruy, 2009).

Resiliency: Resiliency refers to the ability to positively respond (or adapt) to and cope with a

stressful experience. Resilience is understood as a fluid process not easily encompassed by a

list of protective factors; rather, it is the interaction of strength, resources, and risk factors

within context, across space and time. We conceptualize resilience as a dynamic,

multidimensional construct that incorporates the bidirectional interaction between individuals

and their environments within contexts of family, peer, school, community and society.

(American Psychological Association, 2008).

Restorative Justice – Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that involves repairing harm,

rendering respect, requiring engagement of all stakeholders, responsibility and accountability,

involving face to face communication, restoring harmonious relationships with one another,

with creation, and with the Creator (Zehr, 1990).

Restorative Practices: According to McCold's Typology (2000), fully restorative

interventions must include three parts: 1) meeting the needs of the victims; 2) accountability

of offender; and, 3) engagement of the communities of care. Restorative practices are not

limited to formal processes, but range from informal to formal. Although a formal restorative

process might have dramatic impact, informal practices have a cumulative impact because

they are part of everyday life. The most critical function of restorative practices is restoring

and building relationships (Wachtel, 1997). Restorative Practices involves changing

relationships by engaging people: doing things with people instead of for or to them

(Wachtel, 1997). High control indicates that the school structure holds the student

accountable for his or her actions and behaviors while high support indicates that the school

will provide an equal amount of accountability on its own function to ensure that the student

receives the nurturing and holistic and emotional supports needed to succeed (McCold,

2000).

Restorative Conference: A restorative conference refers to a process that seeks to identify,

repair, and prevent harm. It is based in restorative justice values including meaningful

accountability and involves face-to-face contact among one or more victims or their

representative, the offenders, supporters for both, and other stakeholders (people who are

affected or community based persons who have concern regarding the situation). Restorative

Conferencing is not limited to judicial system concerns but any situation where harm has

been evoked and consequential needs are to be met. (O'Connell, 2007)

Restorative Processes: A restorative process is any process in which the victim and the

offender, and, where appropriate, any other individuals or community members affected by a

crime, participate together actively in the resolution of matters arising from the crime,

generally with the help of a facilitator. Restorative processes may include mediation,

conciliation, conferencing and sentencing circles. (McCold, 2000)

"School to Prison Pipeline": The School-to-Prison Pipeline refers to the set of policies and

practices that make the criminalization and incarceration of children and youth more likely

and the attainment of a high-quality education less likely. It is the emphasis of punitive

consequences, student exclusion, and justice-system intervention over students' right to an

education (Advancement Project et el, 2011).

Zero Tolerance: school policy that imposes an array of punishment for infractions of a stated

rule, with the intention of eliminating undesirable conduct (Skiba, 2000).

Methodology

In an effort to report on the impact of Restorative Practices in addressing possible

manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma exhibited by Black males, a case study method

will be performed at Black schools where Restorative Practices has been implemented. Data

will be collected from staff members and black male graduates at the schools. The author will

use qualitative data collecting methods of in-depth interviewing to obtain views,

explanations, insights and thoughts of black male graduates who experienced a form of

Restorative Practices. In addition, a virtual focus group will be conducted with Restorative

Practices professionals who serve as advocates for Black male students at one of the schools.

Qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to explore the experience of these stakeholders to

bring better understanding of how Restorative Practices and Restorative Processes impact the

lives of Black male students.

Delimitations

A delimitation that narrowed the scope of this study is that it will only encompass a

particular phenomenon, special role participants, and only examining black male graduates

while not considering those whom may not have graduated. The study will be further

confined by interviews and analysis of data obtained from a Restorative Practices

professionals who have documented success with Restorative Practices and Black male students.

Statistics for the Black males are most alarming because Black males who do not graduate high school are more likely is given a prison sentence than males of other ethnic backgrounds (Curry, 2011; Coleman & Lipper, 2009). Many of the behaviors that lead to expulsions from school and entrance into prisons are comparable to manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma. This research will explore Restorative Practices as possibly reducing manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma for Black males by hearing the voices of school based Restorative Practices experts and understanding Restorative Practices through the lenses of black male graduates of Restorative Practices schools.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Introduction

Like the foci of the research study, there are also three interconnecting themes in this literature review: 1) Reviewing data on the "School to Prison Pipeline" and its impact on Black male students, 2) Examining Intergenerational Trauma as a possible variable to the "School to Prison Pipeline" and 3) Exploring Restorative Practices in schools to possibly lower the occurrences of the "School to Prison Pipeline". The first theme aims to examine research on factors contributing to a phenomenon known as "School to Prison Pipeline". In the second theme area, the author will present research on Intergenerational Trauma as a response to racism or political violence against blacks and other ethnic people in America. Behaviors associated with Intergenerational Trauma will be compared to behaviors associated with Black males and the "School to Prison Pipeline". An overview of research related to Restorative Practices and its potential for helping Black male students to avoid the "School to Prison Pipeline" phenomenon will be presented in the third theme.

"School to Prison Pipeline" for Black Male Students

The United States Department of Education (2012), published the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDCs), indicates that Black male students face much greater retribution and penalties in our nation's public schools than their peers. According to data provided by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (2012), since the early 1990s many school districts have adopted a zero-tolerance approach to school code violations and this leads to raising the number of students suspended annually from school from 1.7 million in 1974 to 3.1 million in 2000. Data from this Office also indicates that schools increased other prison-like

structures in their schools such as the number of school police, metal detectors, bars on windows and roofs, mandatory arrests of children and mandatory expulsions.

The 2012 CRDCs indicate black students are 3 1/2 times more likely than their white peers to be suspended, black students accounted for 39% of those expelled, and were subject to zero tolerance policies at disproportionate rates. In addition, 70% of students arrested or referred to law enforcement were Latino or black (United States Departed of Education, 2012). Data in the CRDCs (2012) further indicates that black students are punished more harshly for the same infractions and students with disabilities who make up only 12% of the student body but 70% of those subject to physical restraints. The CRDC (2012) data demonstrates that educational inequity is failing Black males particularly and verifying the school-to-prison-pipeline for Black male students does exist. The increasing use of police in schools and the increasing arrests of Black males as young as second grade in schools have all come to the alarm of many advocates for youth that schools are emerging as pipelines to prisons (Darensbourg, Perez & Blake, 2010).

A comprehensive study on the "School to Prison Pipeline" was conducted by Wald and Losen (2003) where they concluded that black students are 2.6 times more as likely to be suspended as white students. In addition, it was found that Black males with no prior criminal records were six times more likely to be incarcerated than whites for the same offenses. Wald and Losen (2003) further asserted that while blacks and Latinos only comprised one-third of the country's adolescent population, they represented two-thirds of all youths confined to detention and correctional placements. According to the *Pennsylvania Department of Education Alternative School for Disruptive Youth Executive Summary* (2009), alternative schools have been launched to address the needs of over 30,000 disruptive youth and special funding has been earmarked accordingly.

According to the publication, *Abandoned in the back row: New lessons in education and delinquency prevention,* presented by Coalition on Juvenile Justice (2001), an estimated 70% of the juvenile justice population suffers from learning disabilities. Furthermore, 33% read below the fourth grade level. This publication also indicated that an array of educational, social service and community based initiatives have been launched to address various bleak statistics regarding Black males; however, there has been little improvement on turning these statistics around.

Figure 1 indicates that blacks who "Drop Out" of high school are three times more likely to be sentenced to prison than their peers. With nearly 50% of Black males dropping out of high school, this data gives a sound foundation to the argument that addressing the educational crisis of Black males is paramount (Curry, 2011).

Figure 1. Prison Rate of Males Who Drop Out of High School (Curry, 2011)
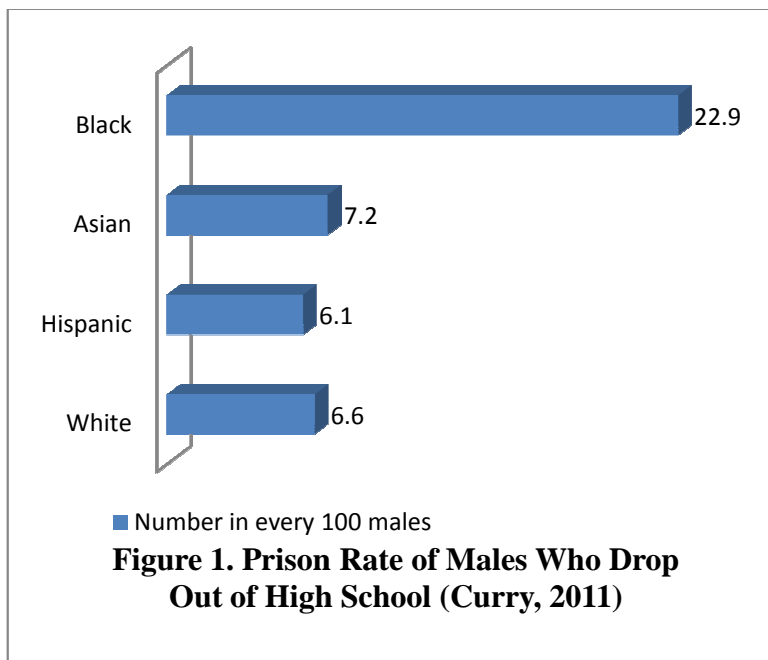
To address this crisis, educators must look outside the doors of the school and begin to understand the entire motif that encompasses Black males in urban America. Far too many males of color have experienced grim life paths which often include dysfunctional school experience,

criminal justice entanglements, violence, depression and even death (Coleman & Lipper, 2009; Curry, 2011; DeGruy, 2004; Dyson, 2008; Noguera, 2002; Sum, et.al.,2009). American male students of color are highly "at-risk" of dropping out of school and facing the criminal justice system (Flores-Regale & Williams, 2010; Mauer & King, 2007).

The incarceration rate of Black males is even more disproportional than their dropout rate and is also related to their dropout rate (Flores-Ragade & Williams, 2010). According to the reports presented data in the Sentencing Project (Maurer & King, 2007), while American male students of color face high dropout rates, high unemployment and high incidents of violence, Black males not only share these statistics but in addition Black males are most "at-risk" of being a victim of violent crime or sentenced to a prison in connection to a crime (Coleman & Lipper, 2009; Curry, 2011; Flores-Ragade & Williams, 2010; Noguera 2002, Small, 2001). According to a report titled*, The Consequences of Dropping Out of High School: Joblessness and Jailing for High School Dropouts and the High Cost for Taxpayers, – 22% Daily Jailing Rate for Young Black Men Who* "Drop Out" *of High School*, 23 out of every 100 black male high school dropouts between the ages 16 and 24 are imprisoned as compared to 6 or 7 out of every 100 white, Latino or Asian male dropout.

Over half of the males who "Drop Out" of school and go to prison are Black (Sum et. al., 2009). Male dropouts of all races were 47 times more likely to be incarcerated than their peers of similar age who had graduated from a four year college or university. The data is alarming in that an American Black male student, who "Drop Out" of high school, is three times more likely to go to prison than his other male peers (Curry, 2011). What is important to acknowledge is that the incarceration rate of Black males who graduate from college is only 0.6 out of 100 Black males in comparison to the 23 out of 100 Black males who "Drop Out" of high school? When

statistics indicate that nearly half of the Black male students in urban cities dropout of high school and of that group, 1 out of 4 will be incarcerated; it becomes evident that there is a decisive correlation between Black male students who "Drop Out" of high school and Black male students who are incarcerated.

Black males in America's public schools lead all other groups of students in suspensions, expulsions, behavioral problems and referrals to special cases for slow learners (Darensbourg, Perez & Blake, 2010). Zero tolerance school discipline policies have been noted as a major component behind these statistics but one genuinely seeking to turn these statistics around must also look at the Black male students and what is going on with Black male students using multidimensional lenses may also contribute to understanding why these statistics exists.

We propose that as researchers seek to understand the complex and dynamic relationship between ethno-racial identities, culture, and achievement, they must interrogate race and ethnicity not only as determinants of educational outcomes but also as formative identities, products of myriad social processes themselves. That is, not only do race and ethnic identity formation constitute one of several antecedent factors in models theorizing and predicting achievement and mobility patterns, but also these identity formations are dependent on a number of other personal and contextual factors" (Warikoo & Carter, 2009, pg. 391).

Thus the statistics that clearly demonstrate that Black males in public schools face a "School to Prison Pipeline" may also suggest that behaviors of Black male students in schools may be associated with identity and other contextual variables. Better understanding why Black males represent the highest "at-risk" groups in our nation is a question that Intergenerational

Trauma theorists are beginning to explore and answer. Are there common threads between the behaviors associated with these dismal statistics of Black male students and behaviors associated with Intergenerational Trauma as it applies to Black male students ? The answer to this may suggest to a researcher or a policymaker that there is a dire need to perform further research on Intergenerational Trauma in finding potential best practice solutions.

Consequently, the "School to Prison Pipeline" phenomenon may represent the greatest socio-educational issue to have ever faced American schools and this is an issue that needs dire attention from researchers of all related disciplines. Most research on this topic looks at the outer layers of what schools, society and government have done wrong. This study hopes to put light on a thesis that states that there may be underlying variables that educators, sociologists and criminologists may need to consider as they seek to redirect or deconstruct the "School to Prison Pipeline". The problem may be a psycho-social condition known as Intergenerational Trauma.

Examining Intergenerational Trauma as a possible variable to the "School to Prison Pipeline"

Intergenerational Trauma also referred to as transgenerational trauma or multigenerational trauma has been given ethnic specific titles as well according to Whitbeck, Adams, Hoyt, and Chen (2004) Native Americans suffered generations of Trauma. Intergenerational Trauma is referred to as Historic Trauma and Residential School Syndrome by Native American scholars (Brave Heart, 2003; Brasfield, 2001; Duran et. al, 2009; Johnston-GoodStar, Palmanteer-Holder, 2005; Sotero, 2006; Whitbeck et. al., 2004) and Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome by African American scholars (Carter, 2005; Davis, 2009; DeGruy, 2009; Smalls 2001). The transmission of trauma from one generation to another when trauma is caused

by political violence and injustice is referred to as Intergenerational Trauma (Wiengartner, 2003; Brasfield, 2001; DeGruy, 2004). Abrams defines political violence as the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property in order to coerce or intimidate a government or the civilian population in furtherance of political or social objectives (Abrams, 1999).

According to scholars and clinical practitioners (Carter, 2005; Darensbourg, Perez & Blake, 2010; DeGruy, 2004; Mims et. al, unpublished), the statistics showing Black males to be "at-risk" of entering the "School to Prison Pipeline" could be an outcome of or a variable related to Intergenerational Trauma. Intergenerational Trauma occurs when the suffering of victims who received or witnessed the direct violence transcends through their successive generations (Danielli, 1998; DeGruy, 2004; Weingarten 2003; Smalls, 2001). Racism against black Americans encompassed more than 400 hundred years of political violence that victimized blacks, which the American government legitimized from the era of slavery through the extremely violent and volatile years referred to as Jim Crow rule (DeGruy, 2004; Small, 2001). During both eras, blacks living in America were traumatized systemically by acts including lynching, rape of black girls and women, exclusions from employment and social spheres, mass murders and genocidal governance. Research findings on Intergenerational Trauma documents that when an ethnic groups become targets of collective oppression caused by political violence, members of that ethnic group experience a high degree of emotional and psychological trauma and in response to the trauma, many will begin to set a pattern of behaviors or psychological paradigms in an attempt to avoid that trauma and to protect their children from experiencing the events relating to the trauma (Brasfield, 2003; Brave Heart, 2002; Danielli,1998; DeGruy, 2004; Johnston-GoodStar, Palmanteer-Holder, 2005; Smalls, 2001).

Joyce DeGruy is a social scientist closely followed the research of fellow Native American research scientist Yellow Horse Brave Heart who wrote extensively on Historic Trauma of Native Americans being a form of Intergenerational Trauma. In addition, both DeGruy and Brave Heart studied the research of Yael Danielli, a Jewish psychologist, who researched the holocaust and observed that trauma can be passed down to several generations for holocaust victims. Danielli (1998) demonstrated that due to the extensive endurance of the holocaust, there was a long term effect on the offspring for the Jewish survivors. Danielli (1998) asserted that this was due to the deficit in the parent's experiential mode of being that led to their children having similar experience deficit. Danielli (1998) demonstrated that trauma has different forms of memories that encourage behavior patterns such as avoidance of stimuli that often cause harm and these behaviors were often transmitted to the children of victims and they transmit the succeeding generation behavior patterns and trauma memory without knowing it. Danielli (1998) published the first comprehensive work, *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma,* which is an anthology of research studies on Intergenerational Trauma across the globe with an emphasis on the holocaust and aboriginal people's response to imperialism. The Jewish Holocaust literature on Intergenerational Trauma contributes to the understanding the transmission of trauma from one generation to another (Weingarten, 2003; Fogelman, 2008). Native Americans and Black Americans, like Jewish people during the Holocaust, are also survivors of genocide and also suffer from Intergenerational Trauma (Brave Heart, 2005; DeGruy, 2004).

DeGruy (2004) associates Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome as an intergenerational form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) with behavioral manifestations as violence, self-destructive behaviors, environmental destruction, rage and acts of violence, lack of academic

motivation, displaced materialism, sense of hopelessness, shame and shamelessness and unrealistic understanding of and an insatiable desire for respect. These are referred to as the symptoms and manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma (Brasfield, 2001; Brave Heart, 2003; DeGruy, 2009; Smalls, 2001). Schools that are dealing with students having these characteristics may correlate highly where school climate has the greatest need for improvement. Since studies with Leslie (2009) demonstrated that school culture increased due to a decrease in "Push Out" behaviors (described as "at-risk" by educators and "manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma" by trauma scholars) following the implementation of Restorative Practices, then it may prove valuable for educators to study this phenomenon for possible future replication. It may further be valuable to look at Intergenerational Trauma as a possible variable contributing to the number of Black male students facing "Push Out" consequences. In order to examine the literature surrounding the phenomena of addressing Intergenerational Trauma of black American males, it is important to present historical violence information as it relates to the enslavement of blacks in America. Although this is not intended to be an exhaustive review, this literature review provides information of the events leading to traumas and recurrent traumas on black Americans that have reverberated over hundreds of years due to the institutions of slavery and "Jim Crow Laws". "Jim Crow Laws" were statutes and ordinances established between 1874 and 1975 to separate the white and black races in America. Education was segregated as were public facilities such as hotels and restaurants under Jim Crow Laws.

About "Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome". On July 29, 2008 the United States House of Representatives passed House Resolution 194, apologizing for slavery. The resolution, although it carried no legal weight, acknowledged the injustice and cruelties as well as the inhumanity of slavery and Jim Crow.

Whereas African-Americans continue to suffer from the consequences of

slavery and Jim Crow - long after both systems were formally abolished

through enormous damage and loss, both tangible and intangible, including

the loss of human dignity and liberty, the frustration of careers and

professional lives, and the long-term loss of income and opportunity" (U.S.

Senate House Bill 194, 2008, pg. 1).

According to Mims, Higginbottom and Reid (unpublished manuscript), it is estimated

that more than 80,000,000 Africans lost their lives during transport through the middle passage

from Africa to America. However, it is almost impossible to estimate the number of slaves that

lost their lives during bondage in the Americas and other countries due to the absence of record

keeping. While the loss of life was one of the greatest human traumas in any history, this African

Holocaust is one that few have acknowledged or talked about in mental health or professional or

counseling circles (Mims, p.11). DeGruy (2009) expressed that trauma is a result of a serious

wound or shock that creates substantial, lasting damage to the psychological development of a

person, and it often leads to neurosis when it goes unresolved. One cannot resolve a problem

that it has not confronted. The United States House of Representatives pledged to confront this

issue but to do so means to address the harms that has been caused.

The House of Representatives -expresses its commitment to rectifying the

lingering consequences of the misdeeds committed against African-

Americans under slavery and Jim Crow and to stop the occurrence of human

rights violations in the future (U.S. Senate House Bill 194, 2008, par. 3).

According to DeGruy (2004), Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome encompassed an exposure to a multitude of mental, emotional and physical injuries coupled with on-going discriminatory and oppressive practices. "Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome" or Disorder is based on the premise that the trauma black Americans faced as slaves have continued to transfer down the lineage of Blacks today. For example, Mims et al. (unpublished), the black American male slave was forced to watch his mate and/or offspring brutalized, raped and sold. Black American male slaves were used for breeding purposes and were not allowed to experience his role as head of family as was done when in his African society. Often in cases when they were permitted to have families, it was usually short lived whereas their mates or children were sold away from one another. African American Intergenerational Trauma scholars assert Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (PTSS) is the reason why some Black males still have difficulty emotionally connecting to their children and in executing their role as head of family (DeGruy, 2004; Smalls, 2001).

DeGruy (2004) described another example of Intergenerational Trauma surrounding the concept of "RESPECT". DeGruy (2004) and Rich (2009) both found in their ethnographic research with Black males that an antecedent to black male violence is their responding to situations where they believe they have been disrespected. A reader of research conducted by Dr. Joyce DeGruy (2004) or Dr. John Rich (2009) may question why the dynamic of being respected emerged as important to the black male youths they studied. The answer may be traced back to generations of oppression where Black males in America faced grave demonstrations of disrespect in situations where they were left helpless to respond. For example, Black men during slavery and even within decades where Jim Crow Laws or culture prevailed were often forced to leave their homes so that a white owner or even a sharecropper could enter and take full advantage of his wife. There are countless stories of Black males during slavery

and Jim Crow years where the man was spoken to with disrespect in front of his children and

peers. Intergenerational scholars assert that these experiences brought tremendous trauma to the

men and such trauma was never addressed but carried on to three to four generations later

following Jim Crow years. Furthermore, these scholars assert that trauma response behaviors or

manifestations of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome or Disorder are anger, isolation of affect,

avoidance, lost of truth identity and psychotic disorders (DeGruy, 2004; Smalls, 2001). Brave

Heart (2003) and DeGruy (2004) firmly asserts that when there is a succession of emotional

injuries without healing, the individual or group begins to experience chronic trauma and

disfuntionalism complex.

Brasfield (2001) asserts that Native Americans exhibit some unique characteristics with

respect to some forms of trauma, which led to two conceptualizations: a specific form of PTSD

called residential school syndrome and a generalized condition that has been called historic

trauma. Black American students face what researchers called Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome,

which is currently not addressed in educational research. Trauma due to oppression has been

studied by Sanchez-Hucles and Jones (2005) provided insight in racism and trauma as a global

harm to targeted groups of people by expressing that clinical definitions of racist based traumas

encompasses complex posttraumatic stress disorders, safe world violations, cumulative trauma,

postcolonial syndrome, all of which are variously related to constructs of historical trauma

(residential school syndrome), post slavery syndrome, and transgenerational or intergenerational

trauma (p. 550).

Although Intergenerational Trauma has not been identified as an educational

phenomenon, Intergenerational Trauma may have had a very profound impact upon the

educational process when a school's population is reflective of ethnic groups who encountered

an unfortunate legacy of Intergenerational Trauma (Darensbourg, Perez & Blake, 2010; Davis, 2009; DeGruy, 2004; Mims, Higginbottom and Reid, unpublished). This leads to the second theme which asserts that schools or communities where there is a high manifestation of Intergenerational Trauma also exhibit poor school climate (Davis 2009; DeGruy 2004; Duran, Duran, Yellowhorse-Davis& Brave Heart, 1998; Mims, Higginbottom and Reid, unpublished). According to Duran, Duran, Yellowhorse-Davis & Brave Heart, (1998) historical trauma is very reflective of a 'conspiracy of silence''. Also, Danielli (1998) accounts that conventional research fails to consider that the trauma faced by a collective people due to injustices and tragedies faced by them as an ethnic group may be a factor because of their ethnicity is a way to protect the wrongdoings of conventional society. Racism in America may be the reason Intergenerational Trauma has never been addressed. Yet, acknowledging and addressing Intergenerational Trauma may be the only hope to resolve to lower occurrences of "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students in America.

Several social behavior researchers and clinicians identified violent behavior of those linked to being victims of oppression may be associated with Intergenerational Trauma (Brasfield, 2001; Brave Heart, 2003; Carter & Helms, 2009; Danielli, 1998; DeGruy, 2004; Small, 2001) and were also characterized as trauma response or symptoms of trauma (Brasfield, 2001; Brave Heart, 2003; DeGruy, 2004). If these trauma scholars are correct, then it is important that schools where students who represent an ethnic group that faced collective oppression or political violence need to have interventions that address trauma as part of their school design.

Restorative Practices In Schools

An increasing number of schools are implementing Restorative Practices and many of these schools are indicating positive improved school environments and promote safety, inclusion, respect, and positive relationships. (Ashley & Burke, 2008). According to McCluskey et. el. (2008), in many schools there was a clear positive impact on relationships, seen in the views and actions of staff and pupils and in a reduction of discipline referrals, exclusions from school and a reduced need for external support. Restorative Practices is sometimes referred to as Whole-School Change by some of its practitioners because it encompasses a completely new way to respond to wrongdoing and a new mindset on how to lead others in general. Whole School Change involves eleven core tools, which combined creates a synergistic community. The eleven core tools include affective statements, restorative questions, fair process, re-integrative management of shame, restorative community of staff, and restorative approach with families, fundamental hypothesis understanding, small impromptu conferences, proactive circles, responsive circles and restorative conferences (Rundell, 2007).

Each of the eleven elements represent common core practices that have been identified as important and critical to the successful implementation of school wide Restorative Practices school design. Affective statements are statements that focus on the people's strengths and promote healing when harm occurs. Restorative questions focus on addressing the deed opposed to punishing the doer and aim to provide support for all involved in the conflict resolution. In a Restorative Practices school community, staff members experience the same respect and processes as they are expected to emulate to the students and other stakeholders. Using restorative approach with families is a very important progression for extending the design to parents and extended family. Fundamental thesis to understanding Restorative Practices is the

social discipline window (see Figure 2) that was discussed previously as the "with" model for

operations. The "With Window" thesis is the core to all school functioning from upper

management to student policies.

Figure 2. Social Discipline Window
(Retrieved from Fairholme College: http://www.fairholme.qld.edu.au/index.php/82).

In the Social Discipline Window, four models of leadership are described. The "punitive

window" represents schools with polices such as zero tolerance where the controls are high but

nurturing is low. The "neglectful window" represents schools that are without discipline and

without nurturing. The "permissive model" is for schools that offer high levels of nurturing but

fall short in the area of accountability. A Restorative model of schooling is represented by the

"with window" where accountability (control) is high and also nurturing (support) is high.

Support is often provided by the routine use of circles. Circles are forums where students are

gathered each day in order to check in and discuss what is on their minds. Conferences are

forums where accountability is established for wrongdoing. A student as well as an adult can call

for an impromptu conference. Proactive circles are continuous practices each day where children are provided daily opportunities to open their school day with a welcome circle and to close their school day with a closing circle of sharing ups and downs. A staff member may notice a concern involving a child or even a fellow co-worker who has a special need that the circle may address. Impromptu circles can happen with anyone and may be as few as two or three people needing to come together to address an immediate issue.

Finally, Restorative Conferences are formal responses to wrongdoing where all related stakeholders and advocates come together to address and understand the dynamics that lead to a wrong-doing, agree on a way to correct the wrongs and to restore relationships. Restorative Practices are designed to promote wholesome interactions in an environment of respect, caring and community. In response to descriptive studies (Leslie, 2009; O'Connell, 1999; Riestenberg, 2005) and news reports (Graham, 2009; Keely, 2009; Woodall, 2011) that schools where Restorative Practices have been implemented have demonstrated a documented decrease in "at-risk" behaviors of students as well as reports of data demonstrating that Restorative Practices in schools where the population is predominately black have had even greater successes in transforming school climate (Graham, 2009; Keely, 2009; Whitehorn, 2009; Woodall, 2007), the author of this study intends to better understand why these phenomena occurred. Lewis (2009) surveyed more than ten schools where Restorative Practices were implemented and all schools documented a reduction in discipline actions.

There is a need to share successes about schools whose mission is on restoring feelings of self-worth for the students who have been the victims of wrongdoing, which includes those who witness wrongdoing. It has been confirmed that those who witness wrongdoing are essentially victims of the wrongdoing as well (Weingarten, 2003). It is

equally important to share the successes that schools and organizations have when there is a

balanced effort to reintegrate the offenders of wrongdoing back to the community of learners

and also restoring his or her self-worth. In many of Pennsylvania's urban schools today,

many schools have been confronted with so much violence that the state has established a list

titled, "Pennsylvania's Most Persistently Dangerous Schools." When looking at the statistics

of these schools, the racial demographics indicate that the schools are primarily attended by

black students and the offenders of the wrongdoings are generally Black males (Graham,

2011; Youth for Action, 2011). Sharon Lewis, former superintendent of research for Detroit

Public Schools and currently director of Research for IIRP, stated the following in the preface

of her report on School Climate and Restorative Practices (Lewis, 2009).

> Zero tolerance has been the rule of the land in most schools for some time. But
>
> there have not been significant reductions in fights, disruptive behavior or other
>
> violent acts in schools as a result of those policies. On the other hand, there is
>
> growing evidence that restorative practices, with its roots in restorative justice
>
> (from the criminal justice system), can improve the culture and climate of all
>
> schools: rural, suburban and urban. Improving School Climate: Findings from
>
> Schools Implementing Restorative Practices is composed of excerpts from articles,
>
> reports and disciplinary data from individual schools and school districts. These
>
> data were collected to provide the reader with a snapshot of findings related to
>
> restorative practices. It is important to note that most schools implementing these
>
> practices have not conducted formal research studies (Lewis, Pg 3.).

One of the schools involved in the Lewis study (2009) was West Philadelphia High

School, which was listed as one of Pennsylvania most dangerous schools. West Philadelphia

High School is composed of more than 90% black students and a very high drop-out rate. The

vice president of its alumnae association noted that before the end of the ninth grade year, West

Philadelphia High School loses ¼ of its student population. Within the first year of restorative

Practices at West Philadelphia High School, violent behaviors were noted to have decreased

significantly and school climate increased significantly (Lewis, 2009). In addition, data recorded

by the School District of Philadelphia School Profile (2012) indicate that during the second year

of implementation of Restorative Practices at West Philadelphia High School, student attendance

rates increased, suspensions decreased, student withdrawal rate (drop-out) decreased and the

number of assaults and weapon offenses decreased by half. These are valuable indicators of

improved school climate.

The unfortunate circumstance is that the administrator and 90% of the school staff who

were implementing Restorative Practices at West Philadelphia High School were removed for the

2010-2011 school year. Therefore, the implementation of Restorative Practices ceased.

Consequently during the 2010-2011 school year, suspensions doubled, student withdrawal

increased and serious incidents increased at the school. The matter in which these statistics were

impacted by the implementation and removal of Restorative Practices needs to be examined.

What is it about Restorative Practices that lead to improvements in school climate when

implemented but later reversed those improvements when removed? Improvement in school

climate for any school is a positive phenomenon; however, the transformation in school climate

creates a major new paradigm for a specific population of students. Based on the statistics

offered in this study, the black male student was the primary one impacted by the rise and fall of

school culture at West Philadelphia High School. When reviewing statistics regarding the

graduation rates and imprisonment rates of Black male students, Black male students may be

considered the most endangered group of students in American schools today. If research can uncover a strategy, intervention or school design where that Black male students increase graduation rates and/or decrease imprisonment rates, then such research is direly needed. Is Restorative Practices embedded with mechanisms aimed to address trauma?

Restorative Practices as a Possible Means to Reduce Manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma ("At-Risk" Behaviors).

Restorative practices is an entirely new way to view wrongdoing, to manage environments, and to restore relationships in meaningful ways that raises the consciousness of all those who are part of the process (Wachtel, 1997). For example, according to Morgan (2000), story sharing is a critical part of healing from trauma and emotional wounding. In an ideal Restorative Practice situation, the victim of a wrongdoing has the opportunity to tell his or her trauma story to the offender along with other supporters and stakeholders (McCold, 2000). Other significant attributes of Restorative Practices requires the offender who caused the trauma to provide a genuine apology to the victim and together the two along with their supporters will find ways to help repair the harm (Rundell, 2007). Restorative Practices have become an emerging intervention to assist healing victims of serious crimes such as rape, serious injury and even in the case of addressing the loss of a love one to murder (McCold, 2000). Restorative Practices are now being implemented by schools to assist with improving school climate (Lewis, 2009) and transforming students (Mirsky, 2003).

In an interview with Nancy Riestenberg, a prevention specialist with the Minnesota Department of Children where Restorative Practices has been implemented in an array of measures in schools and with families, Mirsky asked for her vision for Restorative Practices in

schools, part of her answer was as follows:

> I hope I come to a point where I will be able to ask school people if they have policies
>
> attending to the needs of victims in their school and they will be able to answer yes. They
>
> will be able to articulate what those are. There will be things offered to kids when they
>
> have been harmed, harassed, bullied, or part of a fight–the opportunity to talk to
>
> someone, to get education, to be able to ask for a restorative process (Mirsky, 2003).

Restorative Processes include a continuum of principles that those in both Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice encompass when addressing wrongdoing and assisting youth with developing resiliency. What makes Restorative Processes a transforming experience for many of its clients and/or student participants is that it embraces many of the attributes most needed by students having experienced emotional or psychological trauma. Black male students often complain of not being respected or because they were disrespected, they had to perform some act of violence as retaliation to being "disrespected" (DeGruy, 2004; Rich, 2005). One of the major components and attributes of Restorative Practices and all Restorative Processes is respect. All participants must respect one another. There may be special focus by facilitators to ensure that the offender is shown respect, which serves as a means to reintegrate him or her back to the community.

The attributes of compassionate witnessing (hearing one's story) may in itself serve as a healing process. Compassionate witnessing may have some transformational impact on Black males who once faced the "School to Prison Pipeline" but were able to overcome this socio-educational prediction and graduate high school. Graduating high school is one predictor of a better life vista for Black male students. Therefore, this study intends to hear from the voices of

black male high school graduates who experienced Restorative Practices in order to gain direct

insight regarding the impact Restorative Practices may or may not have had on their graduating.

This research proposal intends to better understand if and how Restorative Practices or

Restorative Processes may have impacted on the graduation rate of Black male students and its

possible impact on decreasing black male occurrences of "School to Prison Pipeline".

> The invitation to cross a frontier into a new territory requires certain knowledge, skills,
>
> and experience. Pioneers, who travel across the mainland in search of new territory,
>
> experience doubt and hardships on the journey. The new territory poses challenges that
>
> invite new ways of working. Cooperation and covision become essential principles of
>
> survival if a new way of living restoratively is to be realized (Rundell, 2007, p. 52).

Chapter 3: Methodology

Overview

This research sought to hear from the voices of Black male high school graduates who experienced Restorative Practices first hand as well as their advocates in order to better understand its impact, if any, on school success of Black males. Previous descriptive studies noted that school climate improves where Restorative Practices is implemented (Lewis, 2009). In addition, reports indicated that the vista of Black male students also improved where Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) was implemented (Sumner, Silverman & Frampton, 2010; Vinikoor, 2009). A qualitative research study, which intends to obtain an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon, was conducted. This phenomenological study was employed to better understand why there was evidence of improved school culture when Restorative Practices was implemented for schools which previously were noted as persistently dangerous schools (Lewis, 2009). This study's primary goal was to understand, more specifically, if and how this identified phenomenon impacts lowering occurrences of Black male students dropping out of high school and later being imprisoned. In order to gather this in-depth understanding, a phenomenological study was conducted. Sixteen professional staff members and eleven recent Black male high school graduates who attended schools where Restorative Practices was implemented participated in the study.

The research questions are in response to descriptive data that indicates that there has been a major decrease in negative school discipline reports and a decreased number of police contacts after Restorative Practices was implemented (Lewis, 2009). The chief aim of this qualitative study was to answer the following question: How can Restorative Practices lower the occurrences of "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students? There are supplementary

questions to this research, which are:

1) How does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact the "School to Prison Pipeline" as viewed by Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) Professionals?

2) How does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact Trauma and Intergenerational Trauma as it relates to Black male students?

3) How do Black males who attended a Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) school and later graduated high school view their experience in a Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) school?

A natural fit for this exploration on understanding how a new intervention can improve the quality of life would require a qualitative research design where the voices of those individuals having that "lived experience" can share their insights. A qualitative study should consist of participants that will contribute well to addressing the research question (Creswell, 2003). In this study Black male students who have experienced Restorative Practices or Restorative Processes and have overcome one of the major high stakes of improving their life vista by graduating from high school will share their views, insights and experiences as they moved from high school students to high school graduates after participating in a Restorative Practices Process.

A Phenomenological Methodology

The phenomenological study is concerned with the lived experiences of individuals who experienced specific phenomena (Maypole & Davies, 2001; Moustakas, 1994) of Restorative Practices being implemented in school settings. An exploratory case study phenomenological approach was also beneficial for this study because the combination offers an opportunity to

implement a comprehensive query in which its findings will most likely enable the participants

to also better understand the dynamics surrounding the phenomenon, as well as offering insight

on possible interrelated variables that may emerge relating to the phenomena or intervention

(Brown, 2008; Creswell, 2007; Maypole & Davies, 2001; Yin, 2003). Often times, the

individuals experiencing the phenomenon do not understand why the outcomes occur until being

given the opportunity to explore and analyze the processes and contexts surrounding it.

This Phenomenological study conducted in-depth interviews of eleven Black male high

school graduates who attended schools where Restorative Practices. The researcher interviewed

those whose lives were impacted because of the intervention of Restorative Practices at varying

levels. The study focused primarily on individuals who were associated with Restorative School

Models located in five urban cities of the United States: Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago, New

Orleans and Oakland. Each of these urban cities is noted for high incidents of Black male

dropout rates. Four of the five schools had one individual who was responsible for the

implementation of Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice). This individual was generally

titled, Restorative Justice Coordinator. The Restorative Justice Coordinators were categorized as

experts in the field of Restorative Practices and were found to be a very rich informant source. In

order to enroll other rich informants in the study, the researcher implemented a snowball

sampling technique.

Phenomenological Sampling Selection

Interpretive Phenomenological Research seeks specific kinds of informants opposed to a

random selection of informants. According to Smith and Osborn (2007), through purposive

sampling, a more closely defined group for whom the research question will be significant can be

obtained. How the specificity of a sample is defined will depend on the study; in some cases, the

topic under investigation may itself be rare and define the boundaries of the relevant sample (Smith & Osborn, 2007). This research involved participants who were chosen according to the parameters of purposeful sampling in order to attain individuals who can offer the greatest expertise in addressing the research questions. According to Wiersma (2000), there is a need for researchers to seek individuals who represent information-rich cases on the topic of study. This study seeks to locate participants who are considered information-rich regarding using the impact of Restorative Practices with Black male students. The first criterion for obtaining information rich participants for this study is to seek Black males who experienced Restorative Practices or Restorative Processes and later graduated high school.

There is a continuum of kinds of Restorative Practice Processes that students can experience. These Restorative Processes include but are not limited to "Daily Classroom Circles", "Informal Restorative Sessions", "Peer Mediation" and other activities where the offender and victim are included as part of the resolution. The most formal process is called a Restorative Conference. Students who participated in a Restorative Conference either in a school or by way of a Court System are students who were involved in a serious issue of wrongdoing. The primary participant retrieval goal was to enroll informants to contribute to this study experience and who possessed a rich knowledge of Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) when being implemented with Black male students. A $25.00 visa cash card was offered as incentive for Graduate Informants to participate in this study.

Amended Informant Samplings. Data was gathered from Restorative Practices professionals using both an online focus group and in-depth interviews. The Restorative Practices professionals can be grouped into three categories:

1) Experts in Restorative Justice or related field (6),

2) Teacher and counselors who use Restorative Practices (6),

3) Administrators of schools where Restorative Practices is being or has been

    implemented (4).

The below chart provides demographics about the professionals who were interviewed.

For purposes of keeping the identity of all participants anonymous, the names presented in

Chapters 4 and 5 are honorary pseudonyms of trailblazers past, present and future. Everyone in

the professional sample population had at least two years of experience with implementing

Restorative Practices, with the exception of the professor who has spent over 30 years

advocating for civil rights for Black Americans and is also a scholar in the area of African studies

and Intergenerational Trauma. The experts listed on the chart represent four Restorative Justice

Coordinators, one retired judge who now teaches Restorative Justice in a law school and the

college professor and activist for the Black family who was included in the sample due to his

offering an African-centered perspective on Restorative Approaches.

Table 1 – Demographics of Professionals who participated in Online Focus Group and/or In-depth Interviews for this study.

Participants	Total	Male	Female	White	Black	Latino	Yrs of Exp.
Experts	6	5	1	1	5	0	4 – 30
Teachers and Counselors	6	5	2	2	7	1	2 - 26
Administrators	4	1	2	1	2	0	5- 17

Using a different protocol, in-depth interviews were conducted for 9 Black male high

school graduates who graduated from schools where Restorative Practices were implemented.

There are a few modifications in the data collection methodology than that which was initially proposed and these changes are noted as follows. The online focus group data collection was expected to involve 15 participants. A total of 14 Professional Informants registered online and only 9 of the 14 participants who logged on the online focus group site actually participated in the study. It was observed that the requested task of having the participants typing responses to the 24 posted questions may have been viewed as too laborious. Therefore, in-depth interviews were conducted with those who were inactive or partially active in order to retrieve the composite data. In addition, instead of restricting the sample to 7 to 11 Black male graduates who attended high schools where Restorative Practices were implemented, participant sample also included 3 Black male high school graduates who attended middle schools where Restorative Practices was implemented and later graduated from non-Restorative Practices high schools. Adding these graduates was due to challenges using the snow ball technique with attaining enough Black male graduate participants who attended high schools where Restorative Practices was implemented. The other 6 Black male graduates interviewed attended high schools where Restorative Practices were implemented. Furthermore, two additional high school graduates who attended high schools where Restorative Practices were implemented participated in the Restorative Practices Professional portion of the study because in both cases the high school graduates are currently employed as counselors in Restorative Justice School settings. This increased the professional informant count to 16 and lower graduate informant count to 9. The number of informants for the study met with the IRB approval.

Black male graduates in this study represents those graduating high school between 2008 and 2012 and also representing five large urban U.S. cities of Philadelphia, Oakland, Chicago, Baltimore and New Orleans. Unfortunately, there is a lack of balance in geographical location of

the Black male graduates whereas being able to enter more than one graduate from cities other

than Philadelphia was unsuccessful. However, those who did participate in the study contributed

greatly towards the study. Overall locating Black male graduates to participate in the study was

done by use of social media research on Facebook. Beginning with names provided by

Restorative Practices information sources, a Facebook probe was launched. This was also a

method for locating Professional Informants as well. Facebook proved to be a very valuable

resource for locating informants for this study because in most cases, the students' high school

and year of graduation were listed. An invitation was submitted to their inbox and those who

responded were accepted into the study. Preview questions were provided in order to assure that

the students were actually graduates of the school. The demographic data for the Black male

Graduate Informants is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographics on the Black Male Graduates

Pseudonym names	City	Class	Current Role	Special pointers
Blake	Baltimore	2011	College & Employed	Sports scholarship to college
David	Philadelphia	2010	Employed	Married with a newborn
Avon	Philadelphia	2010	Unemployed	Graduated from a suburban high school
Chailon	Chicago	2012	College	His high school made him a man.
Izayah	Philadelphia	2008	Employed	A writer and hopes to publish soon
K.C.	Philadelphia	2008	College	Plans to be a teacher
William	Philadelphia	2009	College	Was President of his senior class.
Mustafa	Oakland	2012	Employed	Left prison and went to Bunche life changed.
Jose	New Orleans	2012	College	Engineering major

An additional source of data collection that was not but was presented in this study is data that was retrieved from current event publications and news forums, which took place with two of the schools that are related to this study while the data collection for this study was in progress. A Restorative Model in Oakland, California was featured in the *Christian Science Monitor News Paper* on March 31, 2013.   In addition, The Oakland was featured in an article in *The New York Times* on April 3, 2013 and April 5, 2013. In addition, Restorative Model in Chicago, Illinois was on WBEZ91.5 a radio broadcast on April 15, 2013. In each case the story focus was Restorative Justice as a means to address and lower school violence. Information was also retrieved from these sources and shared as part of the discussion in Chapter 6.

Phenomenological Sampling for Online Focus Group

The study conducted an online focus group with Restorative Practices professionals who serve as advocates for Black male students. The Sampling technique employed was Purposeful Sampling, in order to obtain the best sources of information rich participants for this study. For the most part, the professional participants who enrolled were school administrators, counselors, teachers and Restorative Justice Coordinators who worked at schools where the enrollment of students were predominately African American and where Restorative Practices is implemented.

The first information rich sources that the study sought to hear from were professionals who spearheaded Restorative Practices at West Philadelphia High School during the 2009-2010 School Year. In order to turn the school into a Renaissance School, all but seven of these employees were removed from employment at the school. This researcher has been able to locate seven of these professionals who moved on to new positions. With the aim of recruiting at least three of these identified potential subjects to participate in the study, emails, social media contacts and other forms of communications were submitted to each one. A school administrator,

an active teacher and a retired teacher participated in the study.

News articles from Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices web pages, along with other online news articles and online media lead the researcher to Restorative Models in five different urban cities. Staff members and Black male graduates from each of these models participated in the study. The Participant Declaration assured all participants that their participation was voluntary and that all information received from them were maintained anonymous. The participant declaration statement also provided the purpose of the study as well as specific data regarding participation and timeline. Participants were informed that they may terminate participation in the study at any time. Professional Informants who were willing to participate in the study were asked to enroll in a private online web community that was designed specifically for this study. Selections of staff members to participate in the focus group will primarily be made based on a first come basis.

The Participant Declaration Statement was sent to each participant via email and was posted in the online forum. This declaration statement assured that all who volunteered to participate would be fully voluntary and that all information gathered were maintained anonymous. Participants were informed that they may terminate participation in the study at any time. The participant declaration also provided the purpose of the study, the specifics regarding participation and timeline. Persons willing to participate in the study were asked to register as guest, using pseudonym, on a private social media web community designed specifically for this study. Only registered guests were able to read any contents of the site. Selections of staff members to be interviewed were on first come basis.

Data Collection

According to Smith & Osborn (2007), semi-structured interviews allow the investigator to have a set of questions on an interview protocol, but the interview will only be guided by the protocol rather than being dictated by it. As a result the researcher seeks to meet three primary goals: to establish rapport with the respondent; ordering of questions framed by that rapport; to allow freedom to probe interesting areas that may arise; and allow the interview to follow the respondent's interests or concerns within the framework of the phenomenon being investigated (Smith and Osborn, 2007). According to Smith & Osborn (2007), semi-structured interviews can last for a considerable amount of time. The interviews for this study were generally one to two hours.

As previously noted, there were two forms of qualitative data collection: an online focus group with Restorative Practices professionals who serve as advocates for Black male students and in-depth interviewing of Black male graduates who experienced Restorative Practices prior to graduation. Later, it was found necessary to conduct in-depth interviews with Restorative Practices professionals as well. A third resource for data collection was published news articles and other media reports on three of the Restorative school models that served as case studies in this study.

  In-depth interviews as data collection. In-depth interviews are beneficial in order to gather information about a person's views, insights, attitudes and behaviors as well as being useful when a exploring phenomenon thoroughly (Boyce and Neale 2006). According to Weiss (1994), the best interview questions are ones formulated when the researcher is informed about the phenomenon. The researcher's awareness and understanding of the phenomenon based on the literature and previous experiences will serve as a foundation for knowing what is needed to be

uncovered by the interview (Weiss, 1994). The protocol proposed for this study's in-depth

interviews were developed in reflection of school data obtained from previous studies and

resources on Restorative Practices from the International Institute of Restorative Practices. My

role as the researcher is to be balanced between asking questions that were predetermined as

important to the study and facilitating the interview in a conversational style (Yin, 2004). The

study's In-depth Interview Questions are provided in Appendix 4. In cases where the informant

gave permission, the interviews were recorded. In accordance with IRB guidelines, the audio

files will be discarded.

Restorative Enquiry Focus group as data collection. Restorative enquiry has been

initiated in the United Kingdom to allow students and staff an open venue to share their insight

on a specific concern or development at the school site (Hendry, 2009). Implementing

restorative enquiry requires forming a circle of random students and staff who are involved in a

new situation to assess and share their experiences regarding the event or new situation. An

example could be a new program at the school. Using a Restorative enquiry focus group may

offer an incredible amount of information not only for the researcher but also to the participants.

The Restorative enquiry focus group will involve 10 to 16 participants which is one person more

than recommended by Kamberelis & Dimitriadis (2008, p. 375). Also, because the sampling of

participants was from various states, a virtual focus group implemented. Focus groups are

essentially a qualitative way to gather information using a methodical questioning plan with

several individuals simultaneously in a formal or informal setting. Focus groups are group

discussions which are arranged to examine a specific phenomena or set of occurrences (Creswell,

2007).

Online focus group interviewing. An online social network for educators was the venue for the focus group with Restorative Practices professionals. The online focus group supported triangulation by allowing informants from 5 major urban cities as participants in the study. In addition, online focus group can offer two important opportunities that face to face focus group does not offer. First, it gives the group an opportunity to share with others who have experienced the same phenomenon but may live in another part of the state or country to become part of the focus group discussion. Secondly, when using asynchronous format, there is a unique opportunity for participants to offer reflective responses over a set period of time in which participants can offer revisions to their initial responses, offer greater in-depth responses as well as offer more in-depth response to points made by a fellow participant. This method of focus group query helps to decrease the experience that many face to face participants may have in wishing they had offer more information or different information.

An online social network communication medium can range from a blog talk radio forum or webinar forum. Virtual and online social network communications are commonplace tools for more than 85% of young people in America (Gaiser & Schreiner, 2009; Rezabek, 2000). Providing the information rich professionals the opportunity to network with other Black male advocate turnaround success stories may add to each one's successful life's experiences while providing quality and valuable information to this research. The online format selected for this study is a social online network where responses were in text form. This method was selected to provide the participants the greatest amount of reflection time prior to answering, revising and/or responding to another participant's response. It is this one major feature that social online networks provide that may enhance the quality of response obtained in this research. It must be noted that for this study, the downside of asynchronous communications online focus group is

that although participants may enroll in the study as informants in the online community,

engagement to contribute to the study may be limited or not at all. Unlike webinars, in text

driven asynchronous communication forums informants exchange messages by reading and

responding to posts and comments as their schedules permit opposed to following a

synchronized communication time where all will be online at the same time to communicate. The

trade off for not having to organize a time that everyone is available to go online at the same time

was the increased potential for lower participation.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA),

which the core meaning, complexity and wealth of the lived experiences as told by the

informants (Moustakas, 1994; Maypole & Davies, 2001). According to Smith & Osborne

(2007), the purpose of IPA is to explore in detail how informants make sense of their lived

experiences as it involves their social world. The primary mission for an IPA study is the garner

meanings that events or involvements, particular experiences hold for participants (Smith and

Osborne, 2007).

Generation of Data. According to Raibee (2004), the first step of establishing a trail of

evidence is a clear procedure of data analysis, so that the process is clearly documented and

understood. This step would allow another researcher to verify the findings; it safeguards against

selective perception and increases the rigor of the study (Raibee, 2004). Data during the in-depth

interviews and the online focus group was generated by the researcher taking notes as the

interview is progressing. In addition, interview recordings were transcribed into text data. Data

in the online focus group was collected primarily by the participants' typing in their comments. A

full transcript of the online focus group was transcribed. As the researcher in the role as

ethnographer, it should be noted that data analysis was ongoing even before the actual focus groups commenced. All participants had an opportunity to ask questions prior to, during and after the online focus group proceedings have been conducted.

Yin (2003) encouraged researchers to make every effort to produce an analysis of the highest quality. In order to accomplish this, he presented four principles that should attract the researcher's attention: 1)Show that the analysis relied on all the relevant evidence; 2) Include all major rival interpretations in the analysis; 3) Address the most significant aspect of the case study or phenomenon; and to apply the researcher's prior experiences, expert knowledge to further the analysis. This study carefully reviewed all data as data was initially gathered and notes were being taken. Data was further analyzed during the transcribing of the audio recording one day after each interview. In addition, a review of the written transcripts lead to further analyzing, while categorizing major points and insights offered by each informant. Although the researcher's experience with the topic provided greater opportunity for efficient categorizing, the researcher continued to take steps not to allow her bias to enter by sending the transcripts to the informant for their check for accuracy and / or revisions.

During each interview, field notes were taken as the interview was being recorded. Within 24 hours following a recorded interview, the interview was transcribed into text format. The data analysis process was being performed as the data from the recorded interviews were being transcribed into text data. The text format was re-read using a highlighter to indicate what appeared to be most relevant to the question that the response addressed. Field notes were also compared to the text formats to bring to light any other details that were deemed interesting while the interview was in progress. The text transcripts were emailed to participants for their review. Only two participants responded with corrections. As for the online focus group, the

participants typed their answers to the same questions. Each response on the online focus group

was read daily while field notes were being taken.   Participants in the online focus group had the

opportunity to add to their statements and therefore, their new comments had to be reviewed and

processed as well. Hennink and his colleagues (Hennink et al. 2011) suggests that the researcher

should give attention to use of inductive and deductive reasoning during interviewing because

there is an important and frequent interplay between these types of reasoning within each of the

three qualitative cycles, from questioning to coding data. Perhaps the most concise model of

focus group data analysis is provided by Krueger (1994) who advises that a viable view for data

analysis to contemplate a continuum of analysis ranging from the basic collection of raw data

being at one end and interpretation of data at the other end. There would be an analysis

continuum separating data in categories of being raw data, descriptive statements or

interpretation. In reviewing Krueger's chart for types of data analysis, the author will implement

the transcribing analysis where Krueger (1994) noted that a written report must be based on the

complete transcript.

   Data Extraction. Data extraction began with reading and re-reading the transcribed data.

Thematic patterns began to emerge upon completion of reading of all transcripts. Once all

interviews and interview transcribing and field note taking were complete, an Excel spreadsheet

was created where each participant was given an ID in column A, with demographics in the

adjoining columns B-E and Codes in F. Column G contained the response of each informant to

the question at the top of each spreadsheet page. This sheet construction was repeated for each of

the 15 selected research questions. Therefore, each of the 15 sheets in the Excel Spreadsheet

book was composed of responses provided by the 15 Professional Participants in the Study. Both

Interview data and online focus group data were transposed to the Excel Spreadsheet book. This

structured Excel spreadsheet was done the same way for the 15 questions that were found to

offer the greatest and most relevant information regarding the research questions. Each

participant's most direct answer was placed on the spreadsheet so that the researcher could

further explore and compare responses for repetitious and connecting concepts. The process of

coding answers to thematic patterns began for each question or each of the 15 sheets in the Excel

spreadsheet book. The author identified codes and compared codes to find consistencies and

differences. According to Ratcliff (2003), consistencies between codes denotes similar meanings

or pointing to a basic ideas and reveals categories. Ratcliff notes that eventually category

saturates when no new codes related to it are formed and that certain categories become more

central focus. The Excel recorded data was reviewed across all 15 questions as well as within

each of the fifteen questions or worksheets for common terms and frequencies of terms and

concepts. The Excel find function was used to locate frequency of words used. Excel worksheets

were also funneled through exterior text analysis to identify commonly used words. From these

analyses, 13 codes were noted. Placing a focus on meaning of all responses on the 15 worksheet

pages in lieu of the repetitive words was applied.

Careful steps were taken to extract meaningful codes from the data. Certain words would

connect the response to one of the thematic patterns. For example, when words appear in a

response such as "safety", "haven", "needs nurturing", would be coded as a thematic code for

Altruistic Refuge. Words or phrases such as "communication", "needs someone to listen to their

story", would be coded C for *Compassionate Witnessing*. A second reviewer of the responses

provided feedback to the consistency of the coded material in order to help validate accuracy in

code assignment. The presented codes are shown on Table 3 indicate the answer concepts that the

Professional participants offered in response to the questions presented. As a result, six thematic

patterns emerged.

These six thematic patterns were coded and were categorized. Further analysis of the six

thematic codes were performed and reviewed by a second reviewer. The six codes were listed in

Tables 3 and 4 along frequency and percentage of times the code was indicated by a response.

There were key concepts embedded in responses that lead to the identification of each code. It

should be noted that there were 13 valued responses that did not fall in any of the coded theme

categories as listed below. Although such value data is important to the study, it was not part of

the initial analysis of data. Below are meanings of each thematic code listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Six Thematic Patterns with Codes and Meanings

Codes	Thematic Patterns	Related Definition, Attributes or Meaning
A	ALTRUISTIC REFUGE	School needs to be a safe place where students expect protection, healing and can experience a sense of well-being.
B	BATTLING RACISM & NEG. STATITICS	Black male students face racism, trauma, violence and an array of negative outcomes.
C	COMPASSIONATE WITNESSING	Communicating, talking and listening, hearing their stories and sharing new vistas about their stories, conducting purposeful discussions and lessons for life.
D	DIGNITY THERAPY	Students are provided opportunities to grow in self-awareness, self-management, awareness of others and relationship skills.
E	EMPOWERING VOICE	Students being empowered through accountability participation, inclusion and valued as a contributor.
F	FINDING AUTHENTIC SELF	The authentic self is "the you" that can be found at your absolute core. It is the part of you not defined by others or your function or role. It is all of the things that are uniquely yours and need expression, rather than what you believe you are supposed to be and do.

Table 4. The Frequency of Code Responses from Professional Participants Population as measured following the initial process of analyzing responses.

Code Title - first analysis of adults	Code	Frequency Analysis 1	Percentage
ALTRUISTIC **REFUGE**	A	37	16%
BATTLING RACISM & BAD STATS	B	41	18%
COMPASSIONATE WITNESSING	C	13	6%
DIGNITY THERAPY	D	56	25%
EMPOWERING VOICE	E	21	9%
FINDING AUTHENTIC SELF	F	59	26%
	Total:	**227**	

Figure 3. Frequency of Code Responses from Professionals Analysis 1
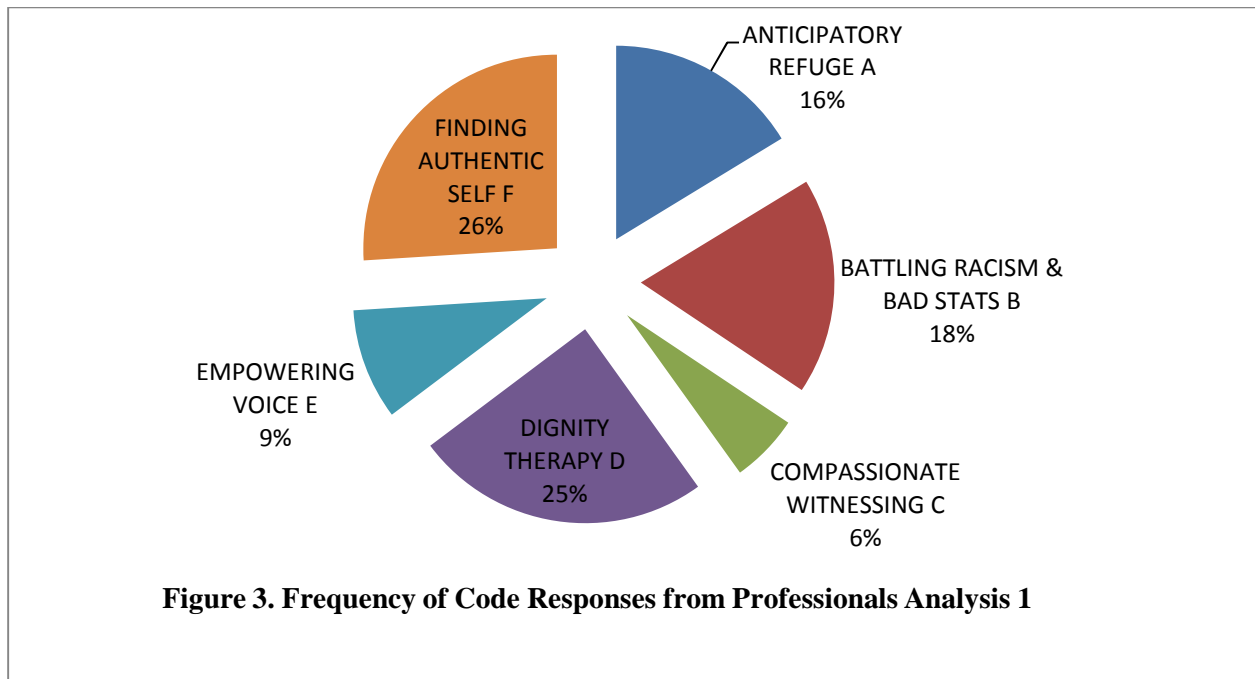
The coded thematic pattern of Altruistic Refuge was derived from the various responses which indicated that students have a need for a safe place that provides care, healing hurts, protecting, keeping a sense of well-being or that it is the role of Restorative Practices to provide such a place for students. When the answer implies either concept, it was coded as Altruistic Refuge. Three examples of such replies are as follows:

- Building a caring place for the students and listening to what they have to say is what I value most about RJ (a Teacher).

- What I value most about Restorative Practices is that it is "Justice that heals". It puts students first and gives them a safe place that fosters their dignity (an Expert).

- Very gentle nurturing very definitive (a Counselor).

Other responses indicated that the problem students faced were racism related and one of the needs for Restorative Practices in schools overall is to employ practices that will battle racism and/or address the effects that racism may have had on Black male students . In some cases, these responses may have emerged in correlation with the nature of the question that was asked. For example, the question may have suggested that racism is part of the problem. "Do you believe that Black males may experience Intergenerational Trauma?" Following the question is an explanation of the term as follows: "Some social science scholars believe that part of the reasons for the negative statistics regarding Black males in America is because Black males suffer from an unaddressed trauma that have been passed down to them through previous generations who faced oppressive violence relating to slavery, Jim Crow laws and political injustice. These scholars refer to this as Intergenerational Trauma. What are your thoughts on this? Do you agree? Please explain why you agree or disagree with this theory." Although most answers were not in full agreement with the Intergenerational Trauma theory, most responses to this question address the need to combat racism. Three examples are presented below.

- I really do not understand Intergenerational Trauma but I do believe because of generations of racism Black males in particular have re-occurring bouts with trauma (Counselor).

- I do believe there could be Intergeneration Trauma but I do not think it justifies or even explains the problems we see with some of the violence we read about and see day-to-day White suburban youth that come to us also participate in violence and use violent response to address their retaliation of a situation (Counselor).

- No I do not believe that slavery is the reason for our youth issues today I believe we have to leave the slavery problem behind us and deal with the new levels of racism that are facing our young men today (Teacher).

Notwithstanding, there were ample responses that were concept coded as "*Battling Racism*" even when the questions were unbiased and non-slanted. For example, the question "What do you see as the greatest challenges for Black male students today?" could lend itself to an array of responses yet nearly every response from the professional participants indicated that black male student are confronted with racism on some level. Our graduate participants often indicated the fact that "Battling the Streets" was the bigger challenge for Black males while the professional participants focused on "Battling Racism".

- It depends who it is for most it (greatest challenge facing Black males) will be that they rather follow the community than to do what is needed to help improve their lives (Philadelphia Graduate).

- Our greatest challenge is violence. We see it everywhere we go. When people see us coming, they expect trouble to start. If we can find a way not to do violence or be harmed by violence, we will be ok (Chicago Graduate).

- The greatest challenge may be that the black male internalized the oppression against him. He sees himself at fault for his lack in every meaningful measure of success (New Orleans Graduate).

Below is an example of how several of the Black Graduate Informants shared feelings of being devalued by staff (when attending high school that was not Restorative). The informant shared his feelings of how the dignity of Black males was harmed as well as his assumptions about racism being part of their school experience. This statement was given in response to the question: How can schools help Black males overcome their challenge?

> I do not think they (regular public school staff) can help because they do not care about these students. They will tell you point blank, get out of my face. They have no respect for Black males. I had a teacher say to our class that the problem with us is that our mothers live on welfare. They are teaching for a pay check and do not care about the students. So how can they help Black males graduate (Philadelphia Graduate).

The third coded thematic patter, *Compassionate Witnessing,* did not prove to be highly frequent in notations; however, it was a concept that offered important relevance to the study. Both professionals and graduates spoke regarding the importance of having someone students can talk to who truly cares about their well being. Graduate males frequently referred to their need for Black male role models at their schools. There reasons generally alluded to the fact that these men would understand their problems and help guide them.

- I think schools in the black community need to hire more black male teachers or even assistant teachers who can help mentor and inspire and be role models for black male students.   Chai helped because they had so many black male leaders in the school. I even felt help talking to the custodians because they all cared about us (Philadelphia Graduate).

- Well, it gave me a home away from home. It gave me teachers who became like aunts and uncles to me. It gave me a look at careers that I never knew existed. It helped me in a lot of ways (Oakland Graduate).

- Every school needs someone there to talk to the kids who are out of the loop. The ones who are absent all the time. People need to go and see about them. They need to hear why they do not want to be there and then helping them get back and catch up with the missed work (Chicago Graduate).

The fourth coded thematic pattern, *Dignity Therapy*, eventually merged with the fifth coded theme, Empowering Voice. Together the two themes emerged into one theme because the informants responses tend to overlap when indicating the two themes. Empowering student voice appears to connect directly with nurturing their dignity. Both Dignity Therapy and Empowering voice were noted as being an integral need for schools to employ in order to help children develop skills to cope with adverse encounters in their lives. Dignity Therapy thematic pattern included all responses that suggested that the schools begin to teach coping skills, relational building skills, self-awareness training and other emotional intelligence developmental skill set.

- The one common denominator of everyone who experiences trauma of any kind is that one's dignity is injured. When you are treated unfairly, it hurts you and takes a chip away from your dignity as a human being. Restorative Approaches begin to restore the dignity of students just by hearing their stories every day (RJ Expert).

- Circles have been known to have transformed wrong doers into persons having dignity. Sharing with one another, solving problems with one another, and giving one another a time to voice ideas becomes a way of life. This is what they can leave with (Counselor).

- I am not really sure, but I think Circles can get people thinking about more important things. Where do you want to go to college? Why do you want to go to college? Who in your family have gone to college? When you start thinking about things about your future, the things that happens day-in and day-out is not such a big problem anymore (Chicago Graduate).

As noted above, the fifth thematic code pattern, *Empowering Voice* (E), was merged with Dignity Therapy (D) code. Closer analysis in bringing meaning to the data, demonstrated that giving the students voice and the power to contribute as a valued member of the school community is part of what nurtures dignity and aids in the therapeutic experience for students. This thesis was clearly observed while reading repeated statements within the spreadsheet for each question. In addition, when spreadsheet transcript was reviewed by an outside reviewer, Empowering Voice was also recommended to be emerged as part of the Dignity Therapy Process. Consequently, Concept Codes D and E were merged as one coded thematic pattern D.

The final coded thematic pattern was *Finding One's Authentic Self* which is rooted in developing Spiritual Intelligence. After very careful review by the assisting analysis support, it was agreed that this coded thematic pattern did stand on its own as the highest level of success that Restorative Practices could possibly offer its students.

- RJ sows a different kind of seed and it began to grow a different kind of black male student (Expert).
- I believe the Circles when in place in the mornings and in the afternoons really begin to break down the trauma and bring forth the genuine person trying to get out from underneath (Teacher).

- Once you own yourself and have confidence in maintaining yourself, you do not worry about the speech or action of others as a defense against yourself (Teacher).

As a result of this first level of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, the six codes were abridged to form four thematic codes offering richer interpretative value and reducing redundancy. It should be noted that numerous comments did not fall into any of the six to four categories of thematic codes; however, such comments still offered great value to the overall study. Analysis processed continued with the three that later emerged as the researcher continued to review the data for the essence of the meaning of informants. The four thematic codes were then rated for repetition and frequency. These codes were later re-categorized into three theme groupings where Codes "C" (Compassionate Witnessing) was merged with Code "A" (Altruistic Refuge). The two codes appeared to have too many overlapping ideas and insights. Code "E" (Empowering Voice) was merged with Code D (Dignity Therapy). After additional reviews of the data and three themed codes, an overarching theme narrative: Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge was generated.

Table 5. Coding Analysis of Professional Informants' responses	Code	Frequency of Code Analysis 2	Percentage
ALTRUISTIC REFUGE	A/C	50	22%
BATTLING RACISM & BAD STATS	B	41	18%
DIGNITY THERAPY	D/E	77	34%
FINDING AUTHENTIC SELF	F	59	26%
		227	

Figure 4.
Frequency of Code Responses from Professionals Analysis 2
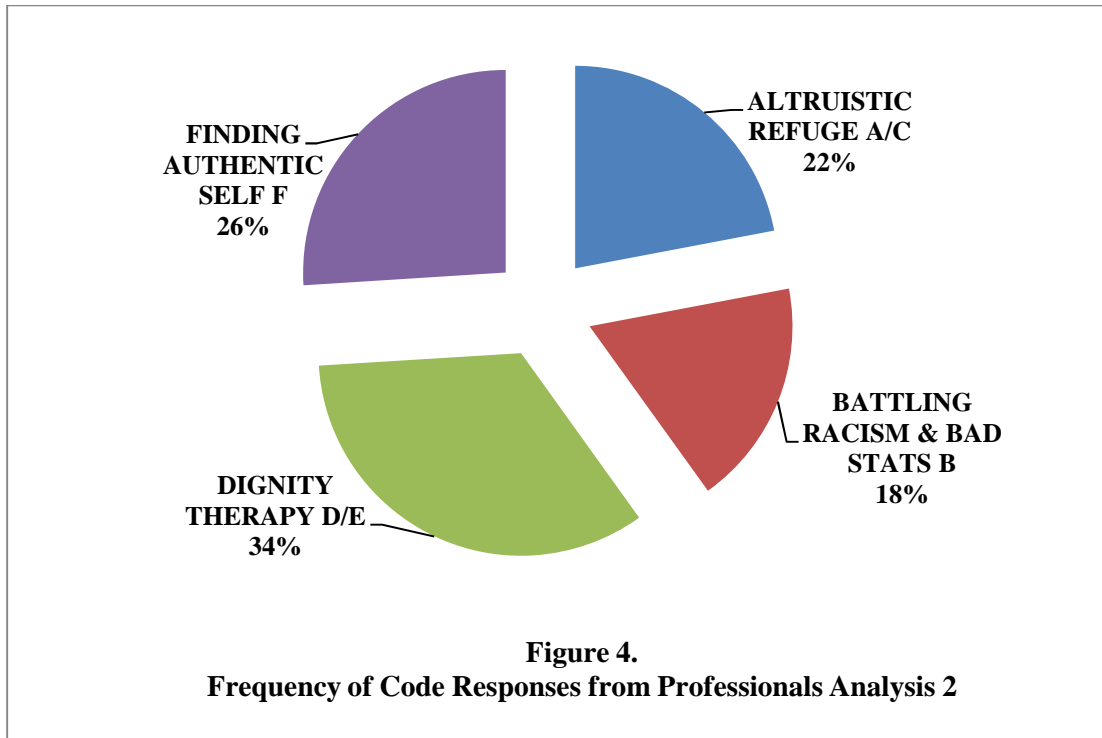
A further look at how Black male graduates view the importance of schools being

Altruistic Refuge in order to support success for students can be seen in looking at the coded

thematic patterns from the responses to the questions by black male graduates.

Table 6. Coding Analysis of Graduate Informants' Responses	Code	Responses from Graduates	Percentage
ALTRUISTIC REFUGE/CIRCLES AND SHARING	A	50	56%
BATTLING THE STREETS	B	26	29%
DIGNITY THERAPY	D/E	14	16%
		90	

Black Male Graduates who attended schools where Restorative Practices were employed offered a strong thesis that Restorative Practices offered refuge and the expectation of such schools gave a sense of family and safety. The concern with racism or violence in the streets was noted by many of the Graduate Informants and the recognition that Restorative Practices offer healing therapy of emotional harms.

Figure 5. Frequency Codes from Graduates
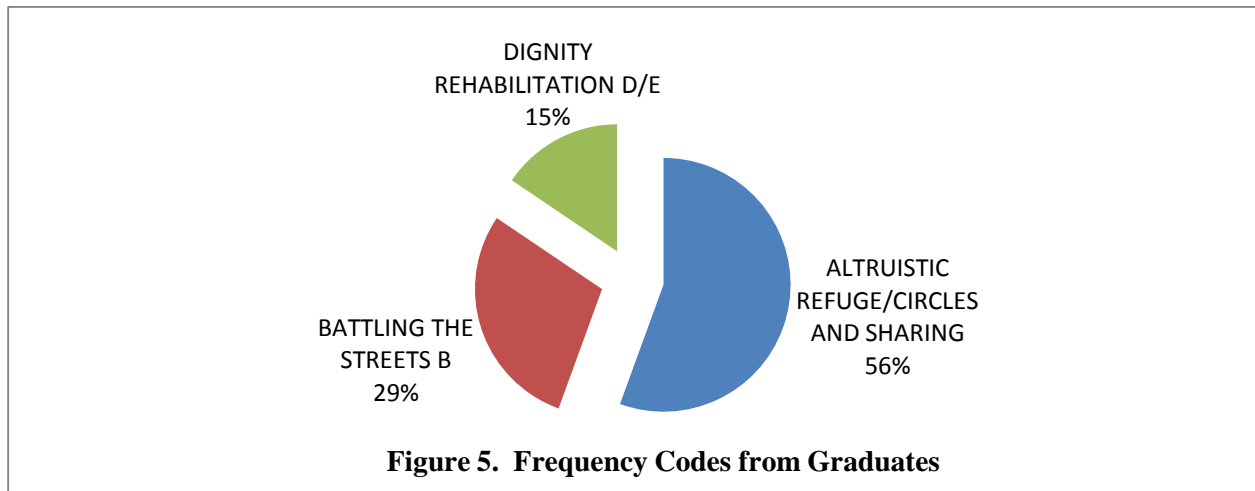
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) Applied for Meaning. In IPA, meaning is crucial and to understand the content and complexity of the meanings obtained from the interviews is the major goal rather than measure the frequency of ideas (Smith & Osborne, 2007). According to Smith and Osborne (2007), this involves the investigator engaging in an interpretative relationship with the transcript. IPA was applied to create meaningful narratives between the four thematic concepts. As a result, four amalgamated insights emerged which told a significant story based on the Informants composite insight regarding the questions asked and their responses and the four thematic concepts. The narrative Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge was derived based on the four amalgamated insights provided by a composite of Informant response implications. These will be further delineated in the Findings Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

Research Validity

Although reliability and generalizability are not part of qualitative research, validity and credibility of the findings are essential. Qualitative research must encompass strategies to increase the fidelity and validity of the research (Creswell, 2003). Therefore, to establish validity, this study involved multiple sources of evidence using dual data gathering methodologies in dual case studies and an array of validity checking tools and processes (Maxwell, 2004). Data triangulation involves the use of different sources of information and is a very important technique to enhance construct validity (Maxwell, 2004). Maxwell (2004) further noted that triangulation methods reduce the risk that the study's conclusions will reflect systematic biases and allows a better assessment of the validity of the study's explanations. Data Analysis of both the In-depth interviews and Focus group data was supported by audio recording where possible, transcribing, an independent reader and transcripts were sent to informants for review in order foster validity when interpreting the data. In addition, maintaining field notes, news media and archival data using dual data gathering methodologies were part of the triangulation strategy.

According to Maxwell (2004), any threats to descriptive validity such as the inaccurate inclusion or partial exclusion of information can be prevented by comparing notes with moderator, audio taping and transcribing the interviews. Efforts to control any threats to theoretical validity was made by paying attention to any discrepancies in responses, comparison of views between the two groups of participants and identifying alternative explanations. Multiple data sources were obtained from two modes of data collection, two groups of participants and participants being from five urban cities. The comparison of data gathered supported the triangulation process and enhanced internal validity.

According to Yin (2004), "any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be more

convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information" (Yin, 2004, p. 98). This multiple case study employed the process of triangulation by providing three data sources (experts, school based professionals and graduates) and three different data collection methodologies (online focus group, online survey and in-depth interviews), representing Restorative models in five different urban cities. This array of procedures, sources, informants and school sites were employed in order to corroborate the same phenomena and to examine evidence from the different lenses while building a "coherent justification for themes" and the composite findings (Creswell, 2003, p. 196).

The Researcher as the Instrument

The co-investigator has a very personal stake on this topic. Having heritage of African descent, the author have a succinct emotional attachment to this topic. The plight of Black male youth has been a serious issue for me personally and professionally for more than three decades. I lost both of my brothers, a nephew and at least seven students (all Black males) during the course of my career as an educator to violence or what some scholars suggest to be manifestations of Transgenerational Trauma. In the last year, two additional past students of mine and other black male students from my home district died in the wake of street violence. This researcher worked directly with young Black males in schools and adult Black males in prison with a vision to narrow the influx of Black males going to prisons. For these reasons, the author organized a school where single gender classes were instituted in order to better meet the spiritual awakening needs of Black urban students but in particular, Black males. While the concept of Restorative Practices was not transparent at the time, many of the processes put forward at this school were later classified as Restorative Practices. There were a number of successes in the lives of Black male students, which were attributed to Restorative Justice

Procedures. The intent of this study was to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how Restorative Practices can lower the "School to Prison Pipeline" occurrences for Black male students. The author recognizes that in order to best support Black male students in American schools and in order to conduct meaningful research, it is of critical importance to allow the Informants' voice to be the sole guide to all analysis of data, interpretations of data and presentation of findings. Therefore, as the interviewer and one to analyze the data several efforts were made to ensure that the findings represent the voices and the lived experiences of the informants. These efforts include vigilant reading of the transcripts, having a second reader to analyze transcripts and coded thematic patterns, and implementing triangulation procedures to assure that the findings represent a minimum of three different levels of informants.

Chapter 4: Preliminary Findings

Special Note: In order to protect the anonymity of all informants in this study, honorary names were given for each informant in Chapter 4 in remembrance of trailblazers past, present and future.

Informants' Descriptions of Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice)

The primary question that this research study intends to answer is how can Restorative Practices lower the occurrences of "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students? There are supplementary questions to this research, which are:

1) How does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact the "School to Prison Pipeline" as viewed by Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) Professionals?

2) How does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact Trauma and Intergenerational Trauma as it relates to Black male students?

3) How do Black males who attended a Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) school and later graduated high school view their experience in a Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) school?

In this Preliminary Findings, the researcher assessed the informants' understanding and descriptions of Restorative Practices based on their lived experience with Restorative Justice (Restorative Practices) and Black male students. The informants' phenomenological vistas on Restorative Practices are presented below in four Informant categories: Graduate Informants, Teacher and Counselor Informants, School Administrator Informants and Expert Informants.

An official operational definition of Restorative Practices was presented in Chapter 3. It was retrieved from research scholars who implemented Restorative Practices, wrote numerous journal articles and books regarding Restorative Practices, and who provided extensive training in its implementation. According to McCold (2000), fully restorative interventions must include three parts: 1) meeting the needs of the victims; 2) accountability of offender; and, 3) encompasses engagement of the communities of care. Restorative Practices is an emerging social science where the most critical function is restoring and building relationships (Wachtel, 1997). Wachtel (1997) further expressed that the most direct requirement of a Restorative Practice principle is that the process or school operation must offer high control, which indicates that the school structure holds the student accountable for his or her actions and behaviors while simultaneously offering high support, which indicates that the school also ensures that the student receives the nurturing emotional supports needed (McCold, 2008).

It should be also noted that the use of the term Restorative Justice is often utilized by professionals who work in schools or with schools where the term Restorative Justice has the same meaning as Restorative Practices. Although the two terms are technically related but different, they are often interchanged by various professionals. Howard Zehr, who is often referred to as the Father of Restorative Justice, offers a definition that more aligned with the Restorative Justice Experts in this study:

> Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that involves repairing harm, rendering respect, requiring engagement of all stakeholders, responsibility and accountability, involving face to face communication, restoring harmonious relationships with one another, with creation, and with the Creator (Zehr, 1990).

I. Lived Experiences of Restorative Practices by Black Male Graduates

In nearly every case of interviewing Black male graduates, the term Restorative Practices or Restorative Justice did not have meaning for them unless the student participated in an official Restorative Justice Court Proceeding. Responses to "How do you describe Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice)?" lead to responses such as "I am not familiar with that", "I do not know what that is" or "I don't know". There was one case where the response appeared to be completely unrelated to the question such as offered by a graduate of West Restorative Model who stated, "It is students going back to learn the histories that were not taught to us." In this case, this author was not certain if the graduate Informant who is a very bright young man simply made assumptions based on the term, "restorative" or if he participated in a form of Cultural Restorative Practices. In one case, a graduate participant simply disconnected the telephone call because this interviewer's first query to him was "Please describe Restorative Justice". Perhaps, the term "justice" could have denoted ideas he was completely uncomfortable with or the young informant may assumed that he was not savvy enough to be interviewed. Fortunately, this author was able to recover his participation in the study and from this experience, how to apply this specific query was re-assessed. This author considered that to participate in Restorative Practices does not indicate that one is trained in the verbiage of it but instead may simply be immersed in the principles of Restorative Practices. Notwithstanding, this author was able to perceive the graduate informants' understanding of Restorative Practices by focusing on more practical terms such as circles or peer mediation.

In every case, the concept of using circles was recognized and understood as a school practice or ritual. Responses when asked about "circles" or "The Chai Way" for a specific group of graduate gave rise to how the Black male graduates defined Restorative Practices or

Restorative Justice. David gave the best illustration for Restorative Practices at his high school.

David explained how Restorative Practices impacted their school environment:

> Before Ms R came the school was chaotic. Fires were being started every day and fights
>
> never stopped. Teachers were being beaten up and it was just hard going to school
>
> during my first year. I did not want to go back but I had nowhere else to go. When we
>
> got back in September, things were different. We had a better attitude about school. We
>
> wanted to make a good name for ourselves because we heard that our school would be
>
> closed down. Circles helped us because we talked about setting these kinds of new goals
>
> for ourselves and our school.

The above description was very typical throughout the nine Black graduate Informants.

Where Restorative Practices was brought into the school, the graduate frequently described a

scenario where chaos transitioned into a calmer environment. A composite definition for the

Black male graduate Informants was that Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) is a school

model that will begin to transform chaotic state into a more harmonious state. This definition was

also reflected by Expert Informants in this study.

II. Restorative Practices as Described by Professional School Informants

Overall, the findings in this study regarding the definition of Restorative Practices by

Professionals parallel with the operational definitions provided for this study; there were some

similarity to the operational definitions but there were also unique attributes of Restorative

Practices that were not mentioned in the literature before. Additional attributes of Restorative

Practices have been uncovered by three levels of Professional Informants of this study.   When

reviewing the responses by professionals on how they describe Restorative Practices, similarities

to the official operating definition appear to be reflected in the responses of teachers and school administrators more so than those who have been identified in this study as Restorative Justice Experts. This chapter presents how informants describe Restorative Practices, particularly as they experienced it with Black male students.

There was some evidence that the descriptions of Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) were compatible with the role of the informants. Teachers and counselors viewed Restorative Practices in close alignment with Zehr's operational definitions presented. Margie Canty, administrator in Pennsylvania described Restorative Practices as being a structured response to addressing wrongful behaviors. He added, "It is gentle but direct and inclusive". In addition, teachers and counselors had similar views on what they valued about Restorative Practices. For example, all three school teachers described Restorative Practices as "a fair process" that involves student accountability and empowers the students' voice. Naomi Winchester, a retired teacher in Philadelphia offered the following description:

> I describe Restorative Practices as being fair, equitable, objective and compassionate. It provides students opportunity to correct their mistakes and also gives them a voice.

Ruth Carita who also teaches in Pennsylvania had a comparable view but adds the importance of re-integration as a valued component of Restorative Practices:

> Restorative Practices gives the youth the chance to make amends and the ability to be restored back into the community. I like the idea the ownership is placed with the students when they caused discord or the harmony in the community. They are responsible for making corrective action among each other.

Fair Process is a very important concept in Restorative Practices. When students see that each one is treated with the same respectful manner of dealing with a problem, students begin to trust their community, their teachers and most of all the process. Trust is later accompanied with respect. Reintegration is a critical part of Restorative Justice because the mission following a conference or peer mediation or other Restorative Process is to return to the student who did the harms back into the community without him having shame but instead feeling valued. . Paul Brown is a counselor in Baltimore and he contended:

Restorative Justice allows them (students) to maintain their dignity while accepting responsibility for their errors and for repairing harm or fixing errors.

Repairing the harms that one has caused teaches the students to value one another and that he has ability to build and do good things that brings harmony where injury arose. Trust for the community builds because the student is now part of the mending process. The ability to feel trust for a community that was once viewed as biased or alienating begins to give students a sense of dignity and empowerment. The idea of students having ownership, voice and being respected through the process was noted by both teachers and counselors. Cynthia Bowser, also counselor in Baltimore, simply provided words in the online focused group forum when asked to describe Restorative Justice. She listed "community, rebuilding, inclusive, restore, healing and wisdom". For the most part, the words provided by Cynthia Bowser are concepts that have been repeated by other teachers and counselors. As stated in the Operational Definition of Restorative Practices, the process is inclusive and its aim is to community building through accountability and nurturing. Cynthia Bowser shares why she values Restorative Justice:

What I most value about the restorative work I am involved in is watching young people take accountability for their actions and they truly begin to understand how their behavior affects their community.

This aspect of the student developing social skills to be problem solvers while being part of the accountability process is one of the core principles of Restorative Practices. When a student does something wrong, he is expected to own up to his error and to repair the harm that was identified. Repairing harms is a major role of accountability. Teachers and counselors concurred that Restorative Practices is about a balance between holding students accountable for their behaviors and nurturing relationships. Once the harms have been identified, both the victim and the offender are often asked how the harm can be repaired. Together as a team, ideas for resolving the issues at hand and restoring relationships are shared and decided upon. This helps to sharpen the social, emotional and spiritual intelligences of their students. School leaders will allow students to offer solutions, which helps them develop problem solving skills and gain a sense of empowerment. Wallace Rosario a teacher in Oakland emphasizes the nurturing attribute of Restorative Practices and the importance of schools being a safe place for students:

Restorative Practices is solving problems while putting hope in the hearts of the students over and over and over again. Building a caring place for the students and listening to what they have to say is what I value most about Restorative Justice. Many times administrators also cause violence by the words they use with students when students do wrong. Here, we learned to use language to help maintain peace within the student and within the school.

Words can be very volatile when negative expressions or statements are voiced by staff members as well as students. Most people can recall incidents where a teacher may have made a statement that devastated someone or several in the classroom. Trauma can happen whenever violence even in the form of verbiage takes place. Wallace Rosario's statement demonstrates that Restorative Justice is a process that requires staff to model to students and the importance for staff to learn trauma knowledge (safe language and practices). Camaron Joel is a new graduate from the New Orleans Restorative Model. His affinity for helping fellow students, lead to him to become an intern counselor. Learning to create or promote harmony in an environment, according to Camaron Joel, requires training and practice:

> Restorative Justice has five levels of functioning where the entire school will emerge in a cycle of developing relationships, learning peaceful solutions, practicing restorative reflection, peer facilitation and when needed restorative conferencing. The better the earlier levels are implemented, the more seldom the latter levels are needed.

There are layers of practices that are part of the Restorative Practices Model in schools. The proactive practices such as daily classroom or homeroom circles are most important because they help students to want to maintain harmony in their school community. Therefore, there is a lower incidence of behaviors that will require the corrective practices such as a Restorative Conference.

III. School Administrators' views of Restorative Practices

Overall, the administrators' descriptions of Restorative Practices were based on its requirement for balance between nurturing students and holding students accountable. Brian

Weiner was assistant principal at West Restorative Model and brought Restorative Practices to the school. His view of Restorative Practices is as follows:

> The things I found most valuable about Restorative Practices is that it gave students a voice in the school. It made them realize that they could become part of the solution rather than being a contributor to or observer of the problem. Restorative Practices removes anger and adds reason and understanding.

The mindset that a student must pay for their mistakes, breaking rules or causing harms are replaced with a student must learn from his mistakes, breaking rules and causing harms. An important factor in the learning process is for the student along with the one harmed and others to collaborate in order to determine his or her own methods of repairing the harms and setting the consequences for the wrongful act or deed. Paulette Smallwood, a school administrator in Pennsylvania, stated:

> Restorative Practices is giving a voice to young people and allowing them to be part of the solution. Working with students instead of doing things for them or to them is what I valued most about Restorative Practices. When students have a voice they begin to discover the leader that is in them.

Restorative Practices give students a voice by first of all having student offenders and student victims (if one exists) to come together in a circle to discuss the issue that allowed such roles to be given. Once the facts are flushed out via respectful dialogue, the offender is expected to then offer apology. In nearly all cases, the apology comes readily following the flushing the facts out process because the victim gets the opportunity to voice how the deed truly caused him harm. Harms are usually about feelings when all is finally flushed out and when feelings are

shared; the tone of the discussion begins to change to a more constructive, relationship mending

process. Ruth Brooker, a retired administrator from a Philadelphia Restorative Model, stated,

"Restorative Practices is putting relationship and community building first so that students feel

safe." Ruth Brooker further offered an important element to her description of Restorative

Practices:

> What I value most is that I learned to separate the deed from the doer. This changed my
>
> entire way of working with young people and fellow adults as well. When school
>
> officials learn to focus on repairing the harms not just the harms that the student has done
>
> but also the harms that was done to the students when they come to us, then they will
>
> begin to see a change in how their schools look.

"Separating Deed from the Doer" is a major cliché in Restorative Practices. It is another

core principle where the individual who makes an error or caused harm is not being judged by

his action but is respected as a valued member of the community who needs an opportunity to be

restored back to the community as a viable asset. With this kind of vista about students who

appear to be very mischievous is one proven way to change the kinds of behaviors they manifest.

Because everyone in the circle sees value in them, they begin to see value in themselves. Just

changing how a student views himself can be transforming and this is why separating the deed,

which may have been very bad from the doer who is always valued, is important.

A composite voice for school staff was that Restorative Practices is employing justice

that heals. Restorative Practices requires school staff and students to define justice as a means to

bring forth or bring back harmony between everyone instead of a means to punish the one(s) who

did the wrongdoing or harm. While professional school Informants provided the study with

insight on how they define, describe and/or value Restorative Practices, the experts in the study

provided the unique information to the study in their descriptions of Restorative Justice/

Restorative Practices. Brooker's description of Restorative Practices was a shared vista with the

school Expert Informants.

IV. Descriptions of Restorative Practices by Expert Informants

The Expert Informants in this study were avid advocates for Restorative Justice and for

helping young people graduate high school. In addition, each expert displayed a focused quest of

keeping young Black males out of prison. Four of the Expert Informants were Restorative

Justice Coordinators and are also Black males. The fifth expert was a white female informant,

who is a retired judge and currently teaches Restorative Justice to law students. The sixth expert

informant is a black male college professor and advocate for African centered education within

the framework of Restorative Practices. Professor Little is working to establish a Cultural

Restorative Practices institution in New York. Each one of the six Expert Informants for this

study served as a rich information source for the study because each one has a professional

mission passionately seeks ways that Restorative Practices can lower the occurrences of "School

to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students. These Informants are also rich information sources

in the area of Black male advocacy and Restorative Justice. The passion for Restorative

Practices and dismantling the "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students were fervent

for all six expert Informants. It is their insight, responses, experiences and recommendations in

conjunction with the insight of the Black male graduates, which offered vital contributions to this

study.

Steven Russell wore several administrative hats with two Pennsylvania charter schools where he was the primary implementer of Restorative Practices at both schools during a course of the past ten years. He implemented Cultural Restorative Practices as part of their core school mission and guiding principles at both schools. Russell describes Restorative Practices as follows:

> Restorative Practices is hope for students across America because it changes lenses for everyone who is involved by placing value on opportunities to change lives instead of retribution and reasons to give punishment. Restorative Practices is seeing the errors that youth make not as a mandate for dismissal or suspension but as an opportunity to bring a new direction for all involved. What I valued most was our brotherhood circles and out history and culture projects because those were the catalysts when the young brothers gain a new sense of pride and engagement of the young brothers with us.

Brotherhood sessions have been noted by students and staff members as being beneficial and therapeutic. It is a time where young males valued being mentored by their male teachers and it's an opportunity to share issues within the same gender environment. Russell expresses that his zeal about Restorative Practices occurred due to the fact that he saw first-hand how students were given an opportunity to redeem themselves when they made an error. Prior to this students were either harshly punished for the mistakes and in some cases the action may have been brushed under the rug. Restorative Practices gave all students an equal playing field that was purely based on what happened, what problems did it cause and how do we address the problems. Russell further spoke about a precautionary approach that Cultural Restorative Practices often incorporate into their implementation. The concept of brotherhood or sisterhood

is for schools that offer specific gender discussion groups where students can discuss issues related specifically to gender related concerns.

Professor Little, a well known activist, who is currently constructing a Restorative Cultural Practices Project in New York to mirror one that is operating in Minnesota for Native America students; however, the project that he is establishing embeds African opposed to Native American Culture as a paradigm:

> Recreating schools as sanctuaries where young black men can heal spiritually is how I envision Restorative Cultural Practices in schools. I never saw one white teacher in my life until I turned 23 in graduate school. I was always taught by people who loved me. Our children need to be loved by their teachers no matter the color of the teachers (Littles).

Professor Little uses the concept Restorative Cultural Practices where as what other practitioners refer to as Cultural Restorative Practices. In both concept uses the goal is the same, which is to help students gain social and spiritual intelligences through reclaiming their cultural heritage. Professor Little further maintains that his experience of being taught by only African American teachers all of his life ensured his sense of safety and extended family assurance. He does not believe that children today have teachers who are like aunts and uncles to them as he experienced. Professor Little also believed that as much as possible his teachers taught him a great deal about African American history, culture and folklore. He believes that those were the key elements that lead to his later research in African studies. The issue of Cultural Restorative Practices was agreed by several other Informants. Quincy Whitaker is program director of a non-profit organization in New Orleans that sends counselors to identified schools where

Restorative Justice is being implemented. Quincy Whitaker noted that a core part of their Re-

Think Summer Program is designed similar to a Rites of Passage program where students make

plans to redesign their schools. Quincy Whitaker is also in alignment with the need for order or

harmony but he suggests how such is accomplished:

> Restorative Justice is teaching students to Re-Think about what was done, Re-Think how
>
> things could have been done differently and ReThink on the outcomes that may have
>
> occurred had another route been taken. Then finally, student who made the error with all
>
> involve must Re-Think on whom or what was harmed or disrupted and how can it be
>
> restored to a good place or way to be again.

As part of the program African arts, culture and history is incorporated as a means to

increase positive racial self concept. Yet, with that stated, Quincy Whitaker's description of

Restorative Justice is that giving youth a second chance to reflect on the misbehavior and look at

ways they could respond if the situation arrives again. Restorative Practices develops one's

reflection skills. Reflecting is one way to learn to evaluate self and one's circumstances. Self-

reflection as well as situational reflection is practices that may sharpen one's social as well as

emotional intellect. Reflection helps the doer to take time to analyze how the problem could have

been avoided and it also provides him with the platform that objectively looks at his issues.

Alfred Campbell was part of a school redesign team due to poor test scores and being on

the list of consistently dangerous schools in Chicago. Alfred Campbell was specifically recruited

because of his past experience as a Restorative Justice Specialist for a non-profit organization in

Chicago and was hired to be the Restorative Justice Coordinator of the high school. Alfred

Campbell was initially unable to implement functional Restorative Justice at the school until an

innocent student was beaten to death in front of the school by a mob that was loaded to YouTube

by students and the video on You tube went viral. The tragedy brought national attention to the

school, which was located in the District that President Obama was Congressman. The District

response was to officially fully institute Restorative Justice as a way to lower crimes in the

school where more than 200 arrests were made in one school year. Alfred Campbell

implemented a comprehensive format of Restorative Practices and within two years, the school

has experienced notable improvement in school culture and positive statistics. Alfred Campbell

expressed his description of Restorative Justice that aligns with the graduates' paradigm of

moving from chaos towards harmony:

> Restorative Justice is Justice that Heals. Restorative Justice looks at solutions more so
>
> than the punishments. It seeks a "win-win" opposed to a "lose-lose" approach to solving
>
> serious school infractions. Students arrive at our school from a chaotic world outside and
>
> it's our job as school professionals to help them learn how to bring their chaos into order
>
> and that can only happen when students are respected and feel safe enough to learn
>
> holistically about how to relate to themselves and how to relate to others.

Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY), a non-profit organization in Oakland

California, is another example of Restorative Justice being launched in response to negative

statistics. RJOY was formed for the purpose of addressing the extremely high suspension and

expulsion rate of Black male students and what appeared to be a disparity in these numbers

between Black males and his peers for the same behaviors. In response to what was deemed as

racism in schools, RJOY sends Restorative Justice Coordinators to designated schools in

Oakland beginning two years ago. Troy Jones was sent to one of Oakland's most challenging

alternative schools where the dropout and "Push Out" rate composite was literally near 80%.

These negative statistics dwindled within the first year of Restorative Justice Implementation by Troy Jones. Troy Jones's description of Restorative Justice aligns with the other experts and the Graduate Informants for this study that there is a need to transform chaos into harmony:

> For me, Restorative Justice requires one to reach out and develop relationships so the person gets to know his or her authentic self. In order that this authentic self to emerge, students have to feel order in lives that they themselves help to create. Schools must learn that a school violation is a relationship violation and it is restoring the relationship that has to be the focus of dealing with the problem or the offense that arise. During my first week at the school a student stole and sold my computer. This would have meant an arrest record for her had we not implemented Restorative Justice. Our Restorative Conference allowed her to hear how much harm the lost of my important files and all of my records were to me which included picture files of children that I could not replace. The student along with me and other stakeholders came up with a compact but the true harm was too hard to repair. The student made recommendations to pay back the money for the computer but I asked the student to engage a compact with me and we agreed on terms that included being on time for school cannot be high, cannot miss a day of school for the proceeding two months as an alternative to arrest. The student agreed to the terms and we all signed off on it, he participated in our ongoing cultural circles and life skills circles and the student turned his life around.

The story shared by Troy Jones was one of many examples of how Restorative Justice prevented as student from being arrested and beginning a criminal history while still in high school. Restorative Justice gives the student an opportunity not only to rethink about what they did but also to feel the deep harm that their behavior or action has caused others and the

community overall. When someone's personal item has been violated, it violates how the person feels and trusts within the community. As a result, there are many issues that could have been addressed in the scenario above and the outcomes could have included monetary replacement but it's the view of many Restorative Practices implementers to focus on the deeper consciousness raising consequences in order that students experience and apply higher thinking and problem solving skills. Every administrator and every Restorative Justice expert had a number of stories to share the reflected Troy Jones's story. Troy Jones's story was reflected in Quincy Whitaker's statement of what he values most about Restorative Practices. Other informants shared what they valued about Restorative Practices. Quincy Whitaker further expressed:

 I value the process of allowing oneself to be internally cleansed and to be vulnerable in a way that is productive and value by all involved.

Alfred Campbell stated:

When a student goes through the process of listening to one whom they offended and is able to offer a genuine and humble apology, he experiences a higher level of dignity. Restorative Justice puts the student first and gives them a safe place to learn to trust those who are working with them.

The concept of students needing a safe place and schools needed to become safe haven for students to heal along with concept of transforming chaos were repeated across Informant categories. The overarching theme that emerged from this study of Restorative Practices addressing needs of Black male students is that Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) serves as a Refuge for Reparations to address and repair the harms, the chaos and the trauma, which all informants agreed that Black male youth as a collectively shared encounter. The theme

Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge indicates that the many strategies involved in implementing Restorative Practices address the need for transforming their chaos into harmony, healing their trauma while providing them with critical information and skills needed to rise above their adversities. This theme is best illustrated by the Restorative Justice description of a retired judge whose courtroom offered countless examples of restoratively addressing crime in order to lower the incidents of Black males from prison sentences. Judge Cara stated the following:

> Restorative Justice is both an end and a means to achieving a harmonious society. And where harmony cannot be restored is only because it has never been there. Restorative Justice is a tool for discovering that harmony can exist in the community. Restorative Justice Techniques work on a personal level as well as a societal level. What I valued most about Restorative Justice is the accountability that we teach and that we learn. We ask how I can make the people that I harmed whole and what do I learn from this and what does society learn from this. Restorative Justice cuts through the blatant and oppressive racism that plagued Black males and offers them new options and new possibilities and new lenses as how to see themselves and their world.

Judge Cara defines Restorative Justice as a process that offers reparatory benefits for Black male students who have previously experienced practices that guaranteed him to receive unfair treatment and penalties due to racism. In summary, Restorative Practices for addressing the needs of Black male students in schools is defined as a collection of guiding principles where the practices employed are to foster student accountability, empower student voice, value cultural heritage and participate in ongoing relationship building towards a quest to be authentic young men within a safe, developmental and healing environment.

Chapter 5: Research Findings

Special Note: In order to protect the anonymity of all informants in this study, honorary names were given for each informant in Chapter 5 in remembrance of trailblazers past, present and future.

Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge Narrative

"Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge" is the emergent theoretical premise supported by a composite analysis of responses from both informant groups for this study. In addition, "Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge" directly addresses this study's overarching research question: How can Restorative Practices lower "School to Prison Pipeline" occurrences of Black male students? Four connecting amalgamated insights generated the emergent premise that "Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge." These composite themes are essential contributions resulting from a collective informant voice:

1) Zero tolerance policies have racially biased outcomes against Black male students ,

2) Racism kindles unacknowledged and unaddressed trauma for Black male students ,

3) Restorative Practices disarm the cycle of trauma for Black male students and

4) Restorative Practices offer Black male students refuge to gain consciousness raising experiences.

Chapter 5 is composed of three major components. Chapter 5 will open and close with a special narrative vignette representative of the voices of Black male graduates of Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice School Model experiences. Following Vignette one, is a presentation of this research most salient findings where four amalgamated insights that formed the theme narrative of this study: Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge. Chapter 5 will then proceed to close with a closing vignette of Black male graduate voices.

A Vignette: The Black Male Graduates' Restorative Stories

The gentlemen are now arriving. As each one approaches me, I am trying to guess which school he attended before revealing his name. The handshakes and hugs of endearment give a sense of expectation and commitment to this cause. I hope my enthusiasm is not too overbearing, as I am anticipating that these young men will pave the way for millions more to follow in the pathways that these young men will "trail-blaze" during this week. I am now holding up the Ibo Talking Stick in my hand and explaining to the circle of trailblazers, its meaning and our use of it as the talking piece for our meeting. As I share my story of losing two brothers before their time, I look in their eyes. I now hand over the Talking Stick to William who is sitting on the left of me. The introductions went very well and I almost got 100% accuracy with putting the right face to the voices I recall during our telephone discussions. William introduces himself as being expelled from one of America's most disruptive middle schools and living in a very chaotic community but was blessed with an aunt who always stood by him and tried her best to give him a caring home. He expressed that his dad has been in prison since he was three and his mother was distracted by her addiction during most of his teen years. Similar stories of an imprisoned parent either via drugs or institution came forth by the conclusion of our first sharing round. Only two young men in the circle appeared to be a product of a "traditional family" where both parents were in the home. Homage was given to two aunts, three grandmothers and two single moms. Yet, we had five college students, three working men having good positions and one young man who stopped college after 2 ½ years due to lack of funds and who is now seeking a job.

The Talking Stick returns to my hand. So the real work is now to be done, I proceed by stating how proud I am of each one and how I view them as trailblazers opening better

passageways for future young Black men to travel. I ask them to share their thoughts on what

led to their successful paths in life. Jose from New Orleans Restorative Model beckoned to

speak first and the talking stick is passed to him. Jose begins a litany on how his world was

filled with chaos at home, chaos in the streets and chaos in school and then he says something

powerful: his response to the chaos was to become a person who created more chaos in his own

life and in the lives of those closest to him. Jose also shared, with the circle of co-trailblazers,

his teen encounters of being adjudicated to juvenile hall and how his route to prison got

intersected by a man whom he did not know. Jose says, "The man who turned out to be my

mentor and good friend, attended my court sentencing and asked the judge to send me to the

summer Rising Up program under his care. He stated that the Rising Up Summer Program is

being launched at the high school where I was slated to attend". Jose concluded somewhat

painfully that the most hurtful part for him was that his mom did not agree. She thought he

would be safer in prison than at home on the streets but the judge placed him in the Rising Up

summer program and in a group home for the summer. Jose concluded, "I guess the judge

thought my mom needed a break from me". He held up the Talking Stick as to say I am finished,

who wants it next. K.C. reaches for it.

The concept about chaos is resurfacing by K.C. who is saying that schools are like a

jungle and he explains how impossible it is for the average black male to survive a typical school

where violence, random acts of harm, every man and teacher for himself and total chaos prevails.

His story of dropping out of high school after three months of trying in the ninth grade quiets the

room. He gave thanks to Chai Beit who heard of his demise and brought him back to what they

called transitional ninth grade. It was a special program for him to attend, until they found a

school for him to go to the following January. Chai Beit helped his cousin who by then was his

guardian to place him in a boarding high school where he said he received great care but missed

out on his cultural training. Chailon who was seated next to K.C. now has the Talking Stick and

he is giving an account of how Chicago Restorative Model was once a real jungle during his

ninth grade year and how it took a fellow schoolmate to be murdered during a mob fight in front

of the school before true changes began at his school. He gives his thanks to Mr. Campbell who

brought big changes to the school by opening the Peace Room.   Jose signals for The Talking

Stick and asserts that the chaos is not by accident but it is the way society designed it to be. I see

concern on the face of Blake and I ask him his thoughts on this topic. Blake states that he

believes the big challenge is that too many Black men have no hopes and no dreams. Izayah

raises his hand towards the Talking Stick and the talking stick was passed on to him. Izayah asks

"Why is there no hope? Why are there no dreams?" Jose responds to the question, "Hope is lost

due to no jobs, poorly ran schools and violence everywhere we turn. I believe dreams were stolen

because our history is hidden from us". Some in the circle are nodding in agreement. Others just

stare. Izayah reminds the circle of voices that we are here to find ways to help brothers in the

schools today to deal with the chaos because we already know that racism is part cause of it. He

states what we need to do is to help schools find out is how to end the chaos in their schools and

how they can help their students deal with the chaos in their lives.

William receives the Talking Stick. He states how his old school saved his life. He told

his story of how he got kicked out of his middle school and Chai Beit welcomed him in. He

further shares that he had been an ongoing problem but they never suspended him but would

send him to the Lighthouse Program at the elementary school site where sometimes he had one–

on-one teacher.   William also shares that he should have been arrested for hitting one of the

older male teachers and whose son who was also a teacher there retaliated by wrestling him to

the ground in a choke hold. William shared, "In traditional schools he (the retaliating teacher) and I both would have been arrested and our lives could have been very different but instead everyone gathered in a circle for nearly an entire day to find a way to deal with the chaos that he erupted. William concluded his story with information that he had to return to the brotherhood which this time included fathers of the students the next evening to offer his apology and asking for their approval that he gets to participate in a special program that will include remaining part of the brotherhood. William reflected:

> I believe that week changed my entire life. I finished the last two months of school in the Lighthouse Program at the school's other site but two days a week I spent with my regular class and the teacher whom put me in the choke hold became my personal mentor and he really made a difference in my life. He taught me sports and martial arts. I discovered the athlete I am today that I learned about because of this experience.

William held the Talking Stick high up in the air as to say, "Whose next"? Then one after the other the other men in the circle told their stories of redemption where they either avoided an arrest, escaped an expulsion and/or were even derailed from a prison sentence because of the use of Restorative Justice. As quiet approached our circle, I am thinking about those voices we have not heard from yet: Mustafa, David and Avon. Yet, their countenances are so intensely part of the discussion. William passes the Talking Stick to me. This may be a good time to take our first break. So I announce the break and our return quest to come up with a composite recommendation on how Restorative Practices can lower incidents of the "School to Prison Pipeline" and that we need to hear from everyone present, if possible.

The above vignette is a composite narrative of stories shared by the Black male Graduate Informants as each shared a special story or statement on their school experience where Restorative Justice or Restorative Practices were implemented. The repetitive theme was that chaos in the school was calmed and a sense of family emerged. The harmonic theme was thankfulness for a second chance. The most vocal theme emerged is that one's life was changed, where graduation became not only a possibility but an expectation for their lives. The findings from the Black male Graduate Informants were in concert with the four amalgamated findings for the study overall.

Amalgamated Insight One: Zero tolerance policies have racially biased outcomes against Black male students

The first amalgamated insight is that zero tolerance was viewed as a racist policy and practice which negatively impacted Black male students more so than all other demographic groups of students. Specifically, the Professional Informants asserted that zero tolerance policies gave rise to the "School to Prison Pipeline" syndrome for Black male students while not serving as an effective answer to the school culture challenges that schools continue to face in spite of its implementation. Out of the fifteen Professional Informants in the study only one of them stated a view where zero tolerance policies could be acceptable. Brian Weiner, a school administrator in Philadelphia, expressed that zero tolerance on specific school infractions such as weapon violations and drug sales have to be implemented in order to protect the school community.

I think zero tolerance policies are necessary to protect students in schools; however, I think the consequences should be on a graduated scale depending upon the facts of the case.

Brian Weiner does not accept the full implementation of zero tolerance as many

principals and school administrators implement each day. Weiner suggests that one has to

evaluate the offense and be willing to apply a continuum punishment system in alignment with

the underlining rationale surrounding the offense. This continuum view of zero tolerance is in

opposition to applying a broad base consequence for each rule broken. While Weiner does not

believe that zero tolerance should be abandoned, he offers that it has to be applied with unbiased

discretion. An example of Weiner's application of zero tolerance is to not immediately give an

expulsion consequence to a student coming to school with a dangerous gardening tool. If found

that the tool was in school for a non-violent purpose or even by accident, a consequence that

does not meet the mandated arrest and expulsion punitive measure would be implemented based

on Weiner's zero tolerance view. Zero tolerance policies often require a mandated arrest and

expulsion when a weapon is brought to school without exception. Recently, a black female

student in Florida was arrested and expelled from school in response to her science project

becoming explosive. The student who had no previous behavior record and was an honor

student and both her teacher and her Principal vowed that the explosion was an unfortunate

accident. Yet, the already traumatized student was still arrested and expelled from school based

on the rigid interpretation of the zero tolerance policy regarding explosives in the school. Brian

Weiner's view of zero tolerance would prevent this kind of blind appliance of zero tolerance

policies. On the other hand, Restorative Justice/Restorative Practices professionals overall

simply see no room at all for zero tolerance policies due to its apparent race biased outcomes.

Judge Irene Cara, a retired Chicago judge, supports the composite insight that zero tolerance is a

racist policy without evidence of usefulness:

Zero tolerance is not a deterrent in our Criminal Justice System and it's not a deterrent in our schools. It feeds into the hopelessness of those already without hope. It has no impact on those who have nothing to lose…Zero tolerance in schools and also in the criminal justice system are generally racist in practice against black men who seldom have social supports as their white peers, which causes disparity in sentencing.

Judge Cara provides an insightful view that zero tolerance policies fail to improve the recidivism rate, which retributive policies were produced to accomplish. Furthermore, because of an unlevel playing field, Black males generally observe themselves as eventually having to receive harsh consequence as a life factor. Their expectation is to receive the most stringent punishment from administration and this expectation is often met. According to Judge Cara both the Chicago court system and school discipline systems offer harsher sentences and consequences to Black males for comparable offenses and are therefore, racially biased systems where Black males face inequality. A study conducted by Youth United for Change & the Advancement Project (2011) disclosed evidence of biased punitive disbursement where Black males were three times more likely to be given suspensions than white males and three and a half times more likely to be arrested in school than their white male peers. Informants viewed such statistics as suggesting that zero tolerance policies are racially biased against Black male students and/or schools are failing to address the needs of Black male students.

Excerpts from three Restorative Justice Coordinators (RJCs) are representative of the professional informants' shared consensus that zero tolerance has racially based discriminatory outcomes:

I think the statistics speak for "itself". As stated earlier, Black males are disenfranchised. 60% of the expulsions in Chicago are black males. Therefore, there will be a high rate of these "Drop Out's" getting prison sentences. With zero tolerance everyone loses. If we want to change these rates, we must change how we treat these young men.

Like other RJCs and Professional Informants, Alfred Campbell asserts that black men are disproportionately impacted by the zero tolerance policy. In Chicago, more than 60% of school suspensions are Black male students, many who may eventually "Drop Out" or end up expelled from school. Statistics has confirmed that one-fourth of Black male students who do not graduate high school possibly will be given a prison sentence (Curry, 2011). This statistic rings true in major cities around the United States. Systemically and structurally, Black males are placed at a disadvantage by zero tolerance policies. The racial implications of such a policy are clear to Professional Informants who work tirelessly to change the outcomes of Black males with Restorative Practices. Cynthia Bowser, a counselor in Baltimore Restorative Model, supports that zero tolerance can foster of cycle of social injustice for Black male students:

Zero tolerance has a different meaning for each situation it faces, pending on who the offender happens to be. Black males are harmed most by it. They come in and out of school like revolving doors but each time they return they bring with them even worst behaviors than when they left. We must improve our discipline policies.

Cynthia Bowser alludes to a cycle of social injustice against Black male students who are too often the recipients of zero tolerance suspension policies, which place Black male students out of school and into environments where additional suspension causing behaviors are often obtained. This often adds to the exposure of Black male students to further zero tolerance

policies and resulting in what many depict as a cycle of social injustice. Suspension cycles fails

to reintegrate the student harmonically back into the school, which causes the students to lag

further behind academically and emotionally. An increasing dissonance from being a purposeful

and valued student develops to the point where Black male students "Drop Out" or are part of the

"Push Out" statistics. In either scenario, zero tolerance policies are the cause of Black male

students' unfair removal from school roles.

Another important concern regarding zero tolerance is that there are no clear parameters.

The policy is far too vague and ambiguous.   According to Troy Garfield, a RJC at the Oakland

Restorative Model, interpretations of zero tolerance are left up to each administrator and

unfortunately these interpretations may vary according to the race and/or gender of the offender:

> Zero tolerance offered little clarity. 'Willful disobedience' is a reason for suspension. So
>
> there are 1000 things a kid could do under this broad category where suspension can be
>
> arbitrarily applied. It's a tool for the teacher to free herself of the kid but we got to find
>
> another way to help the teacher and the kid. At Oakland Restorative Model, I am that
>
> alternative. Send the child to the Restorative Justice Official, who will begin to disarm
>
> the student…The Oakland School District has a case against them because it was found
>
> that too many Black male students received suspensions for behaviors that others were
>
> not suspended for. Restorative Justice was put in place in Oakland to help correct these
>
> injustices.

Garfield affirms that subjective applications of zero tolerance policies are often

inequitably used to serve an ulterior motive of removing a student who is troublesome from the

classroom. The major concern that has been repeated in this study by Professional Informants is

that zero tolerance is one way to separate the troubled one who is viewed as a trouble maker

from the community. Therefore, full removal from the school community serves as an antidote

for the already over burdened teacher but failing to address the issues that may be the causes of

the students' behavior. Restorative Practices has a basic premise that in order to address a

wrongdoing, the school staff must first learn to separate the deed from the doer. When the staff

identifies the deed as being the doer, then the Black male student (viewed as one who can only

be a doer of wrongdoing not as a person needing support) becomes the target of being pushed out

of the school community by every means necessary. To view the student as the deed gives the

administrators a way to meet their dissonance as being care givers to students by accepting a

paradigm that the student is not one needing help and can be disarmed but is one who is a

habitual offender without rehabilitative possibilities. Thus, eliminating the deed/doer from the

school community is what the function and perhaps even the purpose of zero tolerance entails.

Zero tolerance then also becomes a vehicle for not only promoting racism but preventing

students from emotional support interventions, which by federal law they have a civil right to

receive.

        Judge Cara offers an additional testimonial regarding Black males being held responsible

for the outcomes of racism:

        Chicago is one of the worst segregated and racist cities of America. What is happening to

        the black male is unconscionable and the world pretends he has done this thing to

        himself.

        In the above statement, Judge Cara Irene expressed her outrage regarding the social

injustices against Black males in Chicago because society fails to see racism as the impacting the

Black male predicament. Zero tolerance policies were viewed by Judge Cara and three other

Professional Informants (Campbell, Littles and Whitaker) as existing only to make obscure the

cognitive dissonance that society possesses for their major role of collective racism being part of

the dilemma. The unfortunate outcome is that Black male students consistently pay the price for

society's wrongdoing. Russell, previously a Restorative Practices coordinator and later a

principal at the West Chester Restorative Model shares the view that zero tolerance is a medium

utilized for exclusion as an alternative of seeking to understand and support Black male students:

> Zero tolerance policy in schools is another vehicle to get rid of those with the greatest
>
> need for help. These are generally young black men who face zero tolerance
>
> punishments. The irony is that the clear message this sends is that we will not tolerate
>
> you or your problems even though our society may has been the reason you have the
>
> problems. The only thing I see that zero tolerance is doing is adding to the inherent
>
> disorder that schools already deal with…Not to see that these young men are suffering,
>
> one has to wear blinders or is simply hypocritical in saying no child left behind when
>
> they are literally kicking the out of the scenario all together.

Russell was one of the leading informants who were fully against the use of zero

tolerance in schools. He cited the fact that Black male students tend to be the population of

students who habitually receive zero tolerance consequences is his primary objection to zero

tolerance policy. Russell's position further suggests that what is classified by most educators

and school leaders as disruptive or maladaptive behaviors are actually behaviors that should

signal to the counselors and school social workers that the student has unaddressed social and

emotional needs. These unaddressed needs are often ones that calls for compassion and

treatment opposed to intolerance and punishment. To place full accountability upon the students

and removing them from school where their designated source of help should lie renders zero

tolerance as a civil rights and human rights violation as well as one with racial biased outcomes.

Amalgamated Insight Two: Black male students experience a cycle of unaddressed and

unacknowledged trauma

Travis Hines, a graduate informant from Philadelphia expressed this perception:

Our greatest challenge is violence. We see it everywhere we go. When people see us

coming they expect trouble to start. If we can find a way not to do violence or be harmed

by violence, we will be ok.

The above comment signifies essential findings: 1) Violence cultivates trauma as a lived

experience for Black male students and 2) Black males have accepted a racist stereotype of being

a menace to society and that this erroneous identity has to be reformed. Young Black males hold

themselves accountable for the problems in their community due to the continued message that

they are a nuisance and this message is received from nearly every venue they associate with.

Violence has been identified by Professional Informants as being the basis trauma for Black male

youth. Erroneous self identity has been identified by Professional Informants as one of the causes

of trauma. Therefore, Hines' message supports the Professional Informants shared vista that

trauma is often part of the daily lives of Black male students without their understanding of it.

Caretakers (educators and parents) of Black males also generally do not understand or

acknowledge the trauma in the lives of Black male students.

What makes this problem more challenging is that schools themselves may be considered

part of trauma inducing factors for Black male students as well. Ruth Brooker, a retired

Philadelphia teacher, noted that both racism as well as a sense of feeling devalued is a basis of

trauma for Black male students in school:

> I taught for 36 years and I saw firsthand year after year, Black males come and leave with
>
> the look of despair in their eyes hidden by the tough look. Every black male has racist
>
> realities and to know that has to cause trauma…

> I believe one of the reasons the dropout rate is so high for Black males is that they
>
> eventually just give up. Their overall high school experience tends to be negative and just
>
> plain difficult. They are given very little encouragement to stay in school and rarely find
>
> any empathy or kindness in that environment. In fact their mere presence can be an
>
> annoyance for some staff members. After a time they accept what they believe is
>
> inevitable and just leave. It is difficult to stay where you know you are not wanted.

The experience of being devalued and unwelcomed as an integral member of a school

community can cause emotional trauma for any student. However, when this is accompanied

with enduring community based trauma, Black male students face multiple peril traumas.

Multiple exposures to trauma make it more plausible for Black male youth to embrace the

erroneous self-identity of being a menace to society. Unfortunately, they often become that self-

fulfilling prophecy. According to Camaron Joel, a Restorative Justice Counselor intern from the

New Orleans Restorative Model, to know you are not wanted can be an added source of despair.

Camaron Joel asserted that to experience abandonment is a cause of trauma:

> Re-occurring involvement in violence has something to do with trauma but their (Black
>
> male students') trauma is also due to a sense of abandonment. To go to school where it

seems no one cares and spend a large part of your day with this thought being reinforced

show how the schools themselves are part of the trauma Black males experience.

Routinely foreseeing problematic involvement and not knowing what kind of harms may

occur to one's self or someone one knows indicates an existence of sustaining chronic trauma.

Trauma scholars (Rich et al, 2005) suggest that Black male youth live with hypervigilance due to

having a sense of anticipation of violence. Hypervigilance is a state of arousal and has been well

described as a symptom of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Rich, et. al., 2005). In order to

address the trauma Black male students face, their feelings of abandonment as well as

hypervigilance must be replaced with a sense of belonging and well being, which are guiding

attributes of Restorative Practices.

Failure to address trauma faced by Black male students often leads to added trauma

causing behaviors. This perspective leads to the second amalgamated insight, which argues that

racism is an underlying factor of trauma relating to Black male students and that it is often

unacknowledged and unaddressed. When behaviors that produce trauma are not addressed, the

behavior continues to recycle into additional behaviors that create more traumas. Quincy

Whitaker, RJC at the New Orleans Restorative Model, offered a parallel explanation similar to

that of Ruth Brooker's description of trauma and Black males:

> The role of manhood being stripped away to the point that your reality is anticipation of
>
> violence, prison, trouble of some sort; whatever comes first is traumatic. This daily
>
> trauma is not addressed at most schools.

Brooker and Whitaker assertions are in alignment with a thesis that Black male youth has

an ongoing encounter with "Common Shock". The term "Common Shock" was coined by

Kaethe Weingartner (2003) to describe the natural and emotional responses that are produced when one encounters violence. For Black male students, it is common, because it happens to them collectively and routinely. It is a shock, because whether their response is aggression, anguish, distress, depression or disrespect, it affects their mind, body and spirit. When a shocking occurrence in someone's life can become a day to day occurrence or expected occurrence, the person lives with Common Shock, which is trauma. Graduate Informants mentioned the possibility of being harmed, killed or imprisoned as a reality or expectation that one cannot ignore. Having such thoughts regularly is indicative of a person who has learned to co-exist with trauma in their daily living space. Yet, it is the individual's response to this trauma co-existence that will often determine how deeply the young man's ability to navigate without increasing the level of trauma in his life.

In summary, trauma results from the constant negative factors that Black males very often face in their communities and have accepted ownership of them as part of their identity and their destiny. According to the Professional Informants, trauma results from a number of different sources, including: 1) collective injustice and historic discrimination, 2) chronic exposure to violence, 3) family challenges and 4) identity issues. When unacknowledged and untreated, those enduring the trauma participate in behaviors that can add more traumas to their lives. Overall, the collective voice of Restorative Justice/Restorative Practices Professionals is that school staff customarily views trauma adaptive behaviors as punishable deeds opposed to treatable symptoms; however, Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge to reverse their mistaken and inhumane paradigm.

Amalgamated Insight Three: Restorative Practices disarm the cycle of trauma for Black male students

The third amalgamated insight offers solution to the previous amalgamated insights or composite themes. Restorative Practices offer a better way to address wrongdoing where zero tolerance policy is replaced with a discipline plan that is constructive, ethical, fair, inclusive, re-integrative, tolerance of individuals and respect for all members of the community. In addition while we learned from the second amalgamated insight that Black males encounter a cycle of trauma that is unacknowledged and untreated, Restorative Practices has daily rituals and attributes that begins to disengage the trauma cycle.

A retired judge of Chicago provided this perspective.

There are so many levels of implementing Restorative Justice in your schools; however, the minimum level is to find an alternative to putting students out of school and begin to help bring students back to schools that are healthy places for them to be. Graduation from high school can happen and it is happening when school administrators and staff become as passionate about saving students as Mr. Campbell is at Chicago Restorative Model School. Many models claim to be Restorative but if suspending students is highly practiced without layers of interventions preceding it, then the school officials are retributive not restorative.

Judge Cara emphasizes that the most basic element of Restorative Justice/Restorative Practices is to find alternatives to the out of school consequences that zero tolerance employs. Reliable Restorative Practices models offer an array of interventions prior to suspensions such as providing opportunity for reflective apologies, peer mediation, conferencing to establish a shared

repairmen plan, community service and other agreed-upon ways to make amends, reintegrate the student and move forward. A perspective from a counselor in Baltimore states:

> Restorative Justice is creating strong communities having a cycle of empathy and accountability opposed to a cycle of discipline and punishment.

> A Restorative Justice Coordinator in Oakland affirmed:

> Committing to address wrong doings in school as relationship violation not a school violation gives everyone the lenses to see one another as a valued human being in the school community.

The counselor and Restorative Justice Coordinator offer a different way of thinking when rules are broken. The focus is relationship building responses to wrongful behavior. Most implementers of Restorative Practices find that when relationships mending are the focus everyone involved is more wholesome at the end. Furthermore, when there is a need to separate student from the community, Restorative school officials generally aim to do so using an in-house suspension format. A teacher in Pennsylvania shared,

> Restorative Practices teaches them to change lenses on how they see themselves and the world. We all change lenses about ourselves and our community. We learn to do things different.

Restorative Practices endeavor to replace how everyone speaks to one another. In house suspension formats offer an excellent opportunity to have purposeful conversations with the student. Jones further expressed, "Restorative Practices involves relationship building and purposeful discussions ongoing day in and day out."

A retired teacher of the Philadelphia shared another way of Restorative Practices change how things happen at schools:

> Until Restorative Practices, I was too aggressive but I did get the students to listen but no feeling of Respect.   I spent years in the classroom being called somebody's "B" and would go through the roof when it happened but with Restorative Practices the students and I began *to deal with one another differently. Neither my aggression nor theirs were any longer needed. I believe it is very much* like the quote, "you're enemy is someone whose story you have not yet heard.

Too often in urban schools, there are cycles of harmful verbiage exchanges between students as well as staff and students. The kind of verbiage exchange can cause trauma to all involved. It often leads to a punitive measure received by the student who may participate in such an exchange, even when a staff member may have provoked such a discourse between them. Restorative Practices tend to transform the kind of conversations held between students and between staff and students due to the new focus on relationship building as an ongoing quest. When one places "relationship building" as the most critical part of a community's function, the community begins to value its fellow members. Wallace Rosario expressed how he views Restorative Justice at the Oakland Restorative Model School:

> Restorative Justice is like the balm between the violence that could be but instead the student is faced with compassion, empowerment, responsibility and reconciliation. Instead of perpetrating a cycle of violence and trauma, Restorative Justice gives space to sow a different kind of seed. It ends the practices that grow more traumas and creates a culture about learning about self and rebuilds thinking about self and their community.

Rosario teaches at a school where the racial demographics are primarily both Latino and Black students. He shared his first hand experience regarding racism against Black males while growing up in New York. He applauds Restorative Justice because it has no color lenses and sees everyone in the community regardless of gender or race as valued members of the community. He believes this happens with the circles of discussions where trust relationship between participants are created and sustained. Restorative Circles are therapeutic. As one person shares his story, others in the circle will begin to learn of a new characteristic of the sharer and each participant builds empathy for one another. Empathy is an important key to relationship building. Empathy also helps to prevent potential arguments simply because the person got to know a deeper side of the other individual. Also, by telling your story the sharer releases bottled up pain and anguish and the sharer feels validated as a valued person. Jones, who is the RJC at the school, had one statement that he repeated through the interview and that statement was:

> Building relationship is time consuming but it replaces the time spent on diffusing fights. If school leaders are doing anything outside of making sure relationship building is happening in their schools, they will spend twice as much time restoring them or doing things to make them unredeemable.

When school leaders fail to see the significance of "relationship building", their school culture suffers due to disconnect between students, staff and overall school community. Community is made up of people. When people in the community begin to see value in each other, connection between the members of the community emerges. Relationship building is required for community building. The need for relationship building and community building in most urban high schools is evidenced in statements by a graduate informant who shared his

private story on how his school began to build relationship with him from day one and his value

for having Black male mentors:

> At Chai, I had helped from the first day we got to the school. My mother was outside
>
> watching us in the school yard and a student from my class called her a "crack-head".
>
> This made me really angry even though they did not know it was my mom. So I refused
>
> to go to my class. The Assistant Principal had me go to his office and then he got me to
>
> tell him why I would not go to the classroom. He asked me for permission to share the
>
> problem and then the boy who said this and another teacher came in the room. She told
>
> us a story about her mother being on drugs and how hard it was for her. She let us know
>
> about things that she later learned about her mother that made her so sad because it was
>
> not her fault that she suffered like she did. I knew my mother suffered a lot too. The boy
>
> who called her "crack-head" shared that he had drug addicts in his family too and how his
>
> uncle stole from his mother. He apologized to me and we shook hands. We were asked
>
> to keep our stories in the room and I believe we all did. From that day, I knew Chai was
>
> the best place for me to be. It was my escape more than a school. The adults really cared
>
> about the students. There was many Black male staff that treated us like their little
>
> brothers.

The collective voice of Black male graduates expose schools as being havens for violence

and chaos before circles arrived. When Restorative Practices was implemented at their schools,

the school climate changed to a calmer and friendlier school community. This viewpoint was

repeated by several Graduate Informants from schools that changed to a Restorative Practices

centered school. Prior to the change, schools experienced manifestations of unaddressed trauma

(chaos/violence) or behaviors that cause additional trauma in their environment. Such a cycle

often leads to a series of suspensions, which for many Black male students lead to expulsion from school. One quarter of those expelled from or who dropped out of school were found to enter into the prison system. Contrasting this scenario, Restorative Practices addresses the unacknowledged trauma and begins to transform the behaviors that lead to "Push Out" and "Drop Out" outcomes. In doing so, Restorative Practices begins to dismantle to the "School to Prison Pipeline" for Black male students. How do Restorative Practices improve school culture is what this study aimed to explore. Answers to this question can be gleaned from an array of queries. When questioning a graduate informant on Restorative Practices helping to end violence and respect syndrome, the answer give rise to Restorative Practices overall:

> I am not sure circles can change that (how Black males respond to being disrespected) but schools can teach students how to respect others so that they will not get in the position to have to fight or face violence. I believe we learned some of that at Chai Beit Restorative Model by having ground rules we (Black male students) made for our class on what was allowed in conversations. One ground rule was that you cannot talk about someone's mother and that we cannot say things that would bring another brother down. When we broke any of the ground rules during the week, we had to go to Friday's Reminders Room while everyone else was at Expressive Arts Classes. In Friday Reminders Room, we had a chance to make corrections and fix the problems our behaviors caused.

Camaron, counselor in New Orleans, offered a more in-depth explanation of how Restorative Justice heals trauma:

Restorative Justice begins with prevention circles. This is where the social and emotional learning takes place. Students learn strategies such as Re-thinking their action. What other response could they have taken that would have avoided the place where the action has now taken them. Most of all, Restorative Justice will teach them how to develop ownership over their actions and learn to oversee how others impact them.

Restorative Justice is actually the component in Restorative Practices that responds to rule violations; however, the objective is not to measure punishment in terms of meeting the severity of the infraction. The purpose and goal is to employ a process that will help all involved to help the offender, the victim and the community to learn a positive lesson from the mistake while the offender will be held accountable and will be given the opportunity to share in how to make amends for the infraction. The process requires respect for all involved and to keep the student as a valued member of the school community while having the student do what is necessary to repair the harms that he caused. A counselor in New Orleans stated, "Restorative Approaches provide practices that repair emotional harms." The Chicago retired judged asserted, "It restores harmony even where it may have never before existed". RJC, Campbell explains that while Restorative Justice can repair the harms and restore relationships, prevention via relationship building is the best practice:

Talking about what is hurting them is the first step towards healing. We begin to get acquainted with the students by sharing stories, creating skits and life scenarios. The salutary safe space in circles brings healing by allowing those in the circle to talk and begin to see with new lenses and then they (staff and students) begin to seek outside sources to join them in helping to meet their needs. Restorative Justice turns the classrooms and the school into a safe place for growing emotionally and academically.

The daily circles help the students to know others care about them and they learn to care about others.

Restorative Practices is not a specific script for all schools and it is noticed that different schools employ its ritual practices differently. However, opening each day with circles where students "check in" during homeroom is the standard ritual that schools with the greater improvements noted have extended homeroom schedules to provide time for daily "check-in" circles. Schools have dedicated as many as five days to homeroom circles while other schools only designate one day a week to this important ritual or practice. Greater school culture improvement is reflected with the more frequent application of circles. Rosario further shares his strategy to getting his students to begin the process.

Listening, Prodding, and Caring. The whole idea is to listen to their stories. They want to share them because getting some of the stories out to someone who they trust and someone who they can feel his or her empathy. This is a way it cleanses them and then traumas gets less. Talking, talking, talking seems to be the healing part of Restorative Practices. We realize that there is no issue or school function more important than building relationships with our students.

It has been noted that schools where daily circles exists, there is lesser need for Restorative Conferencing. Therefore, homeroom circles and other conversational circles are prevention measures that are instrumental to relationship building and decreasing disruptions. A decrease in disruptions, improves school culture by ending the cycle of trauma at schools. Paul Brown attended a school where Restorative Practices was implemented and later he became a counselor at the school. His shares:

I know Restorative Practices already helps to heal the emotional hurt and isolation that

trauma often brings. When trauma happens to a person they feel that they are alone and

no one knows their hurt and pain. Even when it seems that they are part of the group or

gang, emotionally they are isolated and crippled. Some students feel trauma in so many

ways. Being cursed at your home before even leaving your house can stir trauma that is

not even acknowledged by the student himself. There is also a political trauma that a

student can face when they feel they have been cheated against or wrongfully treated by

authorities. These feelings that stir trauma and are ignored where there is no process in

place for students to share their issues, complaints, anger, hurts and frustrations. Circles

are this process.

The use of circles for the most part speaks to the art of Compassionate Witnessing. In

Compassionate Witnessing, those in the circle listen to the stories often involving witnessing of

violence or violation of someone's rights. These can be painful to share and to hear but the

listeners often help transform the pain or trauma by acknowledging their sorrow and validating

their worth. Compassionate Witnessing can also involve assisting the sharer of the story in

finding ways to reframe or redress the event or an issue needing to be addressed. Circles are the

mainstay of Restorative Practices but there is a continuum of circle practices that are

implemented. Homeroom circles are on one end of the continuum while an official Restorative

Justice conference is on the other end of the continuum. The story shared by Maurice gives an

insight of a Restorative Justice conference being employed to address a more serious offense:

….Different teachers and students shared how they felt about what had happened. Then

the teacher that I punched told me how he taught for 26 years and never had a student hit

him. He asked me to explain why I got so angry with him. I really did not have a real

reason and I told him how sorry I was. My aunt started crying because she was

embarrassed and fed up and just knew I was going to be kicked out of another school.

The son of the teacher that I hit was the one who choked me. He told me how he felt

when he heard about his dad who was an old man being punched in his face by me. He

apologized for losing his control. I felt so bad and I cried too and I told them both I was

very sorry but I was just out of control that day. The principal hardly said a word. She

just let everyone who was involved share their feelings. Eventually, she asked how this

problem can be fixed. She stated that she found a program that I may be able to attend for

one year and the school would be willing to pay. The program was called Vision Quest

and it was very expensive. I asked if it was possible for me to graduate with my class.

She turned to the staff and students in the circle for the answer. The teacher I hit said he

wants me to graduate with my class but his son interrupted and proposed that I attend

school at the Light House and that he would tutor me after school to be sure that I kept up

with the school work. The principal stated that now we have to come up with a plan so

that I could make it to graduation from the 8th grade. She asked me what I think should

happen. I asked her if I could finish the year at the Alternative Site. At the end that was

the plan, except I got to join my class for all 8th grade activities and "Friday's Expressive

Arts" day.   I believe this is what turned my whole life around.

Many Restorative Justice Coordinators and Restorative Practices counselors shared

stories of the "tough guy" at the school being the one who are among the first students to benefit

from Restorative Circles and in more serious cases Restorative Conferences are used. A

Restorative Conference is the most intensive level of intervention offered at Restorative

Justice/Practices schools. It is this level of intervention that should precede any displacement

consequences such as suspension. When a serious wrongdoing occurs, all involved persons are gathered in a problem solving circle or conference that is preplanned by a facilitator. If proper procedures are followed, the facilitator meets with each person that will participate in the conference, which includes parents, staff members, students who are involved. Rosario further expressed:

> I have seen many transformations but not all is perfect. It takes time and you have to trust in the process. When the adults trust the process, the students progress through much better. The students emerge with brighter chances for life.

Rosario offers his perspective on ending practices that do not work and terminating polices that recycles the problem. Rosario reminds us that things do not just suddenly improve but improvements require implementation of the process. Those who trust the process implements the process more accurately and consistently. Restorative Practices will require staff members to begin to wear different lenses to see how they view infractions of school rules. When staff members begin to move from the mindset that breaking rules require punishment to a Restorative mindset, then progress will take place for all involved. Restorative mindset helps all to see that the one who broke the rule needs to be supported through a process where he can acknowledge his error, hear the harms that the error caused and is empowered to talk about how to repair the harms that the error he caused. A very practical response that supported the above responses is by Carita, long time teacher in Pennsylvania who contended that the operative action is Compassionate Witnessing with her students. She listens to their stories, giving them ample time to talk about what bothers them. Carita revealed that there was no panacea for her as she worked with students who have been adjudicated by the Courts and provided a very important comment that was unique from other educators and counselors:

Restorative Justice is not magic. It can be very hard. I have only four classes of four

students a day and they are very challenging students. This year is my most challenging

year. I thought that maybe it is not for every student. Some may come too out of control.

Yet, if you continue to believe in the process and trust the process, before you know it,

the students and you begin to change.

While the evidence is overwhelming that Restorative Practices when applied properly

offer Reparative Refuge, Carita reminds the reader that the process is not magical but requires

patience and persistence and commitment. This study also noted when comparing the four high

schools where Restorative Practices was implemented, that the most successful implementation

requires a Restorative Justice Coordinator to the onsite full time to oversee the program, support

and encourage and train teachers and staff and to build critical relationships with students and

most importantly being able to provide the Reparative Resources for their students, which for

Black male students should include culturally rich curriculum and mentorship programs where

possible.

Amalgamated Insight Four: Cultural Restorative Practices repair the harms

transgenerational trauma

The final amalgamated insight highlights the concept "Reparatory Refuge" in the

emergent narrative theme of Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge. Restorative

Practices in schools was described as processes that provide Black male students a safe place that

calms the chaos and reconciles harms of transgenerational trauma as well as contemporary

trauma. The concept of transgenerational trauma had varying views by Professional Informants.

Quincy Whitaker, the expert informant from New Orleans gave an example intrinsic self-view that has impacted generations of black males.

> The castration of the black male is our greatest challenge. The image of all black men even, those on Wall Street, to be violent is pervasive. Black males must adapt to a world that sees them as corrupt and criminal and many black male youths live up to the racist stereotype of them as each generation appear to increase in violence involvement.

According to Weingartner (2003) "violence occurs when the social system itself exploits some people to the benefit of others, producing the same kinds of harms, but to classes of individuals. This kind of violence and violation is often invisible to those who benefit and the causes of harm may be invisible even to those who suffer from them". While Weingarten suggests that treating trauma due to collective violation is to first understand the violation's effect, Garfield suggests that healing the trauma requires teaching Black males how to deal with racism is one method that will help them heal from their trauma. Garfield adds that trauma is related to both poverty and racism:

> Poverty and racism are catalysts to trauma and our community is embedded with both. So yes, Black males feel it each day until they learn how to address it no longer as the culprit or the victim.

Moving Black male students from a victim or villain paradigm of self to a young man gaining a sense of his authentic self is the primary goal of Cultural Restorative Practices. This occurs by providing guidance and experiences that end the cycle of traumas often rooted in collective racism and offering reparative knowledge of self, right to be heard and accountability for decisions in a wholesome curative environment. Thus the thesis of Restorative Practices as

Reparatory Refuge emerges as the culminating theme or premise to this study. Garfield affirms

that racism, which poverty can also be associated with, is an underlying factor behind the trauma

that Black male youth may experience. Garfield further affirms that Black male youth sees

themselves as the perpetrator of their racist condition as well as the victim of it. A graduate from

Philadelphia gave his thoughts on how Restorative Practices helped re-shape their mindsets from

victims to valued humans:

> We did not go into circles all the time but I liked the brotherhood sessions we had almost
>
> every week. We talked about things that were related to black men surviving in the
>
> world. I also liked being able to go to the dean or whoever you think to tell them your
>
> problems and they would listen.

Numerous comments by both professional and Graduate Informants noted that cultural

mentoring in correcting their erroneous self-identity as a collective was very transforming for

Black male students. Some responses reflected an argument that Black males have accepted a

wrongful identity due to mis-education resulting from collective injustice, stereotyping and

disenfranchisement. All informants support the premise that Restorative Practices helps to

change this by infusing cultural and historical enrichment to repair harms of racism. Professor

Little, an RJ Expert who is formulating the New York Cultural Restorative Practices Model,

offers the following answer when asked if the reoccurring involvement of Black males in

violence causes them to experience trauma:

> Your question is a light reflection of the intense, direct and layers and layers of trauma
>
> that our young brothers face day to day. It has taken their entire inner identity away from
>
> them. The problem is that their teachers and school officials do not see this problem of

generational traumas that did not just begin with them but began long ago with their

fathers, grandfathers, great grandfathers and so on. Their parents do not see this problem

of generations of trauma effecting their sons and they themselves do not have a clue

about trauma. Everyone sees the young brother being the problem, not as a young person

having a problem that developed from the cradle and was carried into the schoolhouse.

Until it's dealt with, the problem will eventually find its way into a prison cell.

Professor Little gives a very compelling account of what happens when trauma is left

unacknowledged and untreated. He asserts that the source of trauma does not begin with the

violence in the streets facing Black male youth but is a culmination of traumas that is passed

down through generations of Black males dealing with racism. Intergenerational or

transgenerational trauma is used by some trauma scholars to explain violence in the Black urban

communities. However, there were conflicting views when it came to validating

transgenerational trauma as the reason for the violence Black males encounter in many urban

communities. Findings indicate that while all Professional Informants overwhelmingly agree that

Black male students encounter racism and trauma in their lives, there were three groupings of

opinions regarding the role of transgenerational trauma being a lived experience for Black male

youth. The three views were unfamiliar with transgenerational trauma (3), disagree with

transgenerational trauma theory (4) and agree with transgenerational trauma theory (8). Three

informants proclaim that while racism is an underlying cause of trauma for black males, it does

not excuse or explain their behavior. One informant insists that the argument of slavery being

the problem with African America predicament must end but dealing with racism is imperative.

The other two informants who did not agree with transgenerational trauma are shared below.

Brian Weiner, school administrator in Philadelphia expressed:

No I do not think this is true because look at the affluent black kids. They are not in the streets doing the things that the poor inner city kids are doing. I believe this all has to do with poverty and with poverty in all ethnic groups; they had violent gangs in the Irish Ghetto, the Italian Ghetto too.

Weiner's objection to the acceptance that trauma caused by racism is passed down and is why Black males are dealing with violence in urban communities is fostered primarily on his thesis that pervasive violence is in communities where poverty is high. He contends that racism causes poverty and poverty cultivates greater disenfranchisement of Black males. The larger concentration of discontent young people, the greater potential for crimes and increase the level of violence. He asserts that this is no different than when other immigrants migrated to urban communities and experienced similar disenfranchisement, compacted concentrated communities and violence.

PR also questioned the validity of Intergenerational Trauma:

If Intergenerational Trauma means that our problems today in terms of youth misbehavior extends from slavery, racism of hundreds of years, I have to ask why did our grandfathers who were more connected to the open violence not do violence against one another as we see in my generation today?

PR made a valid point in that it was rarely heard of young Black males killing one another three and four generations ago. Therefore, there appears to be some level of error in the Intergenerational Trauma theory according to P.R. However, the question was posed to Littles who strongly supported Intergenerational Trauma scholars. According to Littles:

While Black on Black crime was forced upon slaves, Black on Black crime was not

prevalent in early Black communities following enslavement or during Jim Crow years as

it has been seen during the Black gang culture over the past four to five decades. When

racism was overt, Blacks galvanized to support and protect one another. Today, racism is

covert and Black males now see themselves as their own enemy.

What may need to be considered also is that trauma and response to "Common Shock"

has different ways of being released and is influenced social and political landscapes of the

different generations. Media was a primary influence over 20 years ago and for this current

generation, social media will have an even greater influence on how individuals respond to

untreated trauma. As violence in the media increased, the community violence increased. One

other consideration is that as the nature of racism varies, the nature of response also varies.

During years of rampant open collective violence and bigotry, Black response was self-

preservation and there was communal working response. The racism was so blatant that it was

transparent as who the enemy was without confusion. During years of covert racism, the enemy

was no longer as obvious and by Black male youth accepting the identification as being the

enemy may have caused the response to racism to change where they view one another as the

opposition. These kinds of responses to racism require re-teaching and reframing vistas.

There was one insightful view offered by a RJC in Chicago on the topic of

transgenerational trauma:

There is no way I can ever understand what our Ancestors went through. When we speak

of MAAFA, I have no idea of what they really went through. I do know there has never

been an opportunity for our people to heal considering being part of the worst genocide in

the world.   I believe it could be also from continued lost of rights and opportunities. Being pushed out and dropping out of schools is the greatest civil rights trauma to Black males today. We have to remember that it was when Joseph was put into the well only to be accused of one thing to another but at the end he healed and saver his own family. There needs to be forgiveness and healing. We must do this for ourselves. Restorative Practices is the well for healing.

Eight out of the fifteen Professional Informants agree that when trauma of Black male students is recognized and addressed, the violence and other related trauma outcomes will diminish. This perspective is in alignment with transgenerational scholars. Transgenerational trauma is another form of trauma that has to be considered and addressed. There is a noted difference between trauma scholars and transgenerational scholars. Trauma scholars only see immediate or current experience of trauma opposed to transference of generations of trauma contributing to the predicament of Black males. When asked, what was the greatest accomplishment that Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) has on Black males, an expert informant from Pennsylvania offered a poignant viewpoint that was supported by the overall synopsis of the responses.

Restorative Practices repairs the harms that the world has done against Black males and black females too for that matter. Not only do they get daily therapy in their morning circles but it (Restorative Practices) turns the table for them. I lost count of the times, a young brother would say to me, nobody ever cared about my opinion or I never knew that about my people before, or that I never realized that my ideas could change how things are done. They stop seeing themselves as troubled or trouble makers but begin to see themselves as problem solvers and worthy men. The irony is that in Restorative

Practices, we teach students to repair the damage that they caused others but the truth is

that Restorative Practices in itself is repairing the historic harm that was done to their

great, great-great grandfathers because they can now end the cycle.

Russell's statement infers to the concept of reparation, which is a guiding principle of

Restorative Justice. Reparation is a concept that a government or a society must provide some

form of repayment for the damage, which the government's policies and practices or other forms

of collective injustice have rendered against a group. While many advocates of Reparations for

black Americans focus on financial compensation (Magarrell, 2007), there is a wealth of studies

now asserting that a more effectual form of reparation is to repair the actual harms done

emotionally, psychologically and culturally because these kinds of repairs empowers the

individuals in the group to overcome other hurdles (de Greiff, 2006). This can be referred to as

Symbolic or Holistic Reparations, which also stipulates that the discriminatory practices and the

racist policies that lead to the harm must end (Magarrell, 2007).   Holistic Reparations opposed

to Financial Reparations offer benefits that are transforming to the receiver and is parallel to

Restorative Practices in that both require that policies that produces the harms by schools, courts,

companies, institutions and government to be terminated and not replicated again. Professional

Informants demonstrated by their sharing of stories that Restorative Practices provides

reparations for the harms those generations of trauma have caused Black males. Restorative

Practices (Restorative Justice), according to seven Professional Informants of this study, offer an

array of practices that repairs the harms, fosters accountability, and gives Black male students

voice and corrective self-vision. It may be found interesting that Camaron Joel, the counselor

informant from New Orleans offers insight on the greatest challenge for black male youth has a

meta-cognition focus:

The black male internalized the oppression against him. He sees himself at fault for his

lack in every meaningful measure of success… The one common denominator of

everyone who experience trauma of any kind is that one's dignity is injured. When you

are treated unfairly, it hurts you and chips away from your dignity as a human being.

Restorative Approaches begin to restore the dignity of students just by hearing their

stories every day.

While Restorative Practices does an adept job at providing students with decisive social

emotional intellectual development skills, there are also models of Restorative Practices that also

adds a cultural-historical component to its implementation. This model is referred to as Cultural

Restorative Practices. Cultural Restorative Practices is implemented as Restorative Practices;

however, it purposely restores African or Native American culturally-centered historical truths

and cultural awareness. Promoters of Cultural Restorative Practices see this as essential to repair

the harms that transgenerational trauma and racism have caused. Cultural Restorative Practices

offer reparative skills that help Black male students overcome poor self image with cultural

knowledge and corrective history.

Steven Russell shares how Restorative Practices offer reparatory support to Black male

students:

There are numerous ways that having a Restorative Practices Community helps our

brothers overcome trauma has recycle through generations. First of all, experiencing a

community that seeks the truth about a problem and that values their contribution to

solving the problem improves how they see themselves. Then what we have to do in

Black institutions and communities is to begin to retell stories that reclaim their true

histories. You know the cliché is true that until the lion tells the story, the hunter will

always be the hero and the lion, the villain. We have to begin retelling the story from the

lions' experience.

Informants also spoke of curriculum addendums where African culture and African

American history are incorporated in their model. In addition, responses by most Black male

graduates placed importance on having Black male mentors at their schools which gave them a

sense of family or brotherhood. The term "Refuge" emerged to symbolize an altruistic haven or

safe house where social emotional skills, cultural awareness and transforming life skills are

perpetually imparted to both youth and adults. Campbell shares his experience with

transformation of students when immersed in Cultural Restorative Practices:

When they arrive, they are often one step from prison and they know this. They come in

with knowing prison is only a matter of time but many times they leave with college as

their next step.

Cultural Restorative Practices offer reparative skills that help Black male students

overcome poor self image with cultural knowledge and corrective history. Cultural Restorative

Practices (Restorative Justice), according to seven Professional Informants of this study, offer an

array of practices that repairs the harms, fosters accountability, and gives Black male students

voice and corrective self-vision. Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge indicates that

when Restorative Practices are in place, schools become places where the harms of racism are

beginning to be repaired, where practices that harm students such as over use of suspensions are

terminated and where new practices that heals the harm done to students are instituted. As Troy

Jones passionately petitioned, finding one's authentic self is his main mission with Restorative

Practices. Cultural Restorative Practices helps to remove layers of erroneous beliefs and restore

mindsets that will allow Black male students to emerge authentically.

Vignette 2: Restorative Practices in Action

Our Circle of Trailblazers is now reconvening for a final session. I asked David to begin

our circle and handed him the Talking Stick. David said he never really knew about Restorative

Justice or the term Restorative Practices until the video came out about West. He explains that

he knew the new process as "Circles" and he credits ROTC as the group that helped him and

many others deal with ending the chaos. He stated that when he arrived to high school, it was so

chaotic that that they spent more time at fire drills because someone either pulled the alarm or

actually started a fire at least three times a week. He says teachers getting hit happened a lot

during his ninth grade year and the administration just got rid of the student who did it and

suspended the students who curse at a teacher or threaten them in any way but it never stopped it

from happening by someone else. David went on to say things changed in tenth grade when the

new principals arrived to the school. They brought "the Circles" with them and they helped a lot

of the students. Avon nodded vehemently as to say "I TOTALLY AGREE" while reaching for

the Talking Stick. Avon hesitated for a few seconds and then he simply said, "David is right but

the sad thing is not only was she removed from our school two years later the whole staff was

moved and the circles left with them and everything went crazy at West all over again."

K.C. has the Talking Stick again and says, "For me it was going to a school where the

people really cared about me. My middle school was a safe place I looked forward to going to

because home was like insanity for me each night. Having a mother on crack and my

grandmother being very sick was not easy. Had it not been for RH, Inc., I do not know what

would have happened for me. K.C. continued to share that there were all male classes and all male teachers for those classes. He stated that these teachers took them under their wings. They became my family. It seems that Mustafa is very involved silently. I then asked Mustafa, if he had any thoughts on any of the discussions. Mustafa reached for the Talking Stick and Izayah passed it to him. Mustafa stated that he agreed with most that was discussed because his life was once very chaotic too. He shares that K.C. was fortunate to have so many men working with their male students and that he believes that will be the greatest help for Black males to succeed and graduate. He went on to share that he is the only of his mother's six sons thus far who graduated high school and he had four older brothers and two of them are in prison. His description of his mother on his Graduation Day was very moving. Mustafa was holding tight to the Talking Stick as though he had more to say that he could not begin to express. He began to talk about the RJ Coordinator of his school whom Mustafa is convinced is the only way to help Black males is to have Mr. Jones train men to go into the schools and work with Black male students as he worked with him. Mustafa declares there is no student in the country more difficult than he was and that when he got out of prison, he was sent to Mr. Jones' school. He says that was the greatest blessing of his life. With humility and pride, Mustafa proclaims, "Mr. Jones saved his life".

I began to think of how many times I heard that expression during this, thus far, three hour conference. It's time now to bring things to a conclusion. I reach for the Talking Stick and appeal for our composite. We shared our stories. We grew because of these experiences, now what does it all mean to those who want to duplicate our successes? William answered, "It means that we need school leaders who are willing to stand up for their students like Eemah

Hephzybah did when I was nearly had my first arrest in the 6th grade" He then proceeded to

share his in intense story:

> I got into it with a classmate who bothered me at school. On the way home, I beat him
>
> up and trashed his school bag. The next day at school, the police came to arrest me but
>
> Eemah Hephzybah would not allow that to happen. After the officer left, she called me
>
> to her office and let me know the problem that was facing me. I was really scared
>
> because I had no idea I could be arrested for fighting in the street. I really did not hurt
>
> him that bad but his mother was outraged with me about all of it, including destroying
>
> his book bag. Eemah told me that she is scheduling a conference for us to get to the
>
> bottom of the issue and that I should be prepared to be responsible for any mistakes that
>
> I committed. Eemah then called my mother and shared the same information with her
>
> while I was on the telephone. She asked me, if there was anyone who knew what
>
> happened that I would want to attend the conference with me. I gave her the name of a
>
> friend who saw what happened in school. When my mom and I arrived to the
>
> conference, there was a large circle of chairs half filled with people. Captain Rob, our
>
> brotherhood leader, welcomed and introduced everyone to my mother. A police officer
>
> was present in unofficial clothing, as my mom later said he was told to do. Behind us
>
> came my teacher and Mr. Watts our school counselor. Eemah then opened the session
>
> and asked everyone to introduce themselves again. Afterwards, Darnell was asked to
>
> share what happened to him on Monday afternoon when going home. Darnell
>
> explained how I approached him, bullied him, and threw his school bag in the street in
>
> front of a bus coming which went over it and how I started punching him in his head

and chest when he tried to go get it. He talked about how painful it was for him that people out there were laughing and taunting him that he did not even know.

By this time the entire circle of trailblazers are fully immersed in the dynamics of this story being told. William continued to share his saga:

The police officer interjected about how I endangered every person on that bus by doing that. My head went down in shame. Darnell continued to say that he knew he made me mad at school when he teased me in science class for the answer I gave. He called me dummy and that really did make me mad because when I was in second grade my teacher called me dummy in front of the class and the entire class laughed at me. Yet, I felt really bad about how I made Darnell fell on the street corner when everyone was laughing at him. I did not expect onlookers to laugh. I just wanted to get him back for hurting me. Well both of our stories of humiliation came out. Both of us cried while apologizing to the other one. Both of our mothers cried too and so did Eemah. Well, we both had to do things at the end to repair the harms that were caused. Mallam Watts asked how can you help keep others from hurting another person's feeling as both of you have done? Darnell said, we can tell our story to others. I do not like talking in front of people but I thought it would be a good idea. I asked, if we could share the story with younger students instead of those in our grade. Eemah suggested that because this happened in the classroom, the two of us should apologize to the class for causing a break in our brotherhood but its fine with her for us to talk to the younger brother classes. Mallam Parker reminded us that the school bag had to be replaced as well. He suggested that we work with him on Saturday to do the floors of the school and the funds from our work will replace the school bag. Mallam Watts agreed and Officer Williams asked if he

could participate as well because the students need to know that this could have ended up very different, if Eemah Hephzybah had not appealed to him to give this conference a try. Mallam Watts printed out our agreement and had everyone in the circle signed that they agreed that this would be done by the end of the report period. Darnell, Mr. Watts and I worked on what we would say together and they had an assembly for grades 1 – 3 of the male classes. Those young students asked a lot of good questions that made me think even more about how important it is to keep your head about you when things hurt you and not to hurt other people. Restorative Practices helped to make me a better person and kept me from getting my first police contact while I was only in the sixth grade.

This closing vignette further supports this study's overarching conceptual narrative that Restorative Practices Provides Reparatory Refuge. Each of the nine Graduate Informants had a special story to share. Some had brief but revealing stories, while others and very long chronicles to share. The use of vignettes to share the Graduates various stories was the best way to capture their combined stories and the deepest essence of their passion required with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the informants' lived experiences. As with the previous anecdotal narrative in the first vignette, the Graduate Informants offered very vivid explanations of how Restorative Practices may actually been a vital school intervention that diverted their paths from failure, poor social statistics and even from prison cells. Instead these young men were re-routed to graduation and jobs and for some college.

Chapter 6: Interpretations, Recommendations and Summary

Overview

The problem addressed by this research was that there is a "School to Prison Pipeline" that impacts Black male students more than any other demographic group of students in the U.S. This Phenomenological Study offers compelling views regarding the impact of Restorative Practices on the vista of Black male students. Although the informants provided insightful information and perspectives, the contributions of the informants are not offered to be generalized. The reader must keep in mind that due to the purposeful sampling strategies used for Phenomenological studies, the aim was to get a meaningful view of the "lived experiences" of professionals and Black males who experienced Restorative Practices. This task was accomplished. The findings of this study affirm the perspective that there is a significant need for American school leaders to address national statistics that indicate that nearly than 50% of Black male students drop out of high school in many of our urban public school districts (Curry, 2011). Because one fourth of Black male students who drop out of school ends up in prison (Curry, 2011; Darensbourg, Perez & Blake, 2010; Flores-Ragade & Williams, 2010), there is a lucid "School to Prison Pipeline" for American Black male students. As a result of the above statistics, there were two connecting areas of queries in this research:

1) Examining trauma and/or Intergenerational trauma as possible variables to the School to Prison Pipeline occurrences of Black male students and

2) Exploring Restorative Practices as a potential intervention address behavior manifestation of trauma and/or Intergenerational Trauma as a possible means to decrease "Push Out" consequences and subsequent "School to Prison Pipeline" occurrences for Black male students.

In order to explore the above queries, this Phenomenological study was to explore how Black male graduates who experienced Restorative Practices viewed Restorative Practices as having an impact on their path towards graduation. In addition, this study sought to investigate how professional advocates for Black male students who implement Restorative Practices viewed Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) as an intervention for improving the plight of Black male students in American public schools. In addressing these dual purposes, the overarching exploratory question was posed: How Can Restorative Practices Decrease School to Prison Pipeline Occurrences for Black Male Students? The supplementary questions to this research were:

1) How does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact the School to Prison Pipeline as viewed by Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices Professionals?

2) How does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact trauma and/or Intergenerational Trauma and black male students?

3) How do black males who graduated from schools that implemented Restorative Justice or Restorative Practices view their school experience and the vista of black males?

In Chapter 4, a presentation of how all informants viewed Restorative Practices or Restorative Justice overall was presented in detail. In Chapter 5, question #3 was best illustrated by the opening and closing vignettes. The remaining results presented in Chapter 5 respond to Questions #1 and # 2 as well as addressing the overarching question.

The study included professional participants who served as Informants in three groupings: six were teacher or counselors, three were school administrators and six were Restorative Practices experts. Eleven Black male graduates of Restorative Practices schools were recruited to participate in virtual in-depth interviews. All interviews were recorded where

possible. Transcriptions of the recordings were done by the researcher and submitted to each informant for feedback. Careful reviews and outside reviews were made of the transcripts where five codes were initially established and later were deduced to three themed concepts. Four amalgamated insights were drawn from the two groups of Informants, which lead to a themed narrative of Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge for Black male students.

The sixth chapter of this dissertation study has three components. First is an interpretation of the findings in this study, as it addresses the research questions and relates to the literature. Secondly, Chapter 6 will offer Conclusions based on findings, current educational theory and practices as well as contributions to the literature. Finally, Chapter 6 will present recommendations for educational policy and practices. In addition this final section will discuss suggestions for future research as well as limitations regarding this study.

Interpretation of Findings' Composite Narrative: Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge

Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge was the conceptual metaphor to address the study's primary research question: How Can Restorative Practices lower School to Prison Pipeline occurrences of Black male students? Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge answers this question in three ways. Most directly is that the informants concurred with current students that most schools in America employ zero tolerance discipline programs, which has been found to be racially biased in its application of school separation punishments (The Advancement Project, 2010; Darensbourg, Perez, & Blake, 2010). Secondly is that informants concurred with current research statistics that early separation of Black male students from schools tends to filter Black male students more than any other demographic student group into the School to Prison Pipeline (Curry, 2011). According to a retired judge who served as an

informant, Black male students are too often forced out of schools due to the racially biased zero tolerance policies only to face a racially biased criminal justice system. All of the Expert Informants concurred with the retired judge's statement. Finally, informants in all three categories (experts, school staff and graduates) concurred that Black males endure trauma due to racial profiling. Racial trauma is supported by older and recent studies (Carter & Helms, 2007; Carter & Reynolds, 2011; Caruth, 1996).

When a group of people have been found to suffer injustice by a system of government policy, the system is expected to offer reparations to repair the harms caused to the victims of injustice. Reparation is a concept that a government must provide some form of repayment or repair to the harm that their policies or other form of political violence have caused (de Greiff. 2006). This study suggests that one form of reparations for Black male students is to replace zero tolerance policies with Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice Opportunities. In doing so, several of the schools represented in the study began to transform into a place of refuge for Black male students.

Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge also addresses this study's supplementary question: How do Black males who graduated from schools that implemented Restorative Justice or Restorative Practices view their school experience and their school success. The overwhelming Black male graduate opinion regarding their Restorative Practices school experience was that students need schools to be a safe haven for its students. Another eminent finding was that Black male students in particularly need to feel trusted and valued by school staff, their peers and self. Below are samplings of Graduate Informants' expressions about the Restorative Practices School where they attended:

- I had lots of good memories at CRM. We had a great coach and had teachers who really tried to help us make it. Mr. Campbell taught us about becoming a man and being responsible for your life. This means a lot to me. It changed my life (Chicago Graduate)

- Honestly, Chai saved my life. Had it not been for the teachers who cared about me, I really do not believe I would be here today. I would be in jail or dead (Philadelphia Graduate).

- I would tell them to help teach teachers how to care about their students. If teachers took time to know their students they would stop being afraid of them. I do not believe that students should always be put out of school for fighting but the two who were fighting should be made to do some kind of community service work together after they do their conference (Philadelphia Graduate).

- I would tell the government my own story on how my life was turned around because of Restorative Justice. I now help turn other kids around because someone thought enough of the kids at my school to put this in place. (New Orleans Graduate)

Moreover, Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge evolved from the participants' retorts that were coded for "Battling Racism" by the Professional Informants and "Battling Chaos" as noted by the Black male Graduate Informants. Perhaps, racism is the root and chaos is the fruit of injustice. Reparations are needed to bring harmony where as the retired judge expressed harmony may have never before existed. Restorative Practices provides the reparatory emotional and functional experiences needed to address injustice as the school level and to address the cycle of trauma in order to bring forth harmony. Four connecting amalgamated insights generated the emergent thematic narrative that "Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge."

Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge is an overarching narrative that represents a combination of four sub-narrative themes that emerged from the Informants. These amalgamated insights are essential contributions resulting from a collective and divergent informant voices: 1) Zero tolerance policies have racially biased outcomes against black male students, 2) Racism kindles unacknowledged and unaddressed trauma for black male students, 3) Restorative Practices disarm the cycle of trauma for Black male students and   4) Cultural Restorative Practices offer black male students refuge to gain consciousness raising experiences.

Interpreting of Amalgamated Insight 1*: Zero tolerance policies have racially biased outcomes against black male students*

Only one out of the sixteen Professional Informants saw a place for zero tolerance policies in schools. In all other cases, the informants defined zero tolerance policies as inconsistent, racially biased and counterproductive. In addition, two of the informants' employment positions as Restorative Justice Coordinator resulted from political pressure to address the noted disparity of Black male students receiving suspensions and expulsions out of school more than any other demographic student group. According to an article published by *The New York Times* (2012), Black male students are disproportionately represented in both data regarding suspensions from school and expulsions from school.

> Although black students made up only 18 percent of those enrolled in the schools
>
> sampled, they accounted for 35 percent of those suspended once, 46 percent of those
>
> suspended more than once and 39 percent of all expulsions, according to the Civil Rights
>
> Data Collection's 2009-10 statistics from 72,000 schools in 7,000 districts, serving about

85 percent of the nation's students. The data covered students from kindergarten age through high school (Lewin, 2012).

With the exception of the one informant, there was an overwhelming aversion to zero tolerance policy by the Professional Informants. The Black male graduates had a more moderate statistic on zero tolerance policy in that two out of the nine informants saw a need for schools to have a way to eliminate those causing violence and chaos at the school. The other seven Graduate Informants agreed with the thesis of zero tolerance policies causing more harms than helping school culture. Overwhelmingly, zero tolerance was described for being biased and racially administered against Black male students more so than other student populations. This position found in the study strongly supports what educational literature supports and advocates of Black male students in previous studies vehemently assert as well. One of the Professional Informants is currently a school administrator, as well as one of the Graduate Informants vouched that it is the school leaders' obligation to ensure the safety of the children and teachers in school and that zero tolerance may be important for that purpose. The problem with this outlook may be that according to (Skiba, 2000), there is no evidence provided that zero tolerance as a strategy improves school safety.

> The tragic violence that has befallen both urban and rural schools makes it incumbent upon educators to explore all available means to protect the safety of students and teachers. Yet faced with an almost complete lack of evidence that zero tolerance is among the strategies capable of accomplishing that objective, one can only hope for the development and application of more effective, less intrusive alternatives for preserving the safety of our nation's schools (Skiba, 2000).

The most important question this study answered is how does, if at all, Restorative Practices impact the School to Prison Pipeline? Overall, informants offered a shared view that zero tolerance offers a bias use where Black male students receive greater suspensions and expulsions based on subjective application of the policies. Furthermore, there is evidence that these statistics are lowered where Restorative Practices have been put into place (Lewis, 2009; Khadaroo, 2013). Recent newspaper reports on one of the schools which this study interviewed informants supported this thesis.

> In the 2011-12 school year, African-Americans made up 32 percent of Oakland's students but 63 percent of the students suspended. In middle schools, principals suspended about 1 out of 3 black boys. The US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights investigated whether the discipline was discriminatory. Before making a legal finding, OCR collaborated with the district last fall on a five-year voluntary resolution plan to reduce suspensions, expulsions, and the racial disparity (Khadaroo, 2013).

According to Khadaroo (2013), Oakland's concern for this serious racial disparity that found that not only are African American male students appear to receive an unfair number of out of school punitive responses from staff. Federal investigation on racial disparity and school discipline in Oakland also found that needs of African American male students are not being met using the zero tolerance discipline policies. Oakland now seeks to inspire a school culture where healing harms and restoring relationships may offer greater support for all students in its middle and high school (Khadaroo, 2013). While Black male Graduate Informants in the study shared their voices on how Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) aided them with graduation success, Black male dropouts in an earlier study noted that zero tolerance policy was their primary reason for school failure:

This study examines the impact of the zero-tolerance policies on Black males' educational experiences and outcomes. Individual interviews were conducted with Black males who dropped out of high school. Using counter-storytelling within a critical race theory framework, Black males discussed the influence of the zero-tolerance policies on their school experiences. These men's narratives affirm that these policies created an inhospitable school environment and poor student–teacher relationship. Furthermore, school personnel's use of the most punitive measures of the policies, suspension and expulsion of students, led to their school failure (Caton, 2012).

The voices of the young Black men who dropped out of high school in the Caton study (2012), offered the same insight about zero tolerance policies as educational policy investigators found as a result of their research on zero tolerance disciplinary measures:

Rethinking school discipline policy is a concrete, manageable way for educators and the communities they serve to untangle and begin to dismantle complex opportunity-limiting structures. "Zero tolerance" is both a symptom of those larger forces and an independent generator of inequality (Eaton, 2010).

Zero tolerance was found in this study to be counterproductive to helping Black male students graduate from high school. Many Black male Graduate Informants voiced varying stories on how Restorative Practices gave them an opportunity to view school differently. Below is an excerpt from *The New York Times* (Brown, 2013) where students and staff at one of the schools reviewed for the study shared their view on Restorative Justice:

Among the lost youngsters was Damon Smith, now an A student at Bunche, who said he had been suspended more than 15 times. "You start thinking it is cool," he said. "You

think you're going to come back to school and catch up, but unless you're a genius you

won't. It made me want to mess up even more."

Damon, 18, said restorative justice sessions helped him view his behavior through a

different lens. "I didn't know how to express emotions with my mouth. I knew how to hit

people," he said. "I feel I can go to someone now" (Excerpt taken *from The New York*

Times, Brown, 2013).

There seems to be a resounding overarching agreement that zero tolerance disciplinary

practice has been found to be unfair to Black male students and may be one of the chief

contributors to fostering School to Prison Pipeline occurrences for Black male students.

Therefore, an alternative disciplinary vista is needed by schools and Restorative Justice has been

found in the eyes of both professional Restorative Practices advocates for Black male students

and Black male student graduates to be one that helps to lower incidents of School to Prison

Pipeline occurrences for Black male students.

Interpreting Amalgamated Insight 2: *Racism kindles unacknowledged and unaddressed*

trauma for Black male students

There is no doubt that our sons regardless of our success are impacted by the traumas we

had in our lives. We were impacted by the trauma that our fathers faced. My grandfather

fought off white supremacists. Living in South Carolina, I ran to stay alive from a pack of

white supremacists. Do you think I did not do things to help my sons prepare for such an

encounter that may change how it looks today? Every generation has a different way to

express their trauma. What we are seeing with the boys today is gangster response. If we

fail to address their trauma, what will their sons bring to us (College Professor)?

Not only did the Professional Informants have a common thesis that Black male students face unacknowledged and unaddressed trauma, Black male Graduate Informants cited case after case where each one has experienced some level of trauma in their lives. Whether it was home based, school based or community based, there was no dispute that violence of many kinds along with issues of abandonment, poor self identity and injustices, Black male students do face trauma because of racism and this trauma is unacknowledged and addressed.

> I think the statistics speak for it. As stated earlier, black males are disenfranchised. 60% of the expulsions in Chicago are black males. Therefore, there will be a high rate of these drop outs getting prison sentences. If we want to change these rates, we must change how we treat these young men (RJ Coordinator).

Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) professionals supported the thesis found by the Graduate Informants who asserted that those feelings of inferiority, anxiety, anger, frustration and anticipation of trauma are all factors that kindle more traumas. The trauma response to these feelings often are triggers leading to what social scientists and educators call maladaptive behaviors but trauma scholars refer to as manifestations of trauma or possibly Intergenerational trauma (DeGruy, 2004; Small, 2001). In either case, these behaviors have been identified as the very same behaviors that cause many Black male students to experience "Push Out" school discipline consequences. Such consequences were noted by nearly all professional informants to have been racially biased in its application. While many of those who may be recipients of racism may not realize the toll it may have taken upon them emotionally, it has been noted by several racial trauma researchers that in mass cases, racism can kindle unknowledgeable and unaddressed trauma.

Racial harassment involves a negative, sudden and uncontrollable experience or it may be a form of on-going physical and/or psychological threat that produces feelings of fear, anxiety, depression, helplessness and/or PTSD related symptoms. The threat and stress associated with racial harassment and/or discrimination may be communicated through the use of racially meaningful signs, coded language, and/or symbols… Racial trauma is real and may be affecting people without their or your awareness. What is need are procedures to file complaints in organizations, diagnostic criteria, and treatment strategies for racial trauma (Carter & Reynolds, 2011).

According to Carter & Reynolds (2011), there are many racial profiling done by citizens and authorities against Black males that are rooted in racism. This kind of racism has a resounding impact on causing trauma for its targets and in many cases the targets are unaware of their behaviors to block or prevent the pain of racism from their lives Carter & Reynolds, 2011). In cases where the target of the racism is aware being treated with bias, the helplessness of changing that reality also adds to the trauma that the young man may face. Such trauma is normally unacknowledged and unaddressed and becomes a chronic condition for many Black males (Carter, 2007). Whereas there is a plethora of research on racism impacting social, political and economical experiences of Blacks, Carter (2007) began to fill the gap of deeply needed research on racism and psychological and traumatic impact it has on those faced by it day to day.

To live through a lifetime of racism in many areas of one's life requires a certain amount of denial. When the denial becomes loss of memory for the event(s), this could be a sign that the event was traumatic. On an emotional level, one can become numb to the impact of the constant or sudden assaults to one's dignity or sense of self. Thus, one's capacity to

feel a range of emotions may be compromised. Or it may be that the person splits the experiences from his emotions and attaches few feelings to the events as a way to avoid the emotional pain. One may elect to avoid things and the people that contributed to the trauma or stress, and may retreat physically or psychologically into a safer world where it is difficult to be reached by the pain of racism. These reactions may also occur with depression, aggression, shifts in self-esteem, racial identity confusion, complicated interpersonal relationships, and strong feelings of shame and guilt. Targets might feel responsible for the circumstances that they find themselves in, perhaps without being aware that racism played a major role. Alternately, targets might be aware of racism but might feel helpless to deal with its presence or impact (Carter, 2007).

Perhaps Carter has done more on the topic of Racism and Trauma than other trauma scholars and has suggested that trauma scholars begin to look at a category in trauma treatment where race and racism are categorized as part of one of its area of manifestation (Williams, 2013).

The planned changes to the DSM increase the potential for better recognition of race-based trauma, although more research will be needed to understand the mechanism by which this occurs. Additionally, current instruments should be expanded and a culturally competent model of PTSD must be developed to address how culture may differentially influence traumatic stress. In the meantime, clinicians should educate themselves about the impact of racism in lives of their ethnic minority clients, specifically the connection between racist events and trauma (Williams, 2013).

Post traumatic Stress Syndrome has been identified by several trauma scholars as a lived experienced of citizens of ethnic groups who faced political violence as a collective. Native American scholars refer to it as Historic Trauma (Brave Heart, 2003; Whitbeck, et. el, 2004) but several African American scholars refer to their racially induced trauma as Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (DeGruy, 2004; Mims et el (unpublished); Smalls, 2001). Black male students may be part of this generationally transmitted trauma scenario. Although this research did not fully affirm Dr. DeGruy's Intergenerational Trauma Theory, this research suggests that perhaps what educators refer to as "at risk" or "maladaptive behaviors" could very well be racial trauma response behaviors as both Dr. Kenneth Hardy and Dr. John Rich suggested in an interview with Marian Edelman (Edelman, 2013).

Marian Edelman interview with Dr. Kenneth Hardy:

Dr. Kenneth Hardy, professor of Family Therapy at Drexel University, said the young men and boys he meets in his practice come with a set of underlying and intertwined problems. The first is devaluation -persistent assaults to dignity. "Part of being Black means you are born into a group that tends to be devalued. Put on top of that male and poor." Additional trauma comes from failure in school and sometimes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Dr. Hardy believes that persistent devaluation of poor Black boys and men is one reason many put such a high premium on respect, and real or perceived disrespect then often becomes the trigger point for violence (Edelman, 2013).

Marian Edelman interview with Dr. John Rich:

He (Dr. John Rich) found that many of our young people are under tremendous stress, "When these young men behave in ways we don't like, what we should be asking them is

not 'What's wrong with you?' but 'What happened to you?'" Dr. Rich noted that many of

the young men he interviewed display the same symptoms of trauma, like hyper vigilance

and emotional numbing, as soldiers returning from a war zone -- and he sees many of the

young people caught up in the cycle of violence not as inherently bad people needing

punishment, but as injured people who need healing (Edelman, 2013).

Trauma scholars understand that racism often evoke trauma to its target and that it is very

important that those who offer educational and human services to Black male students have

trauma knowledge (Carter, 2007; DeGruy, 2004; Rich, 2009). In other words school staff

members need to understand the dynamics of trauma and be trained in techniques that can

reduce trauma response behaviors. Most importantly school leaders and staff members need

to become cognizant not to manifest trauma causing actions and trauma inducing verbiage.

What this study adds to this fundamental premise is that educators and educational policy

makers must also become aware that racism kindles trauma and that trauma is expressed via

behaviors that often lead to the removal of Black male students from school and their

entrance into prisons (Carter & Helms, 2009; DeGruy, 2004; Smalls, 2001). One of the ways

to dismantle this "School to Prison Pipeline" cycle is to acknowledge behaviors that often

lead to "Push Out" as possible manifestations of Intergenerational Trauma (aka trauma

response) and as a need for healing opposed to only being a mandate for retributive

discipline.

Finally, educators must learn strategies to address trauma opposed to adding to the trauma

by using racial based discipline such as zero tolerance (Skiba, 2000). Zehr (2008) shares the

dynamics between being victimized and trauma.

An experience of victimization, and even trauma, is involved in most situations of

conflict and wrongdoing. Both restorative justice and conflict transformation must

acknowledge and address this sense of victimization and the resulting needs – often

for everyone involved, including those who have offended. Indeed, it can be argued

that much offending – perhaps most or all violence – grows out of a sense of

victimization and/or an experience of trauma (Zehr, 2008).

According to Zehr (2008), Conflict Transformation is paralleled with Restorative

Justice in that there is an underlying assumption that individuals engage in conflict when

they perceive that their material, social and cultural human needs are threatened or

violated. This addresses one of the findings in the study that Black males often become

involved in violence in response to a feeling of being disrespected (DeGruy, 2004; Rich,

2009).

Interpreting Amalgamated Insight 3*: Restorative Practices disarm the cycle of trauma for*

Black male students

This amalgamated insight answers the second sub-question: How does, if at all,

Restorative Practices impact trauma and/or Intergenerational Trauma and black male students.

Each graduate informant and each professional informant had at least one story of how

Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) change the course of life for self or someone they

personally knew. Restorative Justice as referred to by various informants was described as "the

balm on a wound", "Justice that heals", "chaos to calm", and "change how we talked to one

another". Furthermore, Restorative Practices have been poignantly shared by Graduate

Informants as "saved my life' or "kept me out of prison". There were no dissentions by

Restorative Practices professionals that Restorative Practices disarm trauma by numerous practices embedded. The overarching attribute of Restorative Practices is to change lenses for adults to see wrong doing as a "relationship violation" opposed to a school or rule violation requiring punishment vs. restorative accountability (Restorative Justice Coordinator). Due to the need to re-examine Juvenile Justice in Cook County, Illinois, the investigative committee determined that the needs of youth who participate in crime may be trauma related and need to be trauma addressed.

> Among the many advantages of the Restorative Hub model, is its capacity to deliver the types of care that can help young people to overcome whatever traumas they may have faced in their lives, either in their homes, in their neighborhoods, or in outside institutions. Adverse childhood experiences, or trauma that occurs before the age of 18, have been shown to have an enduring effect in life functioning, brain development, achievement orientation, and health. Youth that have experienced significant adverse childhood experiences are more likely to commit crimes and violent offences in particular, than individuals that have not experienced trauma (Cook County Juvenile Justice Task Force, 2012)

There is a growing study of clinical investigations to assess the success that Restorative Processes have on healing trauma. One compelling study was done by Angel at the University of Pennsylvania which produced strong evidence proving that Restorative Justice has a positive impact on addressing Post Traumatic Stress. School being a safe haven was a repeated concept throughout all four levels of Informants. Restorative Practices transform chaos to calm was shared by at least three Graduate Informants. Relation building was the most significant tool expressed two of the Expert Informants. Daily circles seem to be the vehicles that lead to those

accomplishments. "An enemy is only someone whose story you have not yet heard" was a very important adage offered by narrative therapist in Jos, Nigeria who worked diligently to keep peace and end violence between Muslims and Christians in their state. His quote expresses why Circles bring peace between students and harmony between staff and students. During Circles, these stories are being shared each day. Although the Graduate Informants were not aware of the term Restorative Practices or Restorative Justice, they were well aware of the term and purpose and function of "Circles".

Restorative Conferences is another level of implementation when a serious wrongdoing occurs. Below is a study of the Criminal Justice system using Restorative Justice court instead of traditional court to handle very serious crimes where a person was victimized by the offender. The victims in this study were found healed of trauma at a higher rate than those whose ordeal was handled by the traditional courts.

> Angel conducted interviews with the subjects to assess their level of psychological stress both six weeks and six months following the conferences, measuring indicators such as the occurrence of intrusive memories of the crime, flashbacks, difficulty sleeping, and feelings of anger and physical symptoms. She found significant differences: At the six-week interview, the conference group experienced one-third fewer post-traumatic stress symptoms than the conventional justice group. While both groups continued to recover psychologically at about the same rate, six months later the conference group maintained a significantly lower level of post-traumatic stress symptoms, with 40 percent fewer symptoms than the control group (Porter, 2006).

The findings in the study by Angel as reported by Porter (2006), give considerable supportive evidence that Restorative Practices reduces feelings of trauma. It appears that being able to talk about one's troubles to listeners who are compassionate in a culture where pursuing justice that includes all, are practices within Restorative Justice that disarms the trauma. In conclusion to this amalgamated insight that Restorative Practices disarm trauma, Howard Zehr is called by many people the Father of Restorative Justice. Below is what he has to say regarding the use of Restorative Practices and global resolutions.

> Over the last three decades, the conceptual framework and practices of restorative justice have received wide currency internationally. For example, restorative justice was used to help provide a conceptual framework for the mission of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa as well as for the Gacaca Tribunals in postwar Rwanda. Exploring some of the learning from the implementation of this framework, the paper draws attention to a much-needed conversation between the diverse yet related fields of conflict transformation, trauma healing and restorative justice (Zehr, 2008).

Restorative Practices has the potential to heal trauma by healing relationships between individuals as well as collective factions who were once against one another. In addition Conflict Transformation like Restorative Practices maintains that such paradigms where "I meet my needs at the expense of others" can be transformed to a mindset that becomes concerned with the needs of others (Zehr, 2002).

The issue of healing due to racial based trauma, community based trauma or other forms of violence based trauma are very important aspects in the lives of Black male students. However, Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) has been taken one step further by Native

American, African American, Aborigine in Australia and other global cultural specific groups

who believe that part of their trauma being stripped of their cultural heritage (history, traditions

and spirituality). The issue of restoring heritage and cultural identity in order to replace wrongful

identities placed on young people is one of the key contributions that this study brings to the

body of literature on Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice). The connection between culture

and Restorative Practices are two-fold. One vista is that Restorative Practices (Restorative

Justice) practitioners must be very aware of the cultural diversity of their students or clients in

order to be fair and consider and restorative. The second Cultural consideration as it applies to

Restorative Practices is that it is very important to incorporate a cultural immersion component

where Black male students can gain wisdom and understanding about their ancestral heritage,

culture and history in an accurate framework. It is this later aspect of Cultural Restorative

Practices that was revealed by both Graduate and Professional Informants in this study as key.

Interpreting Amalgamated Insight 4: *Cultural Restorative Practices offer black male*

students refuge to gain consciousness raising experiences.

The below excerpt from the Jenkins (2006) study of Restorative Justice and Gullah

Cultures expounds on this fourth Amalgamated Insight.

> Another resident (female older than 40 years) stated that "we [African Americans] are the
>
> only culture that allows the enemy [White Americans] to educate us." The respondent
>
> continued: Take for example the Jewish culture, every holiday and event is used to teach
>
> the younger folks about their culture. That includes all of the trials and tribulations. We
>
> as a people don't do that. We don't teach our children our history. This teaching adds to
>
> the sense of community. . . . It's like we are ashamed of our culture. We are ashamed to

talk about our enslavement. It is like we are the oppressors, the ones that should be

ashamed. That takes away from our sense of community (Jenkins, 2006)**.**

The informant in the Jenkins study offers a very insightful point, which aligns with

fervent expressions from the Expert Informants in this study. The point made is that Black

Americans tend to accept political violence against them as their reasons for shame and fault

while other cultures that experienced political violence such as the Jews are very open and vocal

about their position as the victims and their perpetrators as being the barbaric villains. Their

stories of politically motivated trauma are made known to the world. According to the informant

proponents of Cultural Immersion, the mis-education of Black males as to accepting blame for

their trauma can best be corrected by way of Cultural Restorative Practices. Perhaps the one area

of information that this study has attained that is very new to the field of Restorative Practices is

the concept of Cultural Restorative Practices that emerged from both groups of informants in this

study but was specifically given title by two Professional Informants. A professor of African

studies views Restorative Justice as an important solution to the "New Jim Crow" system of

imprisonment of Black males. However, the professor also advocates that without correcting the

misinformed identity that many have assumed, Restorative Practices will only partially address

the system opposed to the young men aspect of transformation through self awareness and

cultural and historical knowledge.

> The greatest tool kit anyone can prepare for a young Black man graduating high school
>
> and leaving a place that is safe is to give him many examples of his ancestral heroes and
>
> how the heroes overcame. By the time a sister or brother graduates high school, they
>
> should have a psychological portfolio of pictures and stories of Africans who made great
>
> contributions to our world and who overcame great obstacles. These stories need to be

deep in their foreheads and in their hearts. It is not just an academic process but it is a

spiritual one because as the student begins to connect with their Ancestral understanding,

a transformation and a sense of wellness begins to replace the low esteem, bitterness and

anger that racist based society identification of them. Self knowledge is their tool for

success, autonomy and resiliency (An expert informant).

This concept of Cultural Restorative Practices appear to be deeply rooted into Spiritual

transformation and "Finding one's authentic self", which was one of the earliest thematic code

findings in this study. Serious issues facing Black male students were noted as being low

perception of self and accepting society's view of them as being produces of violence and harm.

One retired educator suggested cases where their mere presence caused frustration and turmoil

for some school staff. As appalling as such a comment could be it just may be an unconscious

vista of many teachers and school leaders. This could explain why out of school punishments

were applied to Black male students in greater numbers than other students. Therefore, Cultural

Restorative Practices proponents assert that erasing this kind of historic self memory will require

replacement with a superior heritage commemorative. Dr. Estelle Simrard is the founder of The

Institute for Cultural Restorative Practices in and this is how she describes its vital importance in

the Native American nations.

> The Institute for Culturally Restorative Practices promotes the integration of Indigenous
>
> worldview into service practice. The Institute has an appreciation for the Indigenous
>
> teachings and how these unique teachings can carefully unfold and evolve into rich
>
> Indigenous service practice standards. The Institute is inspired by 25 years of
>
> professional and spiritual mentorship, designed to offer wellness through an Indigenous
>
> paradigm (Simrad & Blight, 2011).

Simrad's mission responds to more than one hundred years of Indian Boarding Schools where Indian children were brutalized if they use any of their cultural language or traditions. As a result, Native Americans avoided such practices long after the closing of the last Indian Boarding School because they learned to view their heritage as taboo. This Historic (Intergenerational Trauma) that Native Americans experience today is being addressed by Cultural Restorative Practices. Three of the Expert Informants were African centered cultural scholars who asserted the importance of staff and students, particularly Black male students to begin to view their education and life issues through an African centered perspective. This kind of re-teaching identity and assisting Black male students to find their authentic self is a highly significant aspect of Black males having success at transformation from victim and villain to being autonomous (School Administrator). Restorative Justice was introduced to the Gullah Nation nearly a decade ago. The Gullah Nation is composed of islands along the coast of South Carolina and Georgia. One of their astounding revelations is that Restorative Justice is very much like the traditional justice they gave up for American Courts to come in their land to deal with crime.

> Disputes on the islands were handled through an informal process that used just laws as the foundation. The primary goals of just law were reparations for the harmed party, community peace, and an assurance that individuals would follow either church or community norms. The benne-seed ritual is an example of a process where offenders would be restored to their place in the church and/ or society after going through spiritually based counseling, some form of ritual and/or material or nonmaterial reparation to the aggrieved party. This approach is clearly one that falls under the restorative justice paradigm (Jenkins, 2006).

Restorative Justice is not new but part of the Gullah people's ongoing practices prior to accepting Criminal Justice oversight from the U.S. The Gullah Nation is known for its unique aspect of maintaining its African traditions in spite of more than four hundred years of enslavement, imperialism and racism throughout the Americas. According to Jenkins (2006), what we today refer to as Restorative Justice mirrors their indigenous way to address wrongdoing and criminal cases.

> Although this formal process is rare, there were many examples of an informal process that was used in recent times on the island. For example, there was an accidental killing of a Gullah by a Gullah on the island 2 or 3 years ago. The victim's family did not take the offender to civil court. During a community coalition meeting, the event was brought up. According to the respondent telling the story, the offender was chastised by many in meeting for being drunk at the time of the incident. The offender was an economically challenged individual and was an individual that did not verbally express his feelings well. However, each month after the meeting, a basket of food has been left at the home of the victim's family. In addition, the offender, victim, and the rest of the community are presently living in harmony (Jenkins, 2006).

This example demonstrates that there is a spiritual implication involved in such Restorative Justice practices where the major goal is not punishment but restoration of harmony to the community. What is also interesting is that moving from chaos to harmony is how many of the Graduate Informants also described the outcome of Restorative Practices in their schools. A study by Hadley (2001) demonstrated also that Restorative Justice is based on Indigenous Spirituality often practiced for generations by Native American and African societies. This practice was based on the Spiritual principles that these communities incorporated in their

everyday lives. Therefore, the informants in this study who proposed that restoring African

culture as part of the Restorative Practices implementation were actually validated by Hadley

(2001), Simrard (2009) and Jenkins (2006) because Restorative Justice in itself is based on the

spiritual and cultural practices of these indigenous societies.

> The process (Restorative Justice) was rooted in traditional African culture and was widely
>
> used throughout the islands on the southeastern United States coast by descendants of
>
> slaves. In addition, the axiology, ontology, and epistemology of the Gullah system were
>
> in line with Afrocentric Principles which seem to resonate in Restorative Justice
>
> Principles (Jenkins, 2006).

According to Jenkins, Restorative Justice seems to resonate many of the African centered

principles used by the Gullah nation long before they accepted the American Criminal Justice

system. The problem is that too many of their people are now being imprisoned for things that

they once dealt with having less retributive impact, yet having greater return to communal

harmony. Cultural Restorative Practices has two major implications. First, it is restoring

indigenous heritage practices to one's original culture where possible and secondly, it is to

connect the students with their accurate histories in effort to provide for them a more accurate

image of self and self-perception.

> I made this recommendation in 1985 to a private school in Newark, New Jersey, and in
>
> 1989 at the National Association of Black School Education's (NABSE) national
>
> conference in Portland, Oregon. I had been interviewed by numerous newspapers and
>
> magazines, including *Education Week* and *Time*, about the needs and components that
>
> would make up the Black male classroom. My publishing company, African American
>
> Images, has a curriculum division called SETCLAE (Self-Esteem Through Culture Leads

to Academic Excellence). Consultants are trained to help school districts design and

develop these classes. The major components of the Black classroom would include:

Black Male Teachers, Twenty to Twenty-Four Students, Cooperative Learning,

SETCLAE Curriculum…(Kunjufu, 1995).

Dr. Jawanzaa Kunjufu was amongst the earliest scholars to address the issue of schools

failing Black male students. In 1985, Dr. Kunjufu offered a riveting message to the world on the

dismal school statistics of Black male students from fourth grade forward. Since that time,

numerous studies continued to address the issue as the issues continued to increase in numbers

and intensity. Dropout rates, "Push Out" rates and prison sentences continued to climb for Black

male youth. It's time now for action to take place by all involved and concerned stakeholders.

Implications and Recommendations

The educational implications based on this study are clear cut. Educational Policy

makers from the federal to the local governments as well as curriculum developers for

teacher/school leader colleges should consider the contributions which the informants of this

study have made that can transform the plight of Black male students in American schools.

1. Zero tolerance discipline procedures are racially biased against Black male students more than

any other group of students in American schools and are one of the leading filters of the School

to Prison Pipeline. Therefore, zero tolerance discipline should be replaced with a system that

does not violate the civil rights of its pupils. A Restorative Justice based discipline system is

recommended for all schools.

Our zero tolerance must be restructured. There needs to be a focused on the act not on

harming the one who perpetrated the act. We should never say we cannot tolerate the

student. Mission possible must become how we get rid of the act but save the student

(Professional Informant, teacher).

2. Black American males face racism of numerous kinds which causes trauma in their lives. The

unaddressed trauma evokes a cycle of chronic trauma, which their behavior response to trauma

often causes additional trauma for them. Black male students are often in a cycle of trauma at

school without any support for their emotional health.   Therefore, schools must prepare all key

staff with trauma knowledge, which understands that racism and injustice can kindle trauma.

Training in how to heal the harms of racial trauma is particularly important.

STAR (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience), these seminars explore the

Intersection of trauma, conflict and justice and brought those of us working in various

related fields into the same teaching and practice arenas. STAR has helped us to

understand that trauma is pervasive and multidimensional. It affects individuals, not only

emotionally but spiritually and physically as well; indeed, the cognitive processing of the

brain is often altered. However, trauma also profoundly impacts communities and

societies. Trauma shapes overall behavior including patterns of wrongdoing and conflict

as well as processes of recovery, resolution or transformation. The social as well as the

individual dimensions of trauma must be addressed as part of peace building and

restorative justice processes (Zehr, 2008).

3. In order to dismantle the "School to Prison Pipeline" occurrences for Black male students, there

should be school based services where trauma is being addressed and where professionals are no

longer part of the trauma causing cycle. Restorative Practices promote trauma knowledge for

professionals and addresses trauma for students. Therefore, I recommend that Restorative

Practices based discipline and school wide implementation need to be in place at all schools

where Black males attend. Restorative Practices should be considered at all schools where

suspension and expulsion rates are high.

> Our Law School students are trained in Restorative Practices and they go to schools
>
> where the violence is highest to help train the schools. The Department of Education
>
> should work at putting Restorative Justice in all schools to end ongoing school violence,
>
> excessive push out rates and drop-out rates of America's city schools (Retired Judge).

4. **"**Schools as Refuge" or to provide Reparatory Refuge means that a culture of harmony and

safety is critical to the psychological wellness needed for dismantling a cycle of racial trauma.

Therefore, I recommend that a Racial Trauma Informed Cultural Restorative Sanctuary Model of

schooling should be part of teacher and principal education to ensure cultural safe environment

for Black male students.

> Minority youth are challenged from school age to incorporate various cultural
>
> perspectives. The developmental tasks of minority youth are far more challenging as
>
> these youth must adapts to at least two cultures. Identity for Aboriginal children must be
>
> considered with the understanding of adaptation of worldviews; however, the core of
>
> Aboriginal identity must continue to be developed (Simard, 2009).

> Although Simard (2009), has a focus on Aboriginal youth, the same is similar to all youth

whose heritage has been replaced, causing them to experience an erroneous self-identify. Black

male students have a right and a need to feel culturally safe in their authentic identity as Black

American men.

5. Circles were highly expressed by Black male Graduate Informants as the practice where their

frustrations, fears and anxieties were comfortably expressed and listened to by others. This

opportunity helped them to experience a better sense of self. <u>Therefore, Restorative Practices is</u>

<u>important for students who experience trauma, poverty, violence and chronic chaos. Restorative</u>

<u>Practices for these students require daily circles.</u> <u>Furthermore, I recommend that the State</u>

<u>Department of Education seek to determine a dossier of Best Practices for Restorative Practices</u>

<u>Implementation in urban schools.</u>

- Restorative Justice (Restorative Practices) begins with prevention circles. This is where the social and emotional learning takes place. Students learn strategies such as Rethinking their action. What other response could they have taken that would have avoided the place where the action has now taken them. Most of all, Restorative Justice will teach them how to develop ownership over their actions and learn to oversee how others impact them (Counselor).

- Restorative Justice turns the classrooms and the school into a safe place for growing emotionally and academically. The daily circles help the students to know others care about them and they learn to care about others (Teacher).

- I believe the Circles when in place in the mornings and in the afternoons really begin to break down the trauma and bring forth the genuine person trying to get out underneath (Administrator).

6. Restorative Practices when implemented correctly (i.e. having a Restorative Practices coordinator on site to support the transition and to assure proper implementation) offers tremendous transformation of both school climate and tends to inspire brighter vistas for Black male students.

1) <u>Therefore, my recommendation for the U.S. Department of Education is to provide fiduciary</u> <u>incentives and resources to urban high schools for hiring Restorative Justice Coordinators.</u>

2) <u>I also recommend for colleges and State Educational specialists to provide requirements for certifying Restorative Justice Coordinators.</u>

3) <u>I recommend that the Department of Education at the state levels, conduct a standardized Restorative Practices implementation based on the practices of those schools where its implementation have been demonstrated to be most successful in improving School Culture and improving graduation rates of Black male students.</u>

> The principles and practice of school-based restorative justice must be applied consistently in a school discipline program or students and teachers may become disenchanted with the process and refuse to adhere to restorative justice practices. School administrators should ensure that the school's staff always includes experienced ambassadors of school-based restorative justice (Sumner et al, 2012)

7. Cultural Restorative Practices is an important component for Black male students and possibly all students who are part of an ethnic group who experienced collective racism. This is best described as implementing Restorative Practices and Cultural Heritage Immersion concurrently. Cultural Restorative Practices reconnect them back to their heritage identity. This may be a key to helping them overcome erroneous self percepts and find their authentic self. <u>Therefore, Cultural Immersion should be partnered with Restorative Practices for culturally specific ethnic student population. Furthermore, based on expressions of Graduate Informants, I recommend increased number of Black male mentors trained in Restorative Practices at schools where suspensions of Black male students are high.</u>

> The philosophy of restorative justice is partially derived from the ways some indigenous cultures, such as the Maori, respond to conflict and harm. Rather than requiring retribution for wrongdoing, restorative justice seeks to encourage accountability, repair

harm, and restore relationships. As a set of practices, it is best known for its use of a

circle. The circle brings together the harmed, those who caused the harm to harm, and the

community in which the harm occurred to respectfully share their perspectives, feelings,

and concerns (Sumner, Silverman & Frampton, 2010).

Restorative Practices Provide Reparatory Refuge has its greatest manifestation when

Cultural immersion and applications are infused with its practices. Similar to the plight of the

Native American child, Black male students also suffer erroneous identity as a result of racism in

education and socio-political spheres of their lives. Cultural Restorative Practices help to repair

the harms that racism brought upon these two groups of students.

Minority youth are challenged from school age to incorporate various cultural

perspectives. The developmental tasks of minority youth are far more challenging as

these youth must adapts to at least two cultures. Identity for Aboriginal children must be

considered with the understanding of adaptation of worldviews; however, the core of

Aboriginal identity must continue to be developed (Simrard, 2009).

Future Research Recommendation

There are three primary areas where future research is recommended. First, the concept

of Intergenerational Trauma was supported by findings in this study but not elaborated on in

terms of a validation that trauma is passed down through generations for Black male students.

While Dr. DeGruy (2004) offered tremendous evidence that such is the case, this study did not

fully support her position. Even though most informants could relate to the thesis of

Intergenerational Trauma, most informants did not have a concise understanding of

Intergenerational Trauma. Therefore, I recommend further studies on Intergenerational Trauma

and Black males so that what could be a central transforming force on improving the statistics of

Black male students is not further overlooked by society. A second area of study that is very important but was not the focus of this study is to clearly determine why Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) level of success varies depending on the schools. This research offered a view that a Restorative Justice (Practices) Coordinator who is well trained and passionate is needed to ensure success of its implementation on a school wide basis. There may be other important factors that implementers of Restorative Practices may need to consider as well. Finally, the concept of Cultural Restorative Practices or Afro centric Restorative Practices as referred to by the Gullah Nation is one that is not highly studied nor applied with most schools where Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice) is implemented. This one component is a significant reparation opportunity that could offer tremendous help for Black male students in particular and further research could provide important implications for schools where there is a predominance of a specific ethnicity. In conclusion, I recommend that future research is conducted to begin to formalize best practices in Restorative Practices for schools.

Delimitations

Regarding methodology, a larger number of participants may be considered for future study, although in ethnographic and case studies the sample size number is not as important as the value of the story or stories obtained. In such a case, the nine Black male graduates offered tremendous value to this study. A future think tank representing the various levels of informants may prove to be extremely valuable for establishing best practices and standardized professional development for future schools to model.

The Phenomenological nature of this study offers limitations in that the participants were purposefully opposed to randomly gathered. Therefore, generalization is not feasible. The informants were those who used Restorative Practices in schools where there was a noted

transformation in school culture and with Black male students, in particular. Because of the

success of the intervention, the Professional Informants may appear to be biased; however, the

questions they answered required comprehensive reflective replies. Overall, Restorative

Practices may be found to make a difference in this study but there are schools that did not have

the same successes and this is why future studies in implementation of Restorative Practices as

this one by Dr. Rundell (2007) may offer guidance:

> Restorative Practices invites the character of societal institutions, groups, processes,
>
> people, places, and programs to work with social conflict, including the prevention or
>
> early intervention levels of harmful behavior and injustices. The challenge to become an
>
> advocate and daily practitioner of restorative practices is a new frontier (Rundell, 2007).

Reflections

"Black mothers raise their daughters but love their sons" – Jawanza Kunjufu, Ph.D.

When I first heard these words, it was during a momentous conference in the spring of

1987 featuring Dr. Kunjufu. A light flickered in my heart and the flame grew with each

successive year of teaching. I believe it was that very moment when the pieces of mysterious

puzzle involving why Black male students appear to be in strife were first revealed to me. Thank

you, Dr. Kunjufu for your poignant publication: *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black*

Boys. I am finally, beginning to put those same puzzle pieces in their proper places. Perhaps,

they may now reveal the hidden antidote to restore Black male students to their authentic

identities.

This research topic was very important to this researcher who is a past school leader

where practices of Restorative Justice were implemented, although the terms were unknown.

The plight of the Black male student has been a chief concern of this researcher and those a number of what many referred to as unorthodox or perhaps cutting edge discipline policies were implemented in order to "deal with the problem but save the student". The cornerstone was a no suspension and no expulsion foundation to the school mission. Therefore, taking measures to assure that the informants' were accurately presented and carefully interpreted in this study was essential in order that thousands perhaps millions of young Black males across this nation may find brighter school success than those at this very present time.   I found each professional Informant to be extremely committed to changing the plight of Black male students in our schools. Yet, the number of such dedicated men and women must increase rapidly and soon. The key is for our young men to know their own story and become their own friend.

"An enemy is someone whose story you have not yet heard" - Dr.

Emmanuel Ande Ivorgba, Jos, Nigeria

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Appendix A. Announcement Letter for Online Focus Group

Dear Restorative Practices Professional:

You are invited to participate in an online study exploring Restorative Practices and its impact with black male students. Restorative Practices has been implemented in schools, social service agencies and criminal justice systems in various parts of the world, including Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Peru and the United States. The purpose of this research is to learn more about Restorative Practices in the lives of black males. The study will explore Restorative Practices as a possible intervention to lower the School to Prison Pipeline occurrences for black male students. This study will also seek any possible emerging themes that may give information on Restorative Practices as an intervention to address Intergenerational trauma or other possible syndromes that black males may experience. Any and all information that will possibly be attained may be very beneficial for school and governmental leaders who are seeking educational best practices for the black male students.

This part of the research will be a six day online focus group. Therefore, it is necessary that the participants have Internet access during six days of the study. The hours of participation will be flexible. Participants will be asked to log on and participate for a minimum of 20 minutes anytime between 5 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. for each of the six days of the study. Therefore, the study will require a minimum of 120 minutes or 2 hours of total participation. New questions will be posted by 5:00 a.m. each day of the study. The participants will be asked to read the question posted and to answer the question as complete as they can. If you would like to participate in this study, email your interest to mir23@drexel.edu. Please use your official school email address

In order qualify as a participant in the study, you must have been employed in a school where Restorative Practices is or was in place and you must have served in any advocacy capacity for Black male students. You must also use your official school email address when submitting your response. This email address will only be used to verify that you are a school employee and all those admitted into the study will be given temporary research participant identification. The link between your email address and your assigned identification will be discarded prior to the start of the research.

Sincerely,

Charles Williams, III, PhD, Investigator

Martha I. Russell, Co-Principal Investigator
Retired School Principal
Ph.D. Candidate
Drexel University School of Education

Appendix B. Announcement Letter for In-depth Interviews

Dear Alumni of _____ High School:

I am seeking black males who graduated from _____ High School within the past two years because Restorative Practices was in place while you attended there. You are invited to participate in a research study that wants to better understand if or how Restorative Practices was helpful to black male students. One of the major concerns is that less than 50% of black males do not achieve the success of graduating high school as you achieved. What makes these statistics very grim for black Americans is that 1 out of 4 black males who do not graduate high school may go to prison. Some professionals believe our schools represent a School to Prison Pipeline. This study will explore Restorative Practices as a possible intervention to lower the School to Prison Pipeline occurrences for black male students. If you experienced Restorative Practices in high school and is now a high school graduate, your help in this study may be very valuable for school planners.

Your time is important to me. Therefore, your participation will be limited to a two hour interview. More than likely it will only take one hour. I will schedule the interview at a library that is convenient to you. Your identity will remain confidential and at any time during the study, you can end your participation. All participants will be given a $25.00 visa cash card and an autographed copy of the book titled, The Black Male Handbook: A Blue Print for Life. With your approval, as a participant you will be acknowledged in the future publication in a manuscript titled, When Souls Cry Out: Addressing Intergenerational Trauma with Restorative Practices, if published. If you would like to participate in this study, please email your interest to mir23@drexel.edu.

Together we may offer hope for some young man who to receive an intervention to keep him out of prison. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Martha I. Russell, Co-Principal Investigator
Retired School Principal
Ph.D. Candidate
Drexel University School of Education

Appendix C. Research Disclosure Declaration provided to all Informants prior to their participation.

Important Disclosure: Please know that as a volunteer participant in this research, your identity is and will at all times remain confidential. Your responses are also confidential. Your participation is completely voluntary. At any time during this study, you can terminate your participation. Please know that any identifying information you provide for this study will be kept confidentially in a secured location and will completely discarded at the conclusion of the study. Please know that no identifying information will be part of the findings of this study.

Important Notice:

This notice was posted on the Online Forum, in emails sent to each participant and in the online

communication exchange for each Graduate informant.

Appendix D. In-depth Interview Protocol for Black Male Graduates

Please know that all information received in this interview will be used for the sole purpose of better understanding the role Restorative Practices played in the lives of some of their clients. Please also be made aware that all information provided will be held in strict confidence and no one will have access to any information that you share today, without your explicit approval.

1. Please tell me about yourself. What have you done since high school? What you are currently doing?

2. Why you do you think you have been invited to participate in this study?

3. Describe your first year in high school. What were some of the challenges facing you? What and/or who helped you get through some of your challenges?

4. When did you graduate from high school? Did you always have in mind you would graduate high school?

5. According to your responses on your profile, you have participated in a Restorative Conference or other formal Restorative Process during your high school years. Why did you have to participate?

6. What lead up to your experience with the Conference or Process?

7. How did you feel when you were invited to participate in the conference or process?

8. What were your concerns, hopes or issues once you agree to attend the conference?

9. What were some of the things you had to do to prepare yourself for the conference?

10. Describe some of the major questions or any reluctance you had about participating in this particular restorative conference or process?

11. Tell me about things in the Conference that you liked and did not like?

12. What do you wish you had said or done differently at the restorative conference?

13. What was said or done at the restorative conference or process (and by whom) that you believe made the greatest difference?

14. Share with me any aspects of the restorative conference or process that upset, angered or bothered you in any way?

15. Explain parts of the restorative forum that you believe were unfair or should have not happened?

16. Describe the best parts of the restorative conference or process and explain why those parts were important to you.

17. In reflection on your experience with Restorative Practices overall, how could it be made better?

18. Do you believe restorative practices changed you or your life path? If so, please share in what ways.

19. Unlike you, many black males in urban cities across our nation simply do not graduate high school. Do you believe Restorative Practices could change this national statistics for black males? Tell me why or why not.

20. When examining the fact that the leading cause of death for black males is murder, it has been documented that many black males who survive the violence suffer from trauma. Do you believe Restorative Practices can help those who witness violence to get on a better path? Why or why not?

21. Are there skills or other needs that you wish you have gotten when you were in high school? In your view what would do we need to know that may make high school life a better place for future black male students?

I thank you for your time and your support. As a token of appreciation for the time you have given to assist me with this study, an autographed copy of a book titled, "" by will be sent to each of you. Again, thank you.

	Appendix E - Protocol Used for Black Male Graduate Informants
1	*Question 1- What have you done since high school and what are you doing now?*
2	Question 2 – Tell me about your high school, what did you like about it and when did you graduate?
3	*Question 3 - In many city schools across the country most black male students do not graduate as you did. Why do you think that is the case?*
4	*Question 4 - What can schools do to help black males stay in school and graduate? Do you think most of the black males at your school graduated as you did?*
5	*Question 5 - What do you think about Restorative Practices (Restorative Justice or using Circles) at School ?*
6	*Question 6. What do you see as the greatest challenges for black males?*
7	Question 7 - What do you think school leaders should do to address the challenges facing black males?
8	*Question 8 - What are your thoughts that black males often commit violence against a person because they felt the person disrespected them?*
9	*Question 9- How can schools or Circles or RP help black males find other ways to react when they feel someone has disrespected them?*
10	*Question 10 – How has Restorative Practices (Circles – RHQ) helped you?*
11	*Question 11 – What is your best memory about High School? (About RHQ?)*
12	*Question 12 - If you were able to give advice to those who make the policies of Education, what would you tell them?*

Appendix F. Restorative Enquiry Online Focused Group Interview Protocol

Please know that all information received in this interview will be used for the sole purpose of better understanding the role Restorative Practices played in the lives of some of black male youth. Please also be made aware that all information provided will be held in strict confidence and no one will have access to any information that you share today, without your explicit approval.

1. Please share information about your school and your role at your school?

2. What is it that you enjoy most about your profession?

3. I understand that Restorative Practices is a central part of your school design. How do you describe Restorative Practices?

4. Who are the key persons involved with implementing Restorative Practices at your school? What are their titles and what do they do?

5. Explain to me how you first learned about Restorative Practices? What were your thoughts on it then and have they changed?

6. I understand that you have advocated for black males while working with Restorative Practices. Based on your experience, what do you see as the greatest challenges for black males? What are your thoughts on why these challenges exist?

7. Do you believe Restorative Practices have addressed or can address any of the challenges you listed? If so, which challenges and how have or can Restorative Practices address the challenges you noted?

8. This study is a focus Restorative Practices' use with Black male youth. This topic has been selected in response to the negative statistics endured by the overall black male youth population. One major concern is that the dropout rate and the expulsion from school rate for black males are higher than any other ethnic group in our nation. What are your thoughts on these statistics? Do you believe they are accurate? If so, why do you think they exist?

9. Statistics says that 25% of black males who do not graduate high school will be sentenced to prison for some kind of crime. Because of these statistics, advocates assert that there is a School to Prison Pipeline. Do you believe a School to Prison Pipeline exists?

10. Some advocacy organizations assert that high numbers of black male expulsions from high school is due to zero tolerance policies for various offenses in schools such as fighting and other disruptions. Do you agree or disagree with removing zero tolerance policies in schools? Please explain your answer.

11. I understand that Restorative Practices replace punitive responses for violations with addressing wrong doing differently? Do you agree? If so, please describe how Restorative Practices will address a serious violation such as fighting in school differently?

12. Statistics indicate that a leading cause of death for black males between the ages of 14 and 21 is murder. Social science scholars assert that many black males face violence in some form on a weekly basis. They further note that facing violence can often cause trauma. Do you believe black males are dealing with some form of trauma? Please explain your answer.

13. Have you observed behaviors of black males that you've worked with or heard stories from these black males that would indicate they were dealing with trauma? If so, please describe.

14. Do you believe Restorative Practices have or can address the needs of a person who is dealing with some form of trauma? Please explain your answer.

15. Some social science scholars believe that part of the reasons for the negative statistics regarding black males in America is because black males suffer from an unaddressed trauma that have been passed down to them through previous generations who faced oppressive violence relating to slavery, Jim Crow laws and political injustice. These scholars refer to this as Intergenerational Trauma. What are your thoughts on this? Do you believe black males may experience Intergenerational Trauma? Do you agree? Please explain why you agree or disagree with this theory.

16. If Intergenerational trauma actually exists with some black males, can you see Restorative Practices being an intervention to acknowledge and address this problem? Please explain.

17. Some phrases often associated with Restorative Practices are "restoring relationships", "transforming lives" and "building community". How does your experience with Restorative Practices with black males reflect or reject any of those phrases?

18. Please describe factors about Restorative Practices that you believe is helpful to black males.

19. Is there any one particular case where you have seen a transformation in the life of a black male youth as a result of being in a Restorative Practices process or environment? If so, please describe this by replacing the person's actual name by referring to him as Isa.

20. What do you see as the greatest accomplishment that Restorative Practices had on the black male clients that you advocated for? Please elaborate.

21. Most intervention practices improve with ongoing critical evaluative implementation. In your evaluation of Restorative Practices, where do you see room for improvement?

22. Do you have anything to add that will help us to better understand how Restorative Practices can help improve the life vista of black males who are considered "at risk"?

23. Is there anything I should have asked?

24. What did we learn from other participants during this focus group study?

25. What did we find surprising?

26. What seems to be our next step in usage of Restorative Practices for black males?

27. If you were able to serve as in an advisory capacity for the U.S. Secretary of Education, what major message would you offer him or her in regards to helping to end the School to Prison Pipeline?

	Appendix G - Extracted Professional Informants' Protocol
1	*Question 1- How do you describe Restorative Practices ?*
2	Question 2 - What do you value most about Restorative Practices?
3	*Question 3 - Do you agree or disagree with removing zero tolerance policies in schools? Why; Why Not?*
4	*Question 4 - Does Restorative Justice or Practices have a greater impact on the students Spiritual Intelligence or Emotional Intelligence ?*
5	*Question 5 - How can RP Address the high dropout rate of black males?*
6	*Question 6. What do you see as the greatest challenges for black males?*
7	Question 7 - How can or how has Restorative Practices addressed the challenges facing black males?
8	*Question 8 - Do you believe black males who engaged in recurrent violence are dealing with some form of trauma?*
9	*Question 9 - Do you believe black males may experience Intergenerational Trauma? If so, how do you explain it?*
10	*Question 10 - If there are black males are experiencing trauma or Intergenerational trauma, how can RP help?*
11	*Question 11 - What are your thoughts on social researchers concluding that most violence entered into by black males were due to feeling disrespected ?*
12	*Question 12 -How Restorative Practices address this issue of redirecting black male responses to feelings of being disrespected?*
13	*Question 13 - Create a Restorative Justice (Restorative Practices) toolkit for your graduates.*
14	*Question 14 - What is the greatest accomplishment that Restorative Practices had on the black male clients that you advocated for?*
15	*Question 15 - If you were able to serve as in an advisory capacity for the U.S. Secretary of Education, what major message would you offer him or her in regards to helping to end the School to Prison Pipeline?*

Code	Informants' Responses
	APPENDIX H - SAMPLE OF CODING CHART
A	Yes, I see it as both. RP brings wellness to all. It teaches a group operates how they see themselves, their peers and those whom they serve. There is ==this expectation of the wellness for all== involve being the outcome.
A	All of us are made of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. In RJ you will hear the spirits of those impacted by it. ==RJ touches all aspects of a human being==. RJ is rooted in Indian and African spirituality.
A	I believe it heals the emotions and ==makes the student feel he is safe==, understood and cared for by others. It teaches the whole student.
B	The hurts the students come to us are physical, emotional and spiritual. ==We have to address all of them to make the child whole again.==
A	I think it is a human intervention that addresses the ==needs of a human to feel safe==, to be respected and to be valued.
D	Based on my experience, one of the greatest challenges for black males is being taught at an early age not to share or show emotions that make you seem weak or vulnerable. I ==believe RJ has to be an emotional intervention that teaches black males how to express their feelings and to show remorse or forgiveness is not weakness but strength.==
A	Spiritual unbelief is how we typically interact with other people. As we increase in spiritual intelligence, we begin to ==interact with a caring and peaceful way== and we begin to understand the violent language and outrage we once had is not needed to be heard and valued.
F	One cannot ==build trust without reaching the inner person of the student==, which is spiritual but when we show we care enough to let them share their own thoughts and solutions, they become empowered emotionally and socially.
D	It has to be spiritual and emotional. First ==it begins the change== within and then we see its manifestations without.
E	For sure it is an emotional intervention. Day in and day out, I see students gain emotional intelligence. For example, when a student breaks the peace and the other students ==share how the infraction== effected them, the student who caused the problem often seeks to avoid being in the hot seat in the future and offers amends for his action. ==A growing process in social skills is shown here==
A	To say ==I am sorry or I forgive you== require both.

F	RJ does both but Spiritual is its best description. True implementers are Life Coaches who nourishes both intelligences to restore in them what has become "Empty fire". In Chinese medicine, the disease of addiction is diagnosed as "empty fire." Lack of nourishment (yin) of body, mind and spirit leads to a lack of "innerstanding" of self. There really is nothing there that practices such as zero tolerance can respond to. Restorative Justice ignites their being. Black males in the streets of Chicago will not survive with both spiritual and emotional intelligence.
D/E	RP improves student thinking and learning across nearly all the intelligences. Most of all, as they learn them that they have a say, they become more confident. Well, I recall X who was a thug and wanted to run the school that a few months later, after being in the fish bowls several times became a true leader facilitating circles.
F	Definitely both intelligences are impacted. For one thing, the student discovers he has been redeemed simply because adults really care. He is not only given a chance to avoid jail, he is given skills on how to not return down that road again. He is learning about himself as his own guide.
F	It is very Spiritual. The light within our brothers have been dimmed from birth. When we began teaching their African Heritage to them, there was a glow in their eyes that I seldom got to see before. The Brotherhood Sessions was really all about teaching to their inner spirit because until we get their spirit to awaken, we can never get their minds to understand how truly great they are as a fellow person.
F	Until one is able to revive the spiritual intellectual wellness in our children, we cannot begin to address their cognitive and emotional development.

A- Code was in many ways given where Anticipatory Refuge from harm or chaos was indicated as a need

B- Code was given where the response refer to social harms and hurts.

C- Compassionate witnessing is for responses that indicate that the stories of students are being heard.

D- Developmental skills mainly emotional development

E- Voice and empowerment

F- Finding Authentic Self indicating that spirituality will help students find their true identity.

Code	Question 7 - How can or how has Restorative Practices address the challenges facing black males? **Informants' Responses**
C	I think RJ helps people learn how to talk to one another and see others as real people with a story instead of a faceless nondescript "other" or "thing". Others can hear and feel the pain of one another.
B	It gives those who would be pushed out an opportunity to be transformed by the process of dealing with their errors instead of automatically being eliminated from the school.
A	RJ turns the classrooms and the school into a safe place for growing emotionally and academically. The daily circles help the students to know others care about them and they learn to care about others.
E	Restorative Justice empowers the student while supporting their life needs.
C	RJ is an ongoing way to communicate in non-violent and respectful ways with in a safe environment. Could also be refuge code A
F	Students begin to see their human self and the humanness in others.
D	Restorative Justice gives students a chance to learn new ways to deal with anger and disappointments and conflict.
C	RP involves relationship building and purposeful discussions ongoing day in and day out.
A	Is a balm for the pain of day to day trauma that the world ignores.
E	RP gives students voice, involvement a say and holds them accountable by their own say.
C	A technique focus on listening and hearing the story of the student and teaching them to listen and hear others.
E	RP is a process that includes everyone to work out the problems. All students will have a say in how to make things right and making things right is the daily goal of Restorative Practices. Could be D
F	RP will help black males discover who they are within individually, collectively and gain insight on how to navigate expeditiously in this world. Once you learn to solve conflicts with others, you begin to learn to solve those conflicts with your own self.
A	RP is a promise to our students that they matter and we will go as far as we can possibly go to keep them well and safe and growing strong.
D	A vehicle to re-channel confrontations and bring new outcomes for both teachers and students.
E	RJ is putting the steering wheel in the hands of the students and giving the trust to navigate their way to solution.

Curriculum Vitae

Martha I. Russell, Ph.D.

Home: 876 Rabbit Run Road
Blue Bell, Pennsylvania 19422
(215) 643 – 0706

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

I aim to prepare educators and educational leaders on the Restorative Pedagogy, which has been documented to improve horizons for students and school culture.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION

Ph.D., Educational Leadership and Learning Technologies- Drexel University, 2013

Academic Program: School of Education

Dissertation: *How Can Restorative Practices Decrease School to Pipeline Occurrences for Black Male Students?*

Advisors: Charles Williams, III, Ph.D. and Elizabeth Haslam, Ph.D.

Program of Restorative Practices - International Institute of Restorative Practices, 2010

Academic Program: Education (12 Credits)

Ph.R.D., Theological Applications - Heath School of Theology, 1999

Concentration: Educational Administration

Thesis: *Creating Holistic Experiences in Schools*

Advisor: Dr. Janice Bowden

Principal Certification - University of Cheney of Pennsylvania, 1998

Concentration*: Elementary Instructional I*

Instructional II granted by Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2005

Certificate of Advanced Studies, Reading Specialist - Arcadia University, 1990

Thesis: *Character Development Through Multicultural Literature*

Advisor: Dr. Fran Emory

M.Ed., Educational Technology - Arcadia University, 1986

Special Project: *Technology and Early Childhood Curriculum Planning*

B.S., **Psychology** - LaSalle University, 1978

Concentration: Experimental Psychology

Research: *Do Students of Color Feel Less Comfort with Campus Life at Small White College?*

Advisor: Dr. Joan Faye Pritchard

RESEARCH , PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

- Restorative Practices and Racial Trauma	2013
- Restorative Justice For All	2009
- Frozen Time Symposium	2007
- Character Education vs. Nurturing Wisdom	2004
- Pros and Cons of Military Academy In Review	2004
- What Can We Do About Mustafa?	2003
- Spirituality in Schools	2002
- Wounded Healers Symposium	2002
- Single Gender Classrooms and Black Males from K-8	2001
- Zero Expulsions and Suspensions: First Year of Practices in Review	2001
- Raising Horizons for Children and Families	2000

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

I served in the field of Education for more than 34 years. Service roles encompassed: Early Childhood Education, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Grade Teacher, Computer Science Teacher, Reading Specialist, School Administration and Chief Academic Officer. As a result of those experiences, I serve in a consulting capacity, where my passion for developing educators to meet social justice challenges in Education is executed.

EXPERIENCE

Raising Horizons, COH   9/1/2011 – Present
Blue Bell, Pennsylvania
Professional Role: EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
Services rendered:

- Perform research on Restorative Approaches including Cultural Restorative Practices, Restorative Justice and Restorative Counseling.
- Develop and implement Professional Development curriculum in Restorative Approaches for schools, workplaces, universities and organizations.
- Curriculum development on Restorative Justice/ Restorative Practices in Teacher Education and Pedagogy Class work.
- Provide advocacy support to individuals, families and organizations for the promotion of Restorative Justice alternatives.
- Public advocacy services for the promotion of Restorative Approaches alternatives in school and juvenile criminal justice systems.

Youth Alternatives, Inc.   9/10/2006 – 8/31/2011
Cheltenham, Pennsylvania
Professional Role: EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT
Service rendered:
- Training behavioral specialists in mediation and Restorative Practices,
- Facilitating Restorative Circles and Conferences.
- Provide educational support services to young adults and families in the area Special Education advocacy and family mediation and counseling services.

Raising Horizons Quest Charter School   7/1/2000 – 6/30/2006
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Positions: FOUNDER AND CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER
- Provided oversight of the instructional and operational school performance of the nation's first aerospace and aviation charter school;
- Established nation's first charter elementary school having single gender classes for grades 1 through 8.
- Facilitated reading across curriculum and beyond challenges project, which lead school as second most improved reading performance in the State;
- Developed integrated mathematics curriculum lead school to being most improved in mathematics on District testing.
- Developed cutting edge partnership relations with companies, faith based and cultural arts educators and other notable community based organizations;
- Applying innovation and diligently implemented charter's mission and vision where students were not suspended or expelled but more restorative approaches to wrong doing were implemented;
- Provided ongoing research in non-traditional discipline and student support services.
- Established Philadelphia's first military immersion program for boys.
- Reported to the Board of Trustees.

Imhotep Charter High / Imani Education Circle Charter School   9/1/1999 – 6/30/2000
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Position: EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST
Services: Provided instruction through technology for students in kindergarten through Grade twelve; Supported Administrative needs. Reported to CAO

School District of Philadelphia   9/1/1987 – 8/31/1999
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Position: COMPUTER SCIENCE TEACHER
Service: Provided instruction in electronic learning for grades kindergarten through Eight; Taught reading improvement strategies using learning technologies; Received letter of accommodation from School Superintendent (1992); Conducted technology conference training; Reported to School Principal.

Archdiocese of Philadelphia   9/1/1982 – 8/31/1987
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Position: GRADE TEACHER
Service: Taught core curriculum for all subject areas for grades four through six;
                Reported to School Principal.

Star Achievement Children's Center   7/12/1980 – 8/31/1982
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Position: DIRECTOR
Service: Provided supervision of staff for small day care center of 32 children. Developed
                curriculum, Created rosters, Trained and evaluated teachers and assistant teachers;
                Reported to Proprietor.

Mental Retardation Center   8/15/1978 – 6/30/1980
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania
Position: VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELOR
Service: Provided vocational training and counseling for adults having mental retardation
                disability. Participated in training programs and developed self-advocacy skills
                workshops for mentally retarded adults.

PUBLICATIONS, EXHIBITS AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Patriots of African Descent: Invisible Heroes
of the American Revolution   1991
Patriots of African Descent during the Valley Forge
Encampment Exhibition   1993
Raising Horizons Quest Aerospace and Character Curriculum   1999
Integrated Mathematics Curriculum   2002
Character Education Through African Fables   2004
Dissertation Research: 2013
How Can Restorative Practices Decrease School to Pipeline
 Occurrences for Black Male Students?

CERTIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL TRAINING

African Spirituality and Restorative Justice   2012
International Institute for Restorative Practices   2010
Frozen Time Symposium on Addiction Healing   2007
Principled Centered Leadership   2003
Pennsylvania Certification in Elementary Principal   1998
Pennsylvania Certification in Reading Specialist   1990

AFFILIATIONS

National Association of Black School Educators   Current
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated   1975 - Present

Charter Member of the Valley Forge Alumnae Chapter	1993 - Present
International Reading Association	1990 – 2008
Association of Curriculum and Supervision	1998 – 2006
National Charter School Authorizers Association	2003 – 2006

AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

$500,000.00 Technology Grant Award	1988
National Endowment of Humanities Grant Award	1992
"Commemorating Patriots of African Descent"	1992
Erected Monument "Patriots of African Descent"	1993
U.S. Department of Interior Conference on Reclamation	1995
Quest Charter School PA Department of Education Grant	1998
Raising Horizons Quest Charter School Proposal Approved	2000
Most Improved Charter School Recognition	2003
Martin L. King Education Drum Major Award	2005
Restorative Practices Curriculum Development for Colleges	2011

REFERENCES

Personal and professional references are available upon request.