

## ABSTRACT

Johnnye Waller. AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE CAREER DECISIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC TEACHERS. (Under the direction of Dr. Marjorie Ringler) Department of Educational Leadership, April, 2010.

There is a need for culturally diverse teachers. Weiher (2000) studied the relationship between African American and Hispanic student achievement and schools with teachers from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Results indicated the greater the difference between the percentage of ethnically diverse teachers and the percentage of diverse students, the lower the percentage of students who score proficient on the state test.

Exposure to various cultural experiences is important to quality education (Anda 1984; Eubanks & Weaver, 1999; Irvine, 1989; King, 1993; Morris, 1990). These experiences prepare students for success in a global market.

In 2004 Hobson-Horton and Owens found almost one third of the student population was non-white, compared to 12% of the teacher population. A lack of ethnically diverse teachers fosters a need to learn about the career decision of African American and Hispanic teachers.

Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994) developed social cognitive career theory (SCCT) which suggests that occupational interests extend from three cognitive variables including self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent & Brown, 1996). Self-efficacy is a person's beliefs in his capabilities to successfully engage in an activity and develops from past performances, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and anxiety management. The origin of

self-efficacy relates to one's family, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and level of educational experiences (Betz, 2004).

According to Hackett and Byars (1996) the research on career development has not addressed the influences of race and ethnicity. Due to this lack of research, the focus of this research was upon vicarious learning and social persuasion, which deal with cultural and familial influences.

Findings indicated that vicarious learning had an impact on the career decision-making process for African American and Hispanic teachers. Social persuasion had little influence on the decision making process.

Recommendations for the school district were to begin early developing an awareness of teaching as a career. Interested students should be involved in "teaching experiences". Assigning a mentoring teacher provides vicarious learning opportunities. The district should provide a "Grow Your Own" scholarship program. Community support was essential for encouraging teachers to move into the district.

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE CAREER DECISIONS OF  
AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC TEACHERS

A Dissertation

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by

Johnnye Waller

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE CAREER DECISIONS OF  
AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC TEACHERS

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

According to King (1993) the role of teachers with different ethnic backgrounds is a critical educational issue. African American students need teachers “who can understand and teach within the context of the African American experience and who believe and expect them to be successful” (King, 1993, p. 475). King states that African American teachers are needed by all students to serve as role models of success. African American teachers maintain a critical position in developing and providing culturally significant pedagogy (King).

Eubanks and Weaver (1999) suggest that teachers of different ethnic backgrounds are essential to the education of all students. African American and Hispanic teachers come to school with “an awareness of their own culture combined with a full immersion in the majority culture” (Eubanks & Weaver, 1999, p. 453). These teachers are crucial as cultural translators. They assist in making connections between the school, the home, and the community for both fellow teachers and for students.

De Anda (1984) defines a cultural translator as one “who serves to facilitate the socialization of the minority individual to the norms of the majority culture” (p. 103). The translator is a person from an ethnically diverse culture who has successfully experienced socialization to the majority culture (de Anda). Based upon one’s own experiences the translator is able to provide information that facilitates an understanding of the values and perceptions of the majority

culture. A cultural translator can suggest alternative means to successfully deal with the demands of the majority culture without compromising ethnic values and norms. De Anda adds that the success of future generations in dealing with acculturation is dependent upon the number of cultural translators who have successfully coped with the pressures of the majority culture.

Irvine (1989) states African American teachers are important cultural translators for the student who finds the school culture different from that of his home and community. White teachers find it difficult to understand the ethnically diverse student's behavior, physical movements, verbal and nonverbal language, values, worldview, home environment, and learning styles. When the non-white student's culture is misunderstood, it is likely that one will experience cultural distancing resulting in low achievement and behavior concerns. This leads to miscommunication between the teacher and the student (Irvine). According to Irvine the non-white teacher is needed to assist the student in becoming multicultural, which means appreciating the values, norms, and expectations of the white and non-white majority cultures.

There are three reasons which Eubanks and Weaver (1999) cite regarding the importance of teachers with different ethnic backgrounds in the education of all students. The first of these relates to the concept that African American and Hispanic students need teachers who have similar cultural experiences and who serve as successful role models. According to Eubanks and Weaver, African American and Hispanic teachers serve as role models to all students. Second, it



is important for all students to learn from teachers who reflect different backgrounds (Eubanks & Weaver). The global marketplace of today brings with it a multicultural environment that requires educators who reflect the diversity students will encounter in their daily life. The third reason suggests that teachers with different ethnic backgrounds bring a variety of life experiences and viewpoints that enhance the quality of education for all students. A culturally diverse teaching staff adds intensity to teaching and learning (Eubanks & Weaver). African American and Hispanic teachers tend to be more responsive to a child's cultural background, maintain higher expectations for children with different ethnic backgrounds, and incorporate social justice into their teaching (Eubanks & Weaver).

Morris (1990) concurs that a quality education, which prepares students for success in a global market, requires all students to be exposed to a variety of cultural perspectives that represent the nation at large. Due to the lack of African American and Hispanic teachers, the average American may have as few as two African American or Hispanic teachers during his elementary, middle, and high school education. Many will not have an African American or Hispanic teacher during their entire education career.

#### Statement of the Problem

##### *A Limited Number of African American and Hispanic Teachers*

Quality education incorporates the ideal that students are exposed to a variety of cultural experiences (Morris, 1990; Eubanks & Weaver, 1999; King,

1993; Anda 1984; Irvine 1989). The United States continues to reflect an increasing level of racial and ethnic diversity. While the percentage of the white population in the United States grew only 5.9% between 1990 and 2000, the African American population grew 15.6% and the Hispanic population grew 57.9% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). This increasing level of diversity is projected to continue. According to the U. S. Department of Education (2007) between 2005 and 2050 the non-white population is expected to increase by 32% as compared to only 4% for the white population. By 2050 the non-white population is projected to comprise 39% of the total population.

The student population in the United States closely mirrors the increasing level of diversity evidenced in the total population. The U. S. Department of Education (2007) reported in the year 1995, 65% of the student population was white. By the year 2000 the white student population decreased to 61% and by 2006 it further declined to 56%. Between 1993 and 2003 the non-white student population increased from 34% to 41%. The Hispanic student population evidenced the largest increase while the African American student population remained relatively stable (National Center of Education Statistics [NCES], 2007).

In 1993, 33% of the student population was non-white in contrast to 13% of the teaching force (NCES, 2007). According to Hobson-Horton and Owens (2004) almost one third of the student population in the United States was non-white. This number compared to only 12% of the teacher population. The U. S.

Department of Education (2007) cited the percentage of white teachers as 84.4 while the percentage of white students was 60.3. The percentage of African American teachers was 8.3 in comparison to 16.8% of the student population. Hispanics represented only 5.7% of teachers but 17.7% of students. Asians comprised 1.3% of teachers and 3.9% of students. American Indians represented only .4 % of teachers and 1.3 % of students. According to NCES (2009) in 2008 83% of all teachers were white, 7% Black, and 7.1% Hispanic. To provide more quality education to all students it is important to have a culturally diverse teaching staff (Eubanks & Weaver, 1999). A diverse staff provides opportunities for all students to learn from teachers who represent a wide range of cultural and ethnic experiences (Morris, 1990).

Statistics show there is a lack of ethnically diverse teachers to serve an increasingly diverse student population. These demographics foster a need to know more about the research relevant to the career decision making process of African American and Hispanic teachers.

#### *Factors that Influence Career Choice*

Research into factors which influence vocational decisions refers to Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory. This theory is a major work in the investigation of the career development process. According to Bandura (1997) behavior, personal variables, and the environment interact with and shape one another. Through cognitive self-regulation a person evaluates the outcomes of and external responses to his behavior and forms self-efficacy beliefs regarding his

ability to perform the activity (Bandura). Betz (2006) defines self-efficacy as confidence in one's ability to perform and persist in an activity.

Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994) used Bandura's social cognitive theory as a basis for the development of social cognitive career theory (SCCT). SCCT represents a framework for understanding the relationships between personal, contextual, and socio-cognitive variables that affect the formation of vocational interests, career goals, and actions (Lent et al., 1994). The theory suggests that occupational and academic interests develop primarily from three cognitive variables which include self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent & Brown, 1996). Interest in an activity develops when a person views himself to be efficacious in the activity and also expects positive outcomes as a result of participating in the activity. Personal inputs, such as race and background factors, including gender role socialization, contribute to occupationally relevant self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations (Lent & Brown).

Self-efficacy is defined as a person's beliefs in his capabilities to successfully engage in a specific behavior or activity (Betz, 2004). Self-efficacy is an important concept and has an impact on the behaviors or activities in which a person chooses to become involved. The four sources of information that explain the initial development of perceived self-efficacy include past performances, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and anxiety management. These sources

are capable of building or strengthening the level of perceived self-efficacy. The causes are, therefore, integrated into the interventions (Betz, 2004).

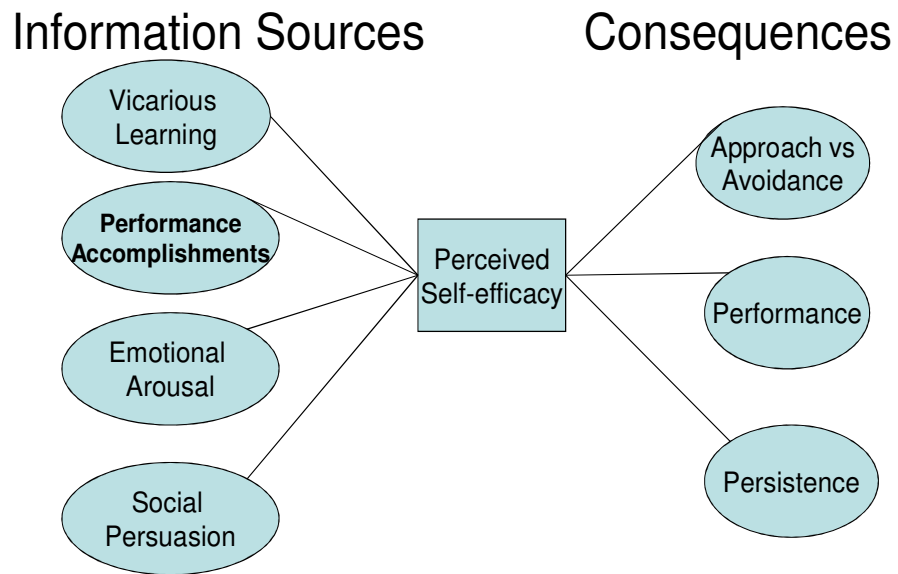
The origin of self-efficacy relates to one's family, background variables including gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and level of educational experiences (Betz, 2004). The strength of the relationships between the four information sources of self-efficacy tends to increase one's level of confidence in considering different careers and pursuing new activities. Hackett and Byars (1996) agree that successful performance accomplishments are usually the most influential source of information of self-efficacy; however, in some circumstances the other three sources for self-efficacy may be stronger influences on career decisions. Typically, past performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and emotional arousal interact to influence academic achievement and career selection (Hackett & Byars). Much research has been completed in the area of past performance accomplishments; therefore, the focus of research for this study will be vicarious learning and social persuasion.

According to Betz (2004) there are at least three behavioral consequences of self-efficacy. These include (a) approach versus avoidance behavior, (b) quality of the performance of the behavior, and (c) persistence in the face of obstacles or negative experiences. As a result of these behavioral consequences a person sets personal goals that are influenced by the self-appraisal of his capabilities (Betz, 2004). These self-efficacy expectations predict the extent to which one considers various careers and college majors. Students will pursue

occupations which they consider to be related to those for which they feel efficacious. Higher levels of self-efficacy will allow a person to engage in an activity, increase the level of performance, and increase one's willingness to persist when faced with difficulty. Low self-efficacy creates anxiety responses which interfere with quality performance and leads to a lack of confidence in one's ability to pursue the behavior. Self efficacy (see Figure 1) becomes a "self-fulfilling prophecy" (Betz, 2004).

In terms of deciding upon a career, approach versus avoidance behavior is one of the most significant concepts (Betz, 2004). According to Betz (2004) approach behavior describes what a person will try. Avoidance behavior describes what a person will not try. When a person avoids a behavior he has no chance to learn or to participate. Avoidance behavior affects the types of educational majors and careers a person will attempt (Betz, 2004).

Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (2001) concur that perceived self-efficacy significantly impacts career selection. Those who have a high degree of perceived efficacy in regard to fulfilling educational and occupational requirements are more open to a greater number of career options, prepare themselves better for various careers, and are more likely to remain firm in their career choice when they encounter challenges. Bandura et al. conclude people avoid those careers they believe are beyond their abilities no matter how great the reward.



*Figure 1.* Schematic representation of Bandura's (1997) theory of perceived self-efficacy.

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*Note.* From *Self-efficacy theory as a basis for career assessment*, 2000, *Journal of Career Assessment*, 8, 207. Copyright 2000 by Nancy E. Betz. Reprinted with permission.

### *Social Cognitive Career Theory and African Americans and Hispanics*

SCCT is a recent approach to understanding career decisions, especially for African American and Hispanic students. It addresses the development of vocational interests, occupational choices, and career success (Lent & Brown, 1996). This theory suggests that occupational and academic interests develop primarily from self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations. These may or may not accurately reflect one's true ability to perform a specific career. The inaccurate beliefs may lead to faulty self-efficacy and barriers to selecting a career (Lent & Brown).

Self-efficacy is a key concept of SCCT that helps to explain career development, especially for African American and Hispanic students. Variables such as self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals are integrated with a person's gender, race, ethnicity, and their environment which provides either barriers or support in making career decisions (Betz, 2004). Many non-white students have limited exposure to the occupational and academic experiences that can contribute to strong self-efficacy (Church, Teresa, Rosebrook, & Szendre, 1992). This makes it important to assist African American and Hispanic students understand and overcome the effects of perceived barriers and negative outcomes which impact self-efficacy beliefs (Weiler, 2000).

According to Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy gender, race/ethnicity, social economic status, and generational status are likely mediators of access to efficacy information (Betz, 2006). The concept of self-



efficacy may cause students to avoid careers as well as hinder performance and persistence in pursuing goals (Betz, 2006). In order to encourage African American and Hispanic students to become teachers, it is important to find ways to increase the student's interest in teaching as a career and to gain confidence in his ability to become a successful teacher.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify if vicarious learning and social persuasion, two sources of self-efficacy, are significant factors in the decision to become a teacher. A rural school district located in the south-central region of North Carolina served as the study population. The district has 813 teachers. Of this number 49 are African American, 7 are Hispanic, and 1 is Native American. The ethnic diversity of the student population is changing. There are a total of 12,098 students in the county. Of this number 19% are African American and 9% are Hispanic.

The comparison between the student and teacher demographics for the study population closely mirrors that of the United States. From 2001 to 2009 the district's African American student population decreased from 24% to 19% while the Hispanic student population grew from 5% to 9%. Only 6% of the county's total teacher population is African American. The number of Hispanic teacher has increased from two to seven during this time period; however, the percentage of Hispanic teachers remains less than one percent of the total teacher population.

For this research 6 teachers (3 African American, 2 Hispanic, and 1 Native American) were interviewed to determine what factors contributed to their decision to become a teacher. Information was coded to identify common themes. Demographic information was used to recognize common characteristics between the participants. As an additional source of information, participants completed Schaub's Learning Experiences Questionnaire. This instrument measures the strength of the four informational sources of self-efficacy. The responses on this instrument were used to determine the degree of influence vicarious learning and social persuasion had on the participant's career decision-making process. Data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed to determine if it supported information revealed during the personal interviews. As shown in Figure 2, the focus of the study was to determine if vicarious learning and social persuasion impacted the career decision making process of this purposefully selected sample of African American and Hispanic teachers.

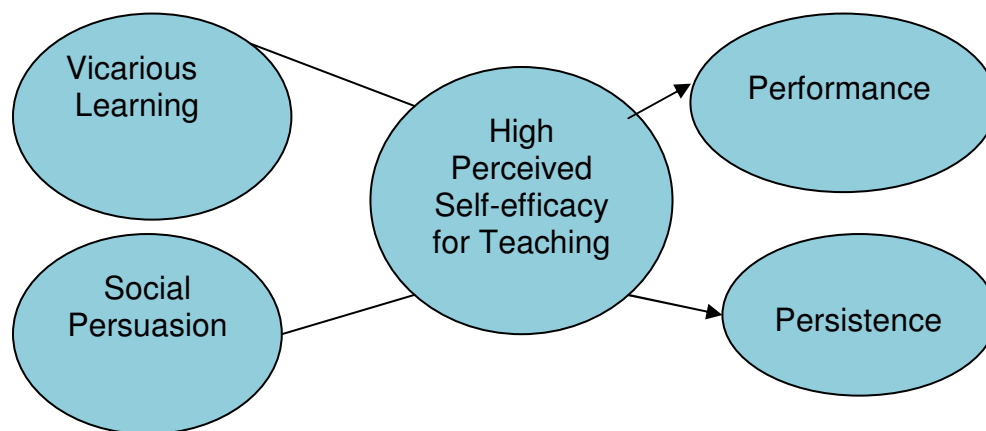
The following research questions will be addressed:

1. What factors influenced the career choice of African American and Hispanic teachers?
2. What recruitment factors influenced African American and Hispanic teachers to pursue a career in the school district being studied?

By understanding the motivators and factors that impacted the career decision of these African American and Hispanic teachers, it may be possible to positively influence the number of students who enter the profession.

Informational Sources of Self-efficacy

Consequences



*Figure 2. Conceptual framework for this study.*

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Note. Adapted from Self-efficacy theory as a basis for career assessment, 2000, *Journal of Career Assessment*, 8, 207. Copyright 2000 by Nancy E. Betz.

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### Significance of the Study

There is a special need for African American and Hispanic teachers. Weiher (2000) used data from 540 school districts and 668 campuses in Texas to address the relationship between African American and Hispanic student achievement and schools that included teachers from different ethnic backgrounds. Weiher's research concluded that the greater the shortfall between the district percentage of ethnically diverse teachers and the district percentage of African American and Hispanic students, the lower the percentage of district African American and Hispanic students passing the state achievement test.

Quiocho and Rios (2000) conclude there is a need for African American and Hispanic teachers because they bring with them success in school and in their home culture that will assist them in being empathetic toward and skilled in crossing cultural boundaries in the school contexts. These "cultural mediation skills" strengthen their potential for effectiveness in teaching and enhance global awareness. African American and Hispanic teachers have a greater sense of how to develop culturally relevant curriculums and to understand the human, social, and collective nature of teaching and learning (Quiocho & Rios).

If African American and Hispanic teachers are important to the education of all students, policymakers and educational leaders must find ways to recruit more. Complicating this task is the fact that today prospective teachers have access to a greater number of careers that offer higher pay, more status, and opportunities for advancement (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

In order to impact the education of all students, educational leaders need to be concerned with finding ways to encourage African American and Hispanic students to become teachers. Eubanks and Weaver (1999) and Morris (1990) found the presence of African American and Hispanic teachers adds intensity to teaching and learning. If vicarious learning and social persuasion impact the career decision making process of African American and Hispanic teachers, educational leaders need to develop strategies that will strengthen these sources of self-efficacy. There is a need for leaders to look to the people who know who and where future teachers may be. This means not only to black colleges but to the black community to the black churches, sororities and fraternities (Lee, 2003).

### Research Methodology

An exploratory study was used to identify the significance of the informational sources of self-efficacy in the decision to become a teacher. A lot of research has already been done on the importance of past performance on the career decision-making process of teachers; however, there is little research on the influence of family and culture. For these reasons the primary focus of this research was on social persuasion and vicarious learning. Demographic data collected from each participant was essential in developing a clearer understanding of factors related to entering and remaining in the teaching profession. Through the use of personal interviews each participant told his or her story of how and why they became a teacher. Comparing the stories lead to

the identification of common elements which related to the career decision of African American and Hispanic teachers.

Collecting data incorporates a variety of methods. The more methods that are utilized the more accurate the findings (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005). In order to strengthen the findings for the exploratory research, each interviewed teacher completed the Learning Experiences Questionnaire (LEQ), a 120-item self-report questionnaire developed to estimate the respondents' standing on Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy information (Schaub & Tokar, 2003). Career decision making information obtained from the interviews was compared to the strength of the responses on the LEQ measuring these sources of self-efficacy.

#### Definition of Terms

The following terms and definitions are provided for the purpose of facilitating a more complete understanding of the research:

*Social cognitive theory* - The theory maintains that people are capable of self-reflection and self-control which enables them to be active shapers rather than passive reactors to their environment. As a result people are able to exercise control over their behavior and influence their environment (Maddux, 1995).

*Social cognitive career theory* - The theory is an attempt to understand how career decisions are made. It emphasizes the relationships between self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent, 2005).

*Self-efficacy* - Self-efficacy relates to a person's beliefs about his ability to accomplish a task regardless of his actual ability. This set of beliefs about one's ability is acquired and later modified based upon four informational sources. These include personal performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and physiological and affective states (Maddux, 1995).

*Personal performance accomplishments* - This source of information relates to how well a person has performed in the past. These often become self-fulfilling prophecies (Maddux, 1995).

*Vicarious learning experiences* - Vicarious learning experiences primarily refer to modeling. We learn from watching others. Models may be significant if they are personally relevant to the observer (Hackett, 1995).

*Social persuasion* - Persuasion stems from verbal information and messages, encouragement and discouragement. Encouragement may strengthen self-efficacy if it is fitting with the actual performed behavior (Hackett, 1995).

*Anxiety management* - Learning new behaviors increase anxiety. High levels of anxiety negatively impact self-efficacy while moderate levels may be facilitating (Hackett, 1995).

*Outcome expectations* - Outcome expectations refer to beliefs about the consequences of performing certain behaviors (Lent, 2005, chap.5).

*Personal goals* - Personal goals are defined as a person's intention to become involved in a particular activity (Lent, 2005).

*Vocational interests* - Patterns of likes, dislikes, and indifference regarding career related activities and occupation (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994).

*Highly qualified teacher* - Highly qualified refers to any public elementary school or secondary school teacher who has a bachelor's degree, has obtained full State certification as a teacher or passed the State teacher licensing examination, has proven they know each subject they teach, and holds a license to teach in the State. The teacher has not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis (United States Department of Education, 2004).

#### Limitations of the Study

Information obtained from the personal interviews provides opportunities for subjectivities. According to Gall et al. (2005) self-reports reveal the individual's feelings. The truth may be concealed simply because the participant does not wish others to know. For this reason it is important to establish a positive, trusting relationship with research participants assuring them of the confidentiality of their responses. Establishing trust facilitates more accurate responses (Gall et al., 2005). This research was dependent upon personal interviews; therefore, there are researcher biases that may have influenced the interpretation of the qualitative data.

Social cognitive career theory and general social cognitive theory emphasize the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals. Each of these factors influences career choices (Lent, 2005).



Self-efficacy beliefs are acquired and later modified base upon personal performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and physiological and affective states. According to Lent (2005) the informational source which has the greatest impact upon self-efficacy is personal accomplishments. Bandura (1997) suggests the power of any mode of efficacy influence is contingent upon the strength of the other modes of influence. In an effort to extend research based on SCCT, the focus of the present study is to further an understanding of the impact on the career decision making process of only two of the four sources of self-efficacy. These include vicarious learning and social persuasion. The number of participants selected as the sample for this study was small due to the limited number of Hispanic and African American teachers in the school district. This sample is not representative of all North Carolina teachers with diverse ethnicity; therefore, findings cannot be generalized to all teachers in North Carolina.

#### Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction, defining the problem and establishing the rationale, the purpose, and justification of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature on selecting teaching as a career, social cognitive career theory, and the influence self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals have upon career choice. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology used in this study. Findings and data analysis will be presented in chapter 4. Chapter 5 presents conclusions,

implications, and recommendation for policy development and educational leadership.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of the literature related to factors which influence one's selection of a career. The chapter begins with research establishing the importance of self-efficacy beliefs in the career decision making process and then transitions to documentation of the need for African American and Hispanic teachers. The second section of the literature review looks at research into different models of understanding why African American and Hispanic students become teachers. Included in this review is a discussion of the educational pipeline, the theory of supply and demand, and the social cognitive career theory (SCCT). SCCT serves as the theoretical framework for this study and is thoroughly discussed in the third section of the literature review. The concept of self-efficacy is essential to SCCT and to the literature review regarding the career decision-making process of African American and Hispanic teachers. Self-efficacy beliefs are derived from four informational sources. These include personal performance, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and anxiety management. This section of the chapter concludes with a thorough discussion of vicarious learning and social persuasion, the sources of self-efficacy which are the focus of this exploratory study. The final section of the chapter deals with the impact of recruitment of African American and Hispanic teachers on the role of the educational leader.

## Career Decisions

Choosing a career is a lifelong process. One of the most important steps in selecting a career is to gain knowledge about one's interests, values, and abilities. It is essential to have an understanding regarding which career will fit with one's characteristics and needs. In an example cited by Smith and Fouad (1999) a student is described as doing well in math while in high school. She enjoys learning how things work by taking them apart. Her desire is to further her high school education by attending college. This student does not enjoy languages but she does enjoy sports and would like a career which she could combine with a family. After acquiring knowledge about various careers, the student learns many occupations require mathematical skills as well as a college education. Based upon the student's interests and needs one might conclude she would do well in the field of engineering because it requires strong math skills and a desire to understand how things work. However, if this same student does not see herself as having the ability to attend college, doubts her math abilities, and believes by pursuing a career as an engineer she will be unable to have a family, she has established barriers to engineering as a career. Smith and Fouad conclude she has low self-efficacy for math and her expected outcomes for a career in engineering are not positive.

Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (2001) completed a longitudinal study of 272 students ranging in ages from 11 to 15 years. The subjects were administered scales measuring their perceived self-efficacy

beliefs. Parents of the students completed scales of perceived parenting efficacy. Findings indicated that the parents, who strongly believed they could impact their child's scholastic development, maintain higher educational aspirations for their children. The perceived self-efficacy beliefs of the students influenced the types of occupations they believed they had the capabilities to perform. According to Bandar et al. these beliefs influenced the occupational level the students selected within their chosen career. Bandura et al. concluded when choosing a career one's perceived occupational self-efficacy is a more important factor than actual academic achievement. Unless a person believes he can succeed in a chosen career he will have little incentive to pursue the field; therefore, self-efficacy is an essential element in the career decision-making process (Bandura et al.).

### *Why Become a Teacher?*

With so many careers open to students why do some elect to become teachers? Today students who are considering teaching as a career must meet higher standards such as those outlined by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This Act mandates that teachers must be "highly qualified" in the area in which they plan to teach. Specific criteria are outlined by the legislation in order for a teacher to achieve this distinction. The accountability standards to which teachers are held are strict and demanding. In some districts teacher success is measured solely by how well students perform on required testing. Given these conditions one may ask, "Why are students electing to become teachers? Why

are they becoming teachers rather than selecting a career that is more prestigious and provides a higher level of compensation?”

Research suggests that most students become teachers due to intrinsically motivating factors. Smulyan (2004) conducted a 10 year longitudinal study of twenty-eight women each of whom became either a doctor or a teacher. There were common themes among the subjects as to why each chose their respective career. Teachers and doctors both chose their career because they were interested in helping others, contributing to society, and developing relationships. Doctors defined helping others in terms of meeting the needs of individuals while teachers wanted to help individuals develop their full potential. Both viewed their career as contributing to and improved society. The major difference between the two careers related to the level of status and power each holds. Doctors acknowledged that medicine is viewed as a highly prestigious and powerful profession. Most of the subjects in this study denied they entered the field of medicine simply because of the status level; however, they did acknowledge and appreciate this as a benefit of their career. Those who became teachers recognized the challenge the status level of the career imposes. Many of the subjects attributed the low status to the fact that teaching is viewed as “woman’s work”; however, they rationalize this issue by asserting they believe in the value of what they are teaching (Smulyan).

Sonia Nieto (2006) provides the reflections of seven teachers in regard to their reasons for becoming a teacher. These reasons coincide with those outlined

in the Smulyan (2004) findings. The underlying reason why each became a teacher was to make a difference. They expressed the idea that as a teacher one can make positive changes in the world by helping others better themselves. One of the participants described teaching as a “spiritual experience” that has life-long implications and brings peace and hope. According to Smulyan and Nieto students become teachers because they want to make a difference.

In order to understand the motivators and factors which impact the decision of white and non-white students to become teachers, Nelson, Garmon, and Davis (2001) surveyed both white and non-white education majors at a public university to study the backgrounds, perceptions, concerns, and aspirations between the groups. A limitation of the study may be the fact there were only 46 non-white students in comparison to 365 white students participating in the study. Nelson et al. (2001) discovered students become teachers primarily for intrinsically motivating factors. Both white and non-white students in the study cited the same three reasons for becoming a teacher. These included working with children, having teachers as role models, and making a difference. The only exception was white students placed greater significance on the influence of role models. According to findings by Gordon (1993) non-white students become teachers due to the influence of a friend, family member, or a teacher.

According to Nelson et al. (2001) there are differences between white and non-white students entering college. White students enter college with more

advantages. These are related to the higher levels of income and education of their parents. With these advantages parents have more choices in regard to where the family lives and which schools their children attend. In turn these factors influence the educational and professional goals of their children. Non-white students who do not have these advantages face greater obstacles in attaining their goals (Nelson et al.).

### *Demand for Teachers*

In the United States the goal of the public school system is to provide high-quality instruction to all students. This goal requires an adequate supply of competent individuals who are willing and able to serve as teachers (Guarino, Snatibanez, & Daley, 2006). Professional standards are continually being upgraded to insure teachers know what they are teaching, they know how to teach by using effective instructional strategies, and they understand the developmental needs of children (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

According to The National Center for Education Statistics [NCES] (2008) the number of new teacher hires in public schools was estimated at 285,000 in 2005. This projection is expected to increase by 28% in 2017 to include 364,000 new hires. New teachers are needed to meet the demands of replacing teachers who are leaving the profession, filling newly created positions, reducing class size in kindergarten through third grade, addressing special needs and conditions, and meeting new educational requirements (Florida Department of Education, 2008).



One question which impacts the demand for teachers is, “Why do teachers leave the profession?” According to the NCES (2007), one-third of America’s teachers leave the profession during the first three years and one-half leave during the first five years. This statistic is even higher in low income and rural areas. Many teachers leave the profession because they receive little or no parental support for their students and because they need to earn more money (NCES).

The National Commission on Teacher and America’s Future (2002) reports that in 1999 there were 232,000 teachers hired. Of this number only 85,000 were new teachers just completing their degree program. During this same year 287,000 teachers left the profession which means 55,000 more teachers left than were hired. The turnover rate for teachers is approximately 15.7% in comparison to only 11% of all other careers (National Commission on Teacher and America’s Future). Institutions in the United States with teacher education programs increased from 1287 to 1354 between 1984 and 1998. Those students graduating as teachers increased 50% from 1999 to 2000 (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future). These statistics indicate the demand for teachers is due more to the high turnover rate than to a lack of supply.

According to the Education Commission of the States (2007) teachers are more effective after their first several years of teaching. Students pay a price for the high teacher turnover rate. Inexperienced teachers may negatively impact

student achievement. Teacher quality makes a difference in regard to student performance. Schmoker (2006) contends that instruction is the single greatest determinant of learning and has the greatest impact on student achievement. Socioeconomic factors or funding resources do not impact learning as much as the quality of instruction (Schmoker). According to Weiss and Pasley (2004) high quality instruction engages students in worthwhile content that builds on prior knowledge. It has meaning and connection to the real world. Quality instruction insures that students are challenged in a meaningful and worthwhile curriculum that is appropriate for their level of development. Sophisticated questioning strategies are utilized which foster the development of problem solving skills, higher-order thinking strategies, and the establishment of a climate that respects student ideas, questions, and contributions (Weiss & Pasley).

The teacher shortage indicates that many teachers are dissatisfied and are leaving the profession. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2002) lists the following factors which foster teacher dissatisfaction: poor administrative support; lack of faculty influence; classroom intrusions; inadequate time; poor salary; student discipline problems; poor student motivation; and class sizes that are too large. Reasons teachers cite for leaving the profession include: school staffing action; family or personal; dissatisfaction; pursue another career; and retirement. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future acknowledges a teacher shortage in certain subject areas including math,

science, and special education. There are too few teacher candidates as well as an especially high attrition rate in these subject areas to meet the demands.

While much research attributes the shortage to the fact that teachers are leaving the profession, Nelson et al. (2001) state otherwise. They concluded while the student population is increasing there are fewer students electing to become teachers. Nelson et al. found this fact of particular concern as it relates to African American and Hispanic students. African American and Hispanic teachers are needed to serve as role models for all students; especially for those who represent ethnic diversity (Eubanks & Weaver, 1999).

#### Theoretical Models for the Career Decision of African American and Hispanic Teachers

SCCT represents one approach to understanding why students enter the teaching profession. There are other theories and research surrounding career choice and development for all students, especially African American and Hispanic students. Research into factors influencing the career decision of African American and Hispanic teachers is significant to recruitment policy development. Understanding these factors will identify areas in which strategies and incentives may be introduced that will encourage students, particularly African American and Hispanic students, to become teachers.

#### *The Educational Pipeline for Potential African American and Hispanic Teachers*

The time between when a person decides to become a teacher and when he actually enters the profession is described as the “educational pipeline”

(Morris, 1990). Henke, Chen, Geis, and Knepper (2000) include preparatory activities such as considering teaching, student teaching, becoming certified to teach, applying for a teaching position, teaching experience, and planning for the future as being within the educational pipeline.

For African American and Hispanic teachers the educational pipeline is “fraught with leaks all along the way”. These “leaks” may include the fact that African American and Hispanic students enter school already at risk because many of their parents have incomes below the poverty line, a greater rate of unemployment, and are less likely to have a college education (Henke et al., 2000). An additional factor may relate to a lack of quality health care for non-whites in comparison to that of whites. This finding may result in a higher mortality rate for African American and Hispanic children (Henke et al.).

Gushue, Scanlan, Pantzer, and Clarke (2006) state adolescence is an important development period for discovering potential careers. During high school students are making important decisions that will influence career plans. For the African American student there may be many challenges. These may include “a scarcity of economic resources within their families of origin, schools, and communities; a lack of accessible career role models; and the existence of systemic and institutional discrimination based on race” (Gushue et al., 2006, p. 20). African Americans are often over represented in low paying and low status jobs and are frequently denied opportunities for advancement (Gushue et al.).

According to Gordon (1994) many African American and Hispanic students do not enter the educational pipeline to become teachers due to negative experiences they had in school. Based upon interviews with over 140 teachers, Gordon focused upon the question, "Why do you think African American and Hispanic students are not going into teaching?" The answers centered on educational experiences, cultural and community concerns, and social and economic obstacles. White teachers may face many of these same obstacles; however, certain issues are more common and intense to the African American and Hispanic experience (Gordon). Many teachers interviewed by Gordon referred to negative experiences in school, as the most common educational reason African American and Hispanic students were not selecting teaching as a career. These experiences represented

a lack of adequate academic preparation and poor counseling for students of color as well as lack of adequate preparation on the part of teachers to work with students from diverse backgrounds, resulting in students dropping out or being pushed out of the system (p. 351).

Gordon (1994) found low pay and the negative perception of the teaching profession to be the most significant social and economic obstacles to becoming a teacher. Another major finding was that African American and Hispanic students are being discouraged from entering the teacher educational pipeline (Gordon). Those who are not academically successful are told they cannot survive in college while those who are achieving are encouraged to pursue more

prestigious positions that will offer a way out of poverty. Many low-income students are told they simply cannot afford college (Gordon).

King (1993) administered two questionnaires, one to prospective teachers and one to beginning teachers. These questionnaires explored reasons and influences why non-white students decided to become teachers. Based upon the research findings King concluded there may be more than one influential period during which a student enters the educational pipeline to become a teacher. The most common time period for the subjects in King's research was the undergraduate years. If the student had a very strong role model, elementary school offered another influential period in selecting teaching as a career

According to King (1993) the decision to become a teacher for African American and Hispanic students is strongly influenced by individuals and conditions affecting society. The most influential individuals include family members, college teachers, siblings, peers, and colleagues. An even more important factor impacting the decision to teach is the fact there are few African American and Hispanic teacher to serve as role models. African American and Hispanic students desire to fill this void (King). These students recognize the need for non-white teachers. They realize the poor conditions of the African American and Hispanic communities and desire to enter a service occupation in which they can make a difference in alleviating these circumstances (King).

African American and Hispanic students become teachers for a variety of other reasons. According to King (1993) these include:

the opportunity to work with young people; the feeling their abilities were well suited to teaching; social justice which includes the belief that teaching contributed to the betterment of society; the feeling that teaching provided one with the opportunity to be creative; the perception that teaching provided the opportunity to work with students of diverse backgrounds with diverse needs; the intellectual challenge that teaching provides; and the desire for good vacation times (pp. 479-280).

Career development research has recently begun to note the importance of childhood and adolescence as a time for entering the educational pipeline. As a child one is exposed to the various careers by observing parents and other important adult role models. Children learn about careers through family relationships (Wright & Perrone, 2008). Ginzberg's (1952) theory of career selection was one of the first to address the importance of the childhood era. According to Ginzberg there are two phases of occupational choice. The first is fantasy choice (prior to age 11) and the second is tentative choice which is between the ages of 11 and 14. During the tentative period a student's career aspirations are due to interest with little consideration of ability or talent. Trice and Knapp (1992) found the similarities between a child's career goal and their mother's occupation was higher than with their father's occupation. The strong influence of the mother may be because children know more about their mother's job. Wahl and Blackhurst (2000) outlined two developmental tasks related to career choice. These include identifying with a worker (ages 5-10) and

developing the habits of industry (ages 10-15). It is during these times that identification with an adult worker is important (Wahl & Blackhurst).

### *Supply and Demand*

The economic labor market theory of supply and demand is the basis for this career-decision making model. Economically, it is important to consider if the high cost of a college education to become a teacher is a sound decision. Boe and Gilford (1992) discussed additional factors which impact the supply and demand for teachers. Social variables address the fact that in the past women and non-whites became teachers because other careers were not accessible to them. As a result of political issues many people became teachers during the Vietnam War in order to receive a deferment. Today military personnel are retiring and entering the teaching profession as a second career (Boe & Gilford).

Guarino, Santibanez, and Daley (2006) suggest limited resources, which include wages and working conditions, make it difficult to recruit a sufficient number of effective teachers to deliver quality instruction. The demand for teachers is defined by Guarino et al. (2006) as “the number of teaching positions offered at a given level of overall compensation” (p. 2). The supply is defined as “the number of qualified individuals willing to teach at a given level of overall compensation” (Guarino et al., p. 2). Overall compensation includes salaries, anticipated future earnings, benefits, working conditions, and intrinsic rewards. A teacher shortage occurs when the demand is greater than the supply. Guarino et



al. conclude students will enter the teaching profession when it represents the most satisfying career among others that are available to them.

Boe and Gilford (1992) strongly consider the qualifications of teachers and the quality of teaching in their discussion of supply and demand. In general terms demand is the total number of teaching positions funded by local education agencies. This number is determined by student enrollment, teacher-student ratio policies, and available funding. Additional considerations when defining demand should address subject matter, grade levels, special needs of students, geographical region, and most importantly the need for teachers who are able to deliver quality instruction (Boe & Gilford). According to Boe and Gilford demand should further be defined by the characteristics of teachers needed to fill these positions. When these factors are considered, a relationship is established between teacher demand and teacher supply (Boe & Gilford).

An additional factor discussed by Boe and Gilford (1992) relating to teacher quality deals with the issue of matching teacher and student demographics. Quality of instruction for African American and Hispanic students includes the need for role models with similar characteristics. To address this issue it is important to increase the diversity among teachers and to increase the knowledge and awareness of different cultural and ethnic groups. In turn this diversity will better prepare all students to successfully interact with different cultures which are evident in a global workforce (Boe & Gilford).

## Theoretical Framework

### *Social Cognitive Theory*

Social cognitive theory is an expansion of social learning theory and was originally referred to as observational learning (Maddux, 1995). The theory is based upon the assumption that people learn by watching others and that cognitive processes mediate social learning. Learning is enhanced if there is a close relationship between the observer and the model. Environment, behavior, and cognition are interrelated and have an impact upon learning. The learner acquires knowledge as his environment comes together with his personal characteristics and experiences (Maddux).

Much of SCCT is based upon Albert Bandura's (1997) general social cognitive theory which provides "an approach to understanding human cognition, action, motivation, and emotion" (Maddux, 1995, p. 4). The theory maintains that people are capable of self-reflection and self-control which enable them to be active shapers rather than passive reactors to their environment (Bandura). As a result they exercise control over their behavior and influence their environment (Maddux, 1995). Cognition, the process of thought, is important as it allows an individual to decide whether or not to participate in an activity. It enables the person to assume control over his environment (Maddux).

According to social cognitive theory people respond cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally to their environment (Maddux, 1995). Through their actions people influence a situation which in turn impacts their thoughts, affect,

and future behaviors. People process and use information gained from the interaction of these responses to adjust their behavior, predict consequences, and set goals (Maddux). Behavior is not only shaped by learning and conditioning but by cognitive perceptions of learning experiences. According to Maddux this assumption, which is known as “triadic reciprocal causation” is the most important principle of social cognitive theory (p. 5).

Choice and freedom, as they relate to behavior are important elements in social cognitive theory. Maddux (1995) outlines the following as basic assumptions of social cognitive theory:

- (a) People have powerful symbolizing capabilities that allow for creation of internal models of experience, the development of innovative courses of action, the hypothetical testing of such courses of action through the prediction of outcomes, and the communication of complex ideas and experiences to others;
- (b) Most behavior is purposive or goal-directed and is guided by forethought;
- (c) People are self-reflective and capable of analyzing and evaluating their own thoughts and experiences. These metacognitive, self-reflective activities set the stage for self-control of thought and behavior;
- (d) People are capable of self-regulation by influencing direct control over their own behavior and by selecting or altering environmental conditions that, in turn, influence their behavior;
- (e) People learn vicariously by observing other people’s behavior and its consequences;
- (f) The previously mentioned capacities for symbolization,

self-regulation, and vicarious learning are the result of the evolution of complex neurophysiological mechanisms and structures; (g)

Environmental events, inner personal factors (cognition, emotion, and biological events), and behavior are mutually interacting influences. Thus, people respond cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally to environmental events; but, more important, through cognition they also exercise control over their own behavior, which then influences not only the environment but also cognitive, affective, and biological states (pp. 4-5).

Social cognitive theory emphasizes the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent, 2005). One's perceived self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1997) as beliefs regarding personal capability or ability to be successful at a given task. These beliefs effect behavior and are task specific. Perceived self-efficacy develops from performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and levels of anxiety (Bandura).

### *Social Cognitive Career Theory*

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) serves as the theoretical framework for understanding how career decisions are made. The theory is an effort to unify elements previously identified by other theorists and to organize them into a new exploration of the career decision-making process. Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994) developed a social cognitive framework (social cognitive career theory) to facilitate an understanding of factors influencing career decisions. The three

primary factors include: “(a) the formation and elaboration of career-related interests, (b) the selection of career and academic options, and (c) performance and persistence in educational and occupational pursuits” (Lent et al., 1994, p. 79). The theoretical model facilitates an understanding of the relationships between vocational interests, career choice goals, choice actions, and performance attainments (Lent et al.).

According to SCCT personal inputs, which include race and ethnicity, and background contextual characteristics, such as gender role socialization, contribute to occupationally relevant self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations (Dickinson, 2007). These personal inputs influence occupationally relevant personal performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and emotional arousal states, which are the informational sources for self-efficacy. Self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations contribute to the development of vocational interests which in turn influence vocational goals, actions, and performance (Dickinson).

There are many personal and environmental influences that strengthen, weaken, or override a person’s decision regarding one’s career development. SCCT suggests that occupational and academic interests develop primarily from three cognitive variables which include self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent & Brown, 1996). Interest in an activity develops when a person views himself to be efficacious in the activity and also

expects positive outcomes as a result of participating in the activity (Lent & Brown).

SCCT in comparison to social cognitive theory provides a more specific theoretical framework for the current research relating to the career decision-making process for African American and Hispanic teachers. SCCT addresses issues including culture and gender which may impact one's career choice (Lent, 2005). SCCT is an effort to unify and organize elements previously identified by others into a novel exploration of how people (a) develop vocational interests, (b) make and re-make career choices, and (c) realize varying levels of occupational success and constancy (Lent).

Bandura's social cognitive theory emphasized a model of interaction termed "triadic reciprocity" (Maddux, 1995, p. 5). According to this model (a) personal attributes, which include internal cognitive and affective states; (b) external environmental factors; and (c) overt behavior are interrelated and affect one another. It is primarily through "overt actions that people influence the situation that, in turn, affect their thoughts, affect, and subsequent behavior" (p, 82). There is a variety of cognitive, self-regulatory, and self-reflective processes which play an important role in guiding psycho-social functioning. According to Lent et al. (1994) SCCT emphasizes three social cognitive mechanisms that are significant to career development. As previously state these mechanisms include self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and goal representations (Lent et al.).

### *Social Cognitive Mechanism: Self-Efficacy*

Social cognitive career theory and general social cognitive theory emphasize the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals, all of which influence career choices (Lent, 2005). Self-efficacy, the first social cognitive mechanism that is significant to career development, is primarily concerned with cognitive factors (Lent). According to Maddux (1995) self-efficacy supports the idea that all processes operate through changes to an individual's sense of personal mastery. This sense of mastery helps to influence goal setting and the persistence of goal attainment in the face of barriers and challenges (Maddux).

According to Gushue, Scanlan, Pantzer, and Clarke (2006) there is little research regarding the influence of self-efficacy on the career decisions of African American high school students. Self-efficacy relates to a person's beliefs about his ability to perform a task regardless of his actual ability (Garcia, 2004). These beliefs are the most inclusive mechanism of personal agency (Bandura, 1997). They help to determine one's choice of activities and environments, including careers. Self-efficacy beliefs are essential in determining thoughts and actions as well as the amount of effort a person will exert when facing a challenge (Lent et al., 1994).

Perceived self-efficacy beliefs are not always objective and may or may not accurately reflect one's true ability to perform a specific activity or career. Grossly inaccurate beliefs and expectations may lead to faulty self-efficacy and

the creation of barriers to selecting a specific activity or career (Lent, 2005).

Modest self-efficacy beliefs, which slightly distort one's ability, may lead to "over confidence" (Lent et al., 1994). When this occurs the person may pursue more challenging tasks because he believes he has the ability to succeed.

In contrast to self-esteem, which is one's judgment of self worth, self-efficacy involves a set of beliefs that are related to particular performances and behaviors (Lent, 2005). If one believes they have the ability to successfully engage in a behavior, these beliefs will lead to action (Gushue, Scanlan, Pantzer, & Clarke, 2006). This set of beliefs about one's ability is acquired and modified based upon four background or informational sources. According to Lent (2005) these self-efficacy beliefs are formed by: (a) personal performance accomplishments; (b) vicarious learning; (c) social persuasion; and (d) physiological and affective states (see Figure 1). Lent (2005) states the informational source which has the greatest impact upon self-efficacy is personal accomplishments. Success raises one's self-efficacy while repeated failure lowers self-efficacy (Lent, 2005). In contrast to Lent, Bandura (1997) suggests the power of a given source of self-efficacy influence is contingent upon the strength of the other sources of influence. Lent et al. (1994) assume the position that past learning experiences do not necessarily dictate future behavior but rather are mediated cognitively. People assess past experiences differently as they integrate these into their self-efficacy beliefs (Lent et al.).



### *Informational Sources of Self-efficacy Beliefs*

*Personal performance accomplishments.* Self-efficacy beliefs are acquired and modified through four primary informational sources. The first of these is personal performance accomplishments. According to Bandura (1997) personal performance accomplishments deal with one's success or failure on previous opportunities. Bandura referred to the influence of performance accomplishments as enactive mastery. Once a person experiences success he will be more willing to try something more difficult. The results of past performance on tests may affect how one performs on exams needed for college entrance or for job certification (Betz, 2004). According to Lent et al. (1994) the impact of past experience on future behavior is transmitted cognitively.

Schaub and Tokar (2004) conducted a study of 327 students at a private mid-Atlantic university to determine the extent to which self efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations develop from relevant learning experiences. There was strong support to indicate learning experiences are positively related to corresponding self-efficacy beliefs and outcomes expectations. The effect of learning experiences on outcome expectations resulted from self-efficacy. Findings suggested that occupationally significant learning experiences impact anticipated outcomes largely through their effect on the self-efficacy beliefs which result from these same experiences (Schaub & Tokar).

*Vicarious learning or modeling.* A second source by which self-efficacy beliefs are acquired and modified is through vicarious learning. Vicarious learning

is mediated through the attainment of a role model (Bandura, 1997). Modeling is an effective tool for promoting a sense of personal efficacy. For most activities there is no absolute measure of adequacy; therefore, a person must appraise his own capabilities in relation to the attainment of others. The greater the similarity one has with the model, the more persuasive are the model's successes and failures (Bandura).

According to Karunanayake and Nauta (2004) role models of one's own race serve functions that models of a different background do not. Role models are especially important to the career development of African American and Hispanic students. A history of discrimination and limited career options has decreased feelings of self-efficacy and outcome expectations for these students. These factors lead to lower educational and career goals for African American and Hispanic students (Karunanaayake & Nauta).

*Social persuasion.* A third informational source of self-efficacy beliefs is social persuasion. According to Bandura (1997) it is easier to sustain one's self efficacy if those who are important express confidence in their ability to perform rather than if they communicate doubt. This influence is only as strong as the faith one has in the person who sends the message. Those who are persuaded they have the ability to master a task are likely to increase and sustain their efforts when faced with barriers and obstacles (Bandura).

Based upon their research Chin and Kameoka (2002) offer that verbal encouragement has a positive impact upon the educational and occupational

expectations of children. Encouragement from parents is critical to a child's assessment of their abilities and chances for future success. Goals, which parents establish, predict future grades for children as well as their level of self-efficacy. Encouragements from peers and relatives are related to a student's self perception of their own academic ability (Chin & Kameoka).

*Anxiety management.* The fourth informational source by which self-efficacy beliefs are acquired and modified is anxiety management. Betz (2004) suggests that learning new behaviors increases anxiety. High levels of anxiety often make it impossible to perform. According to Hackett and Betz (1981) anxiety may be considered a "co-effect" rather than a "cause" of low self-efficacy. Anxiety may be induced when an individual lacks the confidence to perform a specific behavior. In most incidents the presence of anxiety serves to decrease both self-efficacy and the successful performance of the new behavior, however, moderate anxiety states may enhance performance (Betz, 2004).

#### *Social Cognitive Mechanism: Outcome Expectations*

According to SCCT outcome expectation is the second social cognitive mechanism that is important to career development (Lent et al., 1994). Self efficacy beliefs are concerned with an individual's ability to perform a certain action. Outcome expectations refer to the person's beliefs about the consequences of performing certain behaviors or pursuing certain careers (Lent, 2005). Both self-efficacy and outcome expectations influence decision making and help to determine important aspects of human behavior, such as deciding

which activities to pursue and which to avoid. Not only do people judge their ability to perform certain tasks, they assess the types and values of outcomes each provides. Outcomes may include salary, security, social status, career advancement, and the opportunity to learn new skills (Lent). According to Lent and Brown (1996) self-efficacy is a source of outcome expectations. Higher levels of self-efficacy foster more positive outcome beliefs. A person's self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and interests promote choices and goals (Lent & Brown).

*Social Cognitive Mechanism: Personal Goals*

The final social cognitive mechanism of SCCT impacting the career-decision making process is one's personal goal. Personal goals are important to self-regulating behavior and are viewed as a person's intention to or persistence in a particular activity (Lent, 2005). Goals organize, shape, and sustain behavior and foster direction and guidance as well as impact self-efficacy (Lent, 2005). According to Lent et al. (1994) goals represent a person's ability to symbolize desired future outcomes. Goals are affected by a person's self-efficacy beliefs and by their outcome expectations (Lent et al.). SCCT outlines two types of goals, choice-content and performance goals. Choice-content goals refer to the career the person would like to pursue while performance goals refer to the quality of performance the person plans to achieve (Lent et al.).

In a study by Lease (2006) perceived barriers diminished the importance of self-efficacy in regard to personal goals. Barriers related to discrimination,

financial stress, or family disapproval decrease the likelihood that self-efficacy and interest will be transferred to goals and action (Lease). Racial discrimination, limited opportunities to develop a sense of mastery in various careers, exposure to limited career choices, and low economic resources are barriers which the African American student faces in the career decision-making process and in personal goal setting (Quimby, Wolfson, & Seyala, 2007).

### Personal Variables

Self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals are important cognitive mechanisms in the self-regulation of behavior as outlined in SCCT. According to Lent et al. (1994) there are also personal, individual variables which impact career decisions. While there are many potentially career-relevant personal factors, among the most important are vocational interests, gender and race/ethnicity (Lent et al.).

#### *Vocational Interests*

Observing others helps one to learn about a variety of occupations and careers. Lent et al. (1994) define vocational interests as “patterns of likes, dislikes, and indifferences regarding career-relevant activities and occupations” (p. 88). Interests are influenced by the interaction of self efficacy and outcome beliefs. People develop interests in careers for which they see themselves to be efficacious and for which they anticipate positive outcomes. Anticipated self satisfaction is a strong influence in the development of vocation interest (Lent et al.).

According to Betz (2006) if a person has high interests in an activity or career and high confidence (self-efficacy) in their ability to perform, the activity or career is a good option to explore. If the person has low interest and low confidence the activity or career is a low priority and the person will probably elect not to participate (Betz, 2006).

Tokar, Thompson, Plaufcan, and Williams (2007) cite as a central element of SCCT is the assumption that two socio-cognitive mechanisms, self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations, are important to interest formation and other career related outcomes. Cognitive and behavioral experiences during late adolescence and early adulthood help to shape vocational interests. During this time a person is exposed to different activities relating to various careers (Tokar et al., 2007).

### *Gender and Race/Ethnicity*

Gender and race are important personal variables as identified by Lent et al. (1994). These personal variables impact learning experiences and the formation of self-efficacy and outcome expectations. The effect of gender and race on career choice is influenced by differences in learning experiences and educational access (Lent et al.). Learning experiences are affected by the opportunities and support which are made available to all races and genders. These experiences help to shape abilities and opportunities which in turn effect self-efficacy and outcome expectations. There may be “selective exposure” to certain career opportunities for different races and sexes (Lent et al.).

Williams and Subich (2006) surveyed a group of 130 students from a Midwestern university to determine if gender differences in learning histories were consistent with observed gender differences in occupational self-efficacy and interest. The researchers proposed that differential learning experiences contribute to differential occupational self-efficacy and outcome expectations which limit a person's occupational interests and potential careers. Williams and Subich used the Learning Experience Questionnaire developed by Schaub and Tokar (2005). The instrument provides a self-report assessment of prior career related learning experiences including personal performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and physiological arousal. These are measured for each of Holland's RIASEC themes (realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional). Findings indicated that women report significantly fewer learning experiences in the traditionally masculine realistic and investigative domains while men report fewer learning experiences in the traditionally feminine social domain. The research supports the concept that the learning histories for men and women may be the origin of these differences. It is important to note findings of the study indicated that social persuasion was a consistent predictor of outcome expectations, especially for women. The implication for this research is that societal messages may strongly influence outcome expectations (Williams & Subich).

In a study by Tokar et al. (2007) the Learning Experiences Questionnaire (Schaub & Tokar, 2005) was utilized to survey 257 undergraduate students

enrolled in psychology courses in a Midwestern university. The purpose of the study was to examine the contributions of personality, gender, and gender role norm conformity to career-related learning experiences for each of Holland's 6 RIASEC themes. Tokar et al. found that both personality and gender play an important role in exposure to vocational learning experiences. Many of the important relations between personal variables and learning experiences were found to be the result of conformity to gender role norms. Gender role norms are important to career-related learning experiences (Tokar et al.).

According to Hackett and Byars (1996) African American children, especially females are often unable to predict whether certain self-regulated behaviors will be rewarded or punished. Consistent and accurate feedback is important in establishing strong self-efficacy beliefs. In school African American students may encounter differential standards applied to the same level of performance. As a result the African American student may doubt his ability even if he has performed successfully. He has a low sense of self-efficacy. Those students with a high sense of self-efficacy may correctly attribute the differential standards to racism rather than to their lack of ability to perform successfully. African Americans may also face differential standards of performance in the job market (Hackett & Byars).

Within the African American culture early gender role socialization is less sex typed (Hackett & Byars, 1996). Due to family composition and socio-economic status, children often experience a lack of clearly defined traditionally



male and female roles and duties. Each member of the family contributes as needed in order to survive. The wide range of experiences to which African American children are exposed, enhances nontraditional career self-efficacy (Hackett & Byars).

#### Focus of the Study

According to Hackett and Byars (1996) the research on the career development of racial and ethnic minorities has not satisfactorily addressed several issues. Primary among these issues is related to cultural influences on career self-efficacy. Research has not thoroughly investigated the issues of race and ethnicity. It has primarily been limited to simple racial and ethnic differences. Hackett and Byars add that while research may be limited the findings do indicate that career and academic self-efficacy predict academic achievement and career choice for African Americans and for Hispanics. Cultural influences on learning experiences, career self-efficacy, interests, outcome expectations, and goal setting are important to this finding. Slavery and other unique historical circumstances in the United States have created important differences in the academic success and career selection for African Americans which do not impact White men and women (Hackett & Byars).

As previously stated Bandura (1997) defined four informational sources which define self-efficacy. These include past performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and emotional arousal. Due to the amount of research dealing with past performance and the lack of research dealing with

family and cultural influences on the career decision making process for African American and Hispanic students, the primary focus of this research was upon vicarious learning and social persuasion (see Figure 2).

According to Hackett and Byars (1996), social persuasion stems from verbal information and messages, encouragement, and discouragement. Encouragement may strengthen self-efficacy if it reflects the actual performed behavior. A lack of encouragement is considered to be discouraging (Hackett & Byars). Negative encouragement serves to lower self-efficacy and will cause the individual to avoid this behavior or career (Hackett & Byars).

Hargrove, Creagh, and Burgess (2002) contend there has been little research into the area of family influence on career choice and development. If parental and family support were found to be a significant factor in African Americans and Hispanics career decision-making process, school counselors could reinforce this support as they provide assistance during the career making process. Understanding the level of parental support would allow counselors to encourage students to discuss with their parents concerns and barriers they perceive in pursuing a career as a teacher (Constantine, Wallace, & Kindaichi, 2005).

Vicarious learning experiences primarily refer to modeling. Learning occurs by observing other people perform certain behaviors. Models or modeling activities may be significant if these are personally relevant to the observer (Hackett & Byars). If the modeled activity is not relevant it is unlikely that the

observer will learn from the model (Hackett & Byars). Gordon (1994) contends that one way to increase the number of African American and Hispanic teachers would be to provide positive African American and Hispanic role models. The barriers and negative perceptions of African American teachers in comparison to those of white teachers limit the access to successful role models (Bandura, 1997).

*Social Cognitive Career Theory: Vicarious Learning*

Vicarious learning includes observational learning, modeling, and imitation and is used to guide one's behavior (Maddux, 1995). People learn by watching others. The accomplishments of others are a source of social comparison by which one assesses his own ability to succeed (Maddux). By observing the success of a similar person, self-efficacy increases. It is easy for a person to believe that if the similar person can be successful, he can also. Just as observing the success of those similar to oneself increases self-efficacy, observing a similar person fail decreases feelings of self-efficacy (Maddux). Failure may cause the person to reassess the desire to engage in a particular behavior, educational goal, or career. According to Bandura (1997) the greater the assumed similarity between the person and the role model, the more significant the influence of the role model on one's behavior. If the modeled activity or person is irrelevant, the probability the observer learning vicariously is reduced (Bandura).

Role models do more than provide standards by which others judge their own abilities (Bandura, 1997). Typically, people seek successful role models who possess the abilities they desire. These models provide knowledge and effective skills which teach the observer strategies to cope with the demands and challenges of their environment (Bandura). Attaining these skills increases one's self-efficacy beliefs. Accurate self-appraisal of one's abilities is of great importance in terms of educational and career goals. Continually comparing oneself to those who have higher abilities and talents may lead to frustration, feelings of failure, and decreased self-efficacy (Bandura).

#### *Career Role Models*

Role models provide information related to the benefits and consequences of pursuing specific careers. Their influence extends to the development of skills and strategies needed to continue in the chosen career when challenges and barriers arise (Gordon, 1994). Successful role models are important because they offer support as the person persists in the attainment of his goal (Gordon). For African Americans role models are particularly important because factors such as discrimination have limited career options and decreased feelings of self-efficacy and outcome expectations (Hackett & Byars, 1996).

According to Irvine (1989) African American teachers were role models during pre-Brown segregation. Their purpose was instructive as they were to enhance the opportunities of newly freed slaves. The African American teacher was a "racial lifter" (Irvine, p. 54). She taught in a segregated school to prepare

African American students for freedom, respectability, independence, and self-reliance (Irvine). These African American teachers were role models and were respected by a segregated, poor, and uneducated black community (Irvine).

Fairclough (2007) explains that being a black teacher during the age of white supremacy called for faith in the future; the present appeared hopeless. Interactions with whites were often degrading. Many of the black teachers would rather have pursued other occupations; however, their career choices were limited by discrimination (Fairclough). Some black teachers viewed teaching as a missionary calling and dedicated their lives to selfless service. Black teachers believed that education would free the black masses from ignorance, degradation, and poverty (Fairclough). After schools were integrated the black teacher's role in the community changed. Segregated schools nurtured black solidarity and black leadership. Teachers acted as community leaders, interracial diplomats, and builders of black institution (Fairclough). Integration undermined their roles and diminished the comparative standing of black teachers. The end of segregation meant the strong sense of educational mission that had characterized the work of black teacher was lessened (Fairclough; Irvine, 1989).

According to Sheets (2004) African American students tend to look to family members, religious leaders, and celebrity figures as role models. Teachers do not serve as role models. Epstein (2005) states the absence of non-white teachers deprives African-American and Latino students of role models. This creates a distorted social reality for all children. A limited number of non-white

teachers deprives all students of appropriate role models and fails to offset white students' negative racial stereotypes (Irvine, 1989). As role models, African American and Hispanic teachers could enable non-white students to interact successfully with different cultures (Sheets). Morris (1990) concluded there is a dramatic need to increase the number of African American and Hispanic students who are entering the teaching profession. Increasing the number of African American and Hispanic teachers will provide appropriate models of academic success for all students (Morris). Without appropriate African American and Hispanic role models the teaching profession and education in general is viewed as being best suited to whites (Irvine).

Wahl and Blackhurs (2000) found parents serve as one of the most significant role models for their children. Identifying with an adult worker early in their life, effects the child's career aspirations. Typically, the identification is related to the parents' career, especially that of the mother. Children have more first-hand knowledge of and involvement with their mother's career. Interest, and not solely ability, is an important factor in the career aspirations of children. Children aspire to those careers they view as providing more job satisfaction (Wahl & Blackhurst).

Research suggests that people typically seek career role models who they visualize as being similar to themselves. The greater the similarity, the stronger the impact the role model has on behavior and career choices. This behavior is known as the similarity hypothesis (Karunanayke & Nauta, 2004).

Karunanayake and Nauta (2004) discuss the similarity hypothesis and define it by saying “individuals seek career role models whom they perceive as similar to them regarding some easily identifiable characteristics because they assume that such role models’ experiences would apply to their own lives as well” (p. 226). In a study involving 220 students from a mid-western university, Karunanayake and Nauta asked students to identify the number, relationship, and race of their career role models. The sample represented an adequate representation from each race. After identifying their role models, students were administered the Inspiration/Modeling subscale of the Influence of Others on Academic and Career Decision Making Scale. This scale assesses the degree to which the students were influenced by others in making academic and career decisions. Findings indicated that students do have access to valuable resources as they make academic and career decisions. Both white and non-white students were able to identify role models in their life. The majority of career role models identified by students were of their own race. Same race role models provide strategies for dealing with difficult careers, for being an African American or Hispanic in the workplace, and for coping with the consequences of their career. Given that all students were able to identify a number of same race role models, there was no evidence to support the common assumption that there is a lack of African American or Hispanic role models. Karunanayake and Nauta found that African American and Hispanic role models, who successfully cope with challenges to their own career development, recognize the benefits of being a

successful role model. As a result they make themselves available to assist in the career development of other people, especially those from ethnically diverse backgrounds (Karunanayake & Nauta).

Hackett and Byars (1996) state vicarious learning occurs early in life by observing parents, other family members, and the community. African American mothers may exert more influence on their daughters than do White mothers because they expose their daughters more often to nontraditional gender roles and behaviors (Hackett & Byars). African American women are more likely than white women to experience conflicts when combining a family with a career to achieve financial independence. Growing up in an extended family provides African American children more opportunities for vicarious learning. As role models these family members help African American children make sense of the outside world, communicate racial dangers and realities, model how to mediate between two cultures, and help their daughters learn about their place in the world (Hackett & Byars).

According to Bandura (1997) there are four sub-processes which govern vicarious learning. These include: (a) attention processes which determine what is selectively observed; (b) retention processes which involve the process of organizing information for memory; (c) behavioral processes in which ideas are translated into action; and (d) motivational processes which relate to the fact that people are more likely to model behavior that leads to valued outcomes (Bandura).



### *Vicarious Learning and African American and Hispanic Teachers*

Same race role models allow the student to experience the reality that African Americans and Hispanics can be successful. The educational pipeline alludes to the significance of role models who are introduced at an early age to African American and Hispanic students who are considering a career in education (Henke, Chen, Geis, & Knepper, 2000). Gordon (1994) interviewed 140 teachers from ethnically diverse backgrounds using the question, "Why do you think students of color are not going into teaching?" Findings indicated that one way to encourage students to enter the field of education is to increase the participation of positive African American and Hispanic role models in the classroom. According to Gordon, 20% of those interviewed indicated

the Black community is more respectful of Black teachers than White.

Black parents fear racism might enter into discipline. They think Black teachers will be more fair. The more educated you are the more confident; Black kids play games, tell middle-class White teachers what they want to hear, and White middle-class teachers fall for it; but black teachers will call them on it. (pp. 349-350)

Gordon's (1994) findings go on to indicate that just being a non-white does not make one a good teacher. Being an African American or Hispanic teacher who lacks the skills to be successful in the classroom is a very bad situation. This teacher will not serve as a positive role model but rather students will conclude that they do not want to grow up to be like that person (Gordon). In contrast to

Karunanayke and Nauta (2004), Gordon concludes the problem is there are too few African American and Hispanic teachers to serve as good role models.

*Social Cognitive Career Theory: Social Persuasion*

People need to believe they can achieve success. A person's belief in himself is strengthened if he hears from those who are important to him that he has the ability to succeed. Encouragement, also known as social persuasion, leads to a stronger effort to achieve and to persist in the face of difficulties (Bandura, 1997). The extent to which social persuasion becomes an important source of self-efficacy depends upon the expertness, trustworthiness, and attractiveness of the person who is offering the encouragement (Bandura). According to Maddux (1995) social persuasion does not have as much influence upon a person's perceived self-efficacy as that of past performances and vicarious experiences; however, social persuasion may be given in such a manner that it decreases one's perceived self-efficacy. Encouraging a person to engage in an activity for which he does not have the skills leads to disappointment, frustration, and the potential for failure (Maddux). If a person has been persuaded that he does not have the ability to succeed, he will avoid opportunities which would allow him to develop his potential. The discouragement lowers one's perceived self-efficacy (Maddux).

According to Hackett and Byars (1996) African American parents send many messages to their children regarding academic success, the meaning of being an African American, and how to cope with an unfair social system. All

these communications serve as positive or negative forms of social persuasion and impact both outcome expectancies and perceived self-efficacy beliefs of African American children (Hackett & Byars).

Research by Ferry, Fouad, and Smith (2000) concurs with the importance of parental support upon career goals. A study of 791 undergraduate students enrolled in psychology classes examined personal, contextual, and experiential factors which impact career-related development. Results indicate that parents have a significant impact upon their child's career-related development. An important finding was that one of the more significant ways in which parents can influence their child's career interests involves encouragement of their performance. Parents need to take an active role in providing positive verbal reinforcement and encouragement for their child's performance (Ferry et al.).

Falconer and Hays (2006) completed a study of 13 African American college students to gain suggestions for improving career services of a large Midwestern university. In regard to social persuasion as it is associated with parental support, the students related they often struggle to accomplish their career goals as they deal with pressure from family and community. Parents frequently encouraged students to pursue a career which they themselves liked or because of anticipated financial gain. Findings indicated that students believed their parent's effort to influence their career choice was due to the fact African American have only recently been given greater access to higher income careers. This was particularly true for female participants. Parents often

encouraged them to pursue careers that were traditionally male dominated (Falconer & Hays).

Chin and Kameoka (2002) offer a different view of the importance of parental encouragement. They conducted a study with 107 Hispanic children between the ages of 10 and 13 who attended public schools. Students were asked to complete the Self-Efficacy Scale for Future Attainment to assess self-efficacy beliefs relating to future educational and occupational attainment. They were also asked to list and describe the education level and the jobs held by the parental figures with which they lived. Social persuasion was measured by asking the students to respond to two statements. These included: (1) My teacher expects me to go to college; and (2) The kids I know expect me to go to college. These were measured using a Likert scale with 1 being not true and 4 being very true. Findings indicate that young children hold high expectations for their future; however, this decreases with age and with a more realistic view of control. Chin and Kameoka explained this is because as children mature they encounter more difficult educational opportunities. African American and Hispanic children encounter greater and continuing systemic barriers to their education achievement. They are more likely to experience discrimination as they enter adolescence. Gushue and Whitson (2006) suggest positive feedback from those people who are important to a student can help to offset the influence of racially or culturally based occupational stereotypes.

From their research with the Hispanic students, Chin and Kameoka (2002) found that in regard to previous performance when measured using reading scores, past performance did predict educational expectations. This finding suggests that feedback is important in the development of self-efficacy. In Chin and Kameoka's study family education attainment and parents' occupation did not predict educational self-efficacy. This result suggests that parental and peer role modeling may not be as important as previously suggested.

Social persuasion is not limited to merely incidents of verbal encouragement (Bandura, 1997). Those who are strong motivators and encouragers not only offer verbal praise but they structure activities that provide opportunities for success and limit those which lead to failure. Creating these opportunities requires the identification of strengths and weaknesses as well as the ability to develop activities that build confidence. The measure of one's success then becomes self-improvement rather than exceeding the performance of others (Bandura).

#### *Social Persuasion and African American and Hispanic Teachers*

Early adolescence is a critical period for choosing one's career. Parental and family influences are especially important. Constantine, Wallace, and Kindaichi (2005) suggest the influence of parents is especially important to African American students as they begin to consider various careers. This influence remains important throughout their career development. The absence

of parental and family support may negatively impact the decision making process for some students (Constantine et al.).

Constantine, Wallace, and Kindaichi (2005) administered the Career Support Scale (CSS) to 151 African American high school students to determine if perceived parental support would positively predict career certainty. Questions on the CSS included items such as, "My parents and I often discuss my career plans" and "My parents agree with my career goals" (Constantine et al., 2005, p. 312). Constantine et al. found that perceived parental support was significantly related to African American adolescents' career certainty.

King (1993) was also interested in identifying factors which influenced 41 African American, Caribbean American, and African college students to enter the teaching profession. Questionnaires were administered to prospective teachers and to beginning teachers. For the perspective teachers King found that 50% of the participants stated that others whom they respected had encouraged them to teach. Only 30% of the beginning teachers included this as a factor which influenced their decision to teach. Those who were the most encouraging were their children (for those who had children), their mothers, their spouses (for those who were married), their colleagues, and their students. As with the findings of Constantine, Wallace, and Kindaichi (2005), King found the significance of the mother was very encouraging and attributed it to the fact that traditionally in the African American culture the mother has a greater influence on the children than the father. Others who encouraged the participants to enter the teaching

profession included elementary and college teachers. King's finding supports the idea that teachers may be critical to the recruitment of students going into the teaching profession. Twenty four percent of the females in the study indicated that community members encouraged them to teach while only 14% of the males attributed their career choice to the encouragement of others. This finding may be related to the fact that teaching has traditionally been viewed as a female occupation. Those who tried to discourage the students from becoming teachers included colleagues and college peers. Colleagues were cited as both encouraging and discouraging, suggesting the importance of this group on the career decision-making process (King).

Highly efficacious parents have a strong impact on their child's beliefs about their academic ability to succeed (King, 1993). The expectations of parents have an impact on their child's belief in their ability to succeed and their career aspirations. High expectations and encouragement from parents convey confidence in their child's ability to achieve success (King).

Parents want success for their children. When they perceive the teaching profession many view it with low pay and low status. For this reason some parents discourage their children from entering the profession. They aspire for their children to become doctors or lawyers. Parents desire more profitable professions for their children. The classroom environment may serve as discouragement to some who may be considering teaching as a career goal. If students face negative experiences in school they are discouraged from

becoming a teacher. To be sources of positive social persuasion schools must incorporate learning activities that provide opportunities for success (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Stinnett & Karr-Kidwell, 1999).

#### Implications for Educational Leadership

Educational leaders are concerned with determining ways to increase the quality of education for all students. According to research by Eubanks and Weaver (1999) and Morris (1990) the presence of African American and Hispanic teachers adds intensity to teaching and learning for all students. For this reason it is essential for educational leaders to develop strategies that will increase the number of qualified African American teachers within our schools.

Based upon data collected from focus groups Hobson-Horton and Owens (2004) conclude the most important factor in recruiting African American teachers is support. This includes support during course work, practicum experiences, and student teaching. Other areas of support may include mentoring from cooperating teachers and university supervisors, financial support, and the sharing of education resources. In regard to the early recruitment of teachers Hobson-Horton and Owens recognize the importance of meeting with Future Educators of American high school groups to discuss careers in education as well as the college and credentialing requirements.

It is important for colleges and universities to partner with high school students to increase the pool of eligible African American teacher candidates. Hobson-Horton and Owens (2004) point out support must be provided to



students as they prepare for the PRAXIS II. The use of a standardized test as a means of entry into the profession automatically excludes some members of non-Anglo groups. Workshops and financial assistance are needed to improve the success rate on these assessments (Hobson-Horton & Owens).

Betz (2004) recognizes the importance of early intervention into a student's lack of confidence in becoming a teacher. School counselors working with middle and high school students to increase their level of confidence and their perceived self-efficacy, may help students increase their career options (Sheets, 2000). Counselors and African American and Hispanic teachers who serve as role models are important in helping students develop self-confidence in pursuing a career in education. In addition to a whole range of regular academic support services which include tutoring, advising, and counseling that are available to all students, African American and Hispanic students may need courses or workshops that would help them in passing proficiency tests that are required for admission into teacher education programs (Sheets).

According to the Education Commission of the States (2007) teachers are more effective after their first several years of teaching; however, many teachers leave the profession during the first three years. Students pay a price for this high rate of teacher turnover. Inexperienced teachers may have a negative impact upon student achievement as they are gaining the skills necessary to deliver high quality instruction (Education Commission of the States). Schmoker (2006) states

instruction is the single greatest determinant of learning and has the greatest impact on student achievement.

Educational leaders are concerned with developing strategies to keep both white and non-white highly qualified teachers in the classroom. According to Milner (2002) teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to persist during difficult times. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) conducted a longitudinal interview study of 50 new teachers to identify reasons for becoming teachers, staying in their schools, or leaving the profession within 3 years. Findings indicated that teachers typically leave the profession due to low pay and poor working conditions. Good working conditions can reduce the feeling of uncertainty. Important to establishing a supportive working environment is knowledgeable, supportive colleagues and professional communities that offer ideas and advice about how to teach and how to connect with students. According to Johnson and Birkeland teachers who felt successful with students and whose school was organized to offer support were more likely to remain in teaching. Johnson and Birkeland conclude that “school administrators and veteran teachers must take action immediately to scaffold new teachers’ development and to enhance their experiences in schools, and policymakers must help to make teaching an attractive, accessible, and financially rewarding career” (p. 606). “Of central importance in all of the teachers’ explanations of their decisions to stay in their schools, to move, or to leave teaching was whether

they believed that they were achieving success with their students” (Johnson & Birkeland, p. 593).

It is important for educational leaders to develop opportunities for beginning teachers to receive positive constructive feedback from their peers (Stinnett & Karr-Kidwell, 1999). Arranging schedules to accommodate team planning and collegial interaction is very important. Supportive environments acknowledge and build upon the influences of the experiences of African Americans and Hispanics. These connections hold particular significance for African American and Hispanic teacher candidates in addressing frustrations as they face teacher education programs. Stinnett and Karr-Kidwell suggest that school leaders can retain African American and Hispanic teachers by promoting collegiality, incorporating African American and Hispanic faculty into the decision making process, and setting up opportunities for positive media coverage to promote teaching as a profession (Stinnett & Karr-Kidwell).

Professional support through mentoring is important in the induction of new teachers, especially for African American and Hispanic teachers (Singh & Stoloff, 2003). Mentoring is defined by Singh and Stoloff as a collaborative, multicultural form of mutually respectful interaction. According to Singh and Stoloff the mentoring relationship between the senior teacher and the new teacher will lead to the increased retention of African American and Hispanic teachers. The goal of mentoring is to facilitate the development of the new teacher by pairing with an experienced teacher. Due to the lack of African

American and Hispanic teachers it is difficult to establish mentoring relationships with culturally diverse individuals who are teaching in predominantly white schools. The report by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education as authored by Delar Singh and David Stoloff concluded same race mentoring relationships provide more psychosocial support than cross-race relationships. In order for cross-race or cross-cultural relationships to be successful, the mentor must be aware of their basic beliefs, their view of the world, and how these effect their perceptions (Singh & Stoloff). Singh and Stoloff acknowledge the importance of understanding cultural differences and beliefs in cross-racial/cultural mentor relationships. These beliefs relate to the perception of one's power status, to the interpretation of differences along the individualism-collectivism construct, to differences in communication styles, to the importance placed on relationships and work activities, and to the importance of recognizing the cultural style of managing conflict (Singh & Stoloff).

#### Summary of the Review of Literature

Chapter 2 presented a review of the literature related to career decisions. It began with research relating self-efficacy beliefs to career selection. Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (2001) find that when choosing a career one's perceived occupational self-efficacy is more important than one's actual academic achievement. Unless a person believes he will be successful he has little incentive to pursue the career. The chapter continued by looking into the research related to selecting teaching as a career. Nieto (2006) concludes that

most students enter the teaching profession in order to make a difference. They believe they have a chance for change. The literature review examined the demand for teachers. New teachers are needed to fill the challenges of replacing teachers who are leaving the profession, filling newly created positions, reducing class size in kindergarten through third grade, addressing special needs and conditions, and meeting new education requirements ( Florida Department of Education, 2008). According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2002), the demand for teachers is due more to a high turnover rate than to a lack of supply. This is of particular concern as the diversity of the student population is increasing while the diversity of the teacher population is decreasing. While SCCT serves as the theoretical framework for the exploratory study, there are various other approaches to understanding why students enter the teaching profession. The first of these addressed in chapter 2 was the educational pipeline for potential minority teachers. According to Morris (1990) the educational pipeline is the time between when a person decides to become a teacher and when he actually enters the profession. For African American and Hispanic teachers the educational pipeline is "fraught with leaks all along the way". These "leaks" may include the fact that African American and Hispanic students enter school already at risk. Many of their parents have incomes below the poverty line, a greater rate of unemployment, and are less likely to have a college education (Henke, Chen, Geis, & Knepper, 2000). The second approach to understanding why students become teachers is related to the economic labor

market theory of supply and demand. Boe and Gilford (1992) explain that the demand for teachers should be defined by the characteristics of teachers needed to fill these positions. When these characteristics are considered, a relationship is established between teacher demand and teacher supply.

Social cognitive career theory represents the theoretical framework for this exploratory study and is addressed in the literature review. According to Lent (2005) SCCT emphasizes the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs, outcomes expectations, and personal goals. Through cognition people assume control over their environment which then influences cognitive, affective, and biological states (Maddux, 1995). The four informational sources of self-efficacy include performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and anxiety management. Due to a lack of research relating to cultural influences on the career decision-making process, this exploratory study focused on the impact of vicarious learning and social persuasion on the career decision of African American and Hispanic teachers. According to Gordon (1994) one way to get African American and Hispanic students to enter the field of education is to increase the participation of positive ethnically diverse role models in the classroom. Constantine, Wallace, and Kindaichi (2005) suggest the influence and encouragement from parents are especially important to African American students as they begin to consider various careers. The importance of this influence and encouragement remain significant throughout their career development.

The final sections of the literature review dealt with the role of educational leaders in the recruitment of African American and Hispanic teachers. If student achievement is enhanced by the presence of African American and Hispanic teachers, it is important for educational leaders to develop strategies that encourage students to enter and remain in the teaching profession. One of the most significant means of accomplishing this is to offer a supportive working environment for teachers. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) conclude that “school administrators and veteran teachers must take action immediately to scaffold new teachers’ development and to enhance their experiences in schools, and policymakers must help to make teaching an attractive, accessible, and financially rewarding career” (p. 606).

Chapter 3 of this dissertation describes the research questions and the research design of the case study. Chapter 4 explains the results of the study and chapter 5 presents conclusions and recommendations for educational leadership.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The significance of this study was to identify factors that influenced the choice of teaching as a career for African American and Hispanic teachers. Using Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory as a base, Lent et al. (1994) developed social cognitive career theory to explain the relationships between personal, contextual, and socio-cognitive variables that affect the formation of vocational interests, career goals, and actions. Self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations contribute to the formation of career interests and goals. This study examined the extent to which self-efficacy beliefs influenced the career choice of African American and Hispanic teachers and their decision to remain in teaching.

According to Eubanks and Weaver (1999) African American and Hispanic teachers are essential to the education of all students. Self-efficacy, a key concept of social cognitive career theory, helps to explain career development, especially for African American and Hispanic students. The informational sources upon which self-efficacy beliefs are established include past performance accomplishments, social persuasion, vicarious learning, and emotional arousal. Personal goals, outcome expectations, and self-efficacy are all variables which interact with a person's gender, race, ethnicity, and environment to support or hinder the career making process (Eubanks & Weaver).

The purpose of this study was to identify if vicarious learning and social persuasion, two sources of self-efficacy, were significant factors in the career decision process of African American, Hispanic, and other culturally diverse



students. A rural school district located in the south-central region of North Carolina served as the study population. Participants in the study included African American, Hispanic, and Native American teachers who work in this district. Identifying the significance of vicarious learning and social persuasion are important to the district's educational leaders as they develop strategies that encourage African American, Hispanic, and other culturally diverse students to pursue a career in education.

This chapter is organized into the following sections: research questions, study population, design of the study, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis, threats to validity and reliability, and ethical issues and researcher bias.

### Research Questions

Identifying the significance of vicarious learning and social persuasion on the decision to enter the teaching profession will facilitate efforts made by the school district's educational leaders to deliver programs, services, and strategies that encourage African American and Hispanic students to pursue a career in education. To determine if these sources of self-efficacy impacted the participant's career decision the following research questions were addressed:

1. What factors influenced the career choice of African American and Hispanic teachers?
2. What recruitment factors influenced African American and Hispanic teachers to pursue a career in the school district being studied?

By understanding the motivators and factors that impacted the career decision of these African American and Hispanic teachers, it may be possible to positively influence the number of students who enter the profession.

### The Study Population

The personal story of each teacher who participated in this study was used to identify common themes relating to the career decision making process. These identified themes were utilized to determine the importance of vicarious learning and social persuasion on the career decision-making process for each teacher.

Participants were selected using purposeful sampling. Gall et al. (2007) define the goal of purposeful sampling as finding individuals who have specific knowledge of the research topic. According to Creswell (2008) in order to learn more about the concept being studied, the researcher uses purposeful sampling to intentionally select individuals who are “information rich”. The concepts being studied in this research are social persuasion and vicarious learning in relation to the career decision of African American and Hispanic teachers.

Homogeneous sampling techniques were used to identify participants for the study. With homogeneous sampling the researcher purposefully selects those who are members of a subgroup that has defining characteristics (Creswell, 2008). For this research the defining characteristic is being an African American, Hispanic, or Native American teacher.

In qualitative research it is typical to include a small number of participants. According to Creswell (2008) the overall ability of a researcher to provide an in-depth picture of the phenomenon lessens with each additional participant. Including a large number of participants may result in superficial analysis (Creswell). Listening to the stories of this limited number of African American, Hispanic, and other culturally diverse teachers provides a better understanding of what factors influenced their career decision.

The total population of non-white teachers in the school district is 57, 49 African American, 7 Hispanic teachers, and 1 other. The study group for this exploratory study included 3 African American teachers, 2 Hispanic teachers, and 1 other which represented approximately 10% of the district's non-white teacher population. The participants represent both genders, a range of years of experience teaching, and age differences. Table 1 provides the demographic information for each of the six participants.

Data from a small school district located in the south-central region of North Carolina was used for the study. The district has a limited number of African American and Hispanic teachers. The county is known as "The Home of American golf". It is nationally recognized as a center for equestrian activities and represents a historical area for the pottery industry. The county offers many recreational and cultural opportunities. The desirable location, the climate, and exceptional health care offer opportunities for new and expanding businesses for both corporate and private citizens. Important to attracting new businesses to any

Table 1

*Participant Characteristics*

Participant #	Age	Race	Subject/ Grade	Years Teaching	Educational Level	Parents' Level of Education	Parent's Occupation
1	27	NI	1 <sup>st</sup>	1	BA	F-HS M-HS	Millwright Factory
2	24	AA	5 <sup>th</sup>	1	BA	F-HS M-AA	Cab. Co Nurse
3	54	AA	K	21	Bs	F-HS M-CC	Farrier Food Ser.
4	53	AA	K	29	Master's	F-3 <sup>rd</sup> M-HS	Lumber Mill Furniture Fac
5	38	His	5 <sup>th</sup> Sci/Math	15	Master's	F-Jr.Col M-Trade School	VA – Admin x-ray tech
6	35	His	K-5	10	BA	F-HS M-HS	Military Media Ass't

area is the quality of the public school system. The 2009 County Partners in Progress referred to the school system as “impressive”. The public school system is dedicated to promoting student achievement. It sets high standards in pursuit of quality education for all students.

Recreational and business opportunities within the county make it an inviting place to live. From 2000 to 2005 the county population evidenced a growth rate of 8.2% in comparison to a 7.89% growth rate for North Carolina in general. Table 2 represents the changing demographics of the county during this time.

During this time period the population of whites and African Americans decreased while Hispanic and other groups increased. A similar trend was evident in the composition of the county’s student population. As show in Table 3 from 2001 to 2009 the African American student population decreased from 24% to 19% while the Hispanic population grew from 5% to 9%.

The demographics of the school district reveal the fact that the teacher population does not reflect that of the student population. Table 4 details the fact that the number of Black teachers has decreased from 67 to 49 in the past 8 years. This data supports the prediction by the National Center of Education Statistics (1998) that by the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century there would be a decrease in the percentage of non-white teachers in the United States while the number of non-white students would increase. Only 6% of the total school district’s teacher

Table 2

*Demographics of the County by Race*

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Year	White	African American	Hispanic	Other	Total
2000	80.25%	15.50%	3.99%	.26%	74,769
2005	78.0%	14.8%	5.1%	2.1%	80,867

---

Table 3

*Student Population of the Public School System by Race*

Year	African American	Hispanic	White	Other
2001-2002	24%	5%	68%	3%
2002-2003	23%	6%	68%	3%
2003-2004	24%	5%	68%	3%
2004-2005	22%	6%	68%	4%
2005-2006	22%	6%	68%	4%
2006-2007	21%	8%	67%	4%
2007-2008	20%	8%	67%	5%
2008-2009	19%	9%	67%	5%

Table 4

*Teacher Population of the Public County District by Race*

Date	African American	Hispanic	White	Other
2000 693 teachers	67 9.8%	2 Less than 1%	624 90%	0
2001 735 teachers	66 8.4%	5 Less than 1%	663 90%	1 Less than 1%
2002 763 teachers	69 9%	6 Less than 1%	688 90%	0
2003 786 teachers	75 9.5%	3 Less than 1%	707 89.9%	1 Less than 1%
2004 778 teachers	57 7.3%	6 Less than 1%	714 91.7%	1 Less than 1%
2005 825 teachers	56 6.8%	6 Less than 1%	761 92.2%	2 Less than 1%
2006 814 teachers	56 6.9%	5 Less than 1%	752 92.4%	1 Less than 1%
2007 799 teachers	54 6.8%	7 Less than 1%	737 92.2%	1 Less than 1%
2008 813 teachers	49 6%	7 Less than 1%	756 93%	1 Less than 1%



population is Black in comparison to 19% of the student population. The number of Hispanic teachers has increased from 2 to 7 during this time period; however, the percentage of Hispanic teachers remains less than 1% while Hispanic students represent 9% of the total student population.

The results of this study will be helpful to educational leaders in this school district to have a better understanding of why students from diverse cultural backgrounds become teachers. By better understanding these factors the school district may develop strategies that will encourage culturally diverse students to consider teaching as a career.

### Design of the Study

#### *Research Design*

A mixed method design was used for this exploratory study (Creswell, 2008). According to this design the researcher begins with qualitative data and then collects quantitative information to explain or extend a relationship. The qualitative data is emphasized. Quantitative data is used to extend and test the qualitative findings (Creswell). The data sources support one another by incorporating qualitative and quantitative research signs.

In this exploratory study the participants were initially interviewed to determine what factors influenced their decision to become a teacher. The quantitative findings from the Learning Experiences Questionnaire were used to determine the significance of vicarious learning and social persuasion,

informational sources of self-efficacy, on the career decision making process for these teachers.

### *Instrumentation*

*Data sources.* Three sources of data were used in the research study. These included the informal interview, the Learning Experiences Questionnaire, and a demographic survey. Yin (2009) describes the interview as one of the most important sources of information. The interviews for the present research were focused and followed a set of questions developed to guide the conversation. Questions were open-ended which allowed the participant an opportunity to answer the questions in his own words. Permission was obtained from the author, Michael Schaub, to utilize the Learning Experiences Questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to provide information regarding the strength of each source of self-efficacy, particularly vicarious learning and social persuasion. Information from the demographic survey was used to describe the study participants and to determine if there were any common themes or patterns relating to the career decision making process.

*Learning experiences questionnaire.* Schaub and Tokar (2005) used social cognitive career theory to study the indirect effect of personality on interests through learning experiences and socio-cognitive mechanisms. They hypothesized that self-efficacy and outcome expectations are derived from corresponding career-relevant learning experiences. Participants included 327 college students who completed a measure of the Big Five personality factors

and assessments of learning experiences, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and interests corresponding to each of Holland's six RIASEC themes. Holland's theory is based on four assumptions which include: (1) Persons can be categorized as Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising or Conventional; (2) There are six modal environments which include Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional; (3) People search for environments that will let them exercise their skills and abilities; and (4) Behavior is determined by an interaction between personality and environment (Savickas & Lent, 1994).

For his study Schaub (2004) developed the Learning Experiences Questionnaire (LEQ), a rationally derived 120-item self-report questionnaire developed to estimate the respondents' standing on Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy information (performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal) for the Holland's RIASEC themes. Each of the four types of learning experiences was assessed with five items. The participants indicated the extent to which they recalled each learning experience using a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (6). Scores for each type of learning experience are the summed responses of the five items on that subscale. Sample items include, "I have made repairs around the hours" (performance accomplishment) and "While growing up, I recall seeing people I respected reading scientific articles" (vicarious learning.)

Schaub and Tokar's (2005) findings gave strong support to social cognitive career theory and the fact that occupationally relevant learning experiences contribute positively to corresponding self-efficacy percepts and outcome expectations. Much of the effect of learning experiences on outcome expectations occurs through self-efficacy. Findings also supported the relations of personality to learning experiences and of self-efficacy and outcome expectations to interest (Schaub & Tokar).

*Descriptive statistics for the LEQ.* Construct and content validity of the LEQ were assessed by three psychologists in the area of vocational research. Specifically, one reviewer evaluated a preliminary version of the LEQ and after revisions were made, two reviewers evaluated the version that was used in the Schaub and Tokar's (2005) present study. The reviewers evaluated the extent to which the items reflected what they were intended to measure, whether the Holland domain was adequately represented, and the clarity of wording of the statements. Evidence for construct validity was demonstrated by Schaub and Tokar who found that the LEQ summary scale scores were strongly and positively related to scores for corresponding self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

Schaub (2003) reports the alpha coefficients for the LEQ ranged from .51 (Enterprising Vicarious Learning) to .84 (Realistic Performance Accomplishments) with a median coefficient of .69 for the subscales and from .72 (Conventional) to .89 (Realistic) with a median coefficient of .82 for the total

scales. The alpha coefficient for the entire instrument was .92. The Spearman-Brown prophecy formula was used to calculate reliability estimates for 10 items per subscale. This was because each subscale was comprised of only 5 items. Alpha coefficients resulted for the LEQ subscales ranging from .68 (Enterprising Vicarious Learning) to .91 (Realistic Performance Accomplishments) with a median coefficient of .82 for the 24 subscales and from .84 (Conventional) to .94 (Realistic) with a median coefficient of .90 for the six total scales. For the subscale inter-correlations 32 of 36 reached significance with a median inter-correlation of .39. All of the subscales were correlated strongly with their respective total scale scores. Fourteen of the 15 inter-correlations reached significance with a median of .32 (Schaub).

*Additional study using LEQ.* Williams and Subich (2006) used the LEQ to determine if gender differences in learning histories are consistent with observed gender differences in occupational self-efficacy and interest. Findings indicated that women report significantly fewer learning experiences in the traditionally masculine realistic and investigative domains while men report fewer learning experiences in the traditionally feminine social domain. The study gave support to the fact social persuasion was a consistent predictor of outcome expectations, especially for women (Williams & Subich).

#### *Threats to Internal and External Validity*

According to Yin (2009) there are four criteria by which the quality of any empirical social research may be judged. The first test is construct validity. Yin

defines construct validity as “identifying correct operations measures for the concepts being studied” (p. 40). To address the issue of construct validity it is important to use multiple sources of evidence, establish a chain of evidence, and have the participants review draft reports of the study. This study used three sources of data to help understand why people go into teaching. These included (1) personal interview, (2) LEQ, and (3) demographic survey. Participants were given the opportunity to review transcripts of their personal interview to ensure accuracy.

Yin’s (2009) second test for determining the quality of empirical social research is internal validity. It is noted that this applies only to explanatory and causal studies. According to Yin internal validity is “seeking to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships” (p. 40). Pattern matching, explanation building, addressing rival explanations, and using logic models during the data analysis are important means of addressing the issue of internal validity. All data sources in this research were used to identify patterns and themes that explain the teacher’s career choice.

The third criterion used to determine the quality of empirical social research is external validity, which is “defining the domain to which a study’s findings can be generalized” (Yin, 2009, p. 40). This threat deals with generalization of the results to a larger theory. To control for external validity Yin states the theory must be replicated in other studies. According to Yin exploratory

studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations. The exploratory study does not represent a sample. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) the most significant generalization from qualitative research are analytic and not sample to population. External validity will not be addressed in this research.

The final criterion for establishing the quality of empirical social research is reliability. Reliability is defined by Yin (2009) as “demonstrating that the operations of a study, such as the data collection procedures, can be repeated, with the same results” (p. 40). In this study establishing and documenting a clear procedure for collecting data and utilizing a set of questions to guide the personal interviews addressed research reliability.

#### Data Collection Procedures

The use of multiple sources of data allows the researcher to address a broad range of historical and behavioral issues; however, the most significant reason for using multiple data sources is the development of “converging lines of inquiry, a process of corroboration and triangulation” (Yin, 2009, p. 42).

Conclusions and findings are more convincing and accurate when based upon different sources of data.

#### *Procedure*

According to Yin (2009) reliability of a study is strengthened by taking the necessary steps to ensure a later researcher could follow the same procedure

and reach similar conclusions. This requires a clear and accurate documentation procedure.

Participants for this study were randomly selected by the Executive Director of Human Resources. She initially ran a demographics report from the Human Resources Management System (HRMS) system. This report includes classroom teachers with a non-white ethnicity code. Records were sorted by ethnicity code into three groups: African American, Hispanic, and Other. Each group was put into an Excel spreadsheet where each teacher was assigned a number beginning with "2". From that point, each group was processed separately using the following steps: (1) Determine the range of records (i.e., 2 to 53); (2) A co-worker picked numbers falling within the range (i.e., pick ten numbers from 2 to 53); (3) The names of the spreadsheet that coincided with the chosen numbers were used as the list of randomly selected minority classroom teachers. The Executive Director of Human Resources provided the Superintendent with the selected list of teachers. The Superintendent emailed each potential participant to introduce the study and to explain the significance of the findings in regard to the district's recruitment of culturally diverse teachers. This is a common practice of the superintendent for research within the district. The list of teachers who agreed to participate in the study was submitted to the primary researcher who contacted six teachers. This provided the opportunity to supply additional background information, obtain verbal consent, and to schedule the personal interview. At the time of the interview each participant read and



signed an informed consent. With the participant's permission each interview was recorded and later transcribed. Once the transcription was completed the participant was given the opportunity to review and to check the document for accuracy.

The interview questions were divided into five categories. The first section of the questions dealt with background information. Participants were asked why and when they made the decision to become a teacher. The second category of questions dealt with the extent significant people in the participant's life encouraged him or her to become a teacher. Were there educators in the participant's family who encouraged him or her to enter the profession? If so, what did they say that influenced the career decision? Questions regarding the presence of role models who fostered a desire to teach were addressed in the third category. Were there common characteristics between the role model and the participant? The fourth group of questions asked the participants why they decided to teach in the school district. The final section dealt with why each teacher had chosen to continue teaching in the school district.

At the conclusion of the personal interview each participant was given a packet which included a demographic survey and the Learning Experiences Questionnaire. The surveys were in a stamped envelope addressed to the primary researcher. This made it convenient for the participants to mail the completed surveys. One packet of surveys was not returned on a timely basis. An email was forwarded to this participant who immediately returned the surveys.

### *Data Analysis*

Coding is the part of analysis which involves differentiating and combining the data. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) codes are labels for assigning units of meaning to the information that is compiled during the study. Descriptive codes attribute a class to a segment of the text. These codes pull together the information allowing for analysis (Miles & Huberman). Exploratory researchers extend descriptions by looking for themes and patterns. Gall et al. (2005) define a theme as “a salient, recurrent feature of a case” (p. 307). Patterns are possible relationships.

The initial list of codes was identified based upon the research questions, the theoretical framework, and the key concepts. These codes included: encouragement; discouragement; role model; making a difference; parents; change; and motivation. The list of codes was revised and changed as the study continued. Transcripts of the personal interview were reviewed to determine if the participants repeatedly gave the same reasons for becoming a teacher. Did they reveal significant people in their life who impacted the career decision? If so, what did they say or do that encouraged or discouraged the career decision? Data analysis included hand coding relevant text, finding repeated ideas, determining themes, and developing theoretical concepts (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

For each participant the Learning Experience Questionnaire was used to provide an indication of the strength of vicarious learning and social persuasion

as sources of self-efficacy. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize this data (Gall et al., 2005). A mean score was obtained to represent each participant's typical score for the set of questions dealing with social persuasion and for the set dealing with vicarious learning. These scores indicated if the participant strongly disagrees, disagrees, slightly disagrees, slightly agrees, agrees, or strongly agrees with the influence of these variables. The mean does not provide any information regarding the distribution of the participant's response to all the questions. A range of scores, the difference between the lowest and the highest response plus 1, was calculated to determine if the scores are at or near the mean or if they vary widely. The standard deviation of scores was calculated to determine how much the individual question scores vary from the participant's mean score. Data from the Learning Experiences Questionnaire was compared to the participant's interview responses regarding the impact of vicarious learning and social persuasion on their decision to become a teacher.

#### *Ethical Issues and Researcher Bias*

Miles and Huberman (1994) list the following as important ethical issues: beneficence; respect; and justice. These principles provide guidelines for ethical research. Consideration should always be given to the rightness and wrongness of the researcher's actions. Throughout this study the participants were protected from harm and risk. Information provided was treated with honesty and integrity. Participants were given the opportunity to review transcriptions of the interviews in order to ensure accuracy. All information discussed during the interview and

revealed in the surveys was treated confidentially to ensure privacy and anonymity. Confidentiality was important to both the participant and the school district being studied.

Relying upon pre-existing beliefs and making inaccurate judgments result in biased research findings. Miles and Huberman (1994) discussed three types of analytic bias. These include: holistic fallacy which involves interpreting events as more patterned and congruent than they are; elite bias which is overweighting data from high-status informants and under-representing data from lower-status ones; and going native which is losing one's perspective. Providing participants the opportunity to verify the interview transcript was a means of ensuring against researcher bias.

### Summary

Data collected from (1) personal interviews, (2) Learning Experiences Questionnaires, and (3) demographic surveys were used to determine the impact vicarious learning and social persuasion had on the career decision of African American, Hispanic, and other culturally diverse teachers in a rural county located in south-central North Carolina. Common career decisions making variables described in the stories and histories of the participants were identified. Data collected from the Learning Experiences Questionnaire provided information concerning the impact of all four sources of self-efficacy on the career decision making process for these African American, Hispanic, and other culturally diverse teachers. Demographic data described each of the participants.

Appropriate statistical analysis was conducted on the collected data. Chapter 4 describes the results of this analysis. The results of this study are important in learning how to encourage more African American and Hispanic students to consider education as a career choice.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to identify if vicarious learning and social persuasion, two sources of self-efficacy, were significant factors in the career decision making process of African American, Hispanic, and other culturally diverse teachers. In order to investigate the impact of these factors six teachers including three African American, two Hispanic, and one Native American were interviewed. The interview process allowed each teacher the opportunity to tell his or her story as it relates to their decision to become a teacher. Interviews were coded to identify common themes and patterns among the teachers relating to the career decision making process. At the conclusion of the interview each teacher completed a demographic survey and the Learning Experiences Questionnaire (LEQ). The demographic survey provided descriptive information for each teacher. The LEQ provided additional information regarding the strength of each informational sources of self-efficacy in the teacher's decision making process. Information from the LEQ was used to extend and test the qualitative findings (Creswell, 2008).

Research questions guiding this research were: (1) What factors influenced the career choice of African American and Hispanic teachers? and (2) What recruitment factors influenced African American and Hispanic teachers to pursue a career in the school district being studied? Both qualitative and quantitative data will be used to address these questions.

This chapter describes the data obtained from the personal interviews, the demographic surveys, and the LEQ from six teachers. The chapter begins with a description of each of the teachers who participated in the study. The next section of the chapter will provide information obtained from each teacher describing the factors that influenced his or her decision to become a teacher. Quantitative analysis of the LEQ is included in the next section. The final section of the chapter describes factors that relate to the teacher's decision to teach in a south-central county of North Carolina.

## Teachers

### *Teacher 1*

The first teacher was a 27 year old female who identified herself as Native American. She moved to Tennessee from her home state of Ohio. Prior to her move to Tennessee the teacher completed an associate's degree and managed a restaurant. She realized she was unhappy in this career and decided to return to college. This decision, as well as the local economy, prompted her move to Tennessee where she obtained a bachelor's degree in education. According to the teacher her current educational goals were to return to college and obtain her master's degree. Ultimately she would like to pursue a doctorate in education. When this teacher left Ohio the automobile industry was experiencing major economic problems. These difficulties created high unemployment rates with very few jobs of any type. The teacher realized if she wanted to obtain a job teaching she had to re-locate. After finishing college in Tennessee, Teacher 1

moved to North Carolina where she had a friend who was teaching. Her friend told her about the job openings in south-central North Carolina which lead Teacher 1 to move to the area. Teacher 1 stated she likes the area because of the warm climate and opportunities for horseback riding, a major sport in the area. Teacher 1 was a first year teacher who is teaching kindergarten. She described herself as being someone who has a love of education. Her father was a high school graduate and worked as a millwright in the automotive industry. Her mother was a high school graduate who worked in the automotive industry.

#### *Teacher 2*

Teacher 2 was a 24 year old African American female. This was her first year teaching. She is teaching fifth grade as a self-contained classroom. Teacher 2 has a bachelor's degree in education but adds that someday she would like to become a school principal. Her father graduated from high school when there were only 11 grades. He now owns his own cab company. Her mother obtained her associate's degree and works as a nurse. Teacher 2 grew up in New York City. Initially, her family moved here when she was in the fourth grade. Currently, Teacher 2 is teaching with one of her former fourth grade teachers. Because her mother "got bored" the family returned to New York City when Teacher 2 was in the fifth grade. Teacher 2 describes her mother as "not being grown up enough to realize the life you have in the city you can't bring to a rural town". She moved to stay in the south-central region of North Carolina when she was in high school.



According to Teacher 2 her family moved back to this area when she was in high school because her mother wanted the family to have a “better life”.

### *Teacher 3*

Teacher 3 was a 54 year old African American female. She has been teaching for 21 years and for most of this time she has taught kindergarten. The teacher has a Bachelor of Science degree in education. Her father completed high school and was a farrier. According to the teacher her father was one of the first African American entrepreneurs in the area. His father had a successful flooring business and her grandmother was the first African American florist in the county. The teacher’s mother finished high school plus two years at the community college level. She was a food service manager at a training school within the county. This teacher was born in the county and, except when her husband served in the military, has lived in the area all her life. She attended the elementary school where she now teaches and graduated from the local high school.

### *Teacher 4*

Teacher 4 was a 53 year old African American female. She holds a master’s degree in education and has taught for 29 years. For most of this time she has taught kindergarten. Her mother completed high school and worked in the furniture industry. Her father completed the third grade and worked in the lumber mill. According to Teacher 4 her parents wanted her to have an education because they desired “something better for her”. They did not want her to have to

work as hard as they did to make a living. After graduating from high school money was not available for Teacher 4 to attend college. She worked for two weeks in a curtain factory. She stated that she was “not too good to work in a factory” but she was unhappy. There was a teacher assistant position available in her school district. She applied and was offered the position and became the youngest teacher assistant in her county. Teacher 4 grew up in an adjacent county. She moved to the study county when she got married and has remained there.

#### *Teacher 5*

Teacher 5 was a 38 year old Hispanic female. She has a master’s degree in education and has been teaching for 15 years. Currently, she teaches math and science for fifth grade students. She previously taught pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade. The teacher’s mother moved to New York from Puerto Rico when she was 15 years old. She stayed with an aunt and ironed clothes in order to send money home to bring her mother to America. Later she was able to attend trade school and became an x-ray technician. The teacher’s father attended one year at a junior college and is an administrator for the Veteran’s Administration. He grew up in Harlem and was a member of a gang. The teacher’s parents were very strong supporters of education. When she was young her parents moved the family to a Jewish neighborhood in order for their children to be surrounded by well educated people. The parents were willing to take this risk in order for their children to become better educated. The teacher

grew up in New York City; however, she moved to North Carolina when her daughter was two years of age. She did not want to raise children in the City. According to the teacher the study county is a great place to live and to raise her children. She does admit that if it had not been for her children she would have probably remained in New York City. She was comfortable there.

#### *Teacher 6*

Teacher 6 was a 35 year old Hispanic male who has been teaching for ten years. Currently, he teaches in an alternative program for students who have behavioral issues and concerns. He has his bachelor's degree and is half way through a master's program. His father was a high school graduate and had a career in the military. After the military he became a post office carrier. His mother was a high school graduate who worked as a school media assistant. Teacher 6 moved to this area from Nebraska because his wife, who was originally from the area, wanted to return home to be closer to her family.

### Factors Impacting Career Decisions

#### *Parental Values about Education*

Obtaining a college education was important to all the teachers. Four of the six teachers had parents who stressed the significance of obtaining an education. It was an essential as well as an expectation. Five of the teachers expressed a love of learning. According to Teacher 5, who is a Hispanic female, her parents simply said, "You are going to college." She added her parents did not tell her what career she had to choose; however, they were emphatic that

she would attend college. Teacher 5 and her sisters are the first in her family to obtain a college degree. Two of the African American teachers reported that education was seen as the “way to get ahead”. These teachers attended school when school integration began. Both teachers were adamant that their parents valued education and sacrificed in order for them to attend college. Their parents worked long, hard hours. They wanted more for their children than they had experienced. A college education would allow them to achieve their goal and to find a “good job”. Education was viewed as the key to success. Teacher 4 described her parents and her aunt as having a “passion for education”. According to this teacher her family wanted her to go to college and pursue a career. At times she felt they were trying to live their lives through her as more career opportunities were available to her than had been to them. Teacher 3 stated that the only requirement her father placed on her was that she had to learn to type. He viewed typing as a necessary skill for a female to obtain a job. She remembered that she always had a desire to attend college. When she was young she recalls knocking on the bathroom door one morning and asking her father, “Will I be able to go to college?” He assured her she would be able to attend. While her father died before she graduated from high school, Teacher 3 was able to attend college by receiving a scholarship. Teacher 6, a Hispanic male, stated that his parents expected him to attend college. There was never any discussion that he would not attend college. For Teacher 2 there was never a discussion between her and her parents regarding college. It was her choice.

### *Past Performance Accomplishments*

The interviews revealed that five of the teachers loved working with younger children while they were growing up. Teacher 2 did not describe past experiences dealing with children. Before enrolling in college Teacher 6 liked to work with high school age students. When he began his college education he was placed in a first grade class. Teacher 6 asked, "Why are you doing this to me? I don't want to work with little kids?" The professor asked him to "try it" because he felt he would enjoy the experience. Since that experience Teacher 6 had the desire to teach younger children. It was a very successful internship. Teacher 5 babysat and worked in church nurseries since the age of 11 or 12. She always loved working with children. Until high school she and a friend planned to become pediatricians and open their own office; however, she admitted she did not perform well in biology which altered her career goal. As a child Teacher 4 was also interested in becoming a nurse. All of a sudden there were issues at home with people getting sick and going to the hospital. Teacher 4 realized from these experiences that she could not become a nurse.

Teacher 1 and Teacher 5 both recalled that as young children they would come home from school and "play school". They set up their classrooms and taught their dolls. While growing up Teacher 1 worked in summer camps and assumed other roles with children. Prior to becoming a teacher she was a classroom volunteer. She assisted with small group instruction. When she was a young, adult Teacher 3 wanted to become a Sunday school teacher. Her father

would not allow this because he felt, “she needs to be in class herself”. While growing up she describes herself as the “homebody” who “always held the babies and volunteered to keep the cousins”. When Teacher 3 went off to college she had not decided upon her major because she did not know what she wanted to become. She remembers standing in line for registration “having a deep conversation with me”. Teacher 3 says she saw early childhood education and decided this was what she would become, an early childhood educator.

### *Social Persuasion*

Two of the teachers were encouraged to pursue a teaching career while one of the participants was discouraged. When asked if her parents encouraged her to pursue a career in education, Teacher 5 replied that her father always pushed “nursing and teaching”. He viewed these as careers appropriate for females. She feels that his “push” did contribute to her decision to becoming a teacher; however, she added, “I think that if I had wanted to become a doctor he would have been absolutely supportive.” While Teacher 5’s mother was not a teacher she always spoke very highly of teachers. If it had not been for teachers her mother would not have been successful when she immigrated to New York City at age 15. Teachers “made a difference” in her life. They always encouraged her that she could become successful. This admiration and respect was passed on to Teacher 5 by her mother.

Teacher 6 related that he has an aunt who is a retired teacher. When he began teaching she helped him get started by giving him things for his

classroom. Before that time she had never talked with him about becoming a teacher. "My mother wanted me to do something I was happy with and my father always said, 'Do something you enjoy.'" They never encouraged him to pursue any particular career.

No one ever talked with Teacher 2, an African American female, about the possibility of becoming a teacher. She discussed the fact that in her culture students are encouraged to pursue prestigious careers. Teaching is not considered to be such a career. Typically, these include medicine and law. Teacher 2 sees few African American people in these higher level professions. She acknowledged she wanted to become a doctor until she was in the eighth grade. At that time her sister sustained a serious injury. With all her sister experienced Teacher 2 decided against medicine. After that time she decided to become a lawyer. According to Teacher 2 being a lawyer would be fun for her because it "goes with my personality". When she was taking a political science course as a sophomore in college, the District Attorney came to speak. She had been a teacher for 10 years prior to going into law and stressed how rewarding the career had been. This was the deciding factor for Teacher 2 to change her major to education. Teacher 2 felt working with children would be rewarding so that "at least when I got older I could say, 'I made a difference'".

Teacher 1 related that her high school teachers encouraged her to go into education. At one point she was considering a career in aviation, her father and brother both have their pilot's license. The teachers helped her "weigh things out

and see her strengths". When she did she realized education was a better fit for her. Aviation could be a hobby but as for a career education was more appropriate for her. While she was a young child "playing school" Teacher 1's mother would tell her, "teaching is what you are probably going into".

While these teachers experienced positive social persuasion, Teacher 4 was discouraged from becoming a teacher. When she was in high school she wanted to become a history teacher. She talked to one of her teachers about her goal and was told, "I don't think you should become a history teacher because there are too many dates to remember". While this was a negative statement Teacher 4 took this as a challenge. She said, "I'm a person like this. If you tell me I can't do something I am determined to do it. I become a self-motivator." Teacher 4 became a kindergarten teacher; however, she married a history teacher.

Teacher 3's grandmother was a kindergarten teacher before becoming a florist. The reason she left the teaching profession was unknown. While all of her family "pushed" education they did not encourage her to pursue a particular career.

### *Vicarious Learning*

Four of the six (1, 4, 5, 6) participants recalled teachers who had influenced their decision to become a teacher. Some of these were positive influences and some were negative. Teacher 1 stated that all through her elementary career she had "really great teachers". She acknowledged that during



her high school years she had a few teachers who were not “so much into kids and pretty much hated their job”. Teacher 1 stated she knew she did not want to be this way. Her role model for “setting the tone for education” was her kindergarten teacher. Teacher 1 described her classroom as a “very loving environment”. The teacher was extremely dedicated and self-reflecting. She was positive and always cared for the students. When Teacher 1 was required to do 50 hours of volunteer work for Helping Hands, a humanitarian relief and development effort, she completed these with her kindergarten teacher. “It was such a great experience having her as a teacher and then coming back to work under her. Her positive nature was still the same as it had been when I was in school. I wanted to be like her.” The teacher instilled the desire to always seek to do better, to improve.

In regard to teachers they would not like to model, Teacher 1 recalled a middle school teacher. Each day she walked into the classroom she knew what she was going to be doing that day. Every day was the same regimen. According to Teacher 1 routine is good but “when all the teacher does is assign you to read pages 15-53 and answer questions in the back of the book and tell you that there will be a quiz on Tuesday, that is not teaching.” Teacher 1 states she believes in hands on learning.

“If a student can read and self-teach there is no need to come to class. I have learned you can make students regurgitate the information but that doesn’t mean they are really learning it. If they are not able to do the

hands on or be able to explain or show how that is going to work, they are not learning. They are compliant.”

Teacher 2 stated, “I did not have too many teachers that I related to that I really liked beyond normal teaching”. She did have a high school debate teacher that she really liked; however, she added the teacher was “nothing like me, even her teaching style is not like mine”. The trait that made the teacher memorable was that she “knew how to connect with everybody and she did it to the highest degree”. Teacher 2 added that she really respected the teacher a great deal. According to Teacher 2 relationships are the most important element you can have in a classroom.

When asked about teachers whom she did not want to be like, Teacher 2 stated, “I think the worst quality that teachers I have had was that you could not relate to them. They could not relate to me.” Teacher 2 added that she does not believe a “teacher has to be from the same climate to relate to students; however, you have to be able to relate to the demographics of the children you are teaching. These teachers could not. They were just standing up talking.” Teacher 2 again added that “relationships are the best things you can do in the classroom”. This is important for Teacher 2. She acknowledges being African American enables her to relate to students in a way that other teachers cannot. Students are more accepting of how she talks with and relates to them. They respect her.

Teacher 3 did not have any teachers she really wanted to be like; she just wanted to be the best at whatever she decided to do. According to Teacher 3 she had some male teachers but they did not impact her life very much. She liked female teachers better. Teacher 3 added that she is a very timid person. Most of the male teachers were also coaches. They were “rough and gruff” and Teacher 3 did not feel comfortable with this.

Teacher 4 described her mother as being her “role model”. While she did not teach outside the home, Teacher 4 viewed her mother as a “teacher in the home”. According to Teacher 4 her mother made sure her children “talked correctly, our school work was done, and she was fair”. Teacher 4 said, “I think back in elementary school. That really motivated me because I saw the importance of becoming a teacher in the home. I knew I could be a teacher in the public area.” After graduating from high school Teacher 4 became a teacher assistant. The two kindergarten teachers she worked for influenced her decision to become a teacher. They were “really good teachers” and allowed Teacher 4 to do small group instruction.

In discussing teachers that Teacher 4 did not want to be like, she emphatically recalled that she had several teachers who were “unfair”. When becoming a teacher she resolved that she would not have “pets or special kids”. According to Teacher 4 she tells her students she will always be fair. “If I get on this one I will get on you”. Because she saw so much “discrepancy” Teacher 4 was determined she would be fair as a teacher.

Teacher 5 recalled in great detail and with great affection the teacher who was her role model. “

I would say right off the bat that my third grade teacher was totally my reason for becoming a teacher. She seemed very fair. She loved what she did and she made a big deal out of me. I think about that. And I think about the fact she made me feel at my strength. And I remember that.”

Teacher 5 remembered that this teacher found her strengths and then found a way for her to “work in that area – to be a leader in that area”. According to Teacher 5 her role model was very strong. She owned the classroom, found a niche for everyone, and she loved children. After finishing high school Teacher 5 went back to find her third grade teacher. Because of her third grade teacher, Teacher 5 has the desire to find a place for every student. Each student should have “their spot”. This teacher used character education programs, such as Habits of Mind, because it allows students to step forward and say, “I can do this well”. Teacher 5 , Teacher 2, and Teacher 1 agreed that relationships are essential. Making connections with students is extremely important.

In regard to teachers who had a negative impact on her, Teacher 5 recalled her fifth grade teacher. This teacher was a beginning teacher and had no classroom management skills. “She could not handle the classroom at all.” The teacher would cry and run out of the room. She had no control. This instilled in Teacher 5 that when becoming a teacher she would never maintain a classroom where children did not respect her because I am the “leader”.

Strength, as with her third grade teacher, was essential in doing this. Teacher 5 also recalled a college professor whom she described as being “prejudiced”, both against different races and against women. From this experience Teacher 5 realized you must have a “heart for people to work with them”.

While Teacher 5 had teachers she saw both positively and negatively, like Teacher 4, one of her great role models was her mother. Her mother had a great admiration for teachers and always spoke very highly of them. She gave them the credit for making a difference in her life. They encouraged her to learn to speak English, told her she could do better; she could work and they helped her go to school after high school. Without them she would not have been successful. Her mother’s admiration for teachers had always been extremely important to Teacher 5 and influenced her decision to teach.

Teacher 6 attributed his desire to become a teacher to his high school social studies teacher. He made learning fun and engaging. “When I walked into his classroom, I wanted to pay attention, to find out what he was going to do. He was different.” This teacher did not necessarily follow the textbook. He brought in extra items. The students were involved in research. “He was one of the first guys who really made you ‘think outside the box.’” Teacher 6 felt he had some of the same characteristics as his role model. He knew he could make the curriculum “fun and really interesting”. “I could help students learn.”

In regard to those whom Teacher 6 did not want to be like, he recalled his ninth grade math teacher. While Teacher 6 loved math, he hated this class.

Teacher 6 described the teacher as “one of those who had his head down and just read straight from the book”. According to Teacher 6 the math teacher wrote on the board while he was sitting at his desk. There was no learning because it was “a real, real boring class”. Teacher 6 was determined to make learning interesting and to find ways to actively engage students.

### *Anxiety Management*

Teacher 3 was the only participant who expressed any anxiety for entering the teaching profession. When asked about the impact of role models on one’s career decision, Teacher 3 stated she almost decided against becoming a teacher because of this fact. She realized her students were going to look at everything she did. This meant she would need to do everything right. She stated, “I felt the pressure. I took this very seriously. I still take it very seriously.”

### *Would You Encourage Someone to Become a Teacher?*

All the teachers were hesitant in answering this question. Teacher 1 stated she would only if the person was devoted to children and had a passion for education. According to Teacher 2 she would tell someone that “if you want to have a job so that you will be busy all day, that there is something constant to do, if you get along with children, and it fits your personality then you picked the perfect job.” Teachers 3 and 4 were very reluctant to encourage someone to pursue a career in teaching. Both commented they would have encouraged someone to become a teacher a few years ago; however, now there is so much “red tape behind it that the fun has been taken out of teaching. The joy of

teaching has been taken out of it. The child is gone. They are looking at a number.” Teacher 5 said she would not discourage someone from becoming a teacher but she would ask, “Where is your heart?” She commented, “The joy that children bring; you can’t touch it anywhere.” Like Teachers 3 and 4, Teacher 5 agrees all the assessments and the emphasis on test scores has taken a lot of the joy out of teaching. When asked if he would encourage someone to pursue a teaching career, Teacher 6 commented, “I would tell him it is a great job. It’s very, very rewarding. You just have to know you are going into it, not for financial reasons, but for self-reward. You are making a difference in people’s lives”. Teacher 6 added that sometimes what you as a teacher want to do and what the school will allow you to do are entirely different. This makes it difficult. With the focus on testing “we are ‘handcuffed’ to what we can do.” According to Teacher 6 it is as if we are saying, “I want you to think outside the box but I’m still going to set limits on the box because you have to score a certain score on the test. We focus too much on tests.”

#### Learning Experiences Questionnaire

Each teacher completed the Learning Experiences Questionnaire (LEQ). The purpose of this questionnaire was to extend the qualitative findings and determine the impact of all self-efficacy informational sources on the career decision making process. The focus of this research was specifically on the importance of social persuasion and vicarious learning on decision making. Qualitative data indicated that five of the six teachers (1, 3, 4, 5, and 6) talked at

length about the impact former teachers had on their career decision. Data from the LEQ indicated that for four (Teachers 1, 3, 4, and 6) of the six teachers vicarious learning was the major self-efficacy informational source. The strongest informational source for the other teachers (2 and 5) was past performance. According to Lent (2005, chap.5) the informational source which has the greatest impact upon self-efficacy is personal accomplishments. Success raises one's self-efficacy. Past performance was the second strongest informational source for Teachers 1, 3, 4, and 6. For Teachers 1 and 4 social persuasion was the third strongest informational source which impacted their decision making. Data for Teachers 2, 3, and 6 indicated that social persuasion was the least utilized informational source. Vicarious learning and social persuasion were equally important to Teacher 5 whose strongest influence was past performance. While anxiety management was the third strongest informational source for Teachers 3 and 6, qualitative data indicated that Teacher 3 was the only participant who mentioned any anxiety regarding her career decision. Tables 5-10 displays the analysis of the LEQ for each participant. In her interview Teacher 2 did not reveal any experiences while she was growing up that influenced her decision to become a teacher. She did not discuss any specific role model that influenced her career decision.



Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher 1, A Native American Female*


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Informational Source	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
Past Performance	141	4.7	5	5	2-6	1.08
Vicarious Learning	149*	5	5	5	2-6	1.17
Social Persuasion	131	4.4	5	5	2-6	1.07
Anxiety Management	93	3.1	2	2	1-6	1.19

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*Note.* \*Highest total score

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher 2, A Black Female*

Informational Source	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
Past Performance	132*	4.4	6	5	1-6	1.45
Vicarious Learning	78	2.6	1	2	1-6	1.55
Social Persuasion	53	1.8	1	1	1-5	1.08
Anxiety Management	54	1.8	1	2	1-3	.85

*Note.* \*Highest total score

Table 7

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher 3, A Black Female*

Informational Source	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
Past Performance	139	4.6	5	5	2-6	1.0
Vicarious Learning	142*	4.9	6	5	1-6	1.6
Social Persuasion	101	3.37	2	3	1-6	1.85
Anxiety Management	120	4	4	4	2-6	1.23

*Note.* \*Highest total score

Table 8

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher 4, A Black Female*

Informational Source	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
Past Performance	136	4.5	5	5	3-6	1.06
Vicarious Learning	148*	4.9	5	5	3-6	.98
Social Persuasion	128	4.7	4	4	3-6	1.11
Anxiety Management	96	3.2	4	3.5	2-4	.93

*Note.* \*Highest total score

Table 9

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher 5, A Hispanic Female*

Informational Source	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
Past Performance	139*	4.6	5	5	1-6	1.38
Vicarious Learning	120	4	6	4.5	1-6	1.85
Social Persuasion	120	4	5	4	1-6	1.64
Anxiety Management	87	2.9	2	2	1-6	1.67

*Note.* \*Highest total score

Table 10

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher 6, A Hispanic Male*


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Informational Source	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
Past Performance	111	3.7	4	4	1-6	1.44
Vicarious Learning	129*	4.3	4	4.5	1-6	1.49
Social Persuasion	103	3.4	4	4	1-6	2.15
Anxiety Management	109	3.6	4	4	1-6	1.29

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*Note.* \*Highest total score

Teacher 5 indicated she always enjoyed working with children in various capacities while she was growing up. She also talked at great length about the importance of her third grade teacher in regard to her decision to become a teacher. From her story this teacher was very important to Teacher 5. She described her beautiful red hair. Her name was LaRosa, which the teacher translated to mean, the rose.

Findings from the LEQ mirrored the qualitative data in respect to the role of vicarious learning on the career decision making process for these six teachers. Based upon overall total scores vicarious learning was the strongest informational sources for four (1, 3, 4, and 6) of the six teachers. The most frequent answer (mode) for vicarious learning indicated that five of the six teachers agreed that vicarious learning was important to their career decision making. Four of the teachers indicated they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the importance of vicarious learning on their career decision making process.

#### Factors Impacting the Decision to Teach in South-Central North Carolina

Teacher 1 came to this area because she learned of job openings from a friend who was already teaching here. Since coming to the county Teacher 1 has been impressed by the fact “they are really into children in this county”. People are very personable. When Teacher 1 interviewed she was made to feel that she was being interviewed for what she had to offer rather than just “to reach a quota”. “I felt when I was interviewed it was for what I was able to tell and what I was able to show that I had done. They really took me at face value as to what I

had to offer versus who I knew.” Teacher 1 was impressed by the fact the Superintendent took time to speak to the new teachers meeting.

The reason Teacher 2 is teaching in the area is simply because it is convenient to where she lives. Her parents and grandparents live in the area, as well as her husband’s grandparents. Teacher 3 grew up in this county and Teacher 4 moved to the area after she was married. This was her husband’s home.

Teacher 5 made a conscious decision to move to this area from New York to raise her children. She felt it was a much safer area and provided a lot for her family. Teacher 5 acknowledged she was “different” when she moved here and she had to “make her spot”. Teacher 6 moved to the area from Nebraska because his wife wanted to return home. Moving to this area was more like the “North Carolina my wife knew”. It is somewhat rural but close enough to a town for convenience.

Qualitative data obtained from the interviews did not reveal one common reason why these six teachers chose to teach in the south-central region of North Carolina. Teachers 5 and 6 did move here for family reasons; Teacher 5 to raise her children and Teacher 6 to return to his wife’s home. Teacher 1 was the only teacher to move here to find a teaching position. Her reasoning was due to the job openings in the area. The remaining teachers (2, 3, and 4) were already living in the area when they began teaching.



## Summary

In chapter 4 qualitative data was presented from personal interviews regarding the reasons why six teachers from a rural south-central county in North Carolina decided to pursue a career in education. The focus of the data was on the four informational sources of self-efficacy. Quantitative data from the Learning Experiences Questionnaire was presented to extend and support the findings from the personal interviews. According to the personal interviews five of the six teachers had teachers who were role models to them and impacted their decision to become a teacher. According to data from the LEQ four of the six teachers were influenced by vicarious learning. Quantitative data did not extend findings from the personal interviews to indicate that social persuasion was a major influence on educational plans and goals. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the various reasons the participants decided to teach in the study area.

Chapter 5 will discuss and offer conclusions regarding the analysis of the results presented in chapter 4. Also included will be factors relating to why these teachers may consider leaving the county to teach somewhere else or to leave the teaching profession completely. The chapter will offer recommendations from these teachers regarding the need to increase the cultural diversity within the county's teaching staff. These teachers were concerned that there are so few students from culturally diverse backgrounds who are interesting in pursuing a career in education. Chapter 5 will present their recommendations and

suggestions. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the research findings for the study.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Lent et al. (1994) used Bandura's social cognitive theory as a basis for the development of social cognitive career theory (SCCT). SCCT represents a framework for understanding the relationships between personal, contextual, and socio-cognitive variables that affect the formation of vocational interests, career goals, and actions. The theory suggests that occupational and academic interests develop primarily from three cognitive variables which include self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent & Brown, 1996).

Self-efficacy is defined as a person's beliefs in his capabilities to successfully engage in a specific behavior or activity (Betz, 2004). The four sources of information that explain the initial development of perceived self-efficacy include past performances, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and anxiety management. A review of the literature indicated that much research had been completed on the impact of past performances on self-efficacy. Hackett and Byars (1996) found that successful past performance accomplishments are usually the most influential source of information of self-efficacy; however, in some circumstances the other three sources of self-efficacy may be stronger influences on career decisions. Lent (2005) concurred with the finding that the informational source which has the greatest impact upon self-efficacy is personal accomplishments. Bandura (1997) suggests the power of any

mode of efficacy influence is contingent upon the strength of the other modes of influence.

In order to extend research based on SCCT, the focus of this study was on the impact of social persuasion and vicarious learning on the career decision making process of African American and Hispanic teachers. This chapter begins with a discussion of the data obtained from the personal interviews and the Learning Experiences Questionnaires. Following this discussion the six teachers participating in the study give reasons why they would consider leaving the profession or the school district. Recommendations from the teachers in regard to increasing diversity among the teaching staff, teacher recruitment, and teacher retention are included in the third section. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the findings and recommendations for educational leadership.

#### Major Findings of the Study

As previously stated Bandura (1997) defined four informational sources which lead to one's perceived self-efficacy. These include past performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and emotional arousal. Due to the amount of research dealing with past performance and the lack of research dealing with family and cultural influences on the career decision making process for African American and Hispanic students, the primary focus of this research was on vicarious learning and social persuasion (see Figure 2).

### Personal Interviews

Early adolescence is a critical period for choosing one's career. Parental and family influences are especially important. Constantine, Wallace, and Kindaichi (2005) suggest the influence of parents is especially important to African American students. This influence remains important throughout their career development. The absence of parental and family support may negatively impact the decision making process for some students (Constantine et al., 2005).

Parental values and expectations in terms of obtaining a college degree were significant to the majority of the teachers (4 of 6). While only two of the teachers were actually encouraged to become teachers there was a strong parental emphasis upon education. The parents viewed education as an opportunity, a means of improvement; of "being better than they had been". This was particularly true for Teacher 5 who represented the first generation of college graduates in her family.

The teachers, except Teacher 2, talked at length about experiences they had working with children when they were growing up. These included working in summer camps, babysitting, and teaching Sunday School. From these experiences the teachers developed a love and interest in children. For these five teachers their early experiences were important in their decision to become a teacher. Through these experiences the teachers developed a "passion" for children and saw teaching as a means to "making a difference" and carrying out their passion. According to Bandura (1997) past performance accomplishments

are important in the development of one's perceived self-efficacy. This relates to the fact that once a person experiences success he will be more willing to try something more difficult.

Sonia Nieto (2006) provides the reflections of seven teachers in regard to their reasons for becoming a teacher. The underlying reason why each became a teacher was to "make a difference". The teachers in Nieto's study expressed the idea that as a teacher one can make positive changes in the world by helping others better themselves. The teachers in this research expressed a similar reason for entering the profession; to make a difference.

Based upon the personal interviews vicarious learning was the strongest informational source of self-efficacy for four of the six teachers in this research. Each of these four teachers identified a teacher who had impacted their career decision. Results of a study by Bricheno and Thornton (2007) identified a different finding. Their research found that young adults have a variety of role models; however, only 2.4% of the 10 and 11 year old students participating in their study identified a teacher as their role model. Most students selected friends and family as their role model. The five most important attributes of a role model which these students identified included caring, honesty, trustworthy, hard working, and being a good example. Research by Sheets (2004) supports Bricheno and Thornton's findings that African American students tend to look to family members, religious leaders, and celebrity figures as role models. Teachers do not serve as role models. Epstein (2005) points out that the absence of non-

white teachers deprives African-American and Latino students of the availability of role models.

Teacher 5's decision to become a teacher was strongly influenced by her third grade teacher. In describing her, Teacher 5 became emotional. Tears came to her eyes as she related the impact "LaRosa" had on her life and her decision to become a teacher. She could describe in detail her "beautiful curly red hair". Teacher 5 found characteristics in LaRosa that she discovered in herself. This made her realize she could "become just like her". While Teacher 5 was the most emotional during her discussion of her role model, the others saw characteristics in their role models which they discovered in themselves. This led the teachers to believe they could become a successful teacher.

Noting similarities between oneself and the role model is important in determining the impact of vicarious learning. Research suggests that people typically seek career role models who they visualize as being similar to themselves. Karunanayke and Nauta (2004) refer to this behavior as the "similarity hypothesis". They note the greater the similarity, the stronger the impact the role model has on behavior and career choice. According to Maddux (1995) by observing the success of a similar person, self-efficacy increases. It is easy for a person to believe that if the similar person can be successful, he can also. Bandura (1997) supports this idea by adding the greater the assumed similarity between the person and the role model, the more significant the influence of the role model on one's behavior.

All of the teachers in this study were able to identify the influence of negative role models on their career decision. Each of the six participants had teachers they were determined not to be like. Most of these experiences stemmed from teachers who did not create meaningful, engaging work and made no connections with the students. Their instruction was boring. Learning was not fun.

Anxiety management, or emotional arousal as termed by Betz (2000), was mentioned by only one teacher. Betz (2004) states that learning a new behavior increases anxiety. Based upon the qualitative data from the interviews, anxiety management did have an impact on the career decision making process for one of the six teachers. Teacher 3 related she was anxious about becoming a teacher. Being a teacher meant she would be a role model to her students. Teacher 3 took this role very seriously. At one point she almost decided against teaching because she knew her students would be looking at everything she did. Teacher 3 saw this as a tremendous responsibility. Later Teacher 3 commented she “wanted to be the best she could be at whatever she decided to be”. According to Betz in most incidents the presence of anxiety serves to decrease both self-efficacy and the successful performance of the new behavior, however, moderate anxiety states may enhance performance, as evidenced by Teacher 3’s concern for her responsibility as a role model to her students and wanting to be the “best she could be” in whatever she chose to become.



### Learning Experience Questionnaire (LEQ)

Findings from the LEQ mirrored the qualitative data in respect to the role of vicarious learning on the career decision making process for these six teachers. Based upon overall total scores vicarious learning was the strongest informational sources for four (1, 3, 4, and 6) of the six teachers. The most frequent answer (mode) for vicarious learning indicated that five of the six teachers agreed that vicarious learning was important to their career decision making. Four of the teachers indicated they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the importance of vicarious learning on their career decision making process.

While qualitative data indicated very strongly that Teacher 5’s most influential source of self-efficacy was vicarious learning, that conclusion was not supported by the LEQ. For Teacher 5 past performance was the strongest informational source based upon her total score; however, Teacher 5’s most frequent answer (mode) was “strongly agree” in terms of the importance of vicarious learning. Even though her total score indicated strength in the area of past performance, vicarious learning was the only informational source for which Teacher 5 most often answered “strongly agree”. Her median score was 4.5 which indicated answers between slightly agree and agree. The variability (SD 1.85) for vicarious learning was the largest of any of the informational sources for Teacher 5.

Teacher 2 was the only one who indicated on the LEQ that she “strongly disagreed” with the importance of vicarious learning. While her answers varied

from strongly disagree to strongly agree her most frequent answer (mode) was “strongly disagree”. The variability (SD 1.55) of her answers for vicarious learning was the highest of any of the informational sources. During her interview Teachers 2 indicated she had a debate teacher she liked but she had little influence on her decision to become a teacher. According to Teacher 2, “I didn’t have too many teachers that I related to that I really liked beyond like normal teaching”.

The qualitative data indicated that social persuasion had an impact on the career decision of Teacher 1 and Teacher 5. Teacher 1’s total score on the LEQ for social persuasion was 131. Only anxiety management rated lower. This data indicates that social persuasion ranks third out of four in regard to importance in the decision-making process. In completing the questionnaire Teacher 1’s answers regarding social persuasion ranged from “disagree” to “strongly agree”. The most frequent answer (mode) given by Teacher 1 was 5, which is “agree”. Variability (SD 1.07) for social persuasion was the lowest of the four informational sources.

During her interview Teacher 5 expressed that her father encouraged her to go into “teaching or nursing”. According to Bandura (1997) it is easier to sustain one’s self-efficacy if those who are important express confidence in the person’s ability to perform rather than if they communicate doubt. This influence is only as strong as the faith one has in the person who sends the message. Teacher 5 felt her father’s input had an impact on her career decision. Teacher 5

admired her father a great deal for his determination to provide for his family. Ferry, Fouad, and Smith (2000) concur with the importance of parental support upon career goals. Results of a study of 791 undergraduate psychology students indicated that parents have a significant impact upon their child's career-related development. LEQ data for Teacher 5 is interesting. Her total score for vicarious learning and social persuasion were equal, 120. Her most common answer (mode) for vicarious learning was 6, which represents strongly agree. For social persuasion her most common answer was 5, representing agree. Variability for vicarious learning was the highest (SD 1.85) of the four informational sources. For social persuasion variability was the second lowest (SD 1.64).

Teacher 1 was encouraged to pursue a career in education by her high school teachers. For her social persuasion ranked third in over-all total score on the LEQ. Her most frequent answer to questions dealing with social persuasion indicated she "agreed" to the importance of this informational source. Variability of her answers for social persuasion was next to the lowest (SD 1.07).

During the interview Teacher 3 was the only one who expressed a concern for becoming a role model. Teacher 6's LEQ indicated he was most influenced by vicarious learning. He used anxiety management as the second most important informational source of self-efficacy. Qualitative data did not indicate that anxiety management had any bearing on Teacher 6's decision to become a teacher. His overall score for anxiety management was 109. The most frequent answer he gave for anxiety management was 4, slightly agreed.

The descriptive statistics for each of the informational sources of self-efficacy are displayed in Tables 11-14 (Answer key: 1 strongly disagree; 2 slightly disagree; 3 disagree; 4 slightly agree; 5 agree; and 6 strongly agree). It is noteworthy that Teacher 2 was extremely low in both vicarious learning and social persuasion. This finding does support the qualitative data from her personal interview.

Results from the Learning Experiences Questionnaire indicated that vicarious learning was the most important informational source for four teachers from south-central North Carolina. For the other two teachers past performance was the most significant source of information. Social persuasion, the second informational source addressed in this research, was either third or fourth in terms of the impact it had on the decision making process of the six teachers who participated in this research. This indicates that based upon quantitative data social persuasion did not have a significant impact upon the decision making process of these six teachers from south-central North Carolina.

These research findings indicate that educational leaders should find ways to increase the presence of successful role models as vicarious learning was identified as an important factor in the career decisions making process for these six teachers. The importance of past performance indicates that it is necessary for teachers and school administrators to provide opportunities for students to work with others in some type of teaching experience. Examples would include peer tutoring and reading buddies.

Table 11

*Descriptive Statistics for Past Performance*

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Teacher	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
1	141	4.7	5	5	2-6	1.08
2	132	4.4	6	5	1-6	1.45
3	139	4.6	5	5	2-6	1.00
4	136	4.5	5	5	3-6	1.06
5	139	4.6	5	5	1-6	1.38
6	111	3.7	4	4	1-6	1.44

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Table 12

*Descriptive Statistics for Vicarious Learning*

Teacher	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
1	149	4.7	5	5	2-6	1.08
2	78	4.4	1	2	1-6	1.55
3	142	4.9	6	5	1-6	1.60
4	136	4.5	5	5	3-6	1.06
5	120	4.0	6	4.5	1-6	1.38
6	129	4.3	4	4.5	1-6	1.44

Table 13

*Descriptive Statistics for Social Persuasion*

Teacher	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
1	131	4.4	5	5	2-6	1.07
2	53	1.8	1	1	1-5	1.08
3	101	3.37	2	3	1-6	1.85
4	128	4.7	4	4	3-6	1.11
5	120	4.0	5	4	1-6	1.64
6	103	3.4	4	4	1-6	2.15

Table 14

*Descriptive Statistics for Anxiety Management*

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Teacher	Total Score	<i>M</i>	Mode	<i>Mdn</i>	Range	<i>SD</i>
1	93	3.1	2	2	1-6	1.19
2	54	1.8	1	3	1-3	.85
3	120	4.0	4	4	2-6	1.23
4	96	3.2	4	3.5	2-4	.93
5	87	2.9	2	2	1-6	1.67
6	109	3.6	4	4	1-6	1.29

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Data from the Learning Experiences Questionnaire indicated that vicarious learning was the most important informational source for four of the six teachers. Social persuasion was either the third or fourth source for the development of perceived self-efficacy. Qualitative data indicated that vicarious learning was the strongest source for four of the six teachers. Social persuasion impacted the career decision of only two of the teachers. Table 15 compares the results of the personal interviews and the Learning Experiences Questionnaire for each teacher.

#### Why Are Teachers Leaving the Profession?

The six participants offered various reasons why they believe teachers are leaving the profession. Primary among these are the low salary and lack of prestige for the teaching profession. Research by Gordon in 1994 support these current findings. Gordon found when he asked why African American students are not going into teaching that low pay and a negative perception of the teaching career were important reasons. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2002) cites that a major reason for teacher dissatisfaction is the poor salary. Another major reason cited by the six teachers participating in this study related to the emphasis on data. With the No Child Left Behind Legislation of 2001 many teachers see the intrinsically motivating factors cited by Nelson, Gamon, and Davis (2001)for becoming a teacher have been taken away. These factors included working with children, teacher as a role model, and making a difference.

Table 15

*Comparison of Qualitative and Quantitative Data*


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Personal Interviews	Learning Experiences Questionnaire
Past Performance -5 out of 6 (1,3,4,5,6)	Past Performance -2 out of 6 1 <sup>st</sup> info. source (2 & 5) -4 out of 6 2 <sup>nd</sup> info. source (1, 3, 4, 6)
Vicarious Learning -4 out of 6 (1,4,5,6)	Vicarious Learning - 4 out of 6 1 <sup>st</sup> info. source (1,3,4,6) -1 out of 6 2 <sup>nd</sup> info. source (2)
Social Persuasion -2 out of 6 (1 and 5)	Social Persuasion -0 out of 6 1 <sup>st</sup> info. source -Social persuasion & vicarious learning equally imp. for 2 <sup>nd</sup> info. source (5)
Anxiety Management -1 out of 6	Anxiety Management -0 out of 6

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For Teachers 1, 2, and 6, money is the major reason they see as the reason teachers are leaving the profession. The local school district can do little to address this issue as salaries are primarily established by the state. For teachers who are single it is financially difficult to re-pay student loans and afford other living expenses on the current salary. Many teachers, including Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, must hold second jobs to supplement their income. Teacher 1 was highly impacted by the state's reduction in medical insurance benefits. She is a diabetic and must have routine medical checkups, which may not be covered by her insurance. This has created financial issues for Teacher 1. Teacher 2 quickly pointed out, "When you think about college you think about making money. Teaching does not fall in this category." According to Teacher 6, "I love teaching but I guess the big 'knock on teaching' is money. I've been doing this job for ten years and haven't moved up." This teacher has already told his school principal he plans to leave his teaching position at the end of the school year. He will join the military in order to increase his income. Teacher 6 commented, "I don't think I am done with teaching. I can come back after 20 years or do something in the military that involves education."

Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 believe teachers are leaving the profession due to all the "red tape". Teachers can no longer be creative. The joy of teaching has been taken away. The "child is gone and replaced with a number". Teacher 4 said she and Teacher 3 are "veterans. We have been in it a long time. I see new ones coming in and I pray they have patience enough with the kids. To say, 'O.K.

they don't know it but I can try to help them'". Teacher 6 stated he felt "we do too much testing". The emphasis on data has taken away the love of teaching.

Teacher 5 stated that she loves the classroom. The only reason she would even consider leaving teaching would be to become an administrator. In that capacity she could encourage others to keep on teaching. She was emphatic that she would not leave education.

### Why Would Teachers Consider Leaving a South-Central North Carolina School District?

There was no one reason why any of the six teachers would consider leaving the school district in which they are teaching. Each had very positive comments about the school district and the importance placed upon people. They also enjoy the safety of the community, the warm climate, and the availability of a variety of recreational activities.

Teachers 3, 4, and 5 would not consider leaving south-central North Carolina. For Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 it is home. They grew up in the area and have extended family members in the community. Family is very important to both of these teachers. Teacher 5 is very happy with the community resources available to her family, particularly her children. She feels safe in the area and has no desire to move.

Even though Teacher 1 has been very impressed by the friendliness and helpfulness of personnel in the district, she would consider leaving south-central North Carolina for a job that offers more money. "Salary is a big issue."

According to Teacher 1 surrounding states, such as Kentucky and Tennessee, offer higher salaries. When Teacher 2 was asked if she would leave the school district, she was quick to respond that she would. Her reason was, "Honestly, I just don't feel like it is diverse enough. I feel like the 'employees don't match the children'. I know it is hard. I just want to be somewhere that is more diverse".

While Teacher 2 has heard many negative things about the students in her school, she has not seen this for herself. She believes her students respect her just a little better than they do some other people, "Just because I can really relate to them." Research findings by Smulyan (2004), agrees an important reason for becoming a teacher is the development of relationships.

Teacher 6 is already planning to leave the teaching profession and the area. Prior to making his decision to leave teaching and enter the military, Teacher 6 interviewed with several surrounding school districts. He enjoys the south-central area of North Carolina; however, he would move in order for his children to have greater access to sports activities. When the family moved from Nebraska they lived in a very small community. There was one middle school and one high school. The sports program was tied to the high school. "Here it is their own little entity and they do their own thing. That is the only reason I have actually looked into re-locating." Leaving the district would not be an issue for him if it were not for his children and his desire to "give my kids a better advantage with sports".

Recommendations from Six Teachers in South-central North Carolina  
For Encouraging Students to Become Teachers

Each of the six teachers is concerned for why more students are not going into the teaching profession. However, when asked if they would encourage someone to enter the teaching profession, each teacher hesitated to respond. The teachers recognize the importance of assessing students to determine academic progress; however, they continue to believe strongly in the importance of establishing mentoring, supportive relationships and to retain a passion for teaching.

Teacher 1 related that while she was in college she had the opportunity to work in an inner city school where she was a “minority”. This was a very unique and “eye opening” experience. There was barbed wire around the top of the fence because the school was often vandalized. It reminded Teacher 1 of a prison; however, to the students it was their “safe haven”. The staff was dedicated to children and “so sweet and so embracing”. This positive, caring environment provided these students role models of success. Several of the students expressed a desire to pursue teaching as a career because the teachers had made such an impact on their life. Many of them wanted to “make a difference” for others. The school was the “only thing in their life that was stable”. Teacher 1 stated building relationships and “making a difference” are important means to encourage students to see the value of becoming a teacher. Smulyan (2004) found that one reason both doctors and teachers enter their respective

professions is due to the importance of relationships. Nieto (2006) concluded that teachers want to “make a difference”.

While Teacher 2 did not have specific recommendations to encourage students to pursue a career in education, she discussed the importance of establishing relationships. These relationships provide students the opportunity to see how teachers “make a difference” in the lives of others and may instill in students a desire to pursue a similar career.

When discussing diversity within the schools, Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 commented they did not want students to think they were being hired for any job simply because they are African American or Hispanic. Teachers and principals serve as role models of success for all students, not just African American. Increasing the opportunities for exposure to these successful role models is important for all students. Modeling is an effective tool for promoting a sense of personal efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Teacher 4 stated, “We must start early, in kindergarten, with guidance counselors and others encouraging our students to become teachers”. Teacher 5 commented:

“minority children relate to minorities but not necessarily for professional purposes; more to life experiences. It would be nice if role models were from the same culture but it is not necessary. They just need to be someone who has the heart to reach out to them and say, ‘You can do this’”.

Just as Teacher 5, Teacher 2 added she “does not believe a teacher has to be from the same climate to relate to students; however, you have to be able to relate to the demographics of the children you are teaching. Relationships are the best things you can do in the classroom”.

Karunanayake and Nauta (2004) completed a study in which students representing different races were asked to identify the number, relationship, and race of their role models. Findings indicated students do have access to valuable resources as they make academic and career decisions. Both white and non-white students in the study were able to identify role models in their life. The majority of career role models identified by the students were of their same race. Same race role models provide strategies for dealing with difficult careers, for being an African American or Hispanic in the workplace, and for coping with the consequences of their career. According to Karunanayake and Nauta (2004) African American and Hispanic role models recognize the benefits of being a successful role model. As a result they make themselves available to assist in the career development of other people, especially those from ethnically diverse backgrounds. This is the role Teacher 5 is assuming. While Teacher 5 does not agree with Karunanayake and Nauta’s findings, she does recognize the importance of making connections with students. During her interview Teacher 5 recognized that she has a Hispanic female student in her classroom who wants to become a teacher. Teacher 5 determined that she would become a mentor to that student in helping her achieve her career goal.



Teacher 5 was very concerned about the need to find ways to support students in becoming teachers at an early age. She felt it was extremely important to help young people establish goals early, to help them see teaching is a “great field to go into”.

“Don’t wait until the junior or senior year. Grab them early and really start reaching out to them; be their support. You have a dream. Reach this dream. To go to school and then put teaching out there. It really does have awesome perks. You can teach art, you can be a physical education major, you can be computer technology. There are a lot of avenues out there. It is not just the classroom. I don’t think students realize this and I don’t think we are reaching them early enough. There are a lot of avenues out there.

Teacher 5 discussed the importance of having an early mentoring program for students and exposing them to teaching opportunities. Gushue, Scanlan, Pantzer, and Clarke (2006) agree that adolescence is an important development period for discovering potential careers. During high school students are making important decisions that will influence career plans. According to Teacher 5 an important qualification for becoming a mentor would be that “you must have a heart to reach out to students”. There has to be a “connection” between the student and the mentoring teacher. The role of the mentor would be to help students overcome “hurdles” to achieving their goal of becoming a teacher.

Teacher 5's concern for students overcoming "hurdles" to accomplishing their goal of becoming a teacher supports the importance of the educational pipeline. According to Morris (1990) the time between when a person decides to become a teacher and when he actually enters the profession is described as the "educational pipeline". For African American and Hispanic teachers the educational pipeline is "fraught with leaks all along the way". These "leaks" may include the fact that African American and Hispanic students enter school already at risk because many of their parents have incomes below the poverty line, a greater rate of unemployment, and are less likely to have a college education (Henke, Chen, Geis, & Knepper, 2000). Having a mentoring teacher would support the young student as he or she goes through school planning for a future in education.

According to Teacher 5 providing opportunities for high school students to do some "teaching" would be important. This could be set up similar to the "candy striper" program for those interested in the medical field. Teacher 5 expressed the idea that fifth grade would be a great time to have a job fair for students. The fair would expose them to numerous careers, including teaching. Students who were identified as being interested in teaching would be assigned a teacher mentor. Each year, as the student moved from elementary to middle to high school, a teacher mentor would be assigned to encourage their career interest. The role of the mentor would be to become an advocate for the student and help to address barriers to reaching the goal of becoming a teacher. This

would be very important to those students, who like Teacher 5, may be the first in their family to attend college.

Teacher 5 attends a church which has become very culturally diverse. One way they have accomplished this is to reach out into the community to build partnerships. They “go to where the people are” and engage in service projects. Teacher 5 did not have a suggestion for how to implement service projects in the school but she felt this would be a way to “be out there and figure out how to bring them in. You can’t sit back and let people come to you”. Reaching out to the community to develop partnerships would be a means of encouraging students to become teachers. They would see teachers in a different role and as someone with “whom they could connect”. For middle school students the service project may be similar to the project for high school seniors. Teacher 5 alluded to the fact that school service projects could also be a means of encouraging culturally diverse students to become teachers.

Teacher 6 agreed having a job fair for students in elementary school was important. Even though elementary and middle school students see their teachers every day, it would be important to include teachers in the job fair. Students may not stop to consider a career in teaching. Teacher 6 discussed the importance of giving students opportunities to “teach” while they are in high school. He related that when he was in high school his Spanish class went to the elementary school once a week to teach students Spanish. Teacher 6 added, “When we did that, that first couple of days I’m sitting there thinking, this is

“kinda” neat. These kids have to listen to us and everything they are learning is our responsibility. You never know that out of those four or five periods of Spanish there may be one or two kids that say, ‘Hey, I really like doing this’” According to Teacher 6 this made him think, “That was for me, that got me into teaching.”

Teacher 6 also mentioned the possibility of high school students tutoring. He cited the example that in his high school a student came once a week during study hall to help students with their work. The student was like “a mentor”. “A lot of times it was honor students and those honor students are now going into education because they ‘got that tie in’. They liked the kids and being in the room to help.”

#### Recruitment of Culturally Diverse Teachers

In 1992 Boe and Gilford studied the importance of matching teacher and student demographics as it relates to the supply and demand of teachers. This continues to be a concern among the six teachers participating in this study. They see that recruiting African American and Hispanic teachers is a cyclical process. When more African American and Hispanic students become successful teachers, there will be more African American and Hispanic teachers to serve as positive role models for students who may consider education as a career. Karunanayake and Nauta (2004) support the importance of role models of one’s own race. They fulfill a function that role models of other backgrounds do not. This is particularly important for those whose career options have been

limited due to discrimination and other barriers. These obstacles have led to decreased feelings of self-efficacy and outcome expectations.

Teacher 1 expressed the opinion that a job fair where principals are there to actively recruit would be helpful. She did not attend the job fair for the study county; however, in some school districts the job fair was merely a means of collecting resumes. For one job fair Teacher 1 drove 10 hours. When she arrived she found things to be very disorganized. No principals were there to conduct interviews. Teacher 1 described this experience as “devastating”. Since arriving in the study county, Teacher 1 has been very impressed with the warm and caring atmosphere created by the school personnel. She felt the county cared about her as a person. Teacher 1 was very impressed by the fact the superintendent took time to speak to the new teachers’ orientation. “They really are into children in this county. People are very personable.”

When asked to discuss ideas that would increase the diversity among the teaching staff Teacher 2 acknowledged this was “hard”. While in her college education program Teacher 2 was the only “minority”. According to Teacher 2 a lot of her generation is the first to obtain a college degree. “So when you think about college you think about making money. What can I do to make money? To make it? Teaching doesn’t fall into that.” Teacher 2 added that if someone is going into teaching they must have a dual income. She cited the fact that many of her friends who “couldn’t get pass freshman year in college” earn more than she does. While Teacher 2 felt strongly there was a need for more African

American, Hispanic, and other culturally diverse teachers in order to more closely “mirror” the students, she did not have a suggestion for accomplishing this.

Gordon (1994) supports Teacher 2 opinion that there is a need for more positive “minority” role models in schools. One fifth of the students Gordon surveyed indicated that one way to get students interested in education is to increase the participation of positive “minority role models in the schools”.

Teacher 2 added that a lot of African American students “go for those jobs you always hear people talk about”. According to her there are few people from her culture in “distinguished and prestigious careers” such as medicine and law. Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 indicated they had family members who encouraged them to obtain an education as a means of “bettering themselves”. It was important to the family members for these teachers to go to college because they did not have this opportunity. When they were growing up career and educational options were much more limited. According to Hackett and Byars (1996) and Fairclough (2007) factors such as discrimination limited career options and decreased feelings of self-efficacy and outcome expectations among the African American population. Falconer and Hays (2006) completed a study of 13 African American college students to gain suggestions for improving career services of a large Midwestern university. In regard to social persuasion as it is associated with parental support, the students related they often struggle to accomplish their career goals as they deal with pressure from family and community. Parents frequently encouraged students to pursue a career which they themselves liked

or because of anticipated financial gain. Findings indicated that students believed their parent's effort to influence their career choice was due to the fact African American have only recently been given greater access to higher income careers. This was particularly true for female participants. Parents often encouraged them to pursue careers that were traditionally male dominated (Falconer & Hays).

Teacher 4 continually referred to her mother as her role model. While her mother was not a teacher, Teacher 4 viewed her as a teacher in the home. Sheets (2004) states that African American students tend to look to family members, religious leaders, and celebrity figures as role models. Constantine, Wallace, and Kindaichi (2005) found that perceived parental support was significantly related to African American adolescents' career certainty.

Teacher 4 expressed how important her mother was to her career decision. King (1993) was interested in identifying factors which influenced college students to enter the teaching profession. King found the significance of the mother was very important. He attributed this finding to the fact that traditionally in the African American culture the mother has a greater influence on the children than the father.

Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 were extremely concerned for the lack of African American teachers in the school district. Teacher 4 commented on the fact there were only two social studies African American teachers at the local high school. The second one was just hired last year. Teacher 4 asked, "Why would an

African American male, go into teaching social studies or history?” She answered her own question by saying, “They need to know their heritage”. Both teachers expressed the idea that, “We have lost the culture. The culture needs to be made part of the school so they will feel part of the schools.” Teacher 4 asked, “How many principals are African American in this county? Why are we not being hired as a principal? They would be real role models of success for our African American students.”

Teacher 3 and Teacher 4, who are close friends outside their working environment, had recently attended the “Closing the Achievement Gap” conference. They felt very strongly that this conference “reaches diversity”. Both teachers commented on a question asked by one of the presenters, “When there is a Caucasian huge gap it is a crisis and everything stops but the African American gap is getting wider and wider; where is the crisis”. Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 expressed concern that “it really is a crisis and we are trying to close it but we have to go to workshops that will help us to close it”. One recommendation that would increase the awareness of diversity would be for the school district to bring in presenters and workshops, such as Closing the Achievement Gap. Teacher 3 stated, “To me it is a red light to our society when we look at how many Black males you have in third grade to see how many prisons to create. Why can’t we use money to help now? If you can identify the problem in third grade why not fix it then rather than wait until we need the



prisons?” The presence of successful role models would be an important factor in dealing with issues of diversity.

Vicarious learning or role modeling is used to guide one's behavior (Maddux, 1995). People learn by watching others. The accomplishments of others are a source of social comparison by which one assesses his own ability to succeed (Maddux). By observing the success of a similar person, self-efficacy increases. It is easy for a person to believe that if the similar person can be successful, he can also. Role models do more than provide standards by which others judge their own abilities (Bandura, 1997). Typically, people seek successful role models who possess the abilities they desire. These models provide knowledge and effective skills which teach the observer strategies to cope with the demands and challenges of their environment (Bandura). Attaining these skills increases one's self-efficacy beliefs. Accurate self-appraisal of one's abilities is of great importance in terms of educational and career goals (Bandura).

To recruit more culturally diverse teachers, Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 felt it was important to go where the candidates are. “Go to the colleges where they are”. The teachers felt it was important to “focus in early on”. Both teachers agreed it was very important to “give them some incentives”. Primary among these would be for the county to offer scholarships, such as “Grow Your Own”. The scholarships would be awarded with a commitment that the student returns to the county to teach. These students would then become positive role models

for other African American or Hispanic teachers. Teacher 4 acknowledged there may be problems with the scholarship. To qualify for scholarships students typically must have a 4.9 average and have taken Advanced Placement (AP) classes. These criteria limit the number of culturally diverse students who apply. Teacher 4 added, "You know how we are. If a person feels you are "too smart" they say 'you are trying to act white'. They just sit on their 'smartness' because they do not want to be identified as trying to act 'white'. We need more African American teachers to say you are smart." Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 commented recruiting African American teachers is a cyclical process, "If more minorities became teachers there would be more positive role models who would encourage other African American students to become teachers". Research by Gordon (1994) supports the idea that one way to increase the number of African American and Hispanic teachers would be to provide more African American and Hispanic role models.

According to Teacher 4 a school district wanting to increase diversity should work with the community businesses to provide incentives and assistance for moving to the area. She related the experience of her sister who was recently hired by a nearby school district. The district had partnered with local businesses, including the housing industry and the utility companies to provide reductions to beginning teachers for deposits and rental fees. In speaking of her sister's experience Teacher 4 said, "They had someone there for her". These "incentives" offered by the school district were important factors in her sister's

decision to move to the county. Teacher 5 also expressed the idea it would be helpful to have community representatives at the school district's job fair. These community stakeholders would be able to talk with the candidates about available resources.

Both Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 were encouraged by the superintendent's meeting with African American and Hispanic teachers when she first came to the district. They stated, "That felt good. We talked and she took the information. She cared about 'me'. We felt good; but then it just stopped." The teachers commented the superintendent did refer to the Closing the Achievement Gap Conference in a recent newsletter. They were very positive about this support.

When asked how the county could attract more culturally diverse teachers, Teacher 5 commented, "I think as the county becomes more diverse and offers more diversity, we are going to see people from diverse backgrounds wanting to come. It is becoming more that way. You have to have a reason to want to come here." Her reason for coming to the area was to raise her children in a safer environment. Teacher 5 was excited when she reported she had recently met a woman from Florida who is Egyptian. "I have never met an Egyptian before. While she is not a teacher I have learned a lot from her."

Teacher 5 suggested making changes to the way the school district's job fair is set up. The job fair for the school district is held in an area country club. Teacher 5 said, "Not everyone is comfortable walking into a county club setting".

One idea she presented would be to hold the event in one of the schools.

Candidates would then be able to see “what they are like”.

Teacher 6 did not have any suggestions or recommendations as to how the county could increase diversity among the teaching staff. The only factor he discussed in terms of recruiting or retaining teachers was the low salary

#### Teacher Retention

During the discussion regarding ways to encourage students to pursue a career in education, three of the six teachers expressed their concern for keeping teachers in education. Each of these three teachers felt it was important for teachers to remain in the profession; however, Teacher 2 said, “I know people want teachers to stay in education forever but I think if they do stuff like that, they will burn themselves out. After awhile it is a burn out job because there is so much work, always adding something different, ever changing”. Teacher 2 stated she could not see herself in the teaching profession for more than five year.

Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 only commented that the increased emphasis on data and assessment is contributing to teachers leaving the profession. Until the “child is put back in education” schools will continue to lose quality teachers.

According to the Education Commission of the States (2007) teachers are more effective after their first several years of teaching. Students pay a price for the high teacher turnover rate. Inexperienced teachers may negatively impact student achievement. Teacher quality makes a difference in regard to student performance. Schmoker (2006) contends that instruction is the single greatest

determinant of learning and has the greatest impact on student achievement. Socioeconomic factors or funding resources do not impact learning as much as the quality of instruction (Schmoker). According to Weiss and Pasley (2004) high quality instruction engages students in worthwhile content that builds on prior knowledge. It has meaning and connection to the real world.

Mentoring was an extremely important means of support for Teacher 1. She viewed mentoring as a significant way to encourage beginning teachers. Teacher 1 described her school environment as one in which the principal was supportive and willing to listen to everyone. Other staff members were positive and willing to help. Teacher 1 stated she had a very good mentor who was always willing to be helpful; however, for the mentoring program to be more effective the mentor and mentee should be from the same grade level and subject area. This would allow more meaningful conversations as a professional learning community (PLC) regarding curriculum and student data. Due to a limited number of mentors, Teacher 1 realized it may not be possible to pair a mentee with a mentor from the same grade level; however, when possible it would be important. Several of Teacher 1's friends have mentioned the importance of mentors and mentees being in the same grade level.

According to the Center for Personnel Studies in Special Education (2004) one of the most often cited reasons teachers leave the profession is due to a lack of support. Mentoring programs can be very effective in addressing this issue. The goal of mentoring beginning teachers is to improve instructional

effectiveness, promote satisfaction in teaching, and to provide a way for new teachers to learn about the district and the school cultures. One of the suggestions offered by the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities to improve the effectiveness of mentoring programs is to provide mentors who are teaching the same grade and subject area. This recommendation supports Teacher 1's reflection on ways to support beginning teachers and to encourage them to remain in the profession.

Teacher 1 admitted that as a beginning teacher, who is also new to the county, it is difficult to meet teachers from different schools and to learn about the county and the available resources. According to Teacher 1 it would be helpful if the school district provided monthly small group instruction sessions for new teachers, particularly those with less than five years experience, to meet and discuss different ideas about teaching. In larger schools it is difficult for beginning teachers to get to know their colleagues and the community. These meetings could be district wide or community wide. Either would provide an opportunity for "people to get together that are in the same boat". Teacher 1 recommended holding these meetings in different schools. This would provide opportunities for teachers to visit other classrooms and to see what others are doing. "People are able to learn so much from one another." Teacher 1 was given the opportunity to visit different classrooms when she began teaching. This experience provided insight into how other teachers delivered instruction and managed their classroom. She found this to be a very valuable learning experience. While

Teacher 1 knew many teachers would complain about “another meeting” she felt these meetings would be valuable learning opportunities.

Teacher 2 said, “Maybe five years and then I’ll move to another career.” According to Teacher 2 having a support system, especially for the first year, is essential to keeping teachers in the profession. New teachers are overwhelmed by the amount of work that has to be done. They are simply not prepared for this fact. A supportive administrator and mentor who are personable and caring make a tremendous difference in the retention of teachers. There is another first year teacher in the same school as Teacher 2. Having a “buddy” has been significant. “It is just having that friend who is in the same boat as you, has made all the difference for me.” Teacher 2 describes her mentor as being “wonderful” but “she does not compare to having someone who ‘is in the same boat’. We can relate to one another.” Just as with Teacher 1, Teacher 2 suggested it would be helpful to have regularly scheduled district wide meetings for new teachers. Some teachers may resent having to go to another meeting. It may be possible to set up forums or communicate through a webinar in order to eliminate a “meeting”. The important thing is to have some way for new teachers to communicate and share ideas with one another.

From the negative experiences of her fifth grade teacher who lacked classroom management skills, Teacher 5 recognized empowering beginning teachers to feel strong and unique in their area of expertise is important. Teachers need to know they “have an area that they see as their strength”. When

this happens the teacher believes, “they make a difference”. Providing appropriate, meaningful staff development provides the new teacher with the knowledge and skills to improve her practice and to become successful in the classroom.

When Teacher 6 arrived in the school district he had already been teaching for eight years; therefore, he was not assigned a mentor. While Teacher 6 realized a mentor was not required he did admit it would have been helpful if someone had been assigned to him that could help him become acquainted with the school and the district. Teacher 2 agreed with Teacher 6 that having a “teacher buddy” would have given him someone to go to for questions about the school and about the community resources. When Teacher 6 moved to the school district he attended the new teacher orientation program. This was very important to learn about “school stuff but I needed to know about a mechanic or a doctor. I need to know the community”. Teacher 6 commented that the school district is large and after new teacher orientation it is like “here is your classroom, there you go, have fun”. This leaves the new teacher feeling very lonely, unprepared, and overwhelmed.

Just like Teacher 1, Teacher 6 mentioned the fact that it is hard for new teachers to get to know one another. In the school district from which Teacher 6 came they had monthly socials. If he saw a teacher from another school he knew who they were. He knew the superintendent because he was in their school two or three times each month. Here, because of the size of the district, it is difficult



to know teachers and staff members outside one's own school. Having periodic staff development opportunities as a district rather than at the school level would provide opportunities for new teachers to meet others. It would also provide time for collaboration among peers who are teaching at different schools. Another suggestion Teacher 6 offered from his former district was routine curriculum meetings by subject area.

Once every month our social studies committee met. There was a social studies teacher from kindergarten all the way through high school. The middle school teachers would say, "Our kids don't know the 50 states." So elementary teachers would say, "We need to do that a better way". High school teachers would say, "We have kids coming that don't know enough about the civil war". Middle school teachers would say, "We have to do a better job. It was a vertical approach across the district".

In the study district Teacher 6 pointed out there is no communication between the grade levels. Having staff meetings as a district and providing opportunities for vertical planning would help to eliminate the feeling that we are "separate". "It would be a way to bring people together, to collaborate."

Teacher 6 feels the most important means to influence teacher retention relates to the salary. He realizes salaries are set by the state and the district cannot do anything about these; however, the reality is that a male cannot raise a family solely on a teacher's salary. Low salary has traditionally been a concern for the recruitment and retention of teachers. In 1994 Gordon interviewed 140

teachers focusing on the question, “Why do you think students of color are not going into teaching”. One of the reasons cited by over 50% of teachers was “low pay as a main reason that students of color are not entering teaching”.

### Study Conclusions

The methodology for this research was a mixed method with the initial emphasis upon the qualitative findings. During the data analysis process both the personal interviews and the quantitative data from the Learning Experiences Questionnaire (LEQ) were extremely important. The research would not have been complete without both data sources. This gives evidence to the fact that the process of identifying factors which influence the career decisions of African American and Hispanic teachers is very complex and, therefore, requires a multi-faceted approach.

Self-efficacy is an important concept in understanding the career decision making process. Not only is one’s background important in determining interest in a career but also expectations and goals. These interact to influence one another. What becomes important is the individual person and how he or she reacts to or perceives personal inputs and background characteristics. For every one these will be unique and different.

Findings from this research indicate that the emphasis the parents of these teachers placed on education was an overwhelming influence in their life. Family members, especially parents, serve as important role models to African American and Hispanic children. In the capacity of role model parents are also

important sources of social persuasion. Parental support helps to build the child's perceived self-efficacy in his ability to pursue careers and activities. This support helps to eliminate many barriers and obstacles to a child's pursuit of careers which may not have been open to their parents.

### Educational Leadership

Based upon the data obtained from these six teachers vicarious learning is important to the career decision-making process for African American and Hispanic teachers. Educational leadership must determine ways to maximize the sources of vicarious learning to impact teacher recruitment, increased diversity among the teaching staff, and teacher retention.

### *Teacher Recruitment*

Increasing the number of students who are becoming teachers is important. Suggestions offered by these six teachers included providing teaching opportunities for those students who have expressed an interest in becoming a teacher. Examples include peer tutoring and reading buddies. Bandura (1997) cites that social persuasion is not only verbal encouragement but includes structuring activities that will foster success.

Supporting students when they are young in the career decision making process is important. According to Constantine, Wallace, and Kindaichi (2005) adolescence is an important period for career interest development. Assigning a teacher mentor to a student who has expressed an interest in education would

provide support and encouragement to the student as he experiences hurdles in the educational pipeline.

The career decision making and planning process continues throughout one's life. Children become aware of careers by watching their parents, particularly their mother. Observing their parents fosters an awareness of various careers. As Wahl and Blackhurst (2000) suggested career awareness begins as early as the elementary level. Early planning allows students the opportunities to begin to assess what they will need to do in order to prepare for various careers. School counselors play a vital role in guiding students through the network of course options that will help them be successful in a chosen career. A comprehensive counseling program will assist students in becoming aware of the various career options available to them, including teaching. Guidance counselors provide assistance to students in regards to academic achievement and career planning.

Job fairs at the elementary and middle school level are recognized as important means of teacher recruitment. It is essential for teachers to be included among the careers. While students are with teachers all day long they may not stop to consider teaching as a profession. Having teacher participation in the job fair would increase awareness of the profession.

### *Encouraging Diversity*

Gordon (1994) cites that one way to encourage students to enter the teaching profession is to increase the number of role models. Epstein (2005)

recognizes this is difficult given the limited number of African American and Hispanic teachers. One of the most important means of impacting the number of African American and Hispanic teachers is a “Grow Your Own” scholarship program. This would offer an African American or Hispanic student a scholarship with the stipulation of returning to the district to teach. Important to this program would be community involvement and business support.

According to the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (2010), the community is a major stakeholder in the career planning process. Members of the business community may become mentors as well as offer internships to high school students and, when appropriate, to middle school students. These opportunities will provide hands on experiences for students to see the connection between what they learn in the classroom and their future employment.

It is important for guidance counselors to work collaboratively with these community leaders to educate students and their parents regarding careers that are located within the local community, one of which is teaching. Sheets (2000) supports the importance of school counselors working with middle and high school students to increase their perceived self-efficacy in becoming a teacher. Counselors may offer assistance in helping students apply for and obtain these internships. Local businesses could participate in school job fairs to promote career awareness. Businesses may consider offering scholarships to students

who are planning to pursue a degree that would prepare them to work within their company and the county.

Hobson-Horton and Owens (2004) suggest that support is the most important means of teacher recruitment. This is particularly important for African American and Hispanic students. They may need support with student internships, course work, and required testing.

### *Teacher Retention*

Mentoring is identified as an important strategy for keeping beginning teachers in the profession. Mentors are important in providing information and help with understanding policies and procedures. They offer suggestions for improving instruction, promoting satisfaction with the teaching profession, and providing a way to orient new teachers (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, 2004). Support in learning the curriculum, implementing behavior management plans, and orientation to the career is essential. Beginning teachers must not feel isolated and alone. The current emphasis on student achievement and data is overwhelming to all teachers, especially those who are just beginning. It is essential for fellow teachers, mentors, and administration to recognize this and to be available to offer needed support.

Staff development opportunities are important for teacher retention. It is essential that staff development is relevant and appropriate to the needs of the teacher. While on-line opportunities provide an individualized approach to training, the support of other teachers in face to face opportunities is valuable.

The message from the six teachers involved in this study was that the schools and the community must begin early to identify those students who have an interest in becoming teachers. By identifying teachers early there is the chance to provide opportunities for growth and development throughout their educational career, beginning as early as the elementary level. These opportunities will allow students to develop into teachers who are capable of delivering quality instruction that will make a difference in student learning. According to Schmoker (2006) the single greatest determinant of learning is instruction. As educational and community leaders the goal is to help students who desire a career in education to develop into those teachers who provide an outstanding quality level of instruction for all students. Students must see role models of success to let them know they can reach their career goal. As a district the schools must work together to create opportunities for professional growth that will encourage beginning teachers to remain in the profession and in the district. There must be a focus on collaboration between schools within the district, between the schools and the community, and the school and home in order to identify and encourage those students who desire to become teachers.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

Understanding the uniqueness of a culture is very important. While the African American teacher faces a history of discrimination, the Hispanic teacher faces a totally new culture and environment. Gender and role socialization as

well as family expectations are unique to each. Understanding this uniqueness in terms of career decision making is an area for future study.

In addition to the differences in cultures there may also be differences in gender socialization and expectations. As Teacher 6 pointed out teaching does not provide the financial means to support his family. Additional research would be important to assess factors that impact both males and females in their career decision making process.

### Summary

Quality education incorporates the ideal that students are exposed to a variety of cultural experiences (Anda 1984; Eubanks & Weaver, 1999; Irvine 1989; King, 1993; Morris, 1990). The global marketplace of today brings with it a multicultural environment that requires educators who reflect the diversity students will encounter in their daily life. In order for students to successfully compete in this global society it is important they learn from teachers who reflect diversity. Teachers from different ethnic backgrounds bring a variety of life experiences and viewpoints that enhance the quality of education for all students. A culturally diverse teaching staff adds intensity to teaching and learning (Eubanks & Weaver). According to Morris (1990) preparing students for success in a global market requires all students to be exposed to a variety of cultural perspectives that represent the nation at large. Statistics from the U.S. Department of Education (2007) and The National Center of Education Statistics (2007) show a lack of ethnically diverse teachers to serve an increasingly diverse



student population. With the increasing diversity among the student population, recruitment of talented culturally diverse teachers has become a critical education issue. An important question for educational leaders is how to increase the number of culturally diverse students who desire to pursue a career in education so that the teaching staff will more closely mirror the student population?

The present research was guided by the following research questions: (1) What factors influenced the career choice of African American and Hispanic teachers? (2) What recruitment factors influenced African American and Hispanic teachers to pursue a career in the school district being studied? Understanding these factors may identify strategies that can be utilized to influence students to pursue a career in education.

Important to the research was an understanding of the significance of self-efficacy on the career decision-making process for teachers. Due to the lack of research on cultural and family influences on career decision making, this study focused on vicarious learning and social persuasions, two informational sources of self-efficacy. According to Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (2001) when choosing a career one's perceived occupational self-efficacy is a more important factor than actual academic achievement. Unless a person believes he can succeed in a chosen career he will have little incentive to pursue the field; therefore, self-efficacy is an essential element in the career decision-making process (Bandura et al., 2001).

Personal interviews were very important to the research. These allowed each of the six participants to tell their own story. They identified the factors which influenced their decision to become a teacher. Based upon these stories the presence of a teacher role model was the most important factor to five of the six teachers. Each of these five teachers spoke very positively about the impact a former teacher had upon their career decision. These role models were encouraging and supportive. They identified strengths and encouraged the students to persevere in reaching their goal. The interviews revealed less about the importance of social persuasion on the career decision making process. There were only two of the six teachers who identified people who had encouraged them to specifically pursue a career in education. The emphasis was on obtaining a college education. This was very important to the parents and to extended family members.

To extend the qualitative findings of the interview, each participant completed the Learning Experiences Questionnaire. Quantitative data supported the finding that vicarious learning was important to the six teachers from south-central North Carolina who were participating in this study. Social persuasion did not have as much impact upon their career decisions.

There were no significant findings in regard to common factors explaining why these six teachers began teaching in the study county. Four of the teachers had family in the area or chose to move because of their children. One re-located to the area because her home state suffered serious employment problems

which resulted in a loss of jobs. The last teacher just “ended up here”. She is near family but this did not impact her career decision. This data does not provide any information that would identify recruitment strategies the school system could implement that would increase culturally diverse teachers to move to the district.

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APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

**Please complete the following with the most appropriate response.**

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_
2. Race/ethnic group to which you fell you belong:
  - \_\_\_ African American/Black
  - \_\_\_ Latino/a American
  - \_\_\_ Asian American
  - \_\_\_ Bi/Multiracial American
  - \_\_\_ Native American
  - \_\_\_ White
  - \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your highest completed academic degree?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you a National Board Certified Teacher? \_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_ No
5. What is the highest academic level achieved by your father?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is/was your father's occupation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the highest academic level achieved by your mother?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What is/was your mother's occupation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What grade do you teach?
  - \_\_\_ Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade
  - \_\_\_ 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade
  - \_\_\_ 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade
  - \_\_\_ 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade
10. If you are not a self-contained grade level teacher, please indicate what subject(s) you teach.  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. How many years have you been teaching? \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO USE

### LEARNING EXPERIENCES QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Johnnye,

Thank you for your interest in the Learning Experiences Questionnaire. It sounds like the LEQ will be useful in your dissertation. Attached is the LEQ and the scoring key. You have permission to use the LEQ in your dissertation as long as you use the citation described in the scoring key.

Good luck with your study.  
Mike

Mike Schaub, Ph.D.  
Licensed Clinical Psychologist  
5249 Duke Street, Suite 200  
Alexandria, VA 22304  
240-421-6518  
drmikeschaub.com

--- On **Wed, 5/20/09, Waller, Johnnye Thomas <JTW0524@ecu.edu>** wrote:

From: Waller, Johnnye Thomas <JTW0524@ecu.edu>  
Subject: questionnaire  
To: "drmikeschaub@yahoo.com" <drmikeschaub@yahoo.com>  
Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2009, 10:51 PM

Dr. Schaub,

I am a doctoral student at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. In addition to serving as principal of a pre-k through 5 school, I am currently working on my dissertation which deals with self-efficacy and the role it plays in the decision to enter the teaching profession. My primary emphasis is to pursue the impact of vicarious learning and social persuasion on the career decision of minority students. In researching my topic I found your study on "The role of personality and learning experiences in social cognitive career theory". Your Learning Experiences Questionnaire sounds as if it would be very important in my research as it is defined as an "estimate of the respondents' standing on Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy information". My methodology will primarily consist of individual interviews; however, I would like to strengthen this with a questionnaire. Through my research I have attempted to locate a copy of your questionnaire but to date I have been unsuccessful. Could you tell me if it is available for use and if so how could I gain access and permission.

Please know I appreciate any direction or guidance you could give me with my research. I have found the topic to be extremely interesting and look forward to completing my study. My goal is for the findings to be important to XXX County Schools and their initiative to increase the number of minority teachers in our district.

Thank you for your assistance and please know I appreciate your time, Johnnye T. Waller, MSW, MSA  
[jtw0524@ecu.edu](mailto:jtw0524@ecu.edu)

## APPENDIX C: LEARNING EXPERIENCES QUESTIONNAIRE

Using the following scale, write the number corresponding to your response on the line next to the statement. Please respond to ALL of the statements.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I performed well in biology courses in school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. People whom I respect have encouraged me to work hard in math courses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I remember seeing my family plan out the details of vacations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I have made simple car repairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. While growing up, I saw people whom I admire work in youth ministry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I have become nervous while solving math problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have become uptight while trying to repair something that was broken.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I have seen people whom I respect read business magazines.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I have seen family members perform work which involved organizing information.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. People I respect have urged me to learn how to fix things that are broken.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I was successful performing science experiments in school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. In school, I saw teachers whom I admired work on science projects.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I have felt uneasy when people would come to me with their problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I have seen people whom I trust successfully manage a business.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. The artwork I have created usually turned out well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I remember my family telling me that it is important to be able to solve science problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. People whom I looked up to told me that it is important to read scholarly articles.

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. I remember watching members of my family create art.

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. My teachers have encouraged me to explore jobs in the helping professions (e.g., counseling).

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. I have kept accurate records of my financial documents.

\_\_\_\_\_ 21. I have been able to sell a product effectively.

\_\_\_\_\_ 22. I have observed members of my family build things.

\_\_\_\_\_ 23. I have made repairs around the house.

\_\_\_\_\_ 24. I have become anxious while learning new computer software.

\_\_\_\_\_ 25. I received good grades in my art courses in school.

\_\_\_\_\_ 26. I have become nervous when working on mechanical things (e.g., appliances).

\_\_\_\_\_ 27. I have seen people whom I respect enter the teaching profession.

\_\_\_\_\_ 28. I have done a good job at proofreading my papers for mistakes.

\_\_\_\_\_ 29. I have seen my parents keep organized records of their important financial documents.

\_\_\_\_\_ 30. I have been successful when I used tools to work on things.

\_\_\_\_\_ 31. I have felt anxious when I had to act in a play.

\_\_\_\_\_ 32. I have been successful at caring for children.

\_\_\_\_\_ 33. I have listened to members of my family speak in public.

\_\_\_\_\_ 34. I received high scores on the math section of my college entrance exam (e.g., SAT).

\_\_\_\_\_ 35. I have felt nervous when I had to sell something.

\_\_\_\_\_ 36. I have been successful at teaching people.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. I have felt nervous while debating a topic.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. I watched people whom I respect work in the outdoors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. I have felt anxious about creating artwork.

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. Teachers I admired encouraged me to take classes in which I can use my mechanical abilities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. I watched my friends as they participated in school plays.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. People whom I admire have told me that it is important to learn new computer software.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. While growing up, I saw people I respected using math to solve problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. I have felt anxious while taking a science course in school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. I have seen people whom I respect participating in activities that require math abilities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. I have seen people whom I respect enter politics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. I have become nervous while teaching something new to a classmate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. I have felt uneasy while using tools to build something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. I have felt anxious while organizing resources for a term paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. I have seen people whom I admire dedicate their lives to helping others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. I recall seeing adults whom I admire working in a research laboratory.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. I have successfully persuaded people to do things my way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. I have done a good job at writing poetry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 54. People whom I respect have encouraged me to play a musical instrument.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 55. I have observed people whom I admire perform volunteer work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 56. I have felt uneasy while learning new topics in biology courses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 57. I have easily understood new math concepts after learning about them in class.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 58. My parents have encouraged me to pursue jobs that involve keeping track of records.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 59. I observed people whom I respect repair mechanical things.

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

- \_\_\_\_\_ 60. My family encouraged me to take social science courses (e.g., psychology).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 61. Teachers whom I respect have told me that it is important to have good organizational skills.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 62. I have demonstrated skill at conducting research for my term papers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 63. While growing up, I watched adults whom I respect fix things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 64. I have seen people whom I admire write fiction stories.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 65. Reading scientific articles has made me feel uneasy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 66. I have felt anxious while performing basic repairs on a car.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 67. My family has encouraged me to find a job which involves performing basic office tasks.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 68. I have accurately balanced a checkbook.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 69. I have been successful at creating a sculpture with clay.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 70. My family taught me that it is important to develop my interpersonal communication skills.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 71. I have watched people whom I respect perform detail-oriented work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 72. I have been able to hold a conversation with all types of people.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 73. I have felt nervous learning how to operate office machines.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 74. During school, I admired teachers whom I saw create art.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 75. Teachers whom I respect have encouraged me to take a business management course.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 76. Adults whom I admire have urged me to enter a profession in which I manage others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 77. I have been successful at playing a musical instrument.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 78. I have listened well to people who are having personal difficulties.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 79. Teachers whom I respect have encouraged me to take an art class.

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

- \_\_\_\_\_ 80. I have done a good job at things that involved physical labor (e.g., landscaping).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 81. People whom I respect have encouraged me to develop my leadership skills.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 82. I have felt uneasy about taking a leadership role in a group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 83. I have done a good job at operating new computer programs (e.g., word processing).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 84. I have felt uptight while entering data at a computer terminal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 85. I have felt dread while using math in a job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 86. During school, I have felt uptight while working as a part of a small group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 87. While growing up, I recall seeing people I respected reading scientific articles.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 88. I have seen people whom I respect hold jobs which involved performing routine office work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 89. I remember feeling anxious while working on something that required manual

labor.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 90. I have done a good job at performing basic office work (e.g., filing).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 91. Family members have urged me to learn how to sing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 92. People whom I trust have told me that it is important to be able to persuade others to do things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 93. I have become anxious initiating conversations with people I do not know.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 94. I have felt uptight while writing a short story for school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 95. I have been a successful leader in school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 96. My friends have encouraged me to use my research abilities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 97. Teachers whom I admire have encouraged me to take science courses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 98. I have seen people whom I admire lead others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 99. I remember feeling uptight when I had to keep clear, precise records.

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

- \_\_\_\_\_ 100. I observed people whom I admire work in a garden.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 101. While growing up, adults I respected encouraged me to work with tools.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 102. While growing up, I listened to family members play musical instruments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 103. People whom I respect have encouraged me to be a detail-oriented person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 104. I have felt uneasy while supervising the work of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 105. I have done well in building things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 106. People whom I admire have encouraged me to be a salesperson.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 107. I have done well at public speaking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 108. While growing up, adults whom I admired told me that it is important to be a good writer.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 109. I have felt uneasy while drawing something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 110. I have felt uncomfortable while playing a musical instrument for other people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 111. Friends have urged me to act in a play.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 112. I have become nervous while developing new friendships.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 113. People whom I look up to have urged me to pursue activities that require manual dexterity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 114. I have felt anxious when I attempted to persuade someone to do things my way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 115. I have seen people I know enter work in the helping professions (e.g., social work).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 116. People whom I respect have encouraged me to perform volunteer work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 117. I earned good grades in social science courses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 118. Family members have encouraged me to pursue activities that involve working outdoors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 119. My friends have urged me to help others resolve their personal difficulties.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 120. I have successfully supervised the work of others.



## APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

### **Introduction:**

During the initial phase of the interview the researcher will introduce herself and will provide a summary of the study and its significance.

### **Category I: Reasons for becoming a teacher**

1. When did you decide you wanted to become a teacher?
2. Why was it important for you to become a teacher?
3. What influenced your decision to go into teaching?

### **Category II: Social persuasion**

1. Did anyone ever discuss with you the possibility of becoming a teacher?
2. If so who were these people and what did they say to encourage this decision?
3. Did anyone try to discourage you from becoming a teacher?
4. If so who were these people and what did they say to try to influence your decision?
5. Are there educators in your family? If so how did they feel about your decision to become a teacher? Do you know why they decided to become a teacher?
6. Would you encourage others to become teachers? Why or Why not?

### **Category III: Role models**

1. While you were in school did you have teachers whom you wanted to be like?
2. If so can you describe what was important to you about them?
3. What characteristics did you feel you have in common with them?
4. While you were in school did you have teachers who inspired you “not” to be like them?
5. If so can you describe what they did that you would never want to do in a classroom?

### **Category IV: Recruitment**

1. Why did you come to work for Moore County Schools?
2. Did you apply to teach in other districts? If so why did you select this public school district?
3. Would you encourage other teachers to come to this public school district?

### **Category V: Retention**

1. Why has it been important for you to remain with this public school system?
2. What does this public school district or your individual school provide that has supported you in becoming a successful teacher?
3. Why would you consider leaving this public school district?

### **Closure:**

Is there anything you would like to add that you feel was important to your decision to become a teacher?

Is there anything you would tell a friend or relative going into the teaching profession?

## APPENDIX E: PERMISSION FROM NANC BETZ

Yes carry on our work!!

NB

Nancy E. Betz, Professor  
Department of Psychology  
The Ohio State University  
1835 Neil Avenue  
Columbus OH 43210  
614-847-0517  
[betz.3@osu.edu](mailto:betz.3@osu.edu)

**From:** Waller, Johnnye Thomas [mailto:JTW0524@ecu.edu]  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 24, 2010 8:55 PM  
**To:** Nancy Betz  
**Subject:** RE: figure

Thank you so much!!!! The model of the relationship of career self-efficacy and interest to career choice will be very helpful! Self-efficacy as confidence makes the research much easier to understand. I plan to do personal interviews of African American and Hispanic teachers in our school district to determine which informational source of self-efficacy was most important in their career decision. Then I will ask them to complete the Learning Experiences Questionnaire. I will compare the info from the questionnaire to the answers the teachers provide in their interview. I hope I'm on the right track!

Again, thank you for this PP! It will be very useful!  
Johnnye

---

**From:** Nancy Betz [Betz@psy.ohio-state.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 23, 2010 4:03 PM  
**To:** Waller, Johnnye Thomas  
**Subject:** RE: figure

This is a lecture I gave for a diversity program at one of our regional campuses--- feel free to use any of it if you wish!

NB

Nancy E. Betz, Professor  
Department of Psychology  
The Ohio State University  
1835 Neil Avenue  
Columbus OH 43210  
614-847-0517  
[betz.3@osu.edu](mailto:betz.3@osu.edu)

**From:** Waller, Johnnye Thomas [mailto:JTW0524@ecu.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 23, 2010 3:35 PM

**To:** Nancy Betz  
**Subject:** RE: figure

I welcome your expertise!

---

**From:** Nancy Betz [Betz@psy.ohio-state.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 23, 2010 3:22 PM  
**To:** Waller, Johnnye Thomas  
**Subject:** RE: figure

OK! Let me think about it  
NB

Nancy E. Betz, Professor  
Department of Psychology  
The Ohio State University  
1835 Neil Avenue  
Columbus OH 43210  
614-847-0517  
[betz.3@osu.edu](mailto:betz.3@osu.edu)

**From:** Waller, Johnnye Thomas [mailto:JTW0524@ecu.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 23, 2010 3:17 PM  
**To:** Nancy Betz  
**Subject:** RE: figure

Thank you so much!!!! I struggled so long trying to get my ideas together. Your paper was a tremendous resource. The figure will be perfect to bring my research together. If you have any additional suggestions or guidance I would appreciate any input.  
Thank you again!!!!  
Johnnye

---

**From:** Nancy Betz [Betz@psy.ohio-state.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 23, 2010 1:32 PM  
**To:** Waller, Johnnye Thomas  
**Subject:** RE: figure

Absolutely!! Your study sounds terrific! Let me know if you need anything else!!\nRegards  
NB

Nancy E. Betz, Professor  
Department of Psychology  
The Ohio State University  
1835 Neil Avenue  
Columbus OH 43210  
614-847-0517  
[betz.3@osu.edu](mailto:betz.3@osu.edu)

**From:** Waller, Johnnye Thomas [mailto:JTW0524@ecu.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 23, 2010 12:16 PM  
**To:** betz.3@osu.edu  
**Subject:** figure

Dr. Betz,

I am a doctoral candidate with East Carolina University. My study is dealing with the impact of the informational sources of self-efficacy on the career decision of African American and Hispanic teachers. Your review of self-efficacy theory in the article, "Self-efficacy Theory as a Basis for Career Assessment" is very important to my research. The figure you created entitled "Schematic representation of Bandura's (1997) theory of perceived self-efficacy" would be very beneficial to my explanation of the consequences of perceived self-efficacy in regard to career decisions. Your figure helps to summarize as well as provide an outline for my research. I am requesting permission to use your figure in my dissertation. Credit would be given to you in the figure caption. The article is already included in my reference list as I cite it frequently.

Thank you so much for considering my request.

Johnnye Waller

[jwaller@ecu.edu](mailto:jwaller@ecu.edu) or [jwaller005@nc.rr.com](mailto:jwaller005@nc.rr.com)

## APPENDIX F: INSITITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER



**University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board**  
East Carolina University, 600 Moye Boulevard  
1L-09 Brody Medical Sciences Bldg. • Greenville, NC 27834  
Office 252-744-2914 • Fax 252-744-2284 • [www.ecu.edu/irb](http://www.ecu.edu/irb)  
Chair and Director of Biomedical IRB: L. Wiley Nifong, MD  
Chair and Director of Behavioral and Social Science IRB: Susan L. McCammon, PhD

---

TO: Johnnye Waller, Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership, College of Education, ECU  
FROM: UMCIRB *KN*  
DATE: February 15, 2010  
RE: Expedited Category Research Study  
TITLE: "An Exploratory Study of the Career Decisions of African American and Hispanic Teachers"

### UMCIRB #10-0076

This research study has undergone review and approval using expedited review on 2.12.10. This research study is eligible for review under an expedited category number 6 & 7. The Chairperson (or designee) deemed this **unfunded** sponsored study **no more than minimal risk** requiring a continuing review in **12 months**. Changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. The investigator must submit a continuing review/closure application to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

The above referenced research study has been given approval for the period of **2.12.10** to **2.11.11**. The approval includes the following items:

- Internal Processing Form (dated 1.12.10)
- Informed Consent (dated 2.10.10)
- Confidentiality Agreement (received 2.10.10)
- COI Disclosure Form (dated 1.12.10)
- Interview Protocol
- Demographic Questionnaire
- Learning Experiences Questionnaire
- Scoring Key
- Letter of Support

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

**The UMCIRB applies 45 CFR 46, Subparts A-D, to all research reviewed by the UMCIRB regardless of the funding source. 21 CFR 50 and 21 CFR 56 are applied to all research studies under the Food and Drug Administration regulation. The UMCIRB follows applicable International Conference on Harmonisation Good Clinical Practice guidelines.**