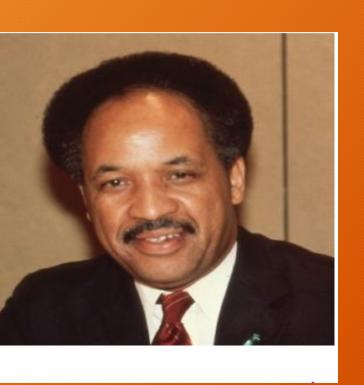# Influence of Society's Perceptions and Stereotypes on African American Women Administrators' Leadership Practices

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Richard Green Scholar Presentation

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Dr. Richard Green (1936-1989)

Educator: teacher, principal

Superintendent:
- **First Black Superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools**
- **First Black Chancellor of New York Public Schools**

"If you can believe it. You can achieve it. If it is to be, its up to me."

-Dr. Richard Green

d Newtonian physics claimed that things have an bjective reality separate from our perception of them. Quantum physics, and particularly isenberg's Uncertainty Principle, reveal that, as perception of an object changes, the object itself literally changes. -Williamson, 1996

estion:

es society's perceptions about African American men literally impact their own perceptions out themselves and how they need to interact h the world?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose and rationale of this study was to examine how society's perceptions and stereotypes about African American women impacted African American women educational leadership practices.

Importance of This Study

nce of African American women's voices in the field of educational nistration

er and Gooden (2005)- studies reveal that African American educators exh tivity and consciousness of the challenges facing African American student

ely (2005) – suggest that African American educators contribute to the essional learning community of other educators by bringing race into the ational discourse of schools

an (2004) – found African American principals implemented alternative fo ion-making that not only would benefit students but would also offer native definitions of organizational effectiveness on schools

Background- Social Identity

d and Evans (2008) Describes social identity as the way a
on or group is socially defined and positioned in society

kuyten (2005) Social identity is the relationship between
individual and the environment

manner in which a person is identified plays a critical
in how others perceive that person and how he or she
eives him or herself.

Theoretical Frameworks

ward-Hamilton (2003) Development and socialization of African American women have been molded and understood within the framework of perceptions and agendas of members of the dominant society

ck Feminist Thought (BFT)

Collins (2000)   BFT – theory represents the standpoint of and for African
                 American women

1. Framework is shaped and produced by the experiences of Black women
2. Each story is unique, but have intersections of experiences between
   and among Black women

Theoretical Frameworks

cal Race Theory (CRT)

elgado and Stefancic (2012) legal movement that seeks to transform the
elationship among race, racism and power

sso (2005) CRT is a framework that can be used to theorize, examine, and
allenge the ways race and racism implicitly and explicitly impact social
ructure, practices and discourse

s

Permanence of Race
Counterstories
Critique of Liberalism
Interest Convergence
Revisionist History

Theme 1: History of African American Women in Leadership

on (2005) 18th century teaching profession dominated by men, illegal for B
ttend college until 19th century

adha and Watts (2005)
frican Americans linked struggle for education with social justice
lack women built educational institutions, helped build communities(Nann
elen Burroughs, Mary McLeod Bethune).
ultiple identities attached to Black women (civic leader, educator, freedo
ghter)

ward-Hamilton (2003) Black women faced double oppression/intersectiona
e and gender

heme 2: Role of Females in Leadership

man (2002) Male leaders seen as norm, women seen as outside the norm

l (2012) Men and women see leadership as a male trait, view influences
women see themselves as leaders and how others perceive their
ership

huck (1996)- female social roles and expectations- women must rise
e social expectations of being a female in order to become the socially
cribed role of leader

Theme 3: Effective Leadership Practices

tion of Leadership:
1. Bass (2008) depends on the specific aspects of leadership interest to the individual
2. Berger and Luckmann (1996)
   A. Process whereby an individual(s) succeed in attempting frame and define the reality of others
   B. Leadership is a social phenomena; socially constructed through interaction

heme 3: Effective Leadership Practices

ective Leadership Practices
elf-Awareness
. Showry and Mansa (2014) ability to evaluate one's own
   personality and understand how perceived as a leader

ransformational Leadership
. Burns (1978) Bass (1985) raise awareness of individuals to work
   toward common goals; motivator, inspirational

ervant Leadership
. Greenleaf (1978) Leaders make sure individuals highest needs are met;
   others

esearch Questions

ch Questions:

t race/gender issues do select African American women school administrators who work
esota report have impacted their leadership practices?

t strategies do select African American women educational administrators who work in M
t they have identified or implemented to address race/gender issues in their administra
tices?

have identified strategies of select African American women educational administrators
k in Minnesota assisted them in developing their leadership practices?

esearch Design

tative approach, using a phenomenological approach.

omenology Merriam (2009):
esearcher seeks to understand the lived experiences of persons about a
henomenon.

acteristics of qualitative research rely heavily on social constructs.

Research Design

Criterion Purposeful Sampling

A. Criteria:

1. African American women school administrators currently practicing or have worked in pre-K-12 school districts in Minneapolis, St. Paul or surrounding suburbs

2. At least 3 years experience as an educational administrator serving in the role of principal, assistant principal, assistant superintendent or superintendent

Small Sample Size: 4

Each participant interviewed – 16 questions

nformation on Participants

participants

nistrator #1: 7 years experience as a principal, 4 years @ high school, 3 ye
le school, and 3 years as assistant superintendent

nistrator #2: 10 years experience as a principal, 10 years @ middle/high

nistrator #3: 20 years as a principal, 20 years at elementary level

nistrator #4: 17 years as principal, 15 years @ elementary/junior high, 2 y
school

esearch Question One-Results

at race/gender issues do select African American women school administr
work in Minnesota report have impacted their leadership practices?

ing challenged by staff and colleagues when making decisions in
eir administrative roles as an African American and a female.

tell you, I was challenged when I tried to release a non-tenured teacher within my first
ond year here, if I would have been a male principal, she would have not have challenge
"
was trying really hard not to think it was race, but I haven't seen anyone else go through
e of the white males, none of the white females, so I believe that it's about authority. I
ieve it's about people who have thought that I don't mind my place."

ace/gender issues impacting leadership practices)

perience stereotypes and negative images about being an
ican American and a woman

oming into a building where they've never had a person of color as a leader, or a female
leader, as a principal, has been very unique and challenging. Having to have
versations with white men has been very challenging, being a person of color. It was quit
resting because he thought that I was too assertive, too abrasive, he didn't like how I
ressed him; he didn't like the way I approached him."

use I can't be that angry. I can't be—what is it? ABW? I can't be the ABW. I can't be the
ry Black women, cause even if I were white I could be angry."

need to change who they were in order to appease others

ould only be so much me before they'd say, Oh, you're just this angry Black woman, "so
ntional. It was like, No, maybe, maybe not, "but as I got older I said, "Forget it. I'm so
," it was about what white folk were saying, what the staff was saying, and I needed to
ge who I needed to be to make sure they felt good about who they were."

what I found, especially my first year here, that in that particular building—and not jus
ding, but even in other schools that I've been in when dealing with white folks, you have
st—I hate to use the word "code switch" or change who you are in terms of how you wa
ss an issue just to appease them."

esearch Question One (continued)

ace/gender issues impacting leadership practices)

e need to have to prove themselves in their roles as African American women educationa ministrators

eah, we have to be better than most. I mean, we have to be 10% more, 10% more, and w ve to produce more in order to prove that , yeah, we're better than the rest."

feel that as an African American I was raised that life will be twice as hard, so just deal and what I mean by that is that I need to be on my p's and q's. I need to make sure I'm ucated, have experiences."

esearch Question One- Results

terature supports the results:

Intersectionality: Beale, 1970; Collins, 2000, 2009

Stereotypes and Perceptions: Howard-Hamilton, 2003;
Collins, 2000, 2009

Working with Social Justice: Murtadha and Watts, 2005

esearch Question Two

at strategies do select African American women educational administrato
o work in Minnesota report they have identified or implemented to addres
e/gender issues in their administrative practices?

 upfront with your vision and expectations
 your work, make sure you stay ahead of everyone else
ake sure you are transparent
sure communication is clear and frequent
ake people aware when a conversation is going to be about race
ly on self-reflection and meditation techniques
nnect with someone else in the business who looks like them

esearch Question Two

ow have identified strategies of select African American women educational
dministrators who work in Minnesota assisted them in developing their leadership
ractices?

ion-making process used: Collaborative
ership Style Results- findings support literature
ansformational- Bass, 1985
 authentic
 Passionate
 Change-agent
 Motivator
rvant Leadership- Greenleaf, 1970
 Empower Others
lf-Awareness- Showry and Mansa, 2014
  Reflective of self and perspectives of others on leadership

ecommendations for Professional Practice

rofessional development for staff in educational institutions on Critical Race Theory

iversity training on how to work with staff members not of the dominant race

elf-Awareness leadership training, Showry and Mansa, 2014

nentorship program/affinity groups

ecommendation for Further Study

itional research studies can be conducted using a larger sample group and demographic area

licate the current study design using other racial/ethnic groups

itional research studies can be conducted on the relational dynamics between white women and b
men educators to see how each influences/impacts each other in their roles as educational
ninistrators

itional research studies should be conducted on the working relationships between African Americ
e educational administrators and its influence on African American women's leadership practices

itional research studies can be conducted on how school districts address race/gender issues in th
rict in their efforts to support women administrators of color.

QUESTIONS???

hank you for attending this
ession and thanks to the
unningham Architect Group.