THE BLUEPRINT FOR BLACK LEADERSHIP

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL DISCOVERY OF EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK LEADERSHIP

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Background on the Researcher

18+ Years in Urban Education

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01

Introduction and Background

Introduction

Black male superintendents in North Carolina make up less than 8% of all superintendents in the state (Hodge, 2017). Black female superintendents make up less than 2% of the role in the entire nation (Webb, 2022).

With Black education being such an important factor in the life of Black people, the supervision and development of Black leaders in schools requires investigation.

Background

- Black leaders in schools make up 9% of the principal population even though the Black population in the U.S. is 13% (Schaeffer, 2021).

- The disparity gap among female principals has all but closed, going from 25% to 52% representation over the past 30 years. However, in that same timespan, non-White principals have increased from 13% to 20% only (Bailes, 2020).

- The role of the principal supervisor in many districts and school communities has pivoted from a role of regulations compliance and attending to the physical building needs to a role focused on leadership to improve teaching and learning (Saltzman, 2016).

- The distinguishing factor is that there is a role designated in school communities to support principals' growth and development to improve teaching and learning in the school setting (Honig, 2019).

Background...

Rationale

Leaders are power holders who dynamically share their power with power recipients to achieve mutual (and individual) outcomes. Black people in America can benefit from sustainable leadership in key areas, but Black America is in a leadership crisis (Wilson, 1998). My focus will be Black leaders in education.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine how principal supervisors who identify as Black develop Black principals in K–12 settings. This study will offer a blueprint for educational organizations to develop Black school leadership in a way that creates opportunities for excellence in the principal role to transform schools.

"

Leaders are a particular kind of power holder. Like power, leadership is relational, collective, and purposeful.

Dr. Amos Wilson

"

02

Research Question
+ Theoretical Frameworks

What methods do Black principal supervisors employ to develop the capacity of Back school leaders?

Research Question
Supporting Questions

- **RQ1: How do Black principal supervisors define their role in developing Black school leaders in the organization?**

- **RQ2: What are the most commonly used activities Black principal supervisors employ to develop Black school leaders to become leaders in the organization?**

- **RQ3: To what extent do Black education leaders experience racial identities as a factor in education leadership?**

- **RQ4: How do Black principal supervisors describe their impact on the success of Black school leaders in the organization?**

Theoretical Frameworks:

Critical Race Theory

- CRT explains that systematic racism is not only a behavioral display of bad actors, but also reinforced by the well-intended in a way that upholds the racist structures. "CRT was not... simply a product of a philosophical critique of the dominant frames on racial power. It was also a product of activists' engagement with the material manifestations of liberal reform" (Crenshaw, 2019, pp. 56)

Complex Adaptive Leadership

- Adaptive leadership requires emotional intelligence to perceive others' feelings as well as your own. In this theory, leaders are thought to need a deep understanding of themselves and how the environment is "pulling their strings." (Heifetz et al., 2009).

03
Literature Review

Literature Review:

Black Principal Supervisor Representation is Low

Recently in North Carolina, Hodge (2017) reported that while the population of African Americans in North Carolina was 21.6%, the population of African American male superintendents was 7.8%

Black women superintendents in the United States constitute less than two percent of people in the role, while the U.S. population is over thirteen percent Black (Webb, 2022).

Black Principals are Critical to Success, but Brown v. Board Dwindled Numbers

Black school leaders are critical to the success of schools with a significant population of Black students (Jang & Alexander, 2022, p.451).

While the Brown v. Board of Education case was used to correct inequities in schools in some sense by allowing Black children to be educated with better resources, it also resulted in the large-scale firing and dismissal of thousands of Black principals and teachers across the United States (Tillman, 2004).

Black Women Principals Have Shown to be Most Successful With Students

Jang & Alexander (2022) found that educational excellence under Black principals is achieved even if they often serve in districts and schools with mostly impoverished students and students of color, especially Black students.

Jang & Alexander's (2022) study found that Black women principals were positively associated with positive math achievement scores among ninth grade students.

Literature Review:

Understanding Curriculum and Creating Learning Environments is Key for School Leaders

Grissom Loeb (2011) looked deeper into actual principal effectiveness for behaviors that lead to effective actions and found that they include creating an atmosphere conducive to learning, involvement in staff development, monitoring classrooms, and guarding teachers' instructional time.

Leadership is Developed Through Mastery Experiences and Mentorship

Leaders start to exhibit leadership readiness when they are exposed to mastery experiences, role models and mentors, focused feedback, and have interest in the goals they are pursuing (Hannah & Avolio, 2010).

04

Methodology

Phenomenological Qualitative Research Study

Methodology – Participants + Collection

Participants

Convenience and Snowball Sampling from Leadership Networks

- Surge Academy (Surge)
- Education Leaders of Color (EdLoC)
- National Charter Collaborative (NCC)

10-15 principal supervisors who all identify Black (of African ancestry).

The following criteria for selection will be utilized:

- Participants will self-identify as Black/African-American
- Participants will all be senior leaders
- Participants will manage a Black/African-American school leader in the some capacity
- Participants will manage more than one principal.

Collection

- Contact potential participants via email to schedule interviews
- Conduct 30 min to 1 hour semi-structured interviews
  - Zoom and Zoom Recording
  - Rev Transcription Service
  - Additional physical note taking on interview instrument

Participant's Demographic Information

Participant	Gender	Education Attainment	Years of Experience as Supervisor	# of Principals Supervised	Charter or Traditional Public
PS-01	Female	Doctoral Student	3	14	Traditional Public
PS-02	Female	2 Masters Degrees	12	6	Charter
PS-03	Male	Ph.D.	8	50	Traditional Public
PS-04	Male	Ed.S.	8	40	Traditional Public
PS-05	Female	2 Masters	8	5	Charter
PS-06	Male	Ph.D.	2	8	Charter
PS-07	Female	Post Graduate	6	21	Traditional Public
PS-08	Male	M.A.	10	20	Traditional Public
PS-09	Male	M.A.	10	12	Charter
PS-10	Female	Ph.D.	9	61	Traditional Public
PS-11	Female	2 Masters	10	11	Charter

Methodology – Data Analysis

- Phenomenology rests on the belief that, "...human meanings are not expressed directly, but instead are embedded by their creators in (or projected onto) the physical, linguistic, and enacted artifacts they create..." Phenomenology is used by the researcher to make sense of everyday actions and behaviors (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2013).

  - Transcription
  - Organizing Data using QDA Miner
  - Coding using QDA Miner
  - Deducing Themes and Categories
  - Identify Themes and Interpretation

⊞ *Theme Chart*

Themes	Codes Associated
Black Leadership Brilliance	Black Leader Attributes
	Growth Opportunities
	Professional Development
	Multi-Role Changes
Opportunities in Awareness	Growth Opportunities
	Coaching
	Reading
	Multi-Role Changes
	Black Leader Attributes
Centering Instruction	Learning Expert
	Reading
	Black Leader Attributes
	Recruitment-Retention
Coaching and Care	Coaching
	School Visits-Instructional Walks
	Receptiveness
	Tough Conversations
	Intuition-Authenticity
Data and Reality	Tough Conversations
	Name It
	Data Analysis
Combating Racial Violations	Social Oppression
	Racial Identity
	Tough Conversations
	Name It
Center Student Life Outcomes	Student Outcomes
	Recruitment-Retention
	Learning Expert
Effective Principals and Inspiration	Student Outcomes
	School Visits-Instructional Walks
	Recruitment-Retention
	Personalized Interventions

05 Results

Results – 8 Themes

Black Leadership Brilliance

Opportunities in Awareness

Centering Instruction

Coaching and Care

Results – 8 Themes

Data and Reality

Combating Racial Violations

Center Student Life Outcomes

Effective Principals and Inspiration

Results – RQ1

How do Black principal supervisors define their role in developing Black school leaders in the organization?

Black Leadership Brilliance

Opportunities in Awareness

Centering Instruction

Results – RQ1

How do Black principal supervisors define their role in developing Black school leaders in the organization?

Black Leadership Brilliance

Leaders should be able to be excellent. And that does not equate to perfection. They should be able to be excellent in a highly self-reliant, independent way.

PS-11

Results – RQ1

How do Black principal supervisors define their role in developing Black school leaders in the organization?

Opportunities in Awareness

A leader would be making sure that they are self-aware enough to acknowledge the things that they're not good at, acknowledge the gaps that they have in their experience and their expertise in their approach and their ability to support teachers... once you're self-aware and can acknowledge those things, then you can accommodate for them.

PS-05

Results – RQ1

How do Black principal supervisors define their role in developing Black school leaders in the organization?

Centering Instruction

So I think there's like the content bucket, so like how do I, how do I develop leaders on what they need to know? Instructional. So like they're, they're solid understanding of instructional core and then all things that are, uh, like adjacent to that. And then I think the, the bucket of, um, just like people management.

PS-07

Results – RQ2

What are the most commonly used activities Black principal supervisors employ to develop Black school leaders to become leaders in the organization?

Coaching and Care

Data and Reality

Results – RQ2

What are the most commonly used activities Black principal supervisors employ to develop Black school leaders to become leaders in the organization?

Coaching and Care

And so we are doing a lot of coaching around how to still deliver the high expectations message would deliver in a way that people can receive it. And so we spend probably about an hour and a half a week saying, okay, what are your key messages?

PS–10

Results – RQ2

What are the most commonly used activities Black principal supervisors employ to develop Black school leaders to become leaders in the organization?

Data and Reality

A lot of times there's a, a conversation behind the conversation about this person's leadership or what, what they are or not good at. And that's not fair to us as leaders, but it's also, I try to have those direct conversations to say like, this is the conversation being said around you. Um, what are you going to do about it? And not in the way of like how you're gonna fight and defend yourself.

PS–03

Results – RQ3

To what extent do Black education leaders experience racial identities as a factor in education leadership?

Combating Racial Violations

Results – RQ3

To what extent do Black education leaders experience racial identities as a factor in education leadership?

Combating Racial Violations

So mostly it's dealing with white teachers, at least from my experience. You know, like the cultural differences for, for black, um, leaders that I've worked with. Usually it's that. And so the best, I think probably the best person I've seen deal with, it was a very maternal black female principal.

PS-08

Results – RQ3

To what extent do Black education leaders experience racial identities as a factor in education leadership?

And to be able to understand the things that are happening in a room, whether you're looking at power and privilege or whether you're looking at like, you know, white supremacist behaviors that we all have internalized that are also at play.

PS-02

Results – RQ4

How do Black principal supervisors describe their impact on the success of Black school leaders in the organization?

Center Student Life Outcomes

Effective Principals and Inspiration

Results – RQ4

How do Black principal supervisors describe their impact on the success of Black school leaders in the organization?

Center Student Life Outcomes

Yeah, I mean I think ultimately for me it's like student life outcomes in regards to college and career readiness, and even civic participation readiness if they choose. Cuz I think that's what should drive all levels of, of effectiveness in a school building anyway. Like, I feel like if kids are moving to me, that's happening. The leaders are impacting the teachers who are then impacting the students.

PS-07

Results – RQ4

How do Black principal supervisors describe their impact on the success of Black school leaders in the organization?

Effective Principals and Inspiration

I think that when I think, uh, for my personal, like I know that I'm successful when my people are like, Hey, "I was in a situation and my first inclination was like, what would my boss say?" Or, um, what, what, what, "oh, my boss would not want me to do that." Like, "what's my move?" But, so when I hear that people are responding to things that we practice with automaticity, I think I know that I am much more successful around things.

PS-10

Gender Type Differences

Reading - Black Female

The "reading" code connects the thoughts of participants suggesting they read books or articles to develop themselves or assigned reading to their teams. **Female participants were more likely to express the use of reading to develop than their male counterparts.** Reading as a development activity was moderately correlated to women and is nearly statistically significant according to the p-value.

Pearson's R	P Value
-0.481	0.067

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Gender Type Differences

Name It - Black Female

The code connects the thoughts of participants as they describe being clear about racial challenges as they occur in the workplace and having discussions with colleagues as transgressions around race present themselves. **Female participants were more likely to express the use of this code exclusively.** Male participants had no submitted instances of naming racial transgressions during the interviews.

Pearson's R	P Value
-0.690	0.009

06

Discussion

"

…a crisis of leadership occurs when the intentions and needs of leadership are severely mismatched with those of its followers.

"

Dr. Amos Wilson

Discussion: Implications

Colleges of Education

There needs to be **increased study and training of mindset around Black brilliance and reducing biases** educators have around black authority figures and students. This could alleviate challenges around racial violations, so black principal supervisors can focus on instructional leadership.

Philanthropy

Philanthropic organizations can **invest in Black affinity learning spaces managed by Black-led not-for-profits, so Black leaders can learn from one another, expand their leadership, and decompress from racial transgressions in the workplace**. This could also serve as a community to practice tough conversations that are driven by data in a low-stakes community populated by goal-aligned individuals.

School Systems

School systems have the opportunity to **shift their management structures to a coaching and care mode**l that centers on side-by-side walkthroughs, conversations that focus on concepts as well as action, and **includes tough conversations to get leaders into action** when success has not yet been evident.

Discussion: Recommendations

Recommendations for Future Research

1

Conduct research to find quantitative measures of Black principal supervisor actions in respect to student achievement.

2

Conduct qualitative research on Black principal supervisor actions vs. white counterparts.

3

Conduct qualitative research on Black senior leadership actions beyond the education field.

Conclusion

Education, and its roles of power, are critical tools for advancing social mobility and career opportunities. This makes it essential for Black communities to establish and use best practices (or blueprints) that reflect their unique needs. These blueprints are crucial for Black leaders to exert greater control over the education institutions in which Black children attend.

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Thank You!