Summer 6-2013

Integrating Aesthetics: Transforming Continuing and Professional Education Through Africentric Practice

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2013

ABSTRACT

K-12 practitioners in urban areas are faced with unique circumstances while serving racially marginalized students in public schools. As a response to this issue, the purpose of this study was to review and describe curricula used in three African Centered educational institutions in Chicago. African Centered schools are uniquely different, thus the need for research emerges to identify new ways to disseminate knowledge for traditional public school practitioners. Goals of the research were to analyze content and instructional strategies at African Centered educational institutions in order to design a continuing and professional education model based on their successes.

The research design was an Africentric qualitative single case study that focused on the experiences of six educators in African Centered schools. The Africentric Paradigm was utilized as the theoretical framework. Research questions that guided the study were as follows: 1) how are conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm reflected in educational environments and incorporated into curriculum and instruction at an African Centered institution, 2) how are the problems that result from sociocultural and intellectual racism addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content, 3) what are the design and objectives of continuing education programs implemented at African Centered institutions, and 4) what culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to a traditional continuing education model for K-12 practitioners? The data collection instruments were document analysis, interviews, site visits (observations), and photography. To interpret field notes that emerged from observations during site visits, I completed a series of paintings to create a meaning context, which expressed the cognitive and affective impacts of instructional activities.

Several important findings and conclusions emerged from the research. Each site had similar missions and the shared goal of building positive selfethnic image (Colin 1989). This was reflected in both curricula and artistic instructional strategies. African Centered practice is grounded in the cognitive and affective domains. In addition to K-12 curriculum content, what makes African Centered schools different is the focus on building positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) and the importance of community empowerment. Academic rigor and affective growth was developed through a consciousness of African value systems. These culturally grounded strategies were reflected in the continuing education model that emerged from analysis. If we look at how public schools are affecting our communities, it is clear that our students are being cognitively and affectively marginalized. By employing an Africentric framework, continuing and professional education can play a role in adequately preparing K-12 traditional public school practitioners for success with students of this Diaspora.

Deeply Rooted   **© 2012 auburnaesthetic.com**

Acknowledgements

What determines how deeply rooted we are, testing the strength of our resilience and intestinal fortitude when life is turbulent? For me it is family, friends and the power of expression. The collage above *Deeply Rooted,* and this study, is dedicated to the memory of my father, Arnold Cornell Ellis, who made his transition on October 5, 2007. Although not physically present, his creative spirit and enthusiasm are inherently embedded in each chapter. To my mother and brother, thank you for lengthy conversations full of wisdom and knowledge, which unknowingly impacted my writing. And for my grandfather, unable to sign his own name due to lack of educational opportunities, and grandmother who endured a lifetime of servitude, my work is infinitely inspired by your struggle. I am eternally

grateful to my dissertation chair, Dr. Scipio A.J. Colin III who helped me find my rhythm and "turn myself into myself." Your guidance on this Scholar Ship has been an experience unsurpassed by any other. Thank you for helping me discover true balance and cultural grounding. To my fellow Research Scholars, and crewmembers on the ship, thanks for your friendship and support. I am very appreciative to Dr. Thomas Heaney and Dr. Derise Tolliver, members of my dissertation committee, who kept me motivated and encouraged. To my cohort members, continuously holding up the rim, I will always cherish the unique experiences shared with each of you. A special gratitude is reserved for the African Centered communities--most importantly Mama Thandi by whom I was renamed--who embraced me during this journey, guiding my physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth. To the practitioners, administrators and students that inspired this research, I will continue to write for the purpose of liberation through education. Lastly, to the friends, family members, mentors, instructors, and colleagues who patiently offered unwavering support during this journey to finding my savoir-faire, I am eternally grateful.

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H.A.I.R.   ©2012 auburnaesthetic.com

FORWARD

Glimpse in the Life of an Urban Practitioner

It was snowing pretty hard this particular morning. The flakes stuck to my coiled afro, instantly melting only to enhance the thick curl pattern. I often receive nervous glances walking down the street because I am one of few residents of color who live in the Gold Coast neighborhood in Chicago. Most people are often unsure of how to react to my big hair and serious demeanor; the painting H.A.I.R. is reflective of my experiences. On one occasion, while walking to my gallery exhibition on the South Side of Chicago (Bronzeville), a man on the street told me my hair was reminiscent of "The Movement" and Angela Davis. The choice to "go natural" was difficult because manipulating hair to make it straight is unfortunately considered the norm for most people in our community. In the past five years, I have become an advocate for celebrating our natural texture. All of these thoughts ran through my head as I continued walking.

I thought about how beautiful the condominium on my right was, on the way to the bus stop heading to the public school where I teach art. It is a short walk, filled with million dollar condos, manicured lawns, people hailing taxis and bustling city life. Much different than the neighborhood where my public school is located. For me, the bus ride is always a time for reflection. Today thoughts wandered to my own educational journey. When I began as a practitioner in the Chicago Public School system, I thought it was a chance to break into the field and make a difference. I was confident after undertaking two degrees in four years during undergrad. There was a bit of ambiguity as to why I had not studied anything relevant to my own culture, but nonetheless I was excited. When I began teaching, I had no idea that completing my studies in rural Missouri, in addition to a year of student teaching in a suburban area, had not prepared me for the journey I was about to embark upon. Nevertheless, I have always been filled with energy and optimism about the possibilities in my classroom.

Traveling to the West side of Chicago, where my public school is located is always a disorienting experience for me. The dilapidated buildings, trash littering the streets, gang tags and teen mothers are a sharp contrast to my current Chicago residence, but they remind me of the neighborhoods where I grew up and went to grammar and high school. As I exit the bus, there are several teens standing in front of the liquor store using obscenities. In the three-block walk to my school, I pass several of the housing developments where a majority of my students reside. Over ninety percent of our students are on free or reduced lunch, which puts them below the poverty line. The demographic is about forty five percent African American and fifty percent Latino. We were recently on the Tribune's list of underutilized and underachieving schools scheduled to close in the next year. Although a challenge, I have always been very committed to teaching in communities of color that need

positive examples. Furthermore, students that cause the most behavioral management issues in other classes always seem to be the best artists; I am passionate about encouraging their natural talents.

My day began like any other, bustling around preparing supplies for my classes. Teaching kindergarten through eighth grade art is an endeavor that I love undertaking. Each age presents a new challenge for me to overcome. Cultivating the first creative experiences of younger children is very different from channeling the energy of older teens. Midday, I had a third grade class in session. We were learning about primary colors, and today's main concept was "red and yellow make orange." As the class was engaging in their studio time for the day, a girl approached me and whispered that one of her classmates, "had a cigarette and was showing it to the other students." I assured her that I would handle it.

When I peered over to her table, I saw the boy shoving something into his pocket and the other students at the table exchanging quiet, alarmed whispers. The background of this student flashed into my mind. His mother had also been a student at this particular school, and he was conceived during her sixth grade year. He has history of seeking negative attention and behavior issues became evident as early as kindergarten. These kinds of stories are not uncommon in this environment. Student behaviors are reflective of pop culture and the neighborhood culture, which as mentioned before, is overrun with gangs and drugs. I assumed he had a candy cigarette and was just showing off. I called him over and asked him what was in his pocket. He was stoic and refused to interact with me. When I reached into his pocket, my hand was unsure of the contents, but I pulled out a lighter and four small bags of marijuana.

This incident caused a pain in my heart greater than any other. As I mentioned before, his home story is not uncommon, but this was the youngest and most shocking

encounter I have had. My mind is often overrun with my students' tragic stories. Whether as a result of the home, or an influence of older peers, what does his future entail? My students are forced to grow up too fast, and education is not valued. What can I do to encourage students to overcome the adversity ahead if they are taught all the wrong things so young? I can recount ten more stories equally as shocking and disheartening, and it leads to a deeper issue. Students of the African Diaspora have unique needs because too many of our communities are affected by economic depression and systemic oppression. There is a war occurring and educators are in the forefront of the battle. Then I ask myself, if practitioners participated in continuing and professional education programs that included culturally grounded curriculum, could it counteract negative influences? Mainstream education is heavily affected by institutional racism and adult education has a responsibility to address these issues with innovative culturally grounded solutions.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Statement of the Problem

The study I conducted (inspired by everyday experiences with educators in traditional public schools) was rooted in the following problem: there are few continuing and professional educational models that acknowledge the importance of African Centered curricula in traditional public schools or community based programming. Hamilton and Cunningham (1989) describe the concept of community based programming as community members identifying problems to directly address. With the goals of social change in mind, this non-formal education process can be used as a tool for community development. The exclusion of these programs affects K-12 educators in various ways. Curriculum content and strategies in traditional public schools tend to reinforce negative stereotypes regarding communities of color, which heavily impacts student success. As a result, practitioners have not been introduced to and informed of the relevance of Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999), thus leaving them unprepared for the unique needs of students of the African Diaspora.

Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming is defined by Colin (1999) as educational programming created for and by members of the African Diaspora. These programs are "reflective of the sociocultural realities and lived experiences that are indigenous to African peoples as a result of the impacts of sociocultural and intellectual racism" (p.3). Expanding the utilization of Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) and its importance relative to curricula development in the field of adult education is critical if K-12 public school educators want to help dismantle institutional and intellectual racism. African Centered practice, including curriculum content,

and instructional strategies have a salient role in the re-education of communities of color impacted by racial oppression.

Purposes and Goals of the Study

This study focused on discussing the experiences of educators in three African Centered schools in the city of Chicago. The purposes included describing and analyzing curricula content and instructional strategies to determine how and in what ways both academic rigor and positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) were fostered and maintained. The goals of the study included designing a continuing education model to facilitate an understanding of the educational utility of Africentrism, thus helping traditional public school practitioners have more success with children of the African Diaspora. Providing an Africentric framework for program planners in the field of continuing and professional education was critical. Informing K-12 educators of the benefits of culturally grounded practice is essential if practitioners want to be prepared to positively impact students' affective and cognitive skills. There is a need for African Centered curriculum content and instructional strategies to be introduced in traditional public school classrooms.

Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Responses to
Continuing and Professional Education in Urban Centers

Urban communities affected by economic depression have created unique circumstances for K-12 educators serving these racially marginalized students. Adult education programs have a responsibility to address these issues through programming. The Chicago Public Schools continuing education policy mandates participation in professional development (a form of adult education programming) to renew certification, but does not

regulate the content of the programming that educators have to complete. An undergraduate degree is not enough; whether tenured or first year, culturally grounded continuing and professional education activities and workshops should be required annually for traditional public school practitioners.

Culturally grounded programming is centered in the socio-cultural experiences of an ethnic group, building positive perceptions of identity and community development. Continuing and professional education programs should be available so that adult learners can engage in discourse framed by the Africentric Paradigm in order to meet the needs of racially marginalized students. For the past ten years, a majority of the professional developments I have attended focus on improving reading, writing and standardized testing rather than truly addressing cultural needs of students of the African Diaspora. Relative to the historical significance of intellectual racism, Colin (1989) writes, "African Ameripeans tend to be viewed as the recipients of the theories and programs of white American intellectual creativity, and they are viewed by researchers as a problem to be solved," (p. 29). Intellectual racism is sustained in public education systems because curriculum content and instructional strategies remain grounded in Eurocentric frameworks. Public school districts must commit to identifying and providing culturally grounded curriculum solutions.

Historical Perspectives

There are many historical responses to oppression and intellectual racism, one being the art of writing. Many authors researched and identified ways to improve education for African Ameripeans (the term African Ameripean will subsequently be defined in this chapter). In *The Miseducation of the Negro,* Woodson (1933), speaking about curriculum content, writes: "the inferiority of the Negro is drilled into him in almost every class he

enters and in almost every book he studies" (Woodson, 1933, p. 656); we must re-educate practitioners so that culturally grounded curriculum and instructional strategies are implemented in classrooms. Regarding primary, secondary, and post-secondary education, Woodson (1933) continues, "You might study the history as it was offered in our system from the elementary school throughout the university, and you would never hear Africa mentioned except in the negative" (p. 662). Unfortunately these inaccurate perceptions of African history are still reinforced in education today. The most implicit forms of intellectual racism are maintained by curriculum content in traditional public schools making practitioners less likely to be able to meet the needs of all learners.

As a global citizen, educator, avid lover of the arts and member of the African Diaspora, I feel it is imperative to frame the discourse regarding the effects of intellectual racism in public schools, which can be addressed in the field of adult education. Unfortunately, the institutions I attended prior to graduate studies failed to mention oppression, racial marginalization, or the fact that we are all participants in a damaged culture. By damaged, I mean a society where inequalities keep certain groups of people oppressed; the status quo, supported by many institutions in America, shows no signs of being eliminated.

Alain Locke, an adult educator in the early twentieth century, often discussed the mis-education occurring in Western educational institutions. Cain (2004), while examining Locke's early analysis of racial marginalization in public education writes:

> Since the public school system in the United States had clearly failed in this respect, the result was an adult population that was both culturally illiterate and insensitive to differences. Locke believed that adult education must therefore assume the responsibility of an 'unfinished democracy'. (Cain, 2004, p. 10)

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Intellectual racism is perpetuated by the "cultural illiteracy and insensitivity to differences" that Cain mentions in the aforementioned passage. The cultural illiteracy referred to is a direct result of systemic efforts to hinder the educational development of African Ameripeans since the emancipation of the slaves. This form of oppression presently affects the intellectual and social development of marginalized communities. These issues can be addressed through continuing and professional education programs rooted in an Africentric framework, thus helping K-12 educators employ culturally grounded instructional strategies and curriculum. Without the implementation of African Centered CPE (Continuing and Professional Education) programs, traditional public school practitioners cannot holistically address the needs of racially marginalized students.

Contemporary Responses

There are a handful schools in Chicago seeking to improve public education through an Africentric framework. African Centered schools are a more contemporary response to America's failed education systems. Like traditional public schools, both Illinois State and College Readiness Standards govern curriculum utilized by these institutions. The framework and instructional strategies, however, are created to encourage the intellectual and socio-historical development of students. Activities and programming also include Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999), which is an educational program created by members of the African Diaspora specifically for African Ameripeans.

Institutions like Betty Shabazz network of Charter Schools in Chicago have seen vast improvement in "standardized testing scores and other areas," (Brown, 2007, p. 3) as a result of high academic rigor and the utilization of selfethnic reflectors, which are integrated in

curricula content. Selfethnic reflector is a concept embedded in The Theory of Selfethnic

Reflectors (Colin 1989), which is a theory regarding the unconscious acceptance of

inferiority as a result of racial oppression. The term selfethnic (written without the hyphen)

acknowledges a "sociocultural significance that is reflected in the conceptual synthesis of the

terms self and ethnic. This process reflects the revitalization of a traditional basic value of

African society," (Colin, 1989, 237). As members of the African Diaspora, we are part of the

whole, and the spelling of this term is reflective of that collective tradition. Selfethnic

reflectors, or positive representations of ones race, are critical to countering negative

perceptions of African Ameripeans in contemporary society. African Centered schools

address these perceptions through their curriculum, building positive selfethnic image (Colin

1989). This network of schools builds character by encouraging students to be agents for

change in the community. Despite successes, there is no discussion or implementation of

African Centered curriculum in traditional public schools.

In communities of color affected by economic depression, students have unique

circumstances surrounding their lives. For example, in an online article titled *African

American Students are Thriving in Afro-centric Schools,* Brown (2007) discusses African Centered

schools and their solution to overcoming these challenges in the city of Chicago. In this

particular article, relative to the benefits of employing an Africentric framework, the founder

of Betty Shabazz Charter School stated the following:

> Public schools have failed African American students, which can be shown in lower
>
> graduation rates and lower achievement. An African centered school strives to
>
> create a black community of positive role models... where children are guided to look
>
> past the negative caricatures of Blacks in pop culture and see their future as players
>
> in the greater world. (Brown, 2007, p. 3)

The "community of positive Black role models" mentioned in this passage is reflective of The Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors and the importance of the concept selfethnic reflector. African Centered schools combine academic rigor with culturally grounded strategies to build character, which holistically addresses African Ameripean student needs.

Continuing and Professional Education in Urban Centers

In traditional public schools, most curricula are devoid of diversity and relevance to students' lives; some instructors lack empathy, creativity, and resilience. Socio-emotional learning (the process for learning life skills, including how to deal with oneself and manage other relationships) is the focus of some school-led organizations, but they do not develop curriculum to help practitioners, and in turn students, have a more in depth sense of African value systems. Traditional public school practitioners are affected by failed education systems in many different ways. Racial stereotypes perpetuated by society are sometimes reinforced in the classroom; curriculum and instruction is grounded in Western frameworks, lacking diversity.

There are several contemporary responses to the lack of diversity that should be mentioned. Organizations like Chicago Arts Educators Forum (CAEF), Chicago Arts Partners in Education (CAPE) and The Art Institute-Chicago (AIC) provide programs for practitioners focused on social justice and inclusion. The Art Institute-Chicago, a public art institution, has a mission statement, which encompasses the responsibility to provide art-based community programming. As a response to this duty, the Teacher Programs Department, for example, often holds workshops with a focus on diversity. A workshop titled *Ancient Crossroads-The Intersection of Greek, Roman, and Asian Worlds* encompasses the following:

Cultural exchange of goods, ideas, and even DNA between east and west

characterized the ancient world in significant ways that have resonance for us even

now… Participants will explore the notion of intercultural exchange and consider

broad connections to classroom curriculum. Teachers will have the opportunity to

work with content experts, museum educators, and fellow teachers to dig deeper in

to strategies for thematic teaching with ancient objects across cultures. (artic.edu,

2013)

Workshops that are reflective of a more globally inclusive perspective are critical to K-12

educators for curriculum development and ideas encompassing innovative classroom

strategies. These programs tend to focus on multiculturalism; there is dialogue about the

importance of diversity and exchange of cultural values, however no focus on African

Centered strategies, or discussions relative to the impacts of intellectual racism.

Urban Centers of the African Diaspora

Racial oppression is overtly present in many communities; segregation is still an issue

in Chicago and public institutional funding is affected by inequities. In February 2011, *The

Reader* featured an article titled *Separate, Unequal, and Ignored,* which discusses the fundamental

problem of segregation in Chicago. The article states:

The hypersegregated black neighborhoods continue to lead the city in the same

wretched problems as in the 60's. In some ways, things are worse. There's not just a

lack of legitimate jobs in these areas today, but also a surplus of people without

skills-and more of them have criminal records from the war on drugs. Predatory

lending has multiplied the amount of abandoned buildings in these neighborhoods.

(Bogira, 2011, p. 13)

School is a refuge from neighborhood perils for a lot of urban students. K-12 educators without knowledge of an Africentric framework including culturally grounded curriculum and instructional strategies do more harm than good in the classroom, continuing to disempower students.

One of the many effects of racial oppression is a state of economic depression. Poverty is a characteristic of many of urban centers in Chicago. Economic depression has created oppressive conditions for marginalized communities. Relative to this group these circumstances are a direct result of systematic oppression due to racial group membership. K-12 educators in traditional public schools often utilize instructional strategies that encourage diversity and inclusion as opposed to researching and addressing specific culturally grounded needs. With this approach, there is no consideration of the historical impact of sociocultural racism. African Centered schools holistically address the cultural displacement that has occurred for people of the Diaspora through curriculum and instruction.

Utilizing Education as an Advocate in Urban Centers

The lack of culturally grounded educational programming and workshops in continuing and professional education has resulted in a generation of students losing their selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) and performing more poorly each year. Relative to economic depression in segregated areas, Bogira (2011) continues discussing Chicago's high concentration of low-income housing for Blacks on the South and far West Side. He states, "the greatest evil of segregation is how it concentrates the poverty of Blacks...many urban children contend with homelessness, domestic violence, abuse, and neglect" (Bogira, 2011, p.

15). Practitioners must be cognizant and empathetic of circumstances that surround students' lives and work to empower students and communities of the African Diaspora.

By teaching curriculum content through an Africentric framework, K-12 educators can provide students with accurate historical perspectives, helping them see that people of this Diaspora have contributed knowledge to many fields, thus, empowering them to do the same. The purpose of culturally grounded curriculum is to build positive selfethnic imagery (Colin 1989) and critical thinking skills. We must design workshops and educational programming intended to meet the goal of building a community grounded in positive selfethnic identity and encourage students to be agents for change. Success can only be had if students' cognitive and affective needs are being met holistically.

Significance of the Research

There are several communities that will benefit from research of this nature:
(1) K-12 traditional public school educators working with marginalized communities,
(2) the field of adult education, more specifically continuing and professional education and
(3) students in racially marginalized communities affected by economic depression. I hope to contribute to of the field of adult education by facilitating meaningful dialogue about implementing Africentric based pedagogy to benefit practitioners, students and communities. Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) can be a key to saving our schools one at a time.

Impact on Educators

Traditional public school educators are the main beneficiaries of this study because African Centered education addresses students academic and affective needs holistically.

The more culturally grounded resources practitioners are given, the more affective they will be in public school classrooms. Asante (1998) states, "very few teachers have ever taken a course in African American studies, therefore, most are unable to provide systematic information about African Americans." (p. 175). If African Centered curriculum instructional strategies were introduced in traditional public schools, students of this Diaspora might have more of a sense of ownership in the learning process, while engaging in curriculum pertinent to their own culture. If educators are not informed of the importance of culturally grounded instructional strategies, then we cannot expect them to meet the needs of racially marginalized students.

Primary goals of the research included developing a continuing and professional education model to inform and facilitate an understanding of the educational utility of Africentrism. African Centered schools are different in terms of curricula content and implementation of instructional strategies, thus the need for research emerges to identify new ways to obtain and disseminate knowledge for traditional public school practitioners. The workshop model developed also provides K-12 educators with culturally grounded strategies to integrate in classroom instruction.

Traditional public school practitioners of any race can be more adequately prepared if continuing education encompassed more culturally grounded resources. Colin (1989), relative to this belief, states:

> The fact that America's educational philosophies, purposes, goals, and programs
> were mainly developed by white Americans for white Americans, and that white
> Americans have not relinquished or shared this power of perception and definition
> raises two questions: What are the resulting psychological problems for the African-

Ameripean? And how have they sought to solve these problems? (Colin, 1989, p.

14)

Implicit forms of oppression often affect people of the African Diaspora. The psychological

burden of systemic oppression is evident in traditional public schools. This study explores

the notion that the best way to approach these issues is African Centered curriculum and

instruction, thus employing a framework to help practitioners be more successful in urban

areas affected by economic depression. With professional development grounded in the

Africentric Paradigm, mainstream education can be reconceptualized to meet the needs of all

learners.

Impact in the Field of Adult Education

The field of adult education, more specifically continuing and professional education,

can benefit from using an Africentric framework as a specific area of practice for K-12

educators. There is contemporary information relative to the importance of African

Centered adult education practice in the field, but unrelated to the development of

continuing education models specifically. Looking at new ways to disseminate knowledge

was important to this study. Critically examining current continuing educational models, it is

apparent that adequate resources are not available for practitioners to be successful teaching

students of the African Diaspora. The field of adult education, more specifically continuing

and professional education, has a responsibility to address this issue by using an Africentric

framework to expand knowledge and practice in the field.

As adult educators we have a responsibility to help liberate future generations. The

model that emerged from analysis focused on continuing and professional education for

practitioners in low-income areas; we cannot ignore challenges students face outside of

school, because it affects the way they learn. For example, as mentioned in the preface, my school, located on the West Side of Chicago, is over 90% free or reduced lunch, which puts students and their families below the poverty line. Most students reside in the surrounding housing developments where gangs and violence thrive. Street behaviors are mimicked in the classroom creating management challenges for practitioners. Disruptions have lead to academic achievement being at its lowest; students are not being prepared to embark upon the world as productive citizens seeking lifelong learning opportunities. The African Centered continuing education model that emerged from analysis can assist program planners in facilitating workshops that address the unique issues that urban students face. The effects of sociocultural and intellectual racism can be rectified through the design and implementation of culturally grounded workshops and programming.

The main goal of this study was to facilitate an understanding of the educational utility of Africentrism by creating a continuing education model. Contributing to the knowledge base of literature relevant to African Centered programs is essential to development of a field reflective of all paradigms. I am making the assumption that some program planners may reject the value of African Centered practice in various fields. In regards to this issue in adult education, Tolliver (2010) states:

> Although many adult educators may not choose to embrace the African-centered paradigm as a personal guide for living, we can all recognize that it is a legitimate conceptual framework with which to not only examine and understand the lived experiences of people of African descent but also to better understand and generate empowered responses to issues related to race and racism. (p. 325)

If program planners take into consideration the affective and cognitive and spiritual marginalization of public school students, it is impossible to disregard the need for an

Africentric model to be researched and implemented. Using innovative, culturally grounded approaches to learning in traditional public schools is an issue that needs to be addressed. Program planners focusing on the development of culturally grounded workshops and training is crucial to saving traditional public K-12 educational institutions.

Impact on Communities of the African Diaspora

Ultimately, students and communities will benefit the most from curriculum that is grounded in the Africentric Paradigm. As a member of this Diaspora, the attainment of my professional and personal goals are impacted by racial oppression. Most thoughts, beliefs, and assumptions relative to education have been shaped by the dominant culture; the Africentric Paradigm helps me reconceptualize my experiences and move toward more liberatory adult education practice. Landsman (2001) describes professional development as an institutional responsibility. Relative to the need for educational transformation relative to CPE, he argues:

> Our teaching training institutions can play a large part in eliminating racism… I
> believe institutions of teacher training can be vigilant in their demands for openness,
> for knowledge of subject matter, and for grasp of diversity and inclusive education.
> (Landsman, 2001, p. 128)

As a result of my research I anticipate publishing (in book form) a guide to teaching in communities of color using an Africentric framework to better serve students of the African Diaspora, which can be used in higher education, or in professional development.

Woodson (1933) contends if education will ever be meaningful for communities of color, it must first articulate African's historical experiences both in Africa and America (Woodson, 1933, p. 7). African Centered practice needs to be researched, provided and

maintained in order to foster change. The lack of culturally grounded programs affects identity and community development and has a negative impact on the development of selfethnic image. Colin (1989) says, relative to the mis-education occurring in mainstream education:

> Given the structure of society and the historical relationship of Africans and their descendants to the dominant cultures (American and European), it is the view of this author that a result of that relationship is an educational system, youth and adults, that by its very nature and design, continues to mis-educate African-Ameripeans. The mis-education of the African-Ameripean is a significant historical issue with current implications. Within the race there is no age group that is unaffected. (Colin, 1989, p. 16)

Continuing and professional education has a responsibility to address issues of dominant culture as it relates to education systems by utilizing an Africentric framework to guide programmatic goals. K-12 practitioners can benefit from workshops of this nature; it is time for mainstream education to address the unique contemporary issues of marginalized communities in America.

Research Questions Guiding Study

1) How are conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm reflected in educational environments and incorporated into curriculum and instruction at an African Centered institution?

2) How are the problems that result from sociocultural and intellectual racism addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content?

3) What are the design and objectives of continuing education programs implemented at African Centered institutions?

4) What culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to a traditional continuing education model for K-12 practitioners?

Exploring the Intellectual Paradigm: Philosophical,

Conceptual and Theoretical Elements

Afrocentrism/Africentrism

I utilized one theoretical framework throughout the research. It is necessary to define each term to avoid ambiguity with spelling and semantics. Although spelling may differ, the substance is very similar. The terms Afrocentrism, Africentrism, African Centered, and African Intellectual Paradigm are used synonymously in this study. This particular paradigm is grounded in African history and utilizes African value systems to contextualize sociohistorical and intellectual experiences. People of the African Diaspora are the subject of research while utilizing this framework. Africentrism is defined by Colin (1994) as:

> Sociocultural and philosophical perspective that reflects the intellectual and cultural traditions of both culture and continent. It is grounded in these seven basic values (the Swahili term is provided first followed by the English translation): Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective work and responsibility),

Ujamma (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), Kuumba (creativity), and Imani

(faith). (Colin, 1994, p. 3)

The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba are a salient philosophical element of this

intellectual paradigm. The prefix *Afri* is reflective of both culture and continental origin.

Africentrism differs from Asante's more commonly used term Afrocentrism mainly because

of its grounding in the Swahili Nguzo Saba. In addition to the Seven Principles of the

Nguzo Saba, the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors, selfethnic, selfethnic reflectors and

liberatory education are also critical theoretical and conceptual elements of Africentrism.

Each of these elements will be introduced subsequently. Both Africentrism and

Afrocentrism assert that educational practice, philosophy, research, and ethics must be

grounded in the authentic lived experiences of African Ameripeans.

The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba are not only a critical part of this

framework, but are also recognized as the Pan African holiday Kwanzaa (Karenga 2008).

The researcher would like to acknowledge Karenga, the creator of this celebration, which is

recognized by African Centered communities around the world. Each principle is honored

for one day during a weeklong celebration beginning on December 26th. In addition to the

necessity of this Pan-African celebration, there are sociocultural and philosophical elements

embedded in each value. In the context of Colin's theory, these principles are an

"indigenous, and therefore legitimate African value system [used] as a normative framework

for defining an Africentric cultural perspective," (Colin, 1998, p. 44) and should also be

essential to frameworks used to develop curriculum for members of the African Diaspora.

This intellectual paradigm reflects culturally grounded concepts, theories and

philosophies, which are informed by African Centered value systems. Utilizing philosophical

and sociocultural elements of Africentrism was critical to my research; the paradigm served

as a foundation for the research. For additional information, I also researched historical events guided by African Centered practice. For example, Smethhurst (2005) describes the impact of a Muntu group during the Black Arts Movement, which included unique approaches to art and politics. His book, *Literary Nationalism in the 1960's and 1970's: The Black Arts Movement,* discusses many examples of encouraging indigenous practice. Goals of the Muntu group are discussed further here:

> Jahn argued that underlying African art across many cultures, languages, and so on was a unity based on spiritual force and rhythm. The conceptual framework not only gave Muntu group a truly Pan-African way of thinking about culture but also a means for analyzing African American culture for the deep structure binding to Africa…It also helped them theorize a revolutionary alternative to the "Western" revolutionary tradition. (Smethurst, 2005, p. 164)

This movement was grounded in the exploration of cultural artifacts taken from indigenous art-making in Ancient Africa. The focus of this movement was not only on aesthetics, but building spiritual and meditative practice as well.

Objectives and activities of the Muntu group were reflective of sociocultural elements embedded in Africentrism. The "revolutionary alternative" to Western culture referenced in the passage above created an opportunity for African Ameripeans to define themselves through artistic practice which is demonstrative of Kujichagulia (self-determination). Nia (purpose) is also reflected in the primary goal of the movements, which is to preserve African value systems here in America. Smethhurst describes the participants of this movement as "scholars of Marxism, left-over Garveyites, and Pan-Africanists" who paved the way for "contemporary black artists and theorists" (Smethurst, 2005, p. 108).

Researching culturally grounded groups can help develop an understanding of ways to use African Centered strategies in contemporary practice.

African Ameripean

Certain descriptors used throughout the research were derived from sociocultural elements of the Africentric Paradigm. For example, the researcher chose the term African Ameripean to describe people of this Diaspora. Colin (1989) defines African Ameripean as "any person of African descent born in America. The racial group has been referred to as Black, Negro and Afro-American" (Colin, 1989, p. 237). This was the preferred descriptor throughout the research because it not only appropriately acknowledges our linkage to people of European descent, but also reflects the displacement that has occurred for people of the Diaspora. Relative to our displacement, hooks (1995) writes:

> Everyone forgets that when we talk about black people living in the diaspora, we're talking about a people who live in exile, and that in some ways, like all other exiles, we imagine home, we imagine journeys of return. (hooks, 1995, p. 74)

The Trans Atlantic Slave Trade had resounding effects on people of the African Diaspora in a vast majority of countries around the world. It is important to acknowledge this history of atrocities and its psychological affects on people of this Diaspora.

The naming of a people is essential to development of positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989), which is why the researcher chose to use African Ameripean throughout this study. We must be familiar with our past in order to address contemporary issues that marginalized populations are facing. Relative to the naming process acknowledging both the displacement of African people as well as and atrocities that occurred Colin (1989) states:

The use of *African* denotes the primary genetic roots and a land of origin. The

Ameri- reflects the voluntary assimilation with various Native American tribal

societies, and *–pean* reflects the forced assimilation with various European ethnic

groups particularly the British, French and Irish during the period of slavery in the

United States. (Colin, 1989, 64)

In the past, the naming of African Ameripeans has been both socioculturally and historically

incorrect. In order to reclaim ourselves as a people, we must first be grounded in accurate

historical perspectives. This nomenclature is a critical component of sociocultural

grounding, which is why African Ameripean was the preferred descriptor throughout the

research.

Africalogy

The Africalogist conducts research utilizing the African Intellectual Paradigm.

Africalogy, as described by Asante (1990), is an "Afrocentric study of phenomena" (p. 75).

This particular discipline is rooted in African value systems and indigenous practices.

Relative to the theoretical and conceptual elements included, Asante (1990) states, "As a

discipline, Africalogy is sustained by a commitment to centering the study of African

phenomena and events in the cultural voice of the composite African people" (p. 76) and

includes both the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba (Colin 1989) and the Virtues of Ma'at

(Karenga 2004). These sociocultural elements are reflective of collective action and the need

for a normative process to develop and disseminate culturally grounded research.

Africology is a discipline is rooted in the rich cultural tradition of African

communalism and interdependence. Relative to the need for culturally specific approaches

to research, Diop reminds us: "The difference in the intellectual approach of the African and

European researcher often causes these misunderstandings in the interpretation of facts and their relative importance. The scientific interest of the European scholar with regard to African data is essentially analytical" (Diop, 1955, p. 275). The "misunderstandings in the interpretation of facts" Diop refers to is prominent in Western approaches to research, which are rooted in sociocultural and intellectual racism. The oppressive circumstances we see in contemporary institutions and educational systems are a direct result of data grounded in these frameworks. Africalogy is a more appropriate discipline for studying people of the African Diaspora because it approaches philosophical studies from an African Centered world-view. African Centered conceptual and theoretical elements, which frame the research, ensure that data is reflective of the authentic lived experiences of African Ameripeans.

Virtues of Ma'at

The subsequent sections will focus on salient concepts and theories embedded in the Africentric Paradigm. Each sociocultural element is reflective of traditional African value systems. The Virtues of Ma'at are ethical standards developed in Kemet (Egypt). Ma'at is defined by Karenga (2004) as, "an interrelated order of righteousness, including the divine, natural and social is repeatedly affirmed…the foundation and order of the world lasts throughout ancient Egyptian history in a dynamic process of continuity and change" (p. 7) and each concept is expressive of Kemetic moral ideals. Ma'at serves as a foundation for classical African ethics. Governing bodies of Kemet cultivated a tradition of collective action and interdependence. This ancient civilization is a prime examples of African rituals rooted in communalism, which was discussed in the Africology section.

The Seven Virtues of Ma'at are as follows: harmony, balance, order, justice, truth, righteousness and reciprocity (Karenga 2004). Each virtue is reflective of an Ancient Egyptian moral order and the idea that as humans we should operate with a profound respect for each other and the Universe. African Centered schools use these concepts as a foundation for curriculum and instruction, grounding students in African values. In regards to the legacy of Kemet, Karenga (2004) highlights the importance of the "ethical and spiritual legacy of its instructions, the concept of soul, humans as bearers of dignity and divinity" (p. 133), which is highly regarded in institutions that utilize African Centered practice. School culture is rooted in the belief that along with academic rigor, it is imperative that we live benevolently with one another. The Virtues of Ma'at provide a philosophic referent that is critical to the framework of the Africentric Paradigm.

Exploring the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors

The Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989) is a theoretical frame regarding how and in what ways racial interactions influence the development of positive selfethnic image. This theory is described by Colin (1989) as "the acknowledgement of the African Ameripean presence, the validity of their experiences, and the inclusion of the race's contributions to the intellectual and socio-historical development of this country" (p. 17-18). Historically, African Ameripeans have been perceived as intellectually inferior; oppression and sociocultural racism are two impacts of this belief. Goals of African Centered education include inspiring more liberatory educational practices. There are several elements embedded in this theory that were fundamental to the research. The concepts of selfethnic, selfethnic reflectors, and liberatory education will be discussed in the following sections.

Selfethnic

The concept selfethnic has a very specific meaning context. Relative to the spelling, Colin (1989) states:

> This researcher's use of the descriptive term selfethnic without the hyphen reflects the underlying principles of influence and reciprocity that form the foundational basis of the relationship between African Ameripeans and their race. It would be both culturally and historically inappropriate for there to be separation between individual membership and group identity when referring to African Ameripeans. (Colin, 1989, p. 20)

The "separation between individual membership and group identity" that Colin discusses is an example of the African tradition of interdependence. The importance of group identity is also reflective of Umoja (unity), one of the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba. In this passage Colin also mentions reciprocity (a Virtue of Ma'at), which purports that with every positive action, a similar response will occur. These conceptual linkages to term selfethnic give a more definitive approach to understanding African Centered values.

Selfethnic Reflectors

The concept of selfethnic reflectors is based on the fact that knowledge of self can help eradicate the affects various forms of oppression. Relative to the impact of intellectual racism on the African Ameripean community, Colin (1989) states:

> They do not see representation of their ethnic group; therefore, they do not see themselves. This lack of reflectors, psychologically tells the African-Ameripean students that their selfethnic group has developed nothing that has had significant contributory value to the field. One is left with the impression that, even 300 years

after slavery, the race has yet to develop intellectually to the point that it can produce

philosophies, theories, ideas, or concepts-elements that are a natural by-product of

any intellectual endeavor. (Colin, 1989, p. 17)

In the Western world, positive images of African Ameripeans in media and pop culture are

difficult to find. Selfethnic reflectors, or representations of ones ethnic group, can be

utilized as a strategy to uplift communities. African Centered education integrates selfethnic

reflectors, an approach that combats the effects of oppression.

One of many leaders in the forefront of culturally grounded education was Marcus

Mosiah Garvey. Although not often thought of as an adult educator, Garvey and his

philosophies relative to the importance of selfethnic identity are critical to the development

of culturally grounded education for African Ameripeans. Serving as the president of the

Universal Negro Improvement Association-African Communities League (UNIA-ACL), he

created an organization that embodied the following:

Working for the unification of our race, not on domestic lines only, but

universally…teaching our race self-help and self-reliance, not only in one essential,

but in all those things that contribute to human happiness and well being (Garvey,

1967, p. 23)

The UNIA-ACL was the largest Pan-African mass organization in history (Martin, 1983, p.

3). Garvey's philosophies regarding the unification of the African Diaspora are a powerful

example of the impact of selfethnic reflectors. His practice also provides a foundation for

contemporary liberatory education.

Liberatory Education

The goals of the liberatory education are to provide instruction with the goal of building positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) as well as combating the negative impacts of sociocultural and intellectual racism. Asante (1991), relative to the racial oppression embedded in Western education systems, reminds us, "In most classrooms, whatever the subject, Whites are placed in the center perspective position. How alien the African American child must feel, how like an outsider!" (p. 171). Due to the psychological impacts of intellectual racism, people of the African Diaspora need curriculum content that is reflective of liberatory educational goals. Relative to the field of adult education, continuing and professional education utilizing an Africentric framework is more appropriate for reflecting on the authentic lived experiences of marginalized communities.

Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming

Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming is defined by Colin (1999) as educational programs created for and by members of the African Diaspora for the purpose of developing positive selfethnic identity. In the following passage, Colin discusses the importance of culturally grounded programs:

> It is also believed that due to the racist nature of American society, adult education programs must be culturally grounded in that they must reflect those educational activities, formal and informal, that are designed and implemented by individuals and organizations that have their roots in the community (racially, ethnically, and geographically) and the programmatic goals are reflective of the sociocultural realities and life experiences that are indigenous to that group." (Colin and Guy, 1998, p. 47)

Africentric concepts, for example the Virtues of Ma'at or the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba, are the center of programming. African Centered schools often provide Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) in the form of after school programs or extra curricular activities. There are also organizations that provide workshops for adults. Programmatic goals include the development of positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) and working in opposition of marginalization using the salient points of the paradigm.

Principles of Twinness and Complementarity

The concepts of twinness and complementarity are both derived from the Dogon people of West Africa (Ani 1994). Ani (1994) defines the concept of twinness as the wholeness that is created when male and female pairs are joined establishing balance, harmony and equilibrium. There is an African proverb that states, "In the world, things are two and two" (Wiredu and Gyekye, 2012, p. 103). Viewed from a cultural center, we all possess the dualistic spirit embodied by the concept twinness. Everything in the Universe is made up of opposing forces. In regards to our dualistic mindset for instance, as opposed to looking at racism as a hindrance, one could acknowledge the struggle but also perceive it as a foundation for resilience and empowerment. We must be cognizant of our twinness and employ it when necessary to combat internalized oppression.

There is an African Proverb that embodies the concept of complementarity stating, "We are, therefore I am, and since I am, therefore we are" (Wiredu and Gyekye, 2012, p. 106). From an African Centered perspective, this concept speaks to the importance of our actions emerging to complement not compete in our communities. To live a rewarding and fulfilling life as individuals, we must realize interdependence is essential. Often times our

actions must emerge to complement the needs of others thus maintaining harmony and balance. From an African value system, our interests as individuals should always be reflective of our family, friends and community members. Tolliver discusses the need for the principles of twinness and complementarity to be used simultaneously here:

> Both concepts must coexist, as their interaction is critical for the optimal development of individual members of the group as well as for the optimal development of the group itself. The needs of the group and of the individual are to be balanced, attesting again to complementarity and twinness. Complementarity exists within the individual and also in the individual's relationship with others and various elements of the universe. (Tolliver, 2010, p. 320)

Relative to CPE programs, these concepts can help inform K-12 educators of the impact that a communal focus can have on marginalized students. These concepts are useful to help practitioners, and in turn students, stay grounded in African value systems when confronted with the effects of sociocultural and intellectual racism in their communities. In regards to this study, the concepts of twinness and complementarity were used as Units of Analysis to create meaning from the data collected.

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CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Historically, African Ameripeans have been legally denied the opportunity to obtain

an education. Efforts to advance oneself have often been met with acts of violence and

even death. The lithograph *Sacrifice* depicts an enslaved African being hung by the ribs, one

of the most gruesome methods used by slave owners. What was the reason for this

inhumane punishment? Did the victim just want the opportunity to learn to read or write?

Or perhaps the victim dared to question the peculiar institution of slavery? Whatever the justification for this gruesome murder, this person's life- and the lives of many others- were sacrificed for the opportunities we have as African Ameripeans today. We must honor our ancestors and the lives sacrificed by staying grounded and maintaining a dedication to excellence.

As stated in chapter one, the problem that lead to this study is as follows: few continuing and professional education models acknowledge the importance of culturally grounded curricula and instruction in both public schools and community programming. Resources relevant to the problem were examined in this chapter. The bodies of literature reviewed include current issues of adult education publications, teaching resources for K-12 educators and historical literature pertaining to African Centered adult education. I discussed strategies used historically and in contemporary practice that have both nurtured and hindered educators working with communities of color. My research sought to include the earliest examples of culturally grounded adult education and highlight its necessity in current practice. This chapter supports the goal to not only develop a continuing education model to help facilitate the educational utility of Africentrism, but to provide salient information about African Centered practice for those in the field of adult and continuing education planning programs for K-12 educators.

The literature review looked at four areas specifically: (1) definitions of continuing and professional education, and the significance of ethics in program planning, (2) examining the role of CPE relative to K-12 curriculum and instruction and the importance of culturally grounded strategies for those serving marginalized communities, (3) the history of African Centered adult education and its necessity in contemporary CPE practice and (4) how art based practice has played a salient role in adult education of African Ameripeans since our

displacement in America. Since the field of continuing and professional education is a fairly

new facet of adult education, it was essential to examine adult education as a broader field.

While reviewing these bodies of literature, I provided an overview of the field of adult

education in addition to information relative to the historical and contemporary importance

of African Centered education for those in the field looking to expand their practice.

The Field of Continuing and Professional Education

Definition and Practice

There are many adult education journals that can be used as a resource to provide

salient information regarding practice in the field. Since the problem leading to this study

was directly related to the absence of African Centered frameworks in the field of continuing

and professional education, defining the term was essential to begin this chapter.

Continuing and professional education is a specific area of interest in adult and continuing

education that emerged in the 1970's (Jeris, 2012, p. 275). *The 2010 Handbook of Adult*

Education (Kasworm, Rose, Ross-Gordon Eds, 2010) has multiple descriptors, all of which

focus on the importance of the word continuing and professional. These terms are used "to

differentiate post-qualification education from initial or pre-qualification preparation" (Jeris,

2010, p. 277) and are critical to the growth of practitioners at any point in their educational

journey. CPE takes on many forms including workshops, professional development,

trainings and classes for specific disciplines.

In the field of continuing and professional education, there are many cultural and

historical issues to address. For example, program planners and educators look to the field

for strategies to address contemporary issues relative to race, culture and gender as it

pertains to public education. The most important goal of CPE is helping professionals

construct new knowledge in their practice. The skills acquired come in various forms,

including recertification (or relicensure), quality assurance or legal compliance; formal and

informal learning are critical components (Jeris, 2010, p. 277). There is much debate over

the goals and expectations of this field. Keeping practice contemporary is of the utmost

importance. As educators it is essential to acquire new knowledge in order to effectively

address issues in the classroom as well as grow professionally. African Centered institutions,

for example model their CPE programs to be reflective of a culturally grounded framework,

which is more appropriate for students of the African Diaspora. As adult educators, we

must acknowledge the importance of culturally relevant CPE programs.

Planning Programs for K-12 Educators

When planning programs for adult learners, it is critical to understand the needs of

participants. Boyle (1981) and Cafarella (2002) are two authors who developed models for

the program development process. Boyle (1981) designed a guide to help educators create a

set of activities carried out in an effort to plan an educational program. He described this as

the essence of the program development process and emphasized the need for planning to

involve not only leadership, but also representatives from the population being served. He

deconstructs the process in the following way: 1) structure for decision making,

2) prioritizing problems, 3) identifying resources, 4) defining outcomes, and 5) developing

training plan activities (Boyle, 1981, p. 5).

The process included in Boyle's model is important to the purpose of my study,

which is to describe and analyze curricula from African Centered educational institutions. It

was critical to look for the aforementioned elements in programming in order to understand

their approach to content and instructional strategies. Step two of the program planning

process, prioritizing problems (Boyle, 1981), involves addressing the needs of participants in

order to conduct a successful program. It is imperative to understand the community being

served. Relative to the importance of this particular element, Boyle (1981) states the major

objective is "to extend knowledge for use by the people and communities" (Boyle, 1981, p.

68). The objectives of program planning are to improve the welfare of participants; in the

case of K-12 educators in traditional public schools, it is incumbent to focus on unique

circumstances that marginalized students face. Addressing issues like economic depression

and racial oppression should be included in the framework of programming. Providing

content and instructional strategies, in addition to culturally grounded resources, are the

most critical components of planning programs for adult learners in CPE programs.

Preservation of the Ethical Approach

Boyle (1981) also emphasizes the importance of practice rooted in the moral

imperative (a consciousness that compels people to do that which is right). This is an

essential component of adult education programming. Relative to the ethical standards

program planners should adhere to he states:

> The continuing education programmer should clearly identify his or her beliefs about
>
> education, the learner, the programmer, and the program development process…the
>
> programmer's beliefs about the rights and responsibilities of the learner will
>
> influence his or her actions when involving the learner in identification of the needs
>
> or designing specific learning experiences. (Boyle, 1981, 44)

It is essential that program planners "consider their beliefs," as Boyle states, therefore

maintaining an ethical approach when creating programs for adult learners by adhering to a

set of moral principles. The framework of a program should take into consideration the cultural needs of educators and learners. Goals and objectives must inform participants of contemporary strategies to improve their practice.

Cafarella (2002), in *Planning Programs for Adult Learners*, described a planning process from initial brainstorming to analysis and assessment. Chapter three, entitled *Interactive Model of Program Planning*, also emphasized the importance of an ethical approach just as Boyle (1981) did. Cafarella (2002) states, "using an ethical approach in making decisions about education and training programs for adults should be of concern to all parties involved in the process of planning such programs" (p. 49), reminding readers that adult education is rooted in the preservation of the moral imperative. Similar to Boyle (1981), she agrees that this ethical approach ensures that programmatic goals and objectives are truly reflective of the needs of populations being served. Relative to my study, this approach is critical because issues like systematic oppression and economic depression must be addressed when planning programs for educators working in African Ameripean communities.

The Absence of Culturally Grounded Programming

Cafarella (2002) states a program planner responds to the needs of specific "community topics, skills, and belief or value systems" (p. 114). Although educators serving marginalized populations have unique needs, Cafarella does not mention Africentrism, or any other culturally grounded approaches to program planning. In order to restore balance in mainstream education, culturally grounded resources must be available. Brookfield (2010) states, "Adult education is racialized, grounded in the principles that emerge from Western European intellectual traditions and conceptualizations" (Brookfield, 2003, p. 4) and we must be cognizant of the fact that most of our experiences are shaped by dominant culture.

If program planners are adhering to the most ethical approach of their practice, they must be committed to finding the appropriate culturally grounded framework to address the needs of participants.

Continuing and professional education must be reimagined to encourage liberatory practice, creating programs with the goal of building positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) as well as combating the negative impacts of sociocultural and intellectual racism. In *The Handbook of Race and Adult Education* (2010, Sheared, Johnson-Bailey, Colin, Peterson, and Brookfield Eds) Tolliver's chapter *Using an African Centered Paradigm to Understand Race and Racism in Adult Education* discusses racism in the field. Regarding the effects of intellectual racism in the field of adult education Tolliver (2010) states, "As such, its expectations for theory and practice and for knowledge production and knowledge dissemination are often at odds with the expectations of those whose lived experiences emerge from a different cultural and conceptual base" (p 324). Since marginalized students often have different needs than the practitioners serving in their community, we must provide a "different cultural and conceptual base" as she mentions. Practitioners are less likely to have success in public school classrooms if we continue planning programs without regard to the individualized needs of communities of color.

The absence of African Centered CPE programs for practitioners is a hindrance because they cannot possibly understand the unique needs of marginalized communities. These programs are intended to equip them with knowledge to create curriculum grounded in students' authentic lived experiences. Relative to the systemization of solutions Tolliver (2010) confirms:

> If adult education is truly committed to undoing systems of oppression and
> marginalization within its own ranks, it must take the risk of telling the truth about

cultural imposition and racist assumptions and ideologies that have operated in

various practices, often invisible to many, rather than embracing a sweet falsehood of

itself as a race-neutral, color-blind profession. The African-centered paradigm

provides an avenue for the profession to move to a more pluralistic reality. (Tolliver,

2010, p. 325)

The "invisible factors" of the dominant paradigm mentioned in the passage heavily affect

student success in communities of color. Explicit and implicit effects of sociocultural racism

are embedded in adult education programs. These issues can only be rectified if adult

educators commit to truly addressing them through an Africentric framework.

Unfortunately, few continuing and professional education frameworks acknowledge

the importance of African Centered approaches. The absence of this concept reinforces

dominant culture and invisible factors mentioned previously. In regards to the development

of Africentric programs for adult learners, there are authors who address the importance of

this culturally grounded approach. In *An Africentric Interpretive Model of Curriculum Orientations*

for Course Development in Graduate Program in Adult Education, the authors discuss adult

education in a sociohistorical context. In this article Colin and Guy (1998) explore the

importance of culturally grounded curricular orientations and create a model for adult

education courses. The literature also establishes who should be involved in the design and

implementation of such programs. Colin and Guy (1998) argue:

It is also believed that due to the racist nature of American society, adult education

programs must be culturally grounded in that they must reflect those educational

activities, formal and informal that are designed and implemented by individuals and

organizations that have their roots in the community (racially, ethically, and

geographically) and the programmatic goals are reflective of the sociocultural realities

and life experiences that are indigenous to that group (p. 47).

These perspectives, which encourage positive selfethnic identity (Colin, 1989), are reflective

of Garvey, and other adult educators who recognized the importance of strategies rooted in

African value systems. The absence of this concept in mainstream adult education is not

only detrimental to educational systems, but is also contrary to the foundation of adult

education, which is rooted in an ethical approach to learning.

The Role of Continuing and Professional Education Regarding K-12 Curriculum Content and Instructional Strategies

Examining K-12 Teaching Resources

Participating in continuing and professional education programming is critical to the

development of curricula content and instructional strategies for K-12 educators. Outside of

programming, there are also publications that K-12 educators rely on to assist in the

development of more innovative classroom strategies. For example, *The Journal of the*

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a journal that focuses on

families, ethics, history and the importance of helping children think in new ways. Dow

(2010) reminds us that in the years ahead "children will enter a global workforce" (p. 34) and

there are many innovative classroom strategies, which improve the way students retain

information. In some public schools, these resources are given to teachers to apply to their

practice as needed. The next section will review K-12 resources for educators to find

content that may support or negate the need for culturally grounded frameworks.

Several authors, Lemov (2010), Payne (2005), and Landsman (2001) are taking on the

challenge of helping practitioners develop general strategies to improve learning

environments in traditional public schools. Lemov (2010) compiled a series of organized

field notes in the book *Teach Like a Champion.* It includes interviews, surveys, site visits and

observations from educators in urban areas working with students of color. Relative to

finding effective ways to reach students the author stated, "Control gets them to do things

you suggest; influence gets them to internalize the things you suggest" (Lemov, 2010, p. 42)

which I have found to be true in my practice. Lemov (2010) also highlights methods like

proximity control, praise, being genuine, challenging students, building character and trust.

Although the research was conducted with communities of color, there was no mention of

the importance of culturally grounded educational strategies. In addition, there was no

reference to the role and influence of race, and strategies to address the unique needs of

marginalized communities.

Diverse Approaches to Addressing Cultural Issues in the Classroom

Resources that reinforce Western dominant culture accompany the absence of

information relative to developing culturally grounded CPE programs. For example, Payne

(2005), in *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* presents views that are devoid of diversity and

empathy for marginalized communities. Payne often uses the term "poor" as a descriptor

for students when discussing the economic impacts of racism. Regarding students from

impoverished communities she writes, "poor children are much more likely than non-poor

children to suffer developmental delay and damage, to drop out of high school and to give

birth during teen years" (Payne, 2005, p. 4), making a statement which demeans an entire

group of people. Her discussion does not mention invisible factors that contribute to

impoverished communities. Economic oppression relative to certain communities of color

is a direct result of racial group membership. Issues like generational illiteracy, institutional

oppression, and economic depression have created unique circumstances for marginalized people of color. There are many resources similar to this book that continue to support institutional racism, further diminishing these communities.

In Western culture, racial marginalization often affects our experiences. As a framework for creating instructional strategies for communities of color, Payne (2005) borrowed from Feuerstein, who worked with "poor disenfranchised Jewish youth" (Payne, 2005, p. 99) in order to develop her ideas relative to diverse practices. In several chapters the author makes overarching assumptions with statements like, "Behavior related to poverty: cannot follow directions, little procedural memory, used, sequence not used or valued," (p. 36) which only reinforces perceived inferiority and negative stereotypes of marginalized students. Mainstream education tends to ignore issues of sociocultural and intellectual racism in education therefore reinforcing the subtlest forms of racism. Payne (2005) writes, "Four reasons one leaves poverty are: it's too painful to stay, a vision or a goal, a key relationship, or a special talent or skill" (Payne, 2005, p. 3), referring to poverty as if it were an option. In order to combat Western rhetoric, the importance of culturally grounded continuing and professional education must be acknowledged.

Literature and strategies that are reflective of African value systems can be used to counter these ideas, thus helping practitioners be more successful with communities of color. Although Payne writes, "Responding to the impending crisis with the mindset that created it and with strategies that have been used to address poverty to date is to invite more of the same results: more poverty and more communities at risk" (Payne, 2005, p. 182), I would argue that this is exactly what she is doing in her research, failing to discuss the major factors that perpetuate poverty, or any innovative, culturally grounded solutions. Outside of planned professional development, K-12 educators in traditional public schools often utilize

resources that encourage diversity and inclusion as opposed to researching and addressing specific cultural needs of this Diaspora. With this approach, there is no consideration of the historical impact of sociocultural racism.

On the contrary, Landsman (2001) suggests a different approach regarding research, and the use of language as well. In *White Teacher Talks About Race,* Landsman (2001) uses terms like "inclusion" and "diversity" offering an empathetic alternative to Payne's writing. He discusses responding to students' individualized needs, and emphasizes the importance of celebrating differences and working toward a more integrated and complex approach to educating students (Landsman, 2001, p. 27). This critically reflective approach does not reinforce stereotypes and perceived inferiority of marginalized groups. Culturally grounded approaches to classroom practice are a necessity because of the effects of racial oppression in Western culture.

To be effective in planning and implementing K-12 curriculum, instructional strategies are essential to meeting the needs of all students. It is imperative to remember that there is value in fostering relationships with students and creating mutually beneficial learning environments; as educators we must be aware that we can also learn from their experiences. In regards to this belief, Landsman (2001) writes:

> In thinking about all these things, and in writing this book, I realized, finally, that we are each on our own journey of racial understanding…I have been fortunate to have been in a profession where every day and every year students have challenged every stereotype and every generalization. I have learned all I know about race, culture, love and celebration from them. (Landsman, 2001, p. 162)

The best way to reach students is to build relationships and to truly to believe in the value of their experiences. Practitioners then become attuned to individualized needs and address

them effectively. Each of the aforementioned authors, Lemov (2010), Payne (2005) and Landsman (2001) utilized different approaches to addressing cultural issues within instructional strategies. Although these resources lack culturally grounded approaches, they are often used by public schools as resource guides for K-12 educators during professional development. After an overview of these resources, one could conclude that culturally grounded education was not acknowledged as a necessity in teaching resources or relative to continuing and professional education.

<div align="center">**Educational Practice Grounded in the Africentric Paradigm**</div>

The Importance of Culturally Grounded Content and Instructional Strategies

Several authors including Murrell Jr. (2002), Ladson-Billings (1994), and Jaha-Echols (2010), advocated for the importance of educational practice grounded in the Africentric Paradigm. Although these resources are not specifically written for the field of continuing and professional education, they discuss the impacts of sociocultural and intellectual oppression, and culturally grounded pedagogical solutions. The following publications respond to necessity for culturally grounded resources for educational programming due to the impact of intellectual racism.

Murrell Jr. (2002), in *African-Centered Pedagogy: Developing Schools of Achievement for African American Children,* utilizes a case study in order to develop an African Centered pedagogical theory. Relative to the marginalization of students and the failure of traditional public schools, Murrell argues:

> For success with African American children teachers need a theory of practice and a
> practice of theory that take account of the cultural patterns and educational heritages

of Africans in America…from this perspective of an African-centered pedagogy, the goal of education is not to prepare children to fit within the system, but to revolutionize the system toward fulfilling the promise of democracy articulated in the documents (but not the deeds) of this country's founding fathers. (Murrell, 2002, p. 34)

In traditional public schools, most educators are not attuned to issues of race, thus reinforcing some of the most implicit forms of intellectual racism in the classroom. By using continuing and professional education programs to actively engage in discourse relative to issues of race, we can begin to overcome institutional oppression through instructional strategies. Utilizing an Africentric framework for CPE programs can help practitioners plan content that is reflective of the authentic lived experiences of marginalized communities.

For K-12 practitioners in traditional public schools, the importance of cultural competency, identity development and community integrity are not emphasized in CPE programs. These elements of African Centered education are a necessity because students of the African Diaspora have unique cultural needs as a result of the impacts of sociocultural racism, which are often ignored by traditional public schools. Educators from diverse backgrounds unknowingly reinforce subtle forms of racism and oppression because curriculum and instruction is grounded in a Western framework. Murrell (2002) also speaks to the importance of utilizing an Africentric lens for practitioners who are not African Ameripean. Relative to the implicit racism embedded in mainstream educational practice he writes, "A pedagogical theory is necessary for teachers who are not African American to develop positionality-a stance in relation to the historicity and culture of African American experience required for effective work as a teacher" (Murrell, 2002, p. 42). It is imperative for K-12 educators to learn accurate historical perspectives in order to understand the

importance of culturally grounded curriculum and building selfethnic identity (Colin 1989).

For "effective work as a teacher," as he mentions, practitioners must understand the

necessity of content and instructional strategies of this nature.

This particular resource, *African Centered Pedagogy: Developing Schools of Achievement for*

African American Children, could be used in continuing and professional education programs

to develop culturally grounded curriculum content and instructional strategies for traditional

K-12 educators. Murrell (2002) states, "The task of an African-centered pedagogy is to

provide teachers with a framework to recreate the symbolic culture of the school setting so

as to reflect the cultural world of Black achievement" (Murrell, 2002, p. 123). The

importance of content that builds positive selfethnic image (Colin 1989) can no longer be

ignored in traditional CPE programming. We must provide resources that inform African

Centered practice and help combat internalized oppression.

Furthermore Ladson-Billings (1994), in *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African*

American Children provides a research-based compilation of successful instructional strategies.

She discusses culturally grounded approaches to content using an Africentric lens. Relative

to the necessity for African Centered education she states:

> In 1935, W.E.B. Du Bois posed the question, "Does the Negro need separate
>
> schools?" The question came as a result of Du Bois' assessment that the quality of
>
> education that African Americans were receiving in the nation's public schools was
>
> poor, an assessment that is still true today. Across the nation, a call in our urban
>
> centers for alternative schooling suggests that attempts to desegregate the public
>
> schools have ultimately not been beneficial to African American students. (Ladson-
>
> Billings, 1994, p.1)

Interviews, research, and surveys were used to compile a list of components for successful practice with communities of color, regardless of socio-economic status. The research was centered in the Africentric Paradigm, and focused on making students the subject, not the object, of research in order to improve pedagogical practice. Because of the effects of intellectual racism in mainstream education, more resources with culturally grounded content need to be available. The field of continuing and professional education must acknowledge the importance of African Centered programming.

While examining literature relative to continuing and professional education, more specifically for K-12 practitioners, it was difficult to find research and information relative to Africentric practice, therefore making it necessary to look at literature that may not be intended specifically for practitioners and program planners. *Project Butterfly* is a book for young girls of the African Diaspora helping them socially construct knowledge through an Africentric framework. Although not written for practitioners, it is a great example of culturally grounded instruction and includes strategies that can be integrated into instructional strategies. The book begins with references to Kemet, or Ancient Egypt, describing the Fourty-two Principles of Ma'at, "a moral code that people used to live peacefully and harmoniously with each other" (Jaha-Echols, 2010, p. 23). Each chapter includes examples of positive affirmations reinforcing selfethnic identity (Colin 1989), just as content and instructional strategies should. For example Jaha-Echols writes, "Our thick springy wool-like in texture hair, is really one of the most awesome gifts that we have from the Creator" (Jaha-Echols, 2010, p. 104). K-12 practitioners should be taught to utilize similar strategies, for instance positive affirmations, with students regardless of color.

This book offers a wealth of accurate historical perspectives including a discussion of Africa, the slave trade, and the fact that the mental, emotional, and spiritual trauma of

slavery has never been effectively addressed by many African-Americans, and we are emotionally scarred from generation to generation (Jaha-Echols, 2010, p. 141). Jaha-Echols encourages students to live their lives with passion or purpose, "go to cultural festivals, learn to drum or African dance" (Jaha-Echols, 2010, p. 180) while nurturing their spirits. Encouraging our youth to engage in creative practice is critical to their development. It is a necessity for public school practitioners to have access to African Centered CPE programs. Culturally grounded content and instructional strategies can change the way students think of themselves and their communities. We must make this information accessible to traditional K-12 educators.

Africentrism and The Handbook of Adult Education

Relative to program planning, many authors fail to mention the importance of the African Centered Intellectual Paradigm. Every ten years, a handbook of adult education is published, with an overview of the literature and activities that are currently practiced in the field. These handbooks are reflective of what mainstream education deems as important, specifically for adult educators. Examining literature from the field in the 1990 (Merriman and Cunningham Eds), 2000 (Wilson and Hayes Eds), and 2010 (Kasworm, Rose, and Ross-Gordon Eds) editions of *The Handbook of Adult Education* helped determine how relevant African Centered practice has been in mainstream adult education the last few decades.

I began looking for terms that were relevant to the paradigm. In the 1990 *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education* (Merriman and Cunningham Eds) neither Afrocentrism nor Africentrism were found in the index. From this we can infer that this term is relatively new to the field. Traditionally, adult education has always been rooted in ethics, social justice, and responding to the needs of the larger community. Resources relative to the Africentric

Paradigm are essential to fulfill the obligation of finding equitable ways to address the needs of the community. In the field of continuing and professional education the outcome of programming should be to create a more appropriate framework for developing content and instructional strategies for practitioners working with marginalized populations.

Certain chapters contained general discussions regarding the use of culturally relevant strategies. The 1990 edition of the handbook discussed the need to address urban learners, more specifically, children of the African Diaspora. Briscoe and Ross (1990), in *Racially and Ethnic Minorities and Adult Education,* discussed how stereotyping and other inequitable practices affect classroom instruction. Briscoe and Ross (1990) state that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that insensitivity to cultural differences tends to create barriers for counseling and education; curriculum must bring balance to the system (p. 587). The authors continue, "The need to recognize and accept cultural differences, without attaching labels to groups based on their differences, are goals yet to be realized in North American society" (Briscoe and Ross, 1990, p. 587) and practitioners must keep this in mind when implementing curriculum. African Centered practice should be acknowledged and as solution to bridge cultural gaps in continuing and professional education.

The effects of oppression create a necessity for culturally grounded programming in continuing and professional education. There are also publications that address the hesitance of the mainstream to accept culturally grounded frameworks. Imel, Brockett and James (2000) in *Defining the Profession: A Critical Appraisal* discussed this issue:

> The question, then, has to do with the extent to which these educators are outside of the mainstream by choice or by exclusion (either overt or covert). We believe that the answer remains somewhere between the two extremes. To be sure, certain perspectives and practices, such as critical adult education, feminist pedagogy and

Afrocentrism have not been widely embraced by a large percentage of those who identify with the mainstream field…at the same time, many of those who have been excluded or marginalized have looked with disdain at the mainstream, making a conscious choice not to engage in the kind of dialogue and exchange that could potentially lead to the creation of a visible, vital and influential adult education profession. (Imel, Brockett and James, 2000, p. 640)

A Eurocentric framework is used for most educational institutions; discourse relative to the needs of marginalized communities is often excluded and "looked with disdain" as the passage indicates. Institutions using an Africentric framework for curriculum, instruction, and continuing education models are acting outside the mainstream. The institutions I conducted research in may be viewed by dominant culture as radical, racial, or unnecessary despite the fact their practice has proved successful. The omission of the Africentric perspective puts practitioners at a disadvantage while teaching students of this Diaspora. This problem can only be addressed if the field acknowledges the importance of culturally grounded educational programming.

The 1990, 2000, and 2010 handbooks do not mention the importance of Afrocentric or Africentric based continuing education models; practitioners are less likely to be exposed to its importance if it is omitted from mainstream literature. There is discourse about the needs of urban educators--and the responsibility to address these issues in a unique way--but no mention of culturally grounded solutions. Several important factors are missing from the literature reviewed. If African Centered strategies are to be disseminated for traditional K-12 educators, more resources need to be available. It is imperative to provide continuing education models that are reflective of the African value systems. The salient concepts and theories of the paradigm can serve as a foundation for the reeducation

of people of the African Diaspora; the need for culturally grounded education programs and curriculum can no longer be ignored.

In the broader field of adult and continuing education, it is difficult to find authors who speak to the importance of a culturally grounded framework in the field. Continuing and professional education practice is affected by the omissions of this literature in the field. Tolliver (2010) addresses this issue in the *Handbook of Race and Adult Education*. In her chapter *Using an African-Centered Paradigm for Understanding Race and Racism in Adult Education,* she discussed the importance of integrating Africentric practice with adult education:

> The African-centered paradigm is more accurate and appropriate for understanding the lives, experiences, concerns, and needs of people of African descent. The philosophical and conceptual elements of this paradigm affirm peoples of African descent and support the goals of optimal functioning and actualization. (Tolliver, 2010, p. 319)

Intellectual racism is creating modern day slavery for students and they are not getting the education needed to compete as global citizens. K-12 educators need access to culturally grounded frameworks to "support optimal functioning" of students. Curriculum content must strive to create balance for students helping them develop more positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989). Relative to the restoration of harmony Tolliver (2010) states, "The African-centered paradigm emphasizes collective and social relationships as well as spiritual connectivity" (Tolliver, 2010, p. 323), and it is our duty as adult educators to integrate these methods in curriculum. K-12 educators need continuing and professional education programs to develop, foster, and maintain culturally grounded instructional strategies in traditional public schools.

Addressing Cultural Relevance in Adult Education Journals

In mainstream adult education journals there is often discourse around curriculum development and resources for practitioners in communities of color impacted by economic depression. Martin and Rogers (2004), Brookfield (2003), and Cueva (2010) specifically address more effective ways to interact with communities of color. Although not specifically for continuing and professional education practice, these publications could be used for insight to those in the field creating programs for K-12 educators serving students of the African Diaspora.

Examining the journal *Adult Education in an Urban Context* (2004), there is no mention of Africentric practice although the focus is improving education for people of the African Diaspora. Martin and Rogers (2004) discuss diverse instructional methods, for example using "gangsta rap" and advocacy for rejuvenation programs in adult education, but no African Centered solutions. Relative to communities of color affected by economic depression, Colin and Guy (1998) confirm:

> African American urban experience can be understood as a complex mixture of opportunity and advancement situated in the experience of oppression and marginalization. It is impossible to understand the cultural experience of African Americans in the modern American city without also understanding how racism functions to segregate, isolate, and denigrate black identity and culture. (p. 44)

Practitioners need to be aware that curriculum and instruction in public schools is reflective of the intellectual racism and isolation discussed in this passage. It is our responsibility as adult educators to implement programs designed to equip practitioners with content and instructional strategies to combat these forms of oppression.

For a more comprehensive overview of adult education as a broader field, I examined other journals that discussed the importance of the Africentric Paradigm because of the omissions found in the adult education handbooks. Brookfield (2003) in *Racializing Critically in Adult Education* highlights the importance of different culturally responsive frameworks. In regards to the title of this chapter, the word racializing is defined as, "the positive recognition of how one's life, world, positionality, and sense of cultural identity compose a set of preconscious filters and assumptions that frame how one's life is felt and lived" (p. 154) and is distinctly different from racism. The article serves as an attempt to racialize critically in adult education from an African American perspective (p. 154), which is often overlooked by the mainstream. The struggle against systematic racism has led to scholars creating new frameworks for examining curriculum and instruction. These frameworks are necessary because they encourage liberatory education through self-directed reflection and meaning-making, standing apart from the Eurocentric ideal (p. 157).

Brookfield (2003) discusses scholars and philosophers of this Diaspora who examine race, the intersection with adulthood, and contest hegemony (p. 156), some with an Africentric framework. He is not necessarily writing to advocate for Africentrism, but simply presenting this as an alternative critical discourse to mainstream education. Relative to the paradigm Brookfield (2003) writes:

> The Africentric theoretical paradigm has prompted other efforts at racially based scholarship and led to an awareness of the importance of racially based ways of knowing…in terms of specific adult education practices, it has underscored the need for programs in which a racial group is taught by members of that group attuned to its cultural rhythms and who provide ethnic reflectors for the learners. (p. 73)

This is an important concept because Africentrism is not the dominant view for communities in America. People are often hesitant to use a lens that is perceived as strictly racial, especially in continuing and professional education.

Combating the psychological effects of intellectual racism can be achieved through African Centered education. Relative to the unwillingness of the mainstream to accept this view, Brookfield (2003) writes, "Africentric scholarship is forced to prove the validity of its intellectual referents before its specific ideas can be engaged" (p 166) and this viewpoint also impedes on the utilization of this framework. To address the educational crisis occurring, continuing and professional education must be reconceptualized to value ideas of this nature. In this particular article, Brookfield does a superb job decentering the dominant paradigm with discussions of multiple perspectives, including Africentrism as one of many frameworks that need to be acknowledged in adult and continuing education.

The Journal, *White Privilege and Racism: Perceptions and Actions* (Lund, Colin Eds., 2010) includes discussions regarding how racism is manifested in the field of adult education. Colin (2010), in chapter one titled *White Racism Ideology and the Myth of a Postracial Society*, speaks to the ways which racism is manifested in the media, employment, higher education, and curricula content. Regarding the importance of culturally grounded knowledge, she states, "Culturally grounded knowledge involves both an accurate and appropriate sociohistorical and sociocultural contextual meaning in which values, beliefs, knowledge, and behaviors are culturally centered" (Colin, 2010 p. 10). Although in this particular paragraph she is speaking in regards to curriculum content in higher education, the literature also emphasizes the importance of appropriate culturally centered knowledge in the field of adult education as a whole. The field of continuing and professional education is lacking culturally grounded programming, which is necessary to address racism in public education.

As a response the myth of a post-racial society, culturally grounded strategies are essential to successful practice in the field of adult education. Cueva (2010) focuses on culturally responsive teaching in *A Living Spiral of Understanding: Community Based Adult Education.* She discussed community-based education that is reflective of diverse cultures. In regards to the need for culturally responsive teaching, she states:

> A safe environment is a notion that gives pause to my growing understanding of adult education. Learning requires taking risks, which means moving beyond our zone of comfort to stretch our capacity to engage in the world in new ways. Learning involves growth and change, which is often disorienting and painful. It is a risky venture to delve beyond the comfort of safety into the mystery of exploration and discovery. (Cueva, 2010, p. 81)

The risk taking, growth and change mentioned in this passage often makes educators apprehensive and unable to critically reflect on their classroom experiences. In this particular journal, there are no discussions specifically about continuing and professional education; articles address the broader field of adult education. African Centered educational practice has the ability to help practitioners "move beyond our zone of comfort to engage the world in new ways" as the passage states. Similar issues can be addressed in CPE if program planners acknowledged the importance of culturally grounded frameworks.

The Roots of African Centered Adult Education

Continuing and professional education is a smaller facet of adult education created in the 1970's (Jeris, 2010, p. 275). Since there is not an extensive history of this practice, examining the broader field of adult education is critical to understanding implications for practice in CPE. The problem remains that few program planners acknowledge the

importance of African Centered content and instructional strategies. The absence of culturally grounded resources in the field of continuing and professional education lead to this study. What historical occurrences have contributed to the negation of Africentrism in continuing and professional education? The next section will deconstruct the roots of African Centered programming and discuss the necessity of similar frameworks to respond to more contemporary educational issues.

Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba and Culturally Grounded Education

Kuumba (creativity) has played a salient role in adult education since our displacement in America. Because African Ameripeans were denied the opportunity for educational advancement, Nia (purpose) and Imani (faith) were conveyed through various forms of visual and creative arts. Even during slavery there was an inherent aesthetic developing in the United States. Artists like Henry Ossawa Tanner and Edmonia Lewis depicted life and culture, cultivating a rich history of creativity rooted in Africa. Traditionally, art was a pivotal mode of instruction for people of the African Diaspora, and literature is one of the most important forms of Kuumba (creativity). Alain Locke was one of the leaders who continued this tradition, helping the world appreciate the consummate talent of the African Diaspora. As Miller (1926) writes, "The Negro must learn to know his own story and to love it" (Miller, 1926, p. 5) and passing these stories to the next generation is a pivotal role of liberatory educational practice.

Kelly Miller is notably one of the first African Ameripean philosophers and adult educators. His book written in 1908, titled *Race Adjustment,* discusses a wide range of racial issues from the early twentieth century, some of which are still relevant today. In reference to the educational facility of Kuumba (creativity), he writes, "It is noticeable that the names

which the Negroes have contributed to the galaxy of the world's greatness are confined almost wholly to the fine arts" (Miller, 1908, p. 242) and we continue to play a critical role in the arts. History from a Western perspective often obscures artists of color; in major museums around the world it is difficult to find work by artists like Henry Tanner, Toussaint L'Ouverture, and Alexander Dumas. Relative to our wealth of cultural artifacts, Miller states, "They show the American people that the Negro, at his best, is imbued with their own ideas and strives after their highest ideal," (Miller, 1908, p. 189). Creative practice in this sense is reflective of Kujichagulia (self-determination) and the Nia (purpose) inherently embedded in art-making. In Miller's chapter entitled *Rise of the Professional Class*, he gives a comprehensive overview of lawyers, doctors, poets, and surgeons that emerged prior to the twentieth century, which inspired the next section highlighting artists preceding the nineteenth century.

The Role of Art Based Practice in Culturally Grounded Adult Education

The negation of culturally grounded continuing and professional education programs is a direct result of intellectual racism. Historically, there is an absence of information relative to the artistic as well as educational endeavors of African Ameripeans. Artists from the eighteenth and nineteenth century--notably Phyllis Wheatley the poet--served as the earliest forms of adult education. We must acknowledge the wealth of informal experiences that emerge from art based learning. Romare Bearden's book *A History of African American Artists* is a collection of fine arts from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in America. Joshua Johnston is the earliest recognized African American visual artist although his true racial identity is obscured by slavery (Bearden, 1993, p. 3). Robert Duncanson is the first confirmed African American artist since Johnston's race can only be accounted through

oral tradition. Another notable painter, Edward Bannister, reveals an African Centered

tradition of the arts. Bearden (1993) discusses the rediscovery of Duncanson's work in the

1930's to 1950's and the fact that many people believed that Bannister was America's first

important Black artist (Bearden, 1993, p. 40). These creative expressions transmit messages

of Umoja (unity) and Ujima (collective work and responsibility) through aesthetic practice.

Their work proves that the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba were inherently integrated in

the earliest forms of art based adult education.

Visual artists were leaders in the earliest forms of informal liberatory education

movements. Edmonia Lewis, born on the Canadian border, was a sculptor and painter of

the late nineteenth century. Bearden writes:

> Lewis was the first African American artist to advertise herself by name as a "colored
>
> artist." In doing this, she took the slaveholders' contention that black people were
>
> incapable of art and turned it on its head to her advantage, making it a reason to see
>
> her work. (Bearden, 1993, p. 69)

This confrontation of racism was one of the earliest examples of Kujichagulia (self-

determination), claiming the power to define oneself, occurring even before the twentieth

century. Powerful statements like these provided some of the first critiques of race and

equity in a written form.

Henry Ossawa Tanner was the first American artist of African descent to attain

worldwide recognition in Paris even before 1900 (Bearden, 1993, p. 78). Tanner always

made a conscious effort to depict African Ameripean life and culture. He often painted

people playing instruments, engaging in prayer, and other cultural referents. Miller (1926)

contends, "The Negro is often forced to feel that there is a conspiracy of silence to ignore

his best deeds and to exploit his imperfections…the effect on the spirit of the Negro is

deplorably oppressive" (Miller, 1926, p. 4) thus, we must celebrate the artistic

accomplishments of people of the African Diaspora. This history highlights the importance

of art based instructional strategies, which should not be absent from learning, but valued as

tools for success. There are multiple ways of knowing and doing; creative play, by definition,

nurtures different aspects of development. In the field of adult education, acknowledging

the importance of meeting all learners' needs and seeing new possibilities is the essence of

creativity.

Alaine Locke, The Harlem Renaissance, and the Adult Education Movement

The next section will examine the roots of Africentric frameworks found in the

earliest African Centered adult education movements. The importance of African Centered

practice becomes apparent in different ways; prominent examples of the Seven Principles of

the Nguzo Saba are embedded in adult education practice. The mis-education of African

Ameripeans is aided by the omission of "reflectors" in traditional public schools. Program

planners must acknowledge the importance of African Centered education before this is

rectified. From the Harlem Renaissance to Black Arts Movement, the history of culturally

grounded adult education strategies is examined in the next section.

In New York following the First World War, the migration of gifted black artists led

to the Harlem Renaissance. During this time, there were more African Ameripean artists

with international recognition in Harlem than in all other American cities combined (Wilson,

2000, xxi). The name Renaissance is French for "rebirth," and it certainly was for people of

the African Diaspora. The prefix *re* denotes that the first flowering of African culture

occurred in Antiquity, even before Kemet. Searching to uplift a people displaced by the

slave trade, visual artists like Augusta Savage and Malvin Johnson proved that although uprooted, an indigenous culture could still be created and sustained through the visual arts.

Locke (1940), often called the father of the Harlem Renaissance, compiled a book titled *The Negro in Art,* which catalogued artists of the period. He writes:

> African art is one of the fountain-heads of modernist style in contemporary art, and this happy accident saved what might otherwise have been the lost cultural heritage for the American Negro…As a modern artist, he cannot escape an influence which has become an integral part of modern idioms. This art tradition, properly understood and assimilated, should and can have even greater influence on the art of the Negro today. (p. 207)

Locke's philosophies and work include a broad scope of writing and editing. *The Negro in Art* is one of his most important publications because these artists have historically been overlooked by the mainstream, and their artistic contributions continue to be ignored by a majority of museums even today.

The Harlem Renaissance was an African Centered movement of the 1920's, which left an indelible legacy of cultural and intellectual thought. The "New Negro," as called by Locke, significantly helped define and shape the African Ameripean aesthetic, uplifting people through education. Cain (2004) states:

> Locke believed in the primacy of life experiences for forging a transformation of the quality of living. Thus, adult education was seen as a meaningful strategic approach for reducing the value conflicts among individuals and groups. Ideally, Locke had envisioned an ideal society that would respect and tolerate differences through an enhanced valuing of those differences, ultimately crumbling the walls of segregation and racism. (p. 32)

Locke was very active in the development of the adult education movement; he served as a delegate to the first adult education conference (Cain, 2004, p. 31). In addition, he wrote several chapters and articles in journals, including the preface and a chapter entitled *Adult Education for Negroes* in the 1936 edition of *Handbook of Adult Education in the United States* (Wilson and Hayes, 2000, p. 678). By 1945, he was elected president of the American Association for Adult Education, which was primarily white (Harris, 1989, p. 8).

Alain Locke, artist, philosopher, and educator, began an unparalleled African Ameripean movement. Focusing not only on art, but the importance of cultural values he encouraged scholars to draw from the African Ameripean experience when developing work. By teaching pluralism and systematic knowledge, Locke suggested we allow people to reveal their own process logic, appreciate diversities among cultures, and see how cultural values of the world might have inhibited or enriched one other (Washington, 1986, p. 115). The Africentric Paradigm mirrors Locke's philosophies and is based on the same centrism. Washington (1986) states:

> Locke's view was that African American art had to be transformed from its American-centeredness to a level of African-centeredness. Therefore, he encouraged the African American artist to accept the challenge of recapturing the spiritual and aesthetic legacy of his/her African ancestral heritage. Also in the tradition of Molefi Asante's Afrocentric idea, in many respects, the Harlem Renaissance challenged the imposition of the white supremacist view as universal or "classical," thus, was the kernel of a major effort to reclaim a cultural past rooted in African tradition. (p. 17)

This study continues Locke's tradition of cultural pluralism focused on building Nia (purpose) and Imani (faith) in this Diaspora through visual arts. To challenge "white supremacist" views in contemporary education, it is critical that the field of continuing and

professional education acknowledge the importance of African Centered practice in the history of adult education. Similar frameworks can be used to design programs for practitioners to work in opposition of intellectual racism.

Researching theorists and educators in the forefront of historical adult education movements was a critical component of this study. It becomes apparent that Kuumba (creativity) is a means for communicating Nia (purpose) through political and cultural messages. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Garvey, father of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was very influential during the Harlem Renaissance as well. Martin (1983) wrote, "Literature and arts played an important role in the organization from the very start" (Martin, 1983, p. 3) speaking in regards to the UNIA. This is apparent from their creative writing publication, *The Negro World*, discussed previously. After traveling the world Garvey was convinced of the need for a racially uplifting organization:

> By 1920, two years after inception, the Negro World was already well on its way to becoming the focal point of a mass preoccupation with the arts, especially poetry, unequalled by any of the better-known publications of the Harlem Renaissance.
> (Martin, 1983, p. 5)

Philosophers who believed in the power of cultivating the talents of African Ameripeans joined this artistic movement. As a tribute to his greatness, sculptor Augusta Savage immortalized Garvey with a bronze bust (Martin, 1983, p. 68). There are many other examples of Kuumba (creativity) being used to reflect Nia (purpose) and other principles of the Nguzo Saba, continuing to grow a culture of indigenous practice.

In an attempt to build cultural competency within newfound freedoms, many theorists highlighted the importance of creative practice. For some the beauty of art is enough, others believed in art for political purposes. Several philosophers had a direct

influence on African Ameripean aesthetic although there were varying objectives. Langston Hughes, writer and poet, believed in art for the sake of art. His writing conveys the richness of culturally grounded experiences. Pieces like *The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain* completely reject anything other than African Ameripeans expressing "our individual dark skinned selves" (Kuehner, 2001, p. 92); his publications also serve as a form of adult education. W.E.B. DuBois, also an adult educator, had very different views. Unlike Hughes, he believed in art for propaganda, and was very active in the fight for social justice. Washington (1986) writes about efforts to develop integrity of culture with DuBois, who argued that the Black masses, or what he called the Folk, were critical in the development of cultural values (p. 15). One of the creators of the National Association for Advancement of Colored People, he also was the editor for *The Crisis*, mentioned previously. Dubois and Hughes are dynamic examples of adult educators, and although they have opposing views, each left a legacy in Harlem and beyond.

There were many other educators and theorists who made an impact during the Harlem Renaissance. Woodson (1933), in *The Miseducation of the Negro,* was very concise about the issues facing members of the African Diaspora. Relative to education, he highlights racial marginalization, which has led to problems practitioners are still confronted with in contemporary education. Regarding economic depression in the community he writes, "the poverty which afflicted them for a generation after Emancipation held them down to the lowest order of society, nominally free but economically enslaved" (p. 659) and still permeates the community today. We must acknowledge the necessity for these ideas in contemporary practice. Culturally grounded strategies are needed for practitioners working in communities affected by economic depression, which unfortunately is still an issue for a lot of students of the African Diaspora.

Mentioned previously as the innovator of *The Journal of Negro History*, Woodson (1933) continues discussing the arts, science, mathematics, literature and law, outlining systematic hierarchies that have been reinforced by the erasing of Africa's historical contributions. In Western culture, the education of African Ameripeans has often been met with hostility. Woodson discusses it further here:

> The status of the Negro, then, was justly fixed as that of inferior. Teachers of
> Negroes in their first schools after the Emancipation did not proclaim any such
> doctrine, but the content of their curricula justified these inferences. (Woodson,
> 1933, p. 662)

Unfortunately this is still a problem today with mainstream education in areas affected by economic depression. This study explores ways to help K-12 educators uplift students, as opposed to continuing the tradition of disempowering them. African Centered teaching strategies and the CPE model that emerged from analysis are both based on Woodson's early critiques of mainstream education.

The Rise of Culturally Grounded Magazines and Journals

Many different organizations cultivated a sense of Umoja (unity) through writing. *The Messenger, The Crisis,* and *The Opportunity* were three culturally grounded publications that emerged in the early 20th century. Each played a critical part in defining people of the African Diaspora in a time when racial empowerment was needed the most. Not far removed from slavery, DuBois contended that in 1863 illiteracy among members of the Diaspora was well over ninety five percent (Reid, 1945, p. 301). With illiteracy high and morale low in the African Ameripean community, it was difficult to create a positive sense of selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) through education. The *Journal of Negro Education* discusses

negative images portrayed by dominant culture, "They were told repeatedly that educating the Negro would spoil the laborer…but free negroes were establishing their own programs of education in Virginia and Maryland, South Carolina and Georgia" (Reid, 1945, p. 300); these views only added to the sense of hopelessness in the community. To combat these forms of oppression, expressing Kujichagulia (self-determination) and Kuumba (creativity) in the form of creative writing became an objective of these publications. Some of these dynamic publications are still in circulation today.

Education is a socialization process; culturally grounded journals were a great tool for adult educators, giving African Ameripeans voice through writing. *The Journal of Negro Education* and the *Journal of Negro History* also emerged during this period, which consciously addressed problems in the community and offered a more accurate account of historical and cultural events. Dr. Carter G. Woodson was instrumental in developing some of this innovative writing; issues of race continued to be pertinent to his work. He was the second African Ameripean to obtain a professional university degree (Miller, 1908, p. 3) and was also responsible for organizing the Association for the Study of Negro Life in Chicago with five other people. In 1915 *The Journal of Negro History* was published by the association (Miller, 1926, p. 2).

The Messenger was a publication that "called for a brand of socialism that would emancipate the workers of America and institute a just economic system" (Wilson, 2000, xxii), an idea which sent a wave of hope through the community. This particular publication was founded by A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen in New York during the year 1917 (Wilson, 2000, xix). The term New Negro, often used by Locke, was extolled by *The Messenger* (Wilson, 2000, p. xxiv). *The Crisis*, still in circulation today, is a journal published by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). *The*

Opportunity, a journal in circulation during the Harlem Renaissance, offered literary contests for scholars to expose their work. The Nia (purpose) of these publications was to encourage literacy and self-expression. In 1940 there were 646,000 Negroes over twenty-five who had received no formal schooling, and two million that had never gone beyond fourth grade (Reid, 1945, p. 305). The gap in knowledge for communities of color continued for many decades. As a solution to this problem, these independently owned publications encouraged Ujamaa (cooperative economics) through literary forms of Kuumba (creativity).

Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association published the *Negro World* newspaper weekly (Martin, 1983, p. 4). Many writers of these publications never achieved recognition outside of their organizations, which was not necessarily a reflection on the standard of their writing (Martin, 1983, p. 27). In regards to Kujichagulia (self-determination), art, propaganda, African Ameripean literature, and essays played a critical part informing the community about what Rodgers describes as the rise of the "New Negro". Rodgers in his journal article *Who is the New Negro and Why?,* argues:

> The New (Negro) is erect, manly, bold if necessary, defiant. He apologizes to no one
> for his existence, feeling deep in his inner being that he has just as much right to be
> on earth and in all public places than anyone else. (Rogers in Wilson, 2000, p. 309)

Authors of the African Diaspora evoked a sense of pride through their writing. The Nia (purpose) of these publications was to strengthen Umoja (unity) in African Ameripean communities.

There were many other culturally grounded publications that portrayed a more accurate history of African Ameripean adult education. Content in *The Journal of Negro Education*, published by Howard University, provided lots of accurate historical information relative to African Ameripeans, which were referred to for this study. In the 1936 summer

volume, Holmes wrote an article titled *Does Negro Education Need Reorganization and Redirection.*
The literature discusses educational initiatives for African Ameripeans after the emancipation
of the slaves:

> Seventy years ago, the Negro found himself emancipated from slavery and
>
> endowed, at least in theory, with all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
>
> While some Negroes before the Civil War had learned to read and write and a few
>
> individuals had progressed considerably in learning, yet the best authorities consider
>
> it extremely doubtful that as much as ten per cent of the Negro population were
>
> illiterate in 1865. (p. 317)

Since some of the same literacy issues are still pertinent in our classrooms today; program
planners in the field of continuing and professional education must seek culturally grounded
solutions.

During this period, art based learning was one of the only modes of instruction for
people of the African Diaspora. Traditionally, African Ameripeans transmitted learning
through Negro spirituals, dance, and other oral traditions. Holmes (1936) discusses the two
views and objectives of education after emancipation, which included the following:

> One school of thought takes the position that the education of Negroes should
>
> differ in no respect whatsoever from the education of white people, since any social
>
> change of a mechanical or cultural nature that affects the American people as a
>
> whole likely affects the Negro…the other is that the Negro is doomed to the servant
>
> status in his relations with white people, that he has no chance to become a bank
>
> director or a railroad president unless a Negro bank or a Negro railroad offers the
>
> opportunity. (p. 320)

In opposition of these views, the arts have played the pivotal role of challenging Western mindsets. Historically society did not see a need to prepare people of the Diaspora for anything other than assimilation and servitude. There were no adult education initiatives created for African Ameripeans in the United States until the 1940's (Reid, 1945, p. 303). That is why organizations like the Highlander School and movements such as the Harlem Renaissance were critical. Artistic opportunities also emerged through Student Nonviolent Youth Committee, which organized the first southern visual art show in Birmingham Alabama in 1939 (Smethurst, 2005, p. 322).

Educational advances were encouraged through the rise of culturally grounded publications. Most journals emerged in the twenties during the Harlem Renaissance, which helped define people of the African Diaspora at a critical time in history. They continued to circulate in the thirties and forties as racial oppression raged on. Embedded in creative writing are the principles Kujichagulia (self-determination), Nia (purpose), and Ujamma (cooperative economics), which are reflective of the Africentric Paradigm. These publications can be utilized as an educational tool for continuing and professional education programs rooted in African Centered practice. Acknowledging the importance of culturally grounded education is essential if program planners want to respond to the unique needs of marginalized communities.

Highlander and the Freedom School

Another dynamic example of a leader in the forefront of the adult education movement is Septima Clark, Civil Rights activist and member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In addition, she was also instrumental in the development of curriculum for the Highlander Schools for citizenship. *Echo my Soul* is

an autobiographical work discussing her practice and development of programming to empower African Ameripeans to be literate among other things. Relative to the mission of Highlander, Clark (1962) writes:

> Highlander workshops dealt with "crisis" issues in current social complexities, and those persons who came to Highlander to participate were concerned with specific problems arising out of these various issues. They came up to the mountains to discover and consider ways of attacking these problems in their own communities. (p. 134)

Referred to as "residential adult workshops" these activities pioneered adult education with a focus on Umoja (unity).

The voice of the people is critical to the success of any program. As Clark (1962) put it, "through my efforts they might become citizens capable of contributing much to their communities" (p. 136), and workshops exuded this mission. African Centered community programming is rooted in Clark's practice. Septima Clark also chose to use Kuumba (creativity) in workshops "to further the efforts toward interesting the pupils in fitting themselves for the attainment of intelligent citizenship, we have also been showing films that give an idea of the kinds of work they need to be doing" (Clark, 1962, 160). Crocheting and sewing were also used to enliven reading and writing courses. Viewed from a cultural center, this is an example of the inherent inclusion of the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba.

Social and educational transformation for African Ameripeans was the focus of Highlander and the Freedom Schools. Their work honors a rich cultural history started prior to the Harlem Renaissance. The *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2004) mentioned importance of their practice. Ladson-Billings and Donner (2004) in their chapter *Moral Activist Role in Critical Race Theory* discusses Highlander's community programs being twofold-

education grounded in the recognition of the struggles of people and challenging people to consider the present and future simultaneously moving toward social change (p. 297). These issues were critical during this time because most African Ameripean adults were illiterate and did not fully comprehend the oppression being forced upon them. Goals of these formal learning experiences are reflective of Nia (purpose) and Kujichagulia (self-determination). The negation of such principles in continuing and professional education models is the problem connected to the research. By modeling programmatic goals after institutions like Highlander, certain strategies can be used as resources for urban practitioners.

Integrating Art Based Practice in African Centered Adult Education Informal Learning through the Black Arts Movement

In addition to the Freedom School, the fifties and sixties brought cultural competency to its highest potential during the Black Arts Movement. Authors like Diop (1955) created a foundation for integrating African history into education for communities of color. This cultural immersion reflected the work of philosophers like Marcus Garvey from the beginning of the twentieth century. Diop (1955) in *The Origin of Civilization* gives historical overviews of Kemet, Kush, and Ancient Africa. Relative to the history of the Diaspora, he argues that Ancient Egypt was a Negro Civilization and the history of Black Africa will "remain suspended in air and cannot be written correctly until African historians dare to connect it with the history of Egypt" (Diop 1955, p. xiv). The purpose of adult education is to increase cultural competency and centrism. Regardless of race, if practitioners were exposed to scholars of the African Diaspora, they could gain a more pluralistic view of education to better serve their students.

Africa's history includes rich cultivation of Kuumba (creativity) in various forms. In Ethiopia and Nubia--completely Negro territory--there is a wealth of stone monuments, such as obelisks, temples and pyramids (Diop, 1955, p. 156). Art was a part of everyday life, and even a system of communication. Diop (1955) states:

> As early as 4000 B.C. Egyptian documents indicate that Meroitic Sudan was a prosperous country which maintained commercial ties with Egypt…About that time the Meriotic Sudan probably transmitted to Egypt the twelve hieroglyphs that were the first embryonic alphabet. (Diop, 1955, p. 169)

Many ancient African accomplishments are ignored by Western historians and are therefore absent from mainstream curriculum. Philosophers like Diop give a more accurate account of history. For example he writes, "It has been determined, in fact, by means of astronomical calculations of mathematical precision, that in 4,241 B.C. a calendar was used in Egypt" (Diop, 1959, p. 58), quoting this and may other facts often overlooked by Western historians. Furthermore, he discusses Queen Hatshepsut, the first queen in the history of humanity (Diop, 1959, p. 115). I applaud writers like Diop, whom contribute to the adult education movement with historically accurate literature.

Moving into the sixties, The Black Arts Movement mimicked cultural responses of the Harlem Renaissance. It started in Harlem with the opening of Black Arts Repertory Theatre School under Amiri Baraka--also known as LeRoi Jones. Crouch (1989) writes that the Black Arts Movement was radically opposed to any conception of the artist that alienates from community. He continues stating that "it proposes a radical reordering of Western cultural aesthetic" (Crouch 1989, p. 62) helping communities of color be recognized by the mainstream. The Black Arts School attempted to merge art and politics through literature and other mediums (Crouch, 1989, p. 129). It grew across the nation in various forms, and

there was a widespread positive response to this aesthetic movement. The Black Arts Movement adds to a rich history rooted in art making and symbolism in linguistics. If continuing and professional education acknowledged the importance of strategies rooted in African Centered practice, they could help practitioners actualize urban pedagogy to its highest potential.

The Importance of Artistic Movements as a Form of Adult Education

Artistic movements serve as informal learning experiences in adult education because they reflect socialization and cultural transmissions. Baraka was preceded by a wealth of other artists who contributed to art of the Diaspora by depicting our history. The Black Arts Movement was a critical time in African Ameripean adult education. Third World Press and Broadside Press, which were unquestionably the most important Black literary presses of the last century, emerged during this period and supported creative writing (Smethurst, 2005, p. 243). The inception of *Umbra, Liberator, Black America Freedomways* and *Negro Digest* also occurred during this time (Smethhurst, 2005, p. 2). The Negro Digest was a notable publication from Johnson Publishing Company. Journals, magazines, were not only critical to building selfethnic image (Colin 1989), but provided prominent examples of Ujamaa (cooperative economics) in the community. These publications were successful businesses owned by African Ameripean individuals and organizations. The content of these publications was reflective of Kujuchagulia (self-determination) and defined the African Ameripean community in a positive way.

Although the movement persisted, sociocultural racism was still evident not only in schools, but also in other institutions. Museums did not include work from artists of color so we began to form our own institutions. In response to this issue, Dr. Margaret G.

Burroughs started the DuSable Museum in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood. Although the institution began in her home, over time it grew into a major African Ameripean museum that still thrives today. The DuSable Museum supported the Black Arts Movement in both Chicago and Detroit (Smethurst, 2005, p. 237). Dr. Burroughs also served as art editor of *Freedomways* starting in 1961 until 1964 (p.153). Chicago's south side Bronzeville area was instrumental in the jazz movement as well as visual arts.

As mentioned before, artistic movements are forms of adult education and play a salient role in fostering liberatory education. Elizabeth Catlett, Samella Lewis and John Biggers organized and inspired the Black Mural Movement of the 1960's and 1970's. The Black Arts Movement holistically transformed public funding for the arts in terms of discussions for public art support (Smethurst, 2005, p. 372). Organizations emerged on the West coast as well. The Pan Afrikan Peoples Arkestra sought to "bring coherence to a network of black artists in Los Angeles and increase black expressive culture back to African Americans," (Smethurst, 2005, p. 297) which helped further the movement in different regions. A lot of effort and resources from the Black Arts Movement went to supporting a budding of African Centered ideas.

Examining the broader field of adult education is essential to understanding certain aspects of continuing and professional education. When utilizing the Africentric Paradigm as a framework for program planning in the field, the Seven principles of the Nguzo Saba can be critical to success. For instance Kuumba (creativity) encourages new forms of creative expression. We must realize that without artistic experiences, and no medium to retain and transfer the experience, the mind cannot develop (Harris, 1989, p. 177) nor can cultures flourish. Artists are often uncomfortable accepting things through the lens of perceived reality, thus abstractions and more imaginative views often emerge in artwork.

There are countless examples of philosophers like Locke, DuBois, and Garvey who merge creative efforts with educational practice. Historically art based learning has been a tool for identity and community development.

Contemporary Practice

There are also examples of contemporary practice in adult education, which utilize art-based practice as a mode of anti-racist pedagogy. Relative to my research, the importance of Kuumba (creativity) to transmit messages of Kujichagulia (self-determination), Nia (purpose), and Imani (faith) has been discussed. In addition, an infinite amount of cultural artifacts demand that art be included in any historical discourse about the African Diaspora. Fred Wilson is a conceptual artist of African Diaspora, known for changing artifacts to reveal the inherent racism often overlooked by museums and other institutions. In 1992 he created *Mining the Museum*, placing a whipping post from pre-Civil War America in a gallery surrounded with four decorative chairs, all from the permanent collection of the Maryland Historical Society (Doss, 2002, p. 245). The juxtaposition of object sent a clear message about institutional racism in contemporary society.

Currently, Wilson continues this liberatory form of adult education with the erection of a monument in Indiana depicting a freedman. Only one other memorial in the entire city depicts an African American, although Indianapolis, Indiana has the second highest number of public monuments in America (Green, 2011, p. 3). An online article describes the memorial here:

One of the figures on the memorial is an African American man, apparently a former slave (as symbolized by his muscular bare torso and by the way he is holding a recently broken chain and shackles)…Wilson's proposed sculpture, would reproduce

that figure isolated and relocated it from its position. Wilson would also remove signifiers of human bondage, resulting on his literally and figuratively freeing the African American figure from references to slavery. Into the figures outstretched arm, the arm the figure uses to reach up to the white man on the monument, Wilson would place a flag that celebrates the African Diaspora. (Green, 2011, p. 3)

Residents have met the proposed work with hostility and protest. Wilson creates work relative to marginalized communities who are "invisible to the majority and the larger societies denial of certain issues" (Doss, 2002, p. 175) striving to highlight their experiences. His work appeals to anyone who loves cultural institutions but challenges the apparent hierarchies.

Every social movement is represented by art, even today. The Harlem Renaissance, the Black Arts Movement, and other aforementioned historical events were depicted by artists entrenched in the interpretation of selfethnic imagery (Colin 1989) and our reality as African Ameripeans. The cultural transmissions we encounter whether in the form of a painting or writing are reflective of human experiences we all share. From a cultural center, Kuumba (creativity) states it is our inherent duty to strive to leave our communities more beautiful and beneficial than how we found them (Colin, 1998 p. 44). Relative to continuing and professional education, program planners can utilize the extensive history of African Centered adult education to equip educators with the tools to serve marginalized communities.

Summary of the Literature

As seen from the literature, continuing and professional education was introduced in the 1970's as a smaller facet of adult education (Jeris, 2010, 275). Since there is not an

extensive history of this practice, examining the broader field of adult education was critical to understanding implications for practice in CPE. The literature reviewed indicates there is an absence of African Centered awareness and resources in adult education, program planning, and curriculum development. Relative to continuing and professional education, K-12 educators are less likely to be introduced to and informed of the importance of culturally grounded practice if there is no literature available. Given the history of intellectual racism overviewed in this chapter, coupled with poor academic performance of marginalized students, the question emerges why almost no literature exists to address specific cognitive and effective needs through African Centered continuing and professional educational programming.

As discussed in this chapter, historically the arts have played a salient role in the formation of culture and societal norms in the African Ameripean community. From the writing of Phyllis Wheatley in the eighteenth century to contemporary artwork of Fred Wilson, Harlem Renaissance to the Black Arts Movement, the inclusion of the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba is clear. Each artist, movement, and African Centered community plays a pivotal role in the reeducation of people of the African Diaspora. Relative to this study, examining historical events and contemporary resources proves that few acknowledge the importance of culturally grounded continuing and professional education. Due to invisible factors of intellectual racism, there is a necessity for African Centered strategies in CPE.

We can only move forward in pedagogical practice by building a foundation on innovations of the past; adult educators must be informed of this history and its relevance in traditional classrooms. Creativity and art based learning can play a salient role in the re-education of our communities. Change must be confronted in a holistic fashion, addressing

not only cognitive needs but spiritual and metal well-being. Art based learning is a critical part of identity and community development. The field of continuing and professional education must acknowledge the need for culturally grounded educational programming. We must continue to advocate for art and Africentrism as modes of anti-racist pedagogy.

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CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Purposes and Goals Revisited

The painting above is a visual representation of the intellectual and spiritual journey accompanying the research. During the process of becoming an Africentric Research Scholar, one must be completely immersed in the conceptual and theoretical elements of the paradigm. *Africentric Research Scholar* depicts physical elements that aided this journey. While conducting research, I was influenced by many different factors including, but not limited to, the sacredness of the space I worked in and music reflective of the paradigm. For example, Billie Holiday and Nina Simone provided cultural transmissions that were essential to this intellectual journey. The content of their music discusses oppression and invisible factors that accompany the African Ameripean struggle against intellectual racism. In addition, the

background of the painting depicts the city of Chicago, founded in 18ᵗʰ century by Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable, a man of African descent. *Africentric Research Scholar* is meant to aesthetically represent the visual, literary, and auditory forms of inspiration that lead to the completion of this Critical Engagement Project.

The purposes of this study were to identify curricula and instruction used in African Centered educational institutions in Chicago to review and analyze their content and educational process. African Centered schools are uniquely different in terms of the mission, philosophy, and vision. The framework is built on African Centered ideas and grounded in the authentic lived experiences of African Ameripeans, thus the need for research emerges in order to explore new ways to describe and disseminate this knowledge for traditional public school practitioners. Expanding the use of Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) is essential in the field of continuing and professional education, to adequately prepare practitioners to instruct students of the African Diaspora. Goals of the research were to utilize their content and process to design a continuing and professional education model for K-12 traditional public school practitioners.

Research Questions Restated

The research questions that guided this study were as follows: 1) how are conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm reflected in educational environments and incorporated into curriculum and instruction at an African Centered institution, 2) how are the problems that result from sociocultural and intellectual racism addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content, 3) what are the design and objectives of continuing education programs implemented at African Centered institutions, and 4) what

culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to a traditional continuing education model

for K-12 practitioners?

Research Design: Overview of Qualitative Research

Purposes and Goals of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research was the method chosen to help answer the questions guiding

this study. Unlike quantitative research, which focuses on the importance of numerical

values, qualitative research is used specifically to explore the affective. Merriman states,

"Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their

experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their

experience" (Merriman, 2009, p. 5). This type of research leads to an understanding of social

norms and cultural artifacts in different groups. Qualitative research is a way of interpreting

meaning of different phenomenon; understanding the participants' perspective was essential

to answering the research questions. This study was designed to document the affective and

cognitive experiences this community fosters as well as understand the benefits of utilizing

African Centered practice.

Rationale for using Qualitative Research

This qualitative study was focused on the experiences of K-12 educators in African

Centered schools in the city of Chicago. Since the primary purpose of this study was to

answer research questions regarding unique elements found in Africentric educational

institutions, it was essential to identify conceptual elements embedded in African Centered

curricula and instruction. These institutions are focused on academic rigor as well as

building positive agents for community change. Literature reviewed in the previous chapter

discussed the absence of resources regarding culturally grounded continuing and professional education programs and its impact on K-12 educators. Describing the affective experiences of educators in these institutions was a critical part of identifying helpful strategies.

Qualitative research was used to identify the purposes of curriculum content and instructional activities in African Centered institutions. If we look at how traditional public schools are affecting our communities, it is clear students are being affectively and cognitively marginalized. Utilizing qualitative research was the most effective way to discuss experiences of educators in African Centered schools. In order to identify helpful strategies for traditional K-12 educators, it was essential to understand the design and objectives of continuing education programs at African Centered educational institutions.

Research from an Africentric Perspective

Who has the right to name, research and write about African Ameripeans? The *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* addresses this issue in a chapter named *Freeing Ourselves from Neocolonial Domination in Research.* Bishop (2000) infers when considering who should conduct research in African Ameripean communities it is:

> Not simply a matter of saying that the researcher must be African American but rather it is important to consider whether the researcher has the cultural knowledge to accurately interpret and validate the experiences of African Americans within the context of the phenomenon under the study. (Bishop, 2000, p. 4)

Based on Bishop, practitioners of any race can research, write, or teach African Centered curriculum if it is grounded in interdependence and African values. Dominant culture

affects how this paradigm is viewed as well. Ladson-Billings (1994) discusses her experience with this issue:

> My own experiences with white teachers, both pre-service and veteran, indicate that many are uncomfortable acknowledging any student differences and particularly racial differences…However, these attempts at colorblindness mask a "dysconscious racism," and "uncritical habit of mind that justifies inequality and exploitation.
> (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 31)

The "colorblindness" mentioned in the passage makes culturally grounded frameworks a necessity in continuing and professional education. Viewing education through an African Centered lens can help the field move toward a reconceptualization of dominant culture because it is a more appropriate framework for interpreting the authentic lived experiences of African Ameripeans.

African Centered Qualitative Methodology and Africalogy

Methodology is defined as, "the framework associated with a particular set of paradigmatic assumptions that you will use to conduct your research, i.e. scientific method, ethnography, action research" (O'Leary, 2004, p. 85). An African Centered methodology was the best way to interpret information relative to creating Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999). Bangura (2011) contends, "Studying Africa using authentic African-centered tools is important for its own sake-as an objective means of learning about hundreds of millions of people of the African continent and its Diaspora" (p. 12). I used this framework because the conceptual and theoretical elements of the paradigm are reflective of the same principles used at an African Centered institution. It is also a more appropriate lens to address the issues that result from

sociocultural and intellectual racism. The Africentric approach to human knowledge was

essential to the research conducted as well as any study of Africalogy, which is described in

the next section.

Africalogy is described by Asante (1990) as an "Afrocentric study of phenomena" (p.

75) beginning in the classical period (Kemet, Nubia or Axum). The Africalogist is

philosophically rooted in building community and the importance of interdependence.

Asante (1990) writes, "As a discipline, Africalogy is sustained by a commitment to centering

the study of African phenomena and events in the cultural voice of the composite African

people" (p. 76). African value systems, for instance the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba

and the Virtues of Ma'at, are applicable to research and educational practice.

Qualitative research leads to comprehension of the affective and cognitive domains

as well as an understanding of how people make sense of their experiences. I used an

African Centered qualitative method to identify and analyze data that emerged from this

study. Grounded in Africentrism, African values, norms, traditions and ideals are viewed as

the center of research (Asante 1990). Conducting research in African Ameripean

communities is essential to understanding ways to use these concepts and theories to combat

the effects of sociocultural racism.

Case Study

In order to identify and describe data collected from K-12 educators at three African

Centered educational institutions, I used a single case study. Case study is defined as:

A method of studying elements of the social through comprehensive description and

analysis of a single situation or case, for example, a detailed study of an individual

group, episode, event, or any other unit of social life organization. Emphasis is often

placed on understanding the unity and wholeness of the particular case. (O'Leary, 2004, p. 114)

This particular method was utilized to help participants articulate the way continuing and professional education was designed and implemented using an Africentric framework. The researcher used their practice to describe the authentic lived experiences of educators in African Centered communities. Each institution had similar beliefs relative to preserving African value systems, but different modes of delivery. As a result of the case study analysis, the researcher could identify the factors that contributed to the success that African Centered schools are having with students of the African Diaspora.

The Africentric Nature of the Case Study

A case study is a tool to help analyze particular groups of people, in this case educators working with students of the African Diaspora. By utilizing an Africentric framework for this case study, the researcher became familiar with conceptual and theoretical elements from the Africentric Paradigm. To analyze and interpret data, the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba (Colin 1989), The Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989), Virtues of Ma'at (Karenga 2004), and the concepts of twinness and complementarity (Tolliver 2010) were utilized. Research questions were constructed to help participants discuss the impact that elements of the paradigm have had on their practice, students, and the larger community.

In order to interpret the strategies embedded in African Centered practice, salient concepts from the theoretical frame became the foundation of layered analysis. For instance, the presence or absence of positive selfethnic reflectors (Colin 1989), or progressive representations of ones racial group, was one of the elements that the research

questions sought to identify. The purpose and objective of this culturally grounded approach was to explore the use of Africentric elements relative to educational objectives, content, instructional strategies, and continuing education programs in African Centered institutions. Utilizing an African Centered case study helped the researcher identify how culturally grounded education was developed and implemented.

<center>**Selection Criteria for Institutions and Participants**</center>

Identifying Africentric Practice: Institution Selection Criteria

The purposes of this study were to identify and examine three Africentric educational institutions in order to determine how African Centered education was developed and implemented. The research questions that guided the study sought to discover how conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm are reflected in educational environments and incorporated into curriculum and instruction at an African Centered institution. During the document analysis phase, the researcher examined school websites to determine what institutions utilized an Africentric framework for school culture, curriculum content, instructional strategies, and continuing education programs.

African Centered institutions create a culture rooted in African value systems and ideals, for example the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba or the Virtues of Ma'at. While reading institution histories and mission statements, it was imperative to look for culturally grounded words like Afrocentric and African Centered, in addition to programs that encourage students to be agents of change in the community. This element was also present in content and instructional strategies as well as Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) in the form of extracurricular or after school activities. After researching several institutions in the Chicago area, it became evident which schools

were rooted in African Centered practice. I chose one elementary school and two institutions serving high school age students; all three institutions were located on the South Side of Chicago in areas affected by economic depression.

Practitioner, Administrator, and Staff Selection Criteria

Interview participants included K-12 educators from selected African Centered educational institutions. The study included practitioners and administrators to get a more holistic view of practice from different perspectives. It was also critical to get participants from various subjects and grades in order to explore how and in what ways African Centered practice can be integrated in any specialty, grade level, or discipline. Interviews with selected educators helped the researcher understand how the problems that result from sociocultural and intellectual racism are addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content.

Two people were selected from three institutions for a total of six interviews. Interview participants included two administrators, a third grade teacher, a high school physics teacher, a high school reading teacher, and a facilitator of community and after school programs. Participants were all over twenty-one and included both males and females. The preference was individuals who have worked in African Centered institutions for one to three years so that they could articulate the impact that the paradigm has made on their practice and the larger community. Some had experience in traditional public schools as well and could make comparisons relative to the differences. Each participant's perspective was critical to identifying strategies unique to African Centered educational institutions.

Overview of Data Collection Strategies

Given the focus of my study, data collection strategies included document analysis, interviews, site visits (observations) with field notes and photography. Data collection methods are of the utmost importance to any study. Every strategy selected helped the researcher gain an understanding of conceptual and theoretical elements at each institution, and the unique ways they were utilized relative to instructional strategies and continuing educational programs. These elements later served as units of analysis. A detailed discussion of each method follows as well as a description of how each was correlated to the questions that guided this study.

Document Analysis

Document analysis, the process of reviewing literature relative to each African Centered educational institution, was used to determine if each institution had a philosophy, mission and objective to meet the criteria to participate in the research. The criteria included being grounded in the conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm, and utilizing elements of the paradigm for building school culture, developing instructional strategies, curriculum content integration, and continuing education programs. A majority of this information, for example rationales for utilizing African Centered frameworks, was found online. Reasons for African Centered education included addressing community issues with academic content specifically for African Ameripean students. There were also samples of African Centered curriculum and instruction available for public use.

African Centered educational institutions create a learning environment rooted in Classical African ideals, for example the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba or the Virtues of Ma'at, which are moral codes that originated in Africa. Institutional histories included

literature relative to responding to issues of intellectual racism in K-12 traditional education. While reading mission statements, it was imperative to look for an emphasis on community empowerment and culturally grounded words like Afrocentric and African Centered, which indicate the acknowledgement of culturally grounded frameworks. The foundation of each institution was built on similar mission statements, but different modes of delivery. Exploring websites was useful to obtain some of this information; visiting the institution provided a wealth of information in the form of newsletters and other literature collected.

Interviews

Participant interviews were the most effective tool for finding answers to the research questions that guided the study. Semi-structured interviews served as the primary source of data collection to help discover how conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm were incorporated into curriculum and instruction, and integrated in continuing education programs. Participants were asked to sign an Informed Consent (see Appendix III), which detailed their level of involvement in the research. In depth dialogue with each participant ranged from a half an hour to one hour and were conducted both over the phone and in person. Participants were asked a series of open-ended inquiries relative to the impact their teaching has on students and surrounding neighborhoods. For instance one questions states, "Can you share more about the linkage your educational institution has established with the community (Ujima)," which helped educators articulate how African Centered schools design programs with the objective of empowering communities. Follow up questions were often asked during the course of the interview. Each educator explained how the effects of sociocultural and intellectual racism were addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content and instructional strategies.

Interview conversations described the design and objectives of continuing education programs in African Centered educational institutions, and what culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to a traditional continuing education model for K-12 practitioners. Some questions focused on the impact of fostering affective and cognitive growth, for example, "What are some of the ways that you have seen student ownership and selfethnic image develop though the African Centered model? Give specific examples." Other questions focused on classroom experiences, school culture, and professional development as well. A list of the ten interview questions can be found in Appendix VI. After interviews were recorded, the researcher transcribed them personally to further reflect on linkages to the research questions guiding the study.

Photography

The secondary data collection tool utilized in this study was photography. While visiting institutions for the interview process, there was a wealth of artwork in the hallways and classrooms representing Kemet, Ma'at and other ancient African concepts and symbols. Photography provided answers to the research question regarding conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm reflected in educational environments. Visual representations were used in institutions to emphasize the importance of different values and principles. The focus on African Centered aesthetic (aesthetic being defined as concern with beauty or the appreciation of beauty) further reinforces positive selfethnic image (Colin 1989) in the school community.

Furthermore, this method addressed the research question regarding culturally grounded strategies that can be transferred to a traditional continuing education model for K-12 practitioners. Photography visually articulated how curriculum and instruction at

African Centered schools integrates cognitive skills with creative efforts. Practitioners were

using Kuumba (creativity) as a tool to facilitate culturally grounded dialogue and activities

based on Imani (faith) and Nia (purpose). Images captured were reflective of interview

dialogue with participants during site visits. It is evident in the photographs of murals,

sculptures, wood-carvings and graffiti art that mimicking indigenous aesthetic is of the

utmost importance to these institutions. Photography can also be used to reach non-

academic audiences through artistic forms of expression, therefore increasing accessibility to

the research.

Observations, Site Visits and Field Notes

After completing interviews, I was often welcomed back to the educational

institution to participate in celebratory events. The events attended addressed the research

question regarding curriculum content at African Centered schools, which integrates

cognitive skills with creative efforts. Site visits added richness to the data collected and

served as an opportunity to observe some of the activities discussed during interview

dialogue. Performances included music, dance, poetry and visual art shows giving students

an opportunity to display their talents during after school or extracurricular activities. For

example, attending an after school band performance I got the opportunity to witness

ceremonious drumming and other forms of Kuumba (creativity). Taking field notes was an

excellent strategy to record data reflective of interview dialogue.

<center>**Units of Analysis**</center>

Each data collection strategy selected helped the researcher gain an understanding of unique conceptual and theoretical elements utilized at each institution. These elements became the units of analysis, which were taken directly from the Africentric Paradigm. Data was analyzed using the following instruments: the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba (Colin 1994; Colin and Guy, 1998), the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989), the principles of twinness and complementarity (Tolliver 2010), and the Virtues of Ma'at (Karenga 2004). Curriculum and instruction at an African Centered educational institution is considerably different than traditional public schools. These conceptual elements were the most viable way to understand the affective and cognitive objectives that African Centered institutions foster. The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba (Colin 1994), the Virtues of Ma'at (Karenga 2004), concepts of twinness and complementarity (Tolliver 2012), and the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989) were not only essential to the research, but also unique to this particular paradigm. Salient points that emerged from analysis were then used to address the research questions that guided the study. Each unit will be described in the following section, as well as its linkage to the purposes of the research.

Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba

The Africentric nature of this case study led to units of analysis reflecting conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm. The researcher chose the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba in order to analyze how and in what ways classical African principles were integrated into school culture, curriculum content, instructional strategies and continuing education programs. The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba are revisited here (written in Swahili followed by the English translation):

(1) Umoja (unity): to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race; (2) Kujichagulia (self-determination): to define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves instead of being defined, named, created for, and spoken for by others; (3) Ujima (collective work and responsibility): to build and maintain our community together; (4) Ujamaa (cooperative economics): to build and equip our own stores, shops, and other business and to profit from them together; (5) Nia (purpose): to make our collective vocation--the building and developing of our communities--more beautiful than we inherited; (6) Kuumba (creativity) to always do as much as we can in order to leave our communities more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited them; (7) Imani (faith): to believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness of our struggle, which eventually will be won. (Colin, 1994, p. 3)

All seven principles were used for analysis. It should be noted that the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba, also used by Karenga (2008), are recognized in the Pan-African celebration of Kwanzaa. During this study, each principle played a critical part in interpreting how conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm were reflected in educational environments, incorporated into curricula, and integrated in the design and content of continuing education programs.

Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors

In addition to the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba, I used the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989), a theoretical frame regarding the importance of building

selfethnic identity to combat the subconscious acceptance of perceived inferiority resulting from intellectual racism. Relative to the importance of selfethnic image, Colin (1989) states, "Selfethnic pride and respect are influenced by one's knowledge of one's own culture or history" (Colin, 1989, p. 17). Interpreting the impact of selfethnic reflectors (Colin 1989) in educational strategies was a critical part of addressing the research questions guiding the study. Elements of this theory were reflected in both school culture and curriculum content. As a unit of analysis, it was utilized to understand how problems resulting from sociocultural and intellectual racism were addressed both cognitively and affectively through instructional strategies and continuing education programs.

Principles of Twinness and Complementarity

The concepts of twinness and complementarity, derived from the Dogon people of West Africa (Ani 1994), are a critical concept of the Africentric Paradigm. Ani (1994) defines twinness as the wholeness that is created when male and female pairs are joined establishing balance, harmony and equilibrium. From an African Centered perspective, as humans we all possess a dichotomous spirit embodied by the concept of twinness. As opposed to the Western mindset of "either, or" the African Centered perspective emphasizes "both, and". Our twinness, or dualistic mindset, can be utilized to combat oppression and marginalization.

Relative to the concept complementarity, there is an African Proverb that embodies this concept stating, "As the glow of coal depends upon its remaining in the fire, so the vitality, the sacred security, the very humanity of man depends on his integration into the family" (Wiredu and Gyekye, 2012, p. 102). Viewed from a cultural center, our actions must emerge in complementarity as opposed to competition within a community. We must

become advocates for interdependence and commit to serving other individuals. These principles are essential to living harmoniously because the needs of the individual and the community become balanced. Utilized as an analysis instrument, this principle helped determine ways that a dualistic mindset was reflected in African Centered communities. This unit of analysis was critical to the research question regarding ways to improve the practice of traditional K-12 educators.

Virtues of Ma'at

As discussed in the literature review, Kemet, located in Africa, was one of the first civilizations of the world. The concept of Ma'at is derived from Kemetic culture (Ancient Egypt) and is defined by (Karenga 2004) as:

> A unity creating idea, which unites God, society, nature, and universe…ethically this has meaning in that it becomes a task of kings and members of society to uphold this Maat-grounded world, which is essentially good, and to restore and recreate it constantly. (Karenga, 2004, p. 10)

For this study, the Seven Virtues of Ma'at were utilized as units of analysis. They include harmony, balance, order, justice, truth, righteousness and reciprocity (Karenga 2004). Each virtue represents a moral order that we should always be in pursuit of in our daily lives. These fundamental values represent classical Africa and the ideal that as humans we should operate with a profound respect for one another. This unit of analysis was utilized as an instructional strategy at African Centered institutions, which answered the research question regarding how sociocultural and intellectual racisms are addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provided an overview of the purposes and goals of this study in addition to revisiting the research questions that guided the study. There was also a discussion of the African Centered qualitative methodology and salient concepts from the theoretical frame that became the foundation of analysis. An overview of selection criteria and data collection strategies was given. Finally, I discussed the units of analysis, which included the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba (Colin 1989), the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989), the principles of twinness and complementarity (Tolliver 2010) and the Virtues of Ma'at (Karenga 2004). Each of these elements was critical to understanding the authentic lived experiences of K-12 educators in African Centered schools. Salient points that emerged from analysis provided answers to the research questions guiding the study.

Echinacea   © 2012 auburnaesthetic.com

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS AND FINDINGS

The paining *Echinacea* aesthetically represents racial perceptions of African Ameripeans regarding roles of servitude in Western culture. When engaging in discourse about this painting, most people make the assumption that it is depicting sharecroppers, or even slaves. The title *Echinacea* honors a tradition of holistic medicine and interconnectedness with the Universe. According to Ancient Ma'at, "The well-being of humankind involves and requires the well-being of nature" (Karenga, 2004, p. 393) and we must respect this philosophy. In an herbal form Echinacea prevents colds and strengthens the immune system. As a child I recall my grandmother often prescribing it for our family as an alternative to traditional medicines. This painting is a dedication to the preservation of mind, body, and spirit and is meant to represent how we are infinitely connected to Nature.

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Research Findings

The following chapter describes and analyzes the experiences of six participants working in African Centered institutions regarding the impact of African Centered education. The research questions that guided this African Centered Case Study were as follows: (1) how are conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm reflected in educational environments and incorporated into curriculum and instruction at an African Centered institution, (2) how are the problems that result from sociocultural and intellectual racism addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content, (3) what are the design and objectives of continuing education programs implemented at African Centered institutions 4) what culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to traditional continuing education models for K-12 practitioners?

The purposes of this study were to review and describe curricula and instruction used in three African Centered educational institutions in Chicago. After describing their content and process, goals included designing a continuing education model to help facilitate an understanding of the educational utility of Africentrism in continuing and professional education. I sought to discover ways to help traditional public school practitioners have more success with students of the African Diaspora through a culturally grounded continuing education program.

An overview of African Centered qualitative methodology was provided in the previous chapter. Data collection instruments included document analysis, interviews, (as the primary source) site visits (observations) with field notes, and photography. In order to analyze and interpret data, I used conceptual schemas from the Africentric Paradigm including the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba (Colin 1994), the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989), the concepts of twinness and complementarity (Tolliver 2010), and

the Virtues of Ma'at (Karenga 2004). Interviews revealed how and in what ways concepts

and theories from the Africentric Paradigm may have impacted classroom experiences.

Data Analysis Process

For this study, data analysis instruments were critical to analyzing the information

collected. I used the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989), the Seven Principles of

the Nguzo Saba (Colin 1989), the principles of twinness and complementarity (Tolliver

2010) and The Virtues of Ma'at. Each conceptual and theoretical element helped interpret

the data in a unique way. African Centered educational institutions use certain elements of

the Africentric Paradigm as a foundation for school culture, curricula, instructional strategies

and continuing education programs. Conceptual schemas were used to code information

found during the course of data collection. Research findings that emerged from this study

were grouped according to the correlating unit of analysis. The findings were then compiled

to generate answers to the research questions guiding the study.

Units of Analysis

Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors

The Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989) is a theoretical frame regarding

how and in what ways racial interactions influence the development of positive selfethnic

image. This theory is described by Colin (1989) as "the acknowledgement of the African

Ameripean presence, the validity of their experiences, and the inclusion of the race's

contributions to the intellectual and socio-historical development of this country" (p. 17-18).

The following activities or strategies, which are reflective of this particular theory, were

observed and present at all three African Centered educational institutions: (1) systems of

naming using Swahili words, (2) an activity called Circle, (3) a strategy named Call and Response, and (4) integration of selfethnic reflectors (Colin 1989) in curriculum and instruction. The origin and intention of strategies always remained the same although modes of delivery differed at each institution. From a cultural center, these activities are reflective of ancient African philosophical values and preserved by daily practice. Each strategy will be described in the following section.

Swahili systems of naming

At each African Centered educational institution every staff members was addressed in Swahili. This particular strategy is an example of the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors because of its roots in an African language. The names Mama or Auntie (followed by their first name) were used to address women, depending on their preference. Baba (followed by their first name) was used to refer to men. Practitioners, administrators, security, and all other staff members were addressed with these terms of endearment. Freda explains, "I think this is good because it gives them a sense of respect before they open their mouth. Because they know that they are supposed to speak to their mother or father in a certain way" (Freda, 2012). A culturally grounded rapport is built in school communities as a result of this strategy.

There are other Swahili terms used giving practitioners and students constant reminders of African Centered culture. Sue shared that work groups are referred to as Egbes. An Egbe is a purpose-centered group of people (Sue, 2012). The term Ase' (pronounced ah-shay) is also used during the daily check-in at two different institutions, which is Swahili for "and so it is," or "right on" (Fiona 2012). Swahili naming strategies provide answers to research question number one, which asks for specific examples of

theoretical elements in instructional strategies at African Centered institutions. Research question number four is as follows: What culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to traditional continuing education models for K-12 practitioners? Systems of naming in Swahili are an example of the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors in practice and could easily be mimicked in traditional public school classrooms. This is a great culturally grounded instructional strategy; from a cultural center, using Swahili is reflective of the preservation of our heritage in Africa.

Circle

The activity called Circle (daily group meetings including practitioners and students) was very important at each site. Fiona articulated the impact it has on her students:

> That sense of belonging and that sense of history in Circle makes them proud; it sustains them because they have something positive to attribute to themselves. Because you know so many of us grow up with negative stereotypes thinking about African culture. Giving them a way to have kinship with this other identity that is not celebrated or taught in mainstream education here. [It] gives them a way to reflect differently on their history. (Fiona, 2012)

It is important to foster what is described as a "kinship with this other identity" during this activity. It also gives students order, preparing them for a day of teaching and learning. Forms of the meeting varied according to institution. For younger students at the first institution, Circle was a morning whole school meeting complete with drumming. This activity is reflective of the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors because things like ceremonious drumming mimic rituals or celebrations in Africa.

One specific activity that occurs in Circle is a "check in," which gives practitioners an opportunity to focus on the individual needs of students. The third African Centered education institution used the acronym P.I.E.S. to check in for students and practitioners. The acronym stands for physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual well-being (Fiona 2012). Participants are asked to respond to each of these areas by stating, "Physically I feel…intellectually I feel…" and so on before moving forward with the daily activities. This strategy creates a safe space for practitioners to foster affective as well as socioemotional growth.

Relative to answering the research questions, this particular activity addresses question two and four. Question two asks about the problems that result from sociocultural racism and how they are addressed through curriculum content. In high school settings, Circle was similar to a gender specific advisory class with content aimed to tackle contemporary issues. The design and objective of these activities were to discuss race, gender, oppression and becoming agents for community change. Teaching accurate historical perspectives and addressing stereotypes in content were used to combat sociocultural and intellectual racism. In regards to answering research question number four, a smaller version of Circle could be implemented in traditional public schools to increase the sense of community in individual classrooms, grade levels, or other groups.

Call and Response

All three institutions utilized a strategy named Call and Response, which is a phrase used to direct attention to the speaker, followed by a response. For instance, Agoo means the room needs to be called to attention. Agoo simply translates, "I want your attention" and the children respond, "Amee" (you have our attention). When this is said, the room

becomes silent. All six participants confirmed that these sayings were used in daily practice.

The Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors is evident here because of the use of Swahili terms.

This theoretical element responds to research question number one, which inquires about

specific elements of the Africentric Paradigm utilized in instructional strategies. In regards

to research question four, this would also be a great behavioral management strategy if

adopted in traditional public schools.

Integration of Selfethnic Reflectors

Each institution used similar frameworks for building positive selfethnic identity

(Colin 1989) through curriculum content. In regards to the importance of this strategy

Arnold stated:

> What kind of philosophy can we bring to our effort in getting our children to know
>
> themselves? So we settled on Kemet, Ancient Egypt, or Nile Civilization, and the
>
> Nguzo Saba…You know we think it is important that all of our children are
>
> immersed in the study of their heritage. (Arnold, 2012)

Culturally grounded curriculum was the most successful part of the African Centered

practice. Building positive selfethnic image (Colin 1989) was always apparent from

referencing historical figures to hallway décor depicting the Motherland. In regards to the

Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989), these visual images are necessary to the success

of educational programming.

Theresa, a high school teacher at the second African Centered educational institution

discussed the importance of using an Africentric framework for curriculum content and

instructional strategies. Relative to educators truly reflecting on elements of the paradigm to

transform teaching strategies she stated, "It has to be something that is really adamantly felt

by the teachers…there has to be passion and authenticity behind it" (Theresa 2012). In regards to answering research question number one, which asks about specific elements of the paradigm utilized, the objectives of instruction at African Centered educational institutions is rooted in the Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors (Colin 1989). Content is designed to build positive selfethnic identity while maintaining academic rigor.

Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba

Using the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba as a foundation for educational environments was a success that each institution shared. The first school, as an adaption to their framework, added a principle--Heshima (respect) and utilized the term Nguzo Nane (Tracy 2012). The second African Centered school used the greeting "Habari Gani" which is Swahili for "What is the news today," in their daily practice. This is a greeting traditionally used during Kwanzaa (Theresa 2012). Utilizing principles as a foundation emphasizes moral imperatives helping students become critically reflective relative to behavior and academic success. Countering negative images that students see on television, in the media and outside of school was an important part of the mission and vision. The response to this issue provides an answer to research question number two, which inquires how sociocultural racism is addressed through curriculum content. K-12 educators at African Centered educational institutions realize the importance of building positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) through curriculum content helping students realize their full potential as lifelong learners.

Umoja (unity)

To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community,

nation, and race (Colin, 1994, p. 3).

There were many activities reflective of Umoja (unity), including continuing education programs, participating in daily Circle, and reciting chants. These were the biggest reoccurring strategies used to counteract some of the negative factors in students' lives. Continuing and professional education in the form of professional development was an essential part of content planning. Each site made sure that they had adequate time set aside for practitioners to meet weekly. During these meetings, practitioners participated in Circle, mimicking activities that students engage in daily; this strengthens practice by building commonalities within diverse school communities. This particular element addressed research question number three, which inquires about the design and objective of continuing education programs. These programs model the same African Centered framework implemented in classrooms with the intention of helping practitioners take ownership of the information they are transferring to students.

At the first institution, educators were encouraged to participate in a Rites of Passage Ceremony, similar to the ceremony that students complete in their sixth grade year. Arnold, an administrator, articulated his experiences with practitioners in this way:

> We have teachers who have signed up to go through the Rites of Passage, because you know you cannot teach what you don't know. So it's now getting to be more concrete. Because everybody who walks into this building notices that we are something different and it is intentional, you know we created that culture here. So now we have adults who are going through the process themselves. (Arnold, 2012)

This form of professional development plays a critical part in building school culture through Umoja (unity). Sue stated that supporting the family and the community is what unity (Umoja) is (Sue, 2012). In addition to community building activities, continuing

education programs always encompassed discussions relative to collaboration for curriculum and program planning. Regarding research question number four, which asks about strategies that can be transferred to traditional public schools, professional development in public schools can be strengthened utilizing similar ideas for practice.

Circle, as discussed in the previous passage, was simply a community event with a check-in, often led by Call and Response. At the first institution, Circle was called Morning Ritual. Tracy articulated her experiences with the activity in this way:

> I think what set it apart for me was the Morning Ritual and that whole coming together, moving forward together, having that kind of same think; that same community thinking about what we should be doing and where we should be going. (Tracy, 2012)

The lack of positive selfethnic reflectors (Colin 1989) in pop culture and media was a concern discussed at multiple sites. This issue was also a critical component of research question number two, which asks how oppression is countered through curriculum content. By ensuring that their practice was culturally grounded, practitioners were seeing more success through curriculum. Educators, and in turn students, are able to adequately prepare for future successes when they learn information akin to their own history.

Each institution was located in a community of color affected by economic depression, which is why these gatherings are essential. Violence is often encouraged in pop culture and perpetuated by media. Fiona, who conducted a gender specific Circle, discussed the challenges she encounters:

> There are definitely social development and personal development issues that are unique to young girls of color. The different rites of passage that have been

removed from our culture that we are trying to reintroduce to her so that she has

support in going through life from a girl to a woman. (Fiona, 2012)

Several practitioners discussed "removed rites of passage" resulting in the loss of selfethnic

identity (Colin 1989), which are addressed during Circle. Discussing identity and community

development during this time was a method used at every institution. Relative to answering

research question number two, this content is definitely utilized to combat racism. We must

empower practitioners, equipping them with the tools to facilitate dialogue to encourage

students of the African Diaspora to be agents for change in the community.

Kujichagulia (self-determination)

> To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for
>
> ourselves instead of being defined, named, created for, and spoken for by
>
> others (Colin, 1994, p. 3).

The most prominent examples of Kujichagulia (self-determination) were

reinforcement through various strategies, as well as integration of the principle in curriculum

and instruction. Tracy discusses her experience with one specific subject here:

> Through Social Studies when you are able to go into characters, and characters from
>
> history to see what they have done…like for instance we were talking about Jackie
>
> Robinson today and because his anniversary is coming up April 15th, and its just kind
>
> of like Kujichagulia--he was self determined to be the best that he could be and you
>
> know, not just help baseball but help America. (Tracy, 2012)

As mentioned previously the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba were used as a foundation

tool for curriculum and instruction. Integration of the principles is critical to the success of

frameworks.

While analyzing Kujichagulia (self-determination) answers emerged for research question number two, which seeks to identify how strategies are utilized to solve problems resulting from sociocultural and intellectual racism. It is evident that by using this principle, these issues are addressed through very specific curriculum content. Students are empowered by Kujichagulia (self-determination) because it emphasizes the ability to define oneself as opposed to feeling marginalized. This conceptual element was critical to maintaining educational environments reflective of African Centered practice. Relative to addressing research question number four, it could also be an efficient strategy to transfer to traditional public schools.

Chants

Each institution had chants that were recited during Circle or other community events. At the first school, the Zulu Declaration was used (see Appendix II). This chant begins with the words "I, I am, I am conscious and aware," and ends with "I know I shall prevail, for, I know who I say I am". This chant was created by the Zulu Nation in Africa and honors a preservation of their heritage (Arnold 2012). Building African value systems by teaching accurate sociohistorical perspectives is an essential part of African Centered practice. Research question number one is as follows: how are conceptual elements reflected and incorporated into instruction strategies. Chanting is an instructional strategy that is not only reflective of interdependence, Kujichagulia (self-determination) and positive selfethnic reflectors (Colin 1989) as well. Being "conscious" and claiming victory are critical to combating the psychological effects of racism.

Chants provide another perspective to research question number two regarding ways to combat intellectual racism. From a cultural center, the repetition of positive affirmations

is empowering. A majority of students come from a lower socioeconomic status, some living in communities where violence, drugs and gangs thrive. The first institution recited a chant during Circle, it is said aloud by the students in the center of the circle and then the outer repeats:

> We are African People,
>
> Determined to achieve,
>
> Political and economic capacity
>
> We are leaders and workers
>
> To bring about a positive change to ourselves, our families and our neighborhood!
>
> (Freda, 2012)

In this particular instance, Kujichagulia (self-determination) is reinforced and the chant encourages students to change themselves and neighborhoods in a positive manner. Consistently reciting affirmations relative to being African is dichotomous to what is happening outside of school. This fosters the affective development of students, which was a critical answer to research inquiry number two. This instructional strategy reinforces respect, character and integrity keeps students grounded in African Centered practice, making them more likely to maintain balance and harmony in other environments.

Ujima (collective work and responsibility)

> To build and maintain our community together (Colin, 1994, p. 3).

There were several important examples of Ujima (collective work and responsibility) including the use of Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) and focus on community empowerment. All three African Centered educational institutions had after school programming and extra curricular activities for students meeting

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certain criteria. Research question number two inquires about the problems resulting from intellectual racism and how they are approached. In regards to answering this question, these particular programs, as defined by Colin (1999) are created for and by members of the African Diaspora with the objective of addressing the effects of intellectual racism. Both cognitive and affective approaches are used and each institution provided these programs in different forms. Cultivating leaders is part of the curriculum design because they are teaching the importance of not only academics, but also being agents for change in the community. African Centered institutions believe it is important to give students opportunities applicable to real life situations.

Community Empowerment

Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin, 1999) is another way to address the effects of sociocultural racism, which is the main inquiry in research question number two. As expressed by Colin (1999) the programmatic goals are created by community stakeholders and designed to combat internalized oppression. These programs occur during after school or on weekends and often involve some sort of art-based practice. Regarding research question number four, which inquires about strategies that can be transferred to public schools, these programs should be considered as a model. K-12 traditional public school practitioners would benefit from strategies that truly address the needs of marginalized students.

Community empowerment is fostered through Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin, 1999) and can take on many forms. Examples of service projects include but are not limited to community gardens, facilitating forums, caring for the elderly, participating in Farmer's Markets, and public performances. These activities

were also reflective of the innovative ways that practitioners enliven curriculum planning.

Fiona shared her experience cultivating Ujima (collective work and responsibility):

> It is really about uplifting your community and doing the best things for your
> family. Celebrating family, celebrating the things that we want to see in our
> community and in ourselves. How are we going to move the agenda to make
> sure that we are a sustainable viable community--a family. (Sue, 2012)

Ujima (collective work and responsibility) teaches that we are a part of the whole; restoring

humanity starts in our own communities. These principles are not only applicable in the

classroom but pertain to our everyday lives as well.

Ujamaa (cooperative economics)

> To build and equip our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit
> from them together (Colin, 1994, p. 3).

Ujamaa (cooperative economics) was apparent in community service and other

extracurricular activities. The first institution participated in a local program collecting

money, gently used shoes, and other resources to send to Africa. Students at the second and

third institution were active working in local Bronzeville Gardens, participating in service

activities and Farmer's Markets. There was also fundraising for school events in the form of

selling goods at local festivals. Products included t-shirts with Andikra symbols painted as

décor, and hand-made jewelry. African Centered institutions often held fundraisers with

independently owned businesses in the neighborhood to raise money for various causes.

Regarding answers to the research questions guiding the study, question two relates

to dealing with economic depression, which is an issue at each of these institutions. Ujamma

(cooperative economics) is utilized to empower students and teach them to build commerce

in their own neighborhoods. Each of these schools was located in communities of color that are affected by economic depression. By participating in the aforementioned programs, African Centered educational institutions are combating the effects of oppression in their communities.

Nia (purpose)

> To make our collective vocation-- the building and developing of
>
> our communities-- more beautiful than we inherited (Colin, 1994, p. 3).

Nia (purpose) was articulated in the mission statements at each institution, Rites of Passages ceremonies, and integrated in classroom (or after school) curriculum and instruction. During the document analysis phase, I examined mission statements and rationales for utilizing African Centered practice. The first educational institution was started by a community organization in 1994 (Arnold, 2012). During an interview with Arnold, an administrator at the first institution, he articulated Nia (purpose) in this way:

> We have also been known to say, for example, we are not trying to bridge the
>
> achievement gap between black children and white children. That's not what we are
>
> after. We are trying to bridge the gap between our children and excellence. So I
>
> mean that changes the whole conversation about what you are trying to do. So you
>
> are trying to break the achievement gap between black and white children. So you
>
> broke the achievement gap, you closed it. You are still left with your humanity, is it
>
> intact? Those are some of the things, so you say you are always trying to achieve
>
> excellence in whatever you do. So that's the thinking. (Arnold, 2012)

This statement is reflective of a critical objective of African Centered practice, building positive cognitive and affective experiences. Creating educational environments that

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empower communities is also an essential part of African Centered practice. In response to research question number one, the Nia (purpose) of these institutions is building positive affective as well as cognitive experiences for students of the African Diaspora.

Consistently using principles to introduce classroom content was an important strategy used. Tracy stated that when a lesson begins she asks students, "What's our purpose, what's our Nia? Why are we really reading this text? What are we looking to learn from this text?" (Tracy, 2012) Practitioners take every opportunity to integrate African Centered principles, values and concepts into classroom practice. Research question number one focuses on conceptual elements incorporated in curriculum instruction and educational environments. To provide an answer for this inquiry, several examples of integrating Nia (purpose) follow.

Rites of passage ceremonies

Each institution participated in Rites of Passage, which is a celebration of phases in life. Arnold, an administrator at the first school, talked at length about this culturally grounded experience:

> We don't call the exits graduation. We have Rites of Passage for them. And the Rites of Passage is a yearlong study of research. They start with themselves acquiring a new name for themselves. And then, the name is actually based on the tradition of naming a child according to the day they were born. So each sixth grader will be renamed, and they will start their journey, or start their passage, researching their family's history. They will also do…their own writing, their own authentic writing. We take them through steps to transition them into the next phase. (Arnold, 2012)

All six participants discussed ceremonious events or rituals that celebrate transitions and positive growth in life. At the first African Centered institution, they have been conducting Rites of Passage ceremonies for the past fourteen years, with at least twenty-five students per year totaling over three hundred and fifty students. During the fourteen year span, only two students did not complete it successfully (Arnold, 2012). This is another way to address the research question number two, which explores affective growth of students through content. Viewed from a cultural center, this conceptual element conveys Nia (purpose) because it represents interdependence and moving forward.

Kuumba (creativity)

> To always do as much as we can in order to leave our communities
>
> more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited them (Colin, 1994, p. 3).

Kuumba (creativity) was inherently embedded in most strategies and activities at African Centered educational institutions. Research question number four, which seeks strategies that would transfer to traditional public schools, was addressed with this particular conceptual element. Art based learning is method of identity and community development and is also used to visually reinforce school culture rooted in African Centered principles. Learning to use Kuumba in the way you walk, talk, and process information was important in African Centered communities (Arnold, 2012). Traditional public schools could easily mimic the culturally grounded art-based practice found in these institutions.

Art based learning is an essential component of African Centered curriculum and instruction. Regardless of subject matter, there are ways to encourage students to incorporate visual elements. Building positive selfethnic image (Colin, 1989) is encouraged through aesthetic practice because Africentric communities foster students' innate abilities in

addition to encouraging academic success. Analysis showed that academic rigor is high at African Centered institutions; they follow Common Core and Illinois State Standards. The second institution, which was a high school, also utilized the national College Readiness Standards (Freda, 2012). At this particular institution, Fiona, a physics teacher discussed how Kuumba (creativity) was used to enhance comprehension of more advanced concepts:

> It is an empowerment piece to know that you can create! It holds weight over anything. Any tool that you can put in your hand and make something beautiful out of it, you know it's empowering and girls need to be empowered. A lot of our energy and empowerment comes from a sense of creation. (Fiona, 2012)

Curriculum and instruction integrates cognitive skills with creative efforts; Kuumba (creativity) was used as a tool to facilitate culturally grounded dialogue and activities. In regards to research question number four, this could also be a useful tool to utilize in traditional public schools.

Kuumba (creativity) was utilized in extracurricular and afterschool activities as well as embedded in educational practice. This principle responds to research question number two, which seeks to identify how intellectual racism is addressed through curriculum content. Sue confirms its impact here:

> Creativity and self-expression that comes with creativity shapes your self-esteem and your image and your ability to feel comfortable being out. Being comfortable with who you are. So I say we use Kuumba in a lot of the ways we approach things. (Sue, 2012)

Since before Ancient Kemet, creative practice has been a way of knowing, understanding and doing for people of this Diaspora. Practitioners and administrators were very adamant about the importance of including ceremonious drumming in daily activities and

celebrations. At the first school, Circle began with ritualistic drumming, performance and

dance. Each activity is reflective of this unique concept and connects students of the

African Diaspora to the spirit of the ancestors.

Adinkra symbols

Kuumba (creativity) was also used to visually reinforce school culture in addition to

enhancing curriculum. Research question number one seeks conceptual elements reflected

in educational environments at African Centered institutions. As a response to this question,

photographs from all three sites include Adinkra symbols derived from the Asante people of

Ghana (Sue, 2012) as well as Kemetic symbols. Each symbol is not only reflective of

Kuumba (creativity), but has a unique culturally grounded meaning. During site visits, the

symbols were usually carved in wood or exhibited as wall art. The photographic portion of

data collection is essential to show the importance of aesthetically reinforced indigenous

culture. To view photographs taken at sites, see Appendix I.

The following Andikra symbols were captured (spelled in Twi followed by English

translation):

> Dwannimmen (Ram's horn)--Represents humility, strength, wisdom and
>
> > learning
>
> Akoma ntoaso (extension of the heart)--Represents understanding or unity
>
> Kramo bone (The Bad)--A Warning against hypocrisy
>
> Gye Nyame (Except God)--Represents omnipotence and Immortality of
>
> > God
>
> Sankofa (Wisdom)--Represents learning from the past
>
> Funntunmireku (Siamese twin crocodiles)--Represents democracy and

oneness despite cultural differences

Akoko nan (The hen's feet)--Represents parenthood tenderness protection

Using images to enhance curriculum content reinforces positive selfethnic image (Colin 1989). These symbols originated from the Asante people of Ghana who have a rich tradition of using visual referents to represent various life situations. Using art based learning as a mode of community and identity development is essential when working in communities of color affected by economic depression. The design and objective of these strategies is to encourage cultural transmissions of African Centered value systems.

Imani (faith)

To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness of our struggle, which eventually will be won (Colin, 1994, p. 3).

Mission and vision statements, created at the inception of each institution, are reflective of Imani (faith) because this principle cultivates growth in African Centered communities. With Imani (faith) as a foundation, these institutions strive to create educational environments that cultivate African value systems and indigenous practice. During the establishment of these culturally grounded institutions, K-12 educators and community stakeholders had to believe in the righteousness of our struggle.

Building Imani (faith) not only for educators, but for students as well, was a concern identified at each of the three institutions. Varying political, geographical, and economic issues lead to differences in implementation of practice, but for the most part practitioners and administrators at each site had similar patterns of thought and behavior. Relative to the success had with culturally grounded curriculum Theresa confirms:

I think just really seeing the students take ownership in embracing their heritage and embracing their culture. Seeing kids outside of class and outside of talking to me, usually the kids are using terms that they learned in school. Actually using the virtues in their daily speech, not just when they have to acknowledge that they have done wrong and or listening to a lecture by a teacher. You know, but actually them taking ownership toward embracing their culture and identifying themselves as a product of the Diaspora. (Theresa, 2012)

Imani (faith) is rooted in helping students "identify themselves as a product of the Diaspora" and building positive selfethnic identity (Colin, 1989). Each of these institutions has created a community of common values based on accurate historical perspectives.

Regarding answers to the research questions that guided this study, question number two inquired ways that intellectual racism was combated through curriculum. Imani (faith) is reflected in the innovative mission and visions at African Centered schools; it is imperative to continue to acknowledge the righteousness of our struggle. In order to deliver culturally grounded curriculum and instruction to students, practitioners have to understand the importance of this principle. Believing in the success of students and empowerment of communities is essential to addressing the affective and cognitive needs of students in African Centered educational institutions.

Twinness and Complementarity

Twinness and complementarity (concepts relative to everything embodying its own opposite) were most evident in continuing education programs, approaches to American celebrations, and views expressed by participants during interviews. These concepts, when used in tandem, help maintain balance and harmony in African Centered communities by

ensuring that we live benevolently with one another. By employing this dualistic mindset, K-12 educators are equipped with strategies to help overcome the effects of systematic oppression.

Research question number four dealt specifically with the structure of continuing education programming. In the field of adult and continuing education, the moral imperative is of the utmost importance just like in African Centered schools. Every site discussed the challenge of ways to help practitioners see the importance of the Africentric Paradigm not just as a method of teaching, but also as a way to live. Several participants confirmed that the biggest challenge working in an African Centered school was helping practitioners immerse themselves in the Africentric Paradigm. Sue discussed some of the experiences from training sessions:

> I would say what stuck out with me was the ability to first go there for yourself…and what I mean by that is the same kind of circle discussions. Deep dive check in, how are you doing and how are you relating. All those kind of things we go through that in training so we are able to kind of go there on our own as adults. (Sue, 2012)

The concept of twinness can be used to help practitioners better understand the benefits of culturally grounded practice. This is an opportunity to fully embrace principles and values in their personal lives as well as professional practice. For instance, how does a white educator utilize twinness to improve their practice working with marginalized communities? By learning and acknowledging the invisible factors that contribute to racism, they can begin to embrace the importance of fostering positive cognitive as well as affective experiences. This is demonstrative of the "both, and" mindset; although teachers of European descent may be perceived as an oppressor, by utilizing African Centered frameworks created by community

stakeholders, they can implement successful curriculum in the classroom to help combat the effects of racism.

There were several resources utilized including the National Rites of Passage Institute founded by Paul Hill Jr. This African Centered Institute provides "regeneration of community through Rites of Passage"(Arnold 2012). *African Centered Education* by Haki and Safisha Madhubuti Ph.D. (2010) also provided literature for continuing education programming, the cover of which can be found in appendix III (Fiona 2012). Twinness in this instance is manifested in the challenges that accompany the rites of passage leading to strengthening oneself mentally, cognitively and spiritually. Utilizing a dualistic mindset, the Africentic Paradigm can be applied to both your personal life as well as professional practice. Tracy stated when beginning "there was some resistance" relative to teacher ownership (Tracy 2012). Tracy shared a conversation that occurred during professional development (a form of continuing education). Relative to the application of Maatian Virtues in the program, one of her colleagues stated, "This is not for me, it is for the kids." The retort back was, "Well this should be for all of us. This is what we do, this is what we are about!" (Tracy 2012). The concept complementarity can be used in these instances to help participants realize the importance of interdependence and reciprocity. We must be cognizant of the fact that these principles and virtues are not just for students, but can be guiding philosophies for adults and communities as well.

Research question number one sought out specific conceptual elements included in curriculum content. In response to this question, Tracy, an elementary teacher at the first African Centered educational institution, discussed the way traditional American holidays and celebrations are approached. For example as opposed to celebrating Halloween, it was referred to as Career Day. Participating students arrive dressed as what they want to be

when they grow up (Tracy 2012). Also as opposed to graduation, Rites of Passage

ceremonies were conducted. All three institutions celebrated Kwanzaa as well, taking time

to further acknowledge the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba. Setting up a Kinara (a

candle holder used during Kwanzaa) and the different symbols really gets students involved;

learning their heritage is the ultimate goal (Theresa, 2012).

Relative to the concepts of twinness and complementarity, these culturally

grounded celebrations are an expansion to Western ideals and culture. African Centered

institutions choose to embrace the opposite of pop culture and celebrate events that are

more culturally grounded. The concept of twinness, by employing the dualistic mindset,

allows students to use Halloween as a day to embody Kujichagulia (self-determination). This

is empowering for students; certain aspects of African Centered practice help them focus on

future aspirations. Regarding the choice to celebrate Kwanzaa, this Pan-African holiday

embodies the concept of complementarity through the communal celebration of each

principle. The concept of twinness is also relevant because this celebration is in lieu of

Christmas, which is the media focus this time of year. Acknowledgement of this African

Centered holiday makes its people of the Diaspora more attune to the richness of our ethos.

Interpreting the acknowledgement of these concepts was important to addressing the

research questions. Relative to the third research question, regarding the design and

objective of continuing education programs, several participants confirmed that the biggest

challenge working in an African Centered school was helping practitioners immerse

themselves in the Africentric Paradigm. The resources used, including *African Centered*

Education and organizations like the National Rites of Passage Institute (information can be

found at http://www.ritesofpassage.org/about/) can assist traditional public school

practitioners in their practice. Through twinness and complementarity, we can see the

relevance of a dualistic mindset, "both, and" as well as the importance of interdependence in African Centered practice. From a cultural center, each of the aforementioned activities was critical to addressing cognitive and affective growth.

The Virtues of Ma'at

The Seven Virtues of Ma'at (Karenga 2004)--truth, order justice, balance, harmony, righteousness, and reciprocity--are derived from Ancient Kemetic culture. In response to research questions number one, the conceptual element of Ma'at is critical to promoting the African Centered ideal of interdependence. Each African Centered educational institution utilized the virtues in their framework for building school culture in addition to character development and behavior management strategies. The first participant, an administrator at the first African Centered educational institution, emphasized, "Our goal is to have them internalize the principles of Kwanzaa, but most importantly, the virtues of Ma'at, because we translate Ma'at into excellence" (Arnold, 2012).

Arnold described Kemetic virtues as "sacred yet secular embodied by Ma'at" (Arnold, 2012). The Virtues of Ma'at were also used as a foundational tool, giving a more holistic view of Kemetic culture in addition to building a respectful environment. At the first institution, the virtues were used as a Call and Response strategy daily to get the school community motivated. In regards to the Virtues of Ma'at, a teacher at this same elementary school stated, "It's not a matter of when you teach the principles and virtues, but it's moreso when do you not teach it," (Tracy 2012). We discussed the importance of incorporating the virtues into school culture, curriculum content and instructional strategies whenever possible. Arnold stated that the Virtues were used as a discipline strategy. When rules were

broken, instead of writing them, the virtue violated was written in repetition. Here he

discusses using the virtues of Ma'at for discipline and as a basis for classroom harmony:

> We settled on the ancient Kemetic virtues, which are sacred, but also secular. It is
>
> embodied in one word, or one concept, which is Ma'at. Ma'at is, for the lack of any
>
> equivalent English translation, our ancestors have broken it out to seven virtues.
>
> They are the virtues of truth, order justice, balance, harmony, righteousness, and
>
> reciprocity. (Arnold, 2012)

Consistent reinforcement was important to help students incorporate character-building

strategies into their daily lives.

> Virtues of Ma'at, utilized as character development strategies, were important

components of African Centered practice. Arnold confirmed the purpose of this practice:

> We always make sure that we touch on that virtue so that they make life connections
>
> to the virtues. We go that route because we think if our children and parents and
>
> teachers are able to do this every day, it becomes part of their being. Because, you
>
> know, in truth what we want to do is save ourselves and recover ourselves as human
>
> beings. (Arnold, 2012)

A few simple concepts and principles were incorporated to promote morale and character

building through curriculum content. Every institution found its own unique way to

incorporate the Virtues of Ma'at for behavioral management strategies; Tracy discusses one

of her schools' methods here:

> When children are sent to the office for an infringement that a teacher cannot deal
>
> with in the classroom, they send [the student] to the office. Depending on what [the
>
> student] did, we will give them the Ma'atian virtue that they broke to read, write, and

think about. In regular class activities it is our intention--we do everything with the

intention to integrate our philosophy. (Tracy, 2012)

The shared experiences at each African Centered institution impacted the community by

creating a new way for practitioners, in turn students, to see the world. In regards to

answering research question number one, every institution utilized these virtues in the

framework for building school culture and positive educational environments. From visual

referents to behavior management strategies, these Ancient Kemetic virtues served as a

guide for African Centered educational communities to live benevolently with one another.

Summary of the Chapter

The findings that emerged from this study were critical to understanding the way culturally

grounded curriculum content and instructional strategies address both cognitive and

affective growth for students. Each of the research questions was addressed in multiple

ways by the information that emerged from analysis. African Centered conceptual and

theoretical elements provided a foundation for each institution in addition to playing a

critical part of daily content and instructional activities. Freda stated that being a part of an

African Centered community causes a tremendous increase in development of selfethnic

identity (Colin 1989). Students are proud of themselves, proud of their hair, heritage, skin

color, who they are and where they come from, and trying to see what the future holds for

them (Freda, 2012). The continuing and professional programming strategies mimic an

Africentric framework and encourage educators to take ownership of what they are teaching.

The curriculum and instruction at African Centered institutions provides a more liberatory

approach to public education and there are multiple strategies that can be transferred to

traditional public schools.

The African Descent

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The painting *African Descent* is an abstracted visual record of our journey as people of the African Diaspora. It depicts an ankh (the Egyptian symbol for life) and pyramid, both symbolic of Ancient Kemet. There are several other visual interpretations of the displacement that has occurred as a result of the slave trade. The term descent is meant to be interpreted in a myriad of ways by the viewer. The right side of the painting depicts cultural transmissions that serve as a foundation for sustaining indigenous tradition despite our displacement.

Overview of the Research

The research design was an Africentric qualitative single case study that focused on the experiences of six educators in African Centered schools. The Africentric Paradigm was utilized as the theoretical framework. Research questions that guided the study were as follows: 1) how are conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm reflected in educational environments and incorporated into curriculum and instruction at an African Centered institution, 2) how are the problems that result from sociocultural and intellectual racism addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content, 3) what are the design and objectives of continuing education programs implemented at African Centered institutions, and 4) what culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to a traditional continuing education model for K-12 practitioners?

Data collection instruments included document analysis, interviews as the primary source, site visits (observations), and photography. While visiting each institution, there was a vast amount of artwork representing Kemet, Ma'at and other African Centered concepts and symbols. The images were demonstrative of how curriculum and instruction at African Centered schools integrates cognitive skills with creative efforts. Practitioners were using Kuumba (creativity) as a tool to facilitate culturally grounded dialogue and activities based on Imani (faith) and Nia (purpose). To analyze data in this case study, I used conceptual elements from the Africentric Paradigm including The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba (Colin 1989), Virtues of Ma'at (Karenga 2004), and the concepts of twinness and complementarity (Tolliver 2010). To interpret field notes that emerged from observations during site visits, I completed a series of paintings to create a meaning context, which expressed the cognitive and affective impacts of instructional activities. In addition to visually enhancing the study, artwork expands the knowledge base to non-academic

audiences and serves as a more creative place to begin discourse in academia. Recommendations include the continuing and professional education workshop that emerged from analysis, in addition to a curriculum template modified for traditional public school practitioners. Implications for future research are reflective of the researcher's ideas for continuing exploration in communities of color worldwide.

Conclusions

The Importance of African Centered Conceptual and Theoretical Elements

Several important conclusions regarding the benefits of culturally grounded educational practice emerged from the analysis. African Centered practice is grounded in both the cognitive and affective domains. Each site had similar missions and the shared goal of building positive selfethnic image (Colin 1989). This was reflected in both curriculum content and art based instructional strategies. In addition to K-12 curriculum content, what makes African Centered schools different is the focus on building positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) and the importance of community empowerment. Academic rigor and affective growth were developed through a consciousness of African values systems and ideals. These culturally grounded strategies were reflected in the continuing education model that emerged from analysis. If we look at how traditional public schools are affecting our communities, it is clear that our students are being cognitively and affectively marginalized. As the findings suggest, by employing an Africentric framework, continuing and professional education can play a role in adequately preparing K-12 traditional public school educators for success with students of this Diaspora.

As a result of the findings I concluded that the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba were incorporated into school culture and instructional strategies in multiple ways. During

the document analysis phase, it became apparent that Imani (faith) and Kujichagulia (self-determination) were reflected in the mission statement of each institution. The other principles (in Swahili followed by English translation) Umoja (unity), Ujima (collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), and Kuumba (creativity) (Colin 1989) were integrated in every subject matter. Ujima (collective work and responsibility) was an important component of African Centered practice. During analysis, community empowerment reoccurred as an important theme embedded in the philosophy and purpose of each institution. The conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm are a more appropriate framework for K-12 educators to utilize for designing curriculum content and instructional strategies because it appropriately addresses academic growth, personal development, and community empowerment for students of this Diaspora.

Combating Sociocultural and Intellectual Racism With Curriculum Content

In order to combat sociocultural and intellectual racism, curriculum and instruction integrated cognitive skills with creative efforts. Kuumba (creativity) was used as a tool to facilitate culturally grounded dialogue and activities based on Imani (faith) and Nia (purpose). As the findings articulate, this art-based approach to learning reinforces culturally grounded curriculum based on accurate historical perspectives. Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) that utilizes art based learning can play a salient role in the re-education of marginalized communities because activities are designed to address cognitive needs and preserve traditions of indigenous culture.

Africentric communities foster students' cognitive abilities while developing creative spirits. Since before Ancient Kemet, artistic practice has been a way of knowing, understanding, and doing for people of this Diaspora. The Seven Principles of the Nguzo

Saba work in tandem to reinforce Ma'at (Deep Wisdom) while reflecting a true understanding of indigenous culture. Due to the impact of sociocultural and intellectual racism, African Centered curriculum and instruction is needed for K-12 educators because it is designed to build positive selfethnic identity (Colin 1989) in addition to sustaining academic rigor.

African Centered Continuing and Professional Education

Adult education, more specifically continuing and professional education, can play a large part in preparing practitioners for success with students of this Diaspora. By changing the way we look at classroom instruction, social justice and equity can be increased in the field of adult education. Relative to the importance of African Centered education, Arnold stated:

> When children are taught their heritage, their performances get better... we think that grounding our children in their heritage removes a lot of barriers because they feel good about themselves and because we celebrate them for who they are, that translates into the academics. (Arnold, 2012)

African Centered institutions impact communities because the utilization of this paradigm creates a more appropriate framework for educators and students to rationalize their authentic lived experiences. Utilizing an Africentric framework for continuing and professional education programs can help K-12 educators understand the impacts of systematic oppression and the need to combat it with culturally grounded curriculum content in traditional public schools.

To conclude, in Western culture, racial marginalization often affects our experiences. Economic oppression relative to this group is a direct result of racial group membership.

Issues like generational illiteracy, institutional oppression, and economic depression have created unique circumstances for marginalized communities. K-12 educators in traditional public schools often utilize instructional strategies that encourage diversity and inclusion as opposed to researching and addressing specific cultural needs of this Diaspora. There is no consideration of the historical impact of sociocultural racism with this approach to teaching. As articulated in the findings, to combat internalized oppression there must be discourse to deconstruct both formal and informal learning. The African Centered Intellectual Paradigm is a more appropriate lens for reflecting on our authentic lived experiences. It is important to create a framework for dialogue to help restore order and balance in our communities.

Strategies to Utilize in Traditional Public Schools

Based on the findings from this study, there are a few simple methods that can be taken from African Centered schools and used in public school classrooms to help practitioners be more successful. Adult education, more specifically continuing and professional education, is a critical place to begin looking at ways to change classroom instruction. Adult education programs should include a wealth of resources from an African Centered perspective. Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) should be valued as a tool for saving our schools. Creativity and art making can play a salient role in the re-education of our communities. We must confront change in a holistic fashion, addressing not only cognitive needs but spiritual and mental well-being. "Great teaching is an art…great art relies on the mastery and application of foundational skills" (Lemov, 2010, p. 1). Art based learning is a critical part of identity and community development. We must continue to advocate for art based learning and Africentrism as modes of anti-racist pedagogy.

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<div style="text-align: center;">Recommendations</div>

Recommendations for Program Planners in the Field

  Based on contemporary practice in the field of continuing and professional education as discussed in the review of literature and research findings, several recommendations were proposed for the field of adult education. Due to the impact of intellectual racism, the field of continuing and professional education should make literature available relative to the Africentric Paradigm, so that program planners have the opportunity to immerse themselves in accurate historical perspectives and appropriately reflect on the authentic lived experiences of this Diaspora. The field of adult education has a responsibility to provide more innovative ways to use art based learning as a mode of anti-racist pedagogy building identity and community development through liberatory education programs. The design and implementation of Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) is essential to address community empowerment in traditional institutions that serve marginalized populations.

Recommendations for K-12 Educators

  Since the conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm are a more appropriate framework for addressing the cognitive and affective needs of the African Diaspora, K-12 educators must be required to participate in culturally grounded continuing education programs (workshops, professional development, or trainings) that include African Centered curriculum content and instructional strategies to appropriately address academic growth, personal development, and community empowerment. After participating in continuing education programs utilizing an Africentric framework, K-12 educators must contemplate the importance of not only employing this lens to their educational practice, but

to their daily lives. Saving traditional public schools and restoring communities can only happen if educators truly understand the impacts of systematic oppression and the necessity to combat it with culturally grounded curriculum.

Africentric Continuing and Professional Education Workshop Model

An Africentric continuing and professional education workshop model emerged from the data analysis process. This study is reflective of the benefits of culturally grounded content and strategies; art based pedagogy nurtures different aspects of identity development. From a cultural center, these activities allow students to approach tasks visually and kinesthetically, coming up with new questions, and more innovative answers based on indigenous practice. This particular continuing education workshop model was created for K-12 educators in traditional public schools serving students of the African Diaspora. The model can be used for any grade level and all subject matters. As a result of data analysis, the researcher recommends this workshop to help program planners facilitate an understanding of the educational utility of Africentrism for educators. It will also assist K-12 educators with the integration of African Centered curriculum content and instructional strategies in individual classrooms. If traditional public schools adopted this framework for their CPE programs, they are more likely to successfully combat internalized oppression and empower communities through culturally grounded curriculum.

The following lists the objectives of the continuing education workshop model developed:

- Introduce participants to the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba, the Virtues of Ma'at and the use of selfethnic reflectors (Colin 1989) in various teaching strategies.

- Help participants understand the importance of culturally grounded practice across all disciplines and age levels.

- Help participants identify the best ways to integrate African Centered practice in their classroom instruction/and or school culture.

- Discuss how the principles and virtues engage multiple ways of knowing and doing.

- Equip K-12 educators with three strategies to use in classroom practice.

- Model culturally grounded strategies and discuss classroom application.

- Guide participants through a curriculum map template during the training.

These objectives address content discussed in both the conclusion and recommendations section. Relative to the negative impact of racial and economic oppression, the strategies in this model are intended to combat these issues in public school classrooms. Curriculum and instruction in traditional public schools is rooted in a Western body of knowledge, lacking culturally grounded strategies. The African Centered continuing education model that emerged from analysis can assist K-12 practitioners with unique issues that urban students face as a result of marginalization and intellectual racism.

The workshop outline that follows was designed for traditional public school practitioners to engage in a continuing education workshop utilizing an Africentric framework. Goals of the workshop model are two-fold: 1) facilitate an understanding of the educational utility of Africentrism in continuing education for K-12 educators and 2) serve as a model for practitioners to implement these activities in K-12 traditional public school classrooms. An explanation of each activity follows.

Part I:
        Opening and Introductions
        Large Group Check-In
        Discussion: Introduction to the Africentric Paradigm

Part II:
        The Importance of Community and Identity Development
        Facilitating Culturally Grounded Curriculum Content
                The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba
                Virtues of Ma'at
                Using Adinkra Symbols

Part III:
        Exploring Instructional Strategies
                Call and Response
                Speaking in Swahili
                Facilitating a Check In (Circle)
        Demonstration of the Curriculum Map Template

Part IV:
        Action Items: How can I use this in my practice?
        Art Based Learning Activity
        Questions & Comments
        Closing

Each of the aforementioned activities is reflective of conclusions and recommendation that emerged from this study. Part one establishes a community of learners with introductions and a check in lead by the facilitator. The large group check in should follow the format discussed in Chapter four, asking each participants to respond to how they feel physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually (P.I.E.S. check in). An introduction to the Africentric Paradigm follows, emphasizing the importance of utilizing the paradigm not only for continuing education but as a basis for classroom practice as well.

Part two of the workshop responds to the importance of community and identity development, which was an issue discussed throughout this study. Discourse during this portion of the workshop is focused on the facilitation of culturally grounded educational strategies. The facilitator would introduce theoretical and conceptual critical elements of the

Africentric Paradigm that can be integrated into curriculum content. The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba, the Virtues of Ma'at, and Andikra symbols from Ghana are the focus of dialogue during this portion. There is a worksheet to accompany this section, which includes Andikra symbols and their culturally grounded meanings.

Part three is critical to exploring instructional strategies that can be used to implement culturally grounded curriculum content in the classroom. The facilitator would lead a discussion relative to the understanding of Call and Response, systems of naming in Swahili, and the Check In (modeled in part one) each are important components of this section. A demonstration of the curriculum template model follows, so that participants comprehend ways to incorporate these strategies in their practice.

Part four requires participants to evaluate ways that culturally grounded strategies or curriculum content can be integrated in their school culture or individual classrooms. During this portion, participants are asked to develop action items relative to the application of culturally grounded strategies in their practice. This is followed by an art based learning activity, which can also be mimicked in their classroom. The art based activity includes everyone creating a post card (which will be mailed to them after the workshop) that includes the salient points learned during the workshop and three things they are committed to implementing in their classroom. Questions about the workshop as a whole should be addressed at this time. The closing activity should include everyone sharing the postcards created during the art based learning activity. Every activity during the course of this workshop is grounded in the Africentric Paradigm. Several of the activities conducted are meant to serve as a model for practitioners to try in their own classrooms. Guiding worksheets are included on the next pages, which give an overview of salient points of the paradigm; the complete workshop model follows.

African Centered Practice Reference Sheet

During the facilitation of your lesson, think of relevant historical figures or references of the African Diaspora to integrate in the lesson. Don't be afraid to research! Include any other culturally grounded events that you can mention pertaining to the lesson.

The following African Centered concepts and ideas are discussed on this page:
- Call and Response
- The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba
- Virtues of Ma'at
- Adinkra Symbols

Call and Response- A phrase that calls to room to be attentive to the
                      speaker

- o Ase' (pronounced ah-shay and so it is, right on)
- o Agoo- I need your attention (said by instructor)
       Amee -you have our attention (said by participants)
- o Chant (created by you)

Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba

1. Umoja meaning unity

2. Kujichagulia meaning self-determination

3. Ujima meaning collective work and responsibility

4. Ujamaa meaning cooperative economics

5. Nia meaning purpose

6. Imani meaning faith

7. Kuumba meaning creativity (Colin 1989)

Seven Virtues of Ma'at: Harmony, Balance, order, justice, truth, righteousness

and reciprocity (Karenga 2004)

ANDIKRA SYMBOLS

Andikra symbols are from the Asante people in Ghana. The origin is of the word Andikra is from the Twi word di nkra (to say goodbye). Traditionally, an Adinkra cloth is for mourning and adorned in symbols. (Wiredu and Gyeke). Five examples of symbols are listed below, accompanied by their Twi name.

Sankofa (Wisdom)

Represents using past experiences to build the future

Dwannimmen (Ram's horn)

Represents humility and strength

Gye Nyame (Omnipotence)

Funntunmireku
(Siamese crocodiles joined at the stomach)
Represents democracy and oneness

Akoko nan (the hen's foot)
Represents Parenthood or protection

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW:
Integrating Africentrism in Adult Education

This workshop is designed to show adult educators the benefits of integrating Africentrism into continuing and professional education. There are many innovative ways to introduce Africentrism to your workshops and trainings, therefore improving cultural pluralism for practitioner's classroom methods. Expanding the use of Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) is essential in the field of adult education to adequately prepare practitioners to instruct students of the African Diaspora. The goals of this workshop are to help you facilitate a continuing and professional education model based on African Centered practice.

Adult Education, more specifically continuing and profession education, can play a large part in preparing practitioners for success with students of the Diaspora. If we look at how traditional public schools are affecting our communities, it is clear our students are being affectively and cognitively marginalized. Students of this Diaspora throughout the world do not have public education that includes culturally grounded techniques. Given the benefits of the Africentric Paradigm, the question emerges why more adult educators do not use these methods. By changing the way we look at classroom instruction, culturally grounded instruction can become a regular part of curriculum. The purpose of this workshop is to facilitate an understanding of the educational utility of Africentrism in public school classrooms. Using methods from today's training will assist adult learners in coming up with culturally grounded questions and solutions to classroom instruction.

Traditionally most programs are grounded in Western ideals. Today's discourse is centered on quick easy ways to integrate African Centered principles, values and strategies into curriculum. As contemporary adult educators, we must continue to encourage culturally grounded ways of knowing and doing. African Centered education should not be absent from teaching and learning, but rather valued as a tool for success. Africentrism can play a pivotal role in education for students of this Diaspora. This workshop is intended to support this idea; the desired outcome is for adult educators to understand the need for culturally grounded techniques in their practice.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- Introduce participants to the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba, the Virtues of Ma'at and the use of selfethnic reflectors (Colin 1989) in various teaching strategies.

- Help participants understand the importance of culturally grounded practice across all disciplines and age levels.

- Help participants identify the best ways to integrate African Centered practice in their classroom instruction/and or school culture.

- Discuss how the principles and virtues engage multiple ways of knowing and doing.

- Equip K-12 educators with three strategies to use in classroom practice.

- Guide participants through a curriculum map template during the day's training.

**INTEGRATING AESTHETICS:
CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL
EDUCATION WORKSHOP OUTLINE**

Part I:

      Opening and Introductions
      Large Group Check-In
      Discussion: Introduction to the Africentric Paradigm

Part II:

      The Importance of Community and Identity Development
      Facilitating Culturally Grounded Curriculum Content
            The Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba
            Virtues of Ma'at
            Using Adinkra Symbols

Part III:

      Exploring Instructional Strategies
            Call and Response
            Speaking in Swahili
            Facilitating a Check In
      Demonstration of the Curriculum Map Template

Part IV:

      Action Items: How can I use this in my practice?
      Art Based Learning Activity
      Questions & Comments
      Closing

SAMPLE <u>**Lesson Plan Template**</u>

<u>**Subject:**</u>   Social Studies

Topic and Main Idea of Lesson (What I want students to learn):
- Familiarize students with locale and government of Ancient Kemet (Egypt)
- Introduce students to the concept of Ma'at

Standards Addressed:
(note whether standards are Illinois State, College Readiness Standards, Common Core)

<u>**Course objectives (SWBAT-Students will be able to):**</u>

- Locate Ancient Egypt on a map or globe
- Comprehend the geographical advantages of communities near natural resources (The Nile)
- Recognize and reproduce Hieroglyphics for communication and language
- Comprehend the functionality of the Virtues of Ma'at used govern the Kemetic/Egyptian community)

<u>**Goals or Outcomes:**</u>
- Students will complete chapters 4-5 discussion questions
- Students will draw a map of Africa including Ancient Egypt and the Nile
- Students will sketch the alphabet in hieroglyphics in addition to their own name

<u>**INTRODUCTION:**</u>
<u>**(Incorporate a principle or virtue)**</u>

       Today we are going to be discussing Ancient Egypt. While reading our Social Studies texts today, what is our Nia, what is our purpose?

<u>**ACTIVITIES:**</u>
<u>**(Integrate relevant historical figure or reference of the African Diaspora)**</u>

       Reading on Queen Hatshepsut-first queen in the history of humanity

<u>**CLOSURE:**</u>
<u>**(Use Call and Response strategy)**</u>
       (Ago and Amee) to get students attention
       Exit slip

SAMPLE   <u>Lesson Plan Template</u>

<u>Subject:</u>_____Math_____

Topic and Main Idea of Lesson (What I want students to learn):

- Introduce students to Pythagorean Theorem
- Comprehend the formulas associated with the theorem

Standards Addressed:

(note whether standards are Illinois State, College Readiness Standards, Common Core)

Course objectives (SWBAT-Students will be able to):

Commit the Pythagorean Theorem to memory
Learn the relevance of this theorem relative to the pyramids
Apply the theorem to contemporary math

Goals or Outcomes:

- Students will complete warm up upon entering class
- Students will take notes and comprehend theorem formulas on the board
- Students will complete chapter 4 questions during class

INTRODUCTION:
(Incorporate a principle or virtue)

> Today we are going to be discussing Pythagorean Theorem, created in Ancient Egypt, which is what you are also discussing in Social Studies. How do we apply the theorem to find a solution to the problem on the board?

ACTIVITIES:
(Integrate relevant historical figure or reference of the African Diaspora)

> Pythagorean Theorem, created in Ancient Egypt, to assist with pyramid construction

CLOSURE:
(Use Call and Response strategy)
> (Ago and Amee) to get students attention
> Exit slip

Lesson Plan Template

Subject:_____

Topic and Main Idea of Lesson (What I want the students to learn):

*

*

*

Standards Addressed:

(note whether standards are Illinois State, College Readiness Standards, Common Core)

Course objectives (SWBAT-Students will be able to):

*

*

*

*

Goals or Outcomes:

*

*

*

*

INTRODUCTION:
(Incorporate a principle or virtue)

ACTIVITIES:
(Integrate relevant historical figure or reference of the African Diaspora)

CLOSURE:
(Use Call and Response strategy)

Implications for Future Practice

In the spirit of Ujima (collective work and responsibility), the implications for future practice include the work the researcher is interested in as a result of this study.

1. The researcher will publish a guide to teaching in communities of color affected by economic depression. The book, based on conclusions and recommendations from this study, is intended for K-12 educators working in traditional public schools with racially marginalized communities. It will include the workshop model that emerged from analysis. The researcher has already begun integrating culturally grounded strategies in the classroom, and can attest to the benefits of employing this framework.

2. The researcher will continue to create artwork inspired by conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm. A documentary will be produced featuring photographs taken during the course of research, serving as a DVD introductory segment to the aforementioned guide book.

3. The researcher is interested in Africentric Culturally Grounded Community Based Programming (Colin 1999) developed and implemented in communities affected by economic depression. How do adult learners currently actively engage in these programs, and how can the programmatic goals be used to further transform and uplift communities of color?

4. The researcher is also interested in communities of the African Diaspora across the globe. How does education or art based practice address the psychological affects of the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade, and strive to build positive selfethnic identity despite being displaced in communities worldwide?

Afterword Reflection

How does one find their authentic self in a world of oppression and marginalization dominated by Western culture? Since starting this educational journey, I have contemplated this issue almost daily. American pop culture, politics, media, and religion have heavily influenced my life experiences; these factors represent values and ideals that conflict with my personal and professional goals and expectations. Who am I, who am I becoming, and how does my authentic lived experience affect these queries? As a result of this program and research process, I began to contemplate what it means to truly "know yourself" outside limiting constructs like race, educational background, socioeconomic status, gender or religion, which are consistently perpetuated by Western culture.

When I started this Critical Engagement Project there were several theoretical and conceptual frameworks that seemed to lend themselves to my research. I considered both Critical Race Theory and Transformational Learning; each of these included innovative concepts and theories that opened my eyes to different ways of viewing the world. After much critical reflection, I decided to ground my research in Africentrism. The foundation of the paradigm included concepts and theories that were pertinent to my research in African Centered communities. Immersing myself in the work of scholars of the African Diaspora, I immediately recognized the vast amount of sociocultural history that has been omitted from mainstream education in this country. Relative to the importance of selfethnic liberatory education strategies, Colin writes, "Due to the racist nature of American society, adult education programs must be culturally grounded…the programmatic goals are reflective of the sociocultural realities and life experiences that are indigenous to that group" (Colin and Guy, 1994, p. 47). Authors like Miller, Locke, Garvey and Colin represent sociocultural realities that I had never been exposed to. Theories and concepts from the Africentric

Paradigm help me articulate, and find solutions to the disorienting dilemmas that surround my practice in school communities affected by economic depression and institutional racism. Researching African value systems is a liberating extension to Western culture. The classical periods of Kemet, Nubia and Axum discussed by authors like Diop and Asante need to be a part of community programming and adult education.

As my writing continued, Africentrism became more than a framework for my research, but a spiritual grounding for my daily thoughts and actions. There is a significant difference between solely using the Africentric Paradigm for a research framework, and employing the knowledge as a foundation for understanding your everyday life experiences. It was difficult for many months to make the paradigmatic shift because of the commitment to a complete change in mindset. During the course of our lives many are programmed with certain values and adopted truths based on Western ideals, which do not reflect people of this Diaspora. Relative to this conflict, my first interviewee stated something I did not forget, "Once you get yourself in order, then you must stay in balance" (Arnold 2012). Truth can only be ascertained through critical reflection; it takes a conscious effort on my part to meditate each moment of the day on the values and principles of the paradigm in order to restore the disharmony that surrounds me. We must train ourselves to be more critical consumers grounded in a more centric way of living. Our language must be intentional and research purposeful to reflect the rich cultural history that we have been denied.

It is often problematic working with institutions that do not reflect the same values and principles, but with continued meditation and practice I am able to employ a completely different mindset, thus maintaining who I am. Being grounded in the Africentric Paradigm requires a continuous stream of consciousness to restore harmony with the Universe and

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others. There is no separation between my professional and personal beliefs. The entire process has been personally reaffirming but often publically tested because most people I encounter daily do not engage in critical thinking, let alone experience liberatory transformation through education. Although the surrounding world continuously has a different message for me, a paradigmatic shift allows me to find balance through Africentrism. To conclude this experience, I was renamed on the lawn of the DuSable Museum of African American History. I found my authentic self in the history, movements, research, artwork, and writing of this Diaspora.

Ase'

Rukiya Nkenge Dada

Queen Hatshepsut-The First of Humanity   ©2012 auburnaesthetic.com

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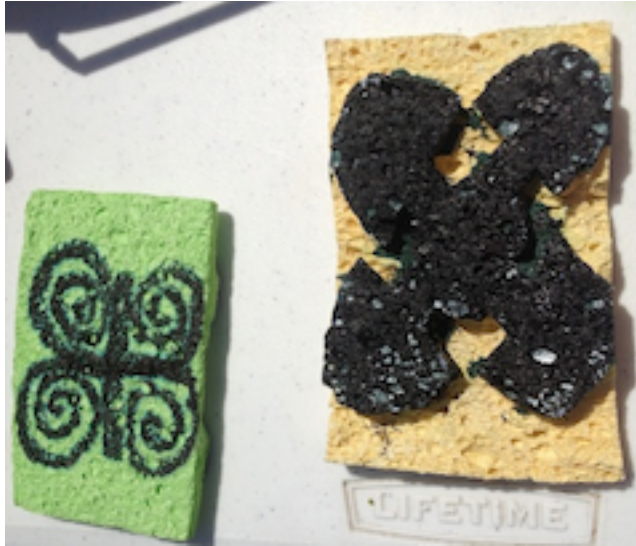
(left image) Dwannimmen (Ram's Horn)
Represents humility, strength wisdom and learning
"It is the heart, not the ram's head that leads him to bully"

(right image)Akoma ntoaso (extension of the heart)
Represents understanding or unity

Kramo bone (The Bad)
Represents a warning against hypocrisy

Sankofa (Wisdom)
Represents using past experiences to build the future

Dwannimmen (Ram's horn)
Represents humility and strength

Gye Nyame (Omnipotence and immortality of God)

Funntunmireku
(Siamese crocodiles joined at the stomach)
Represents democracy and oneness irrespective of cultural differences

Akoko nan (the hen's foot)
Represents Parenthood or protection

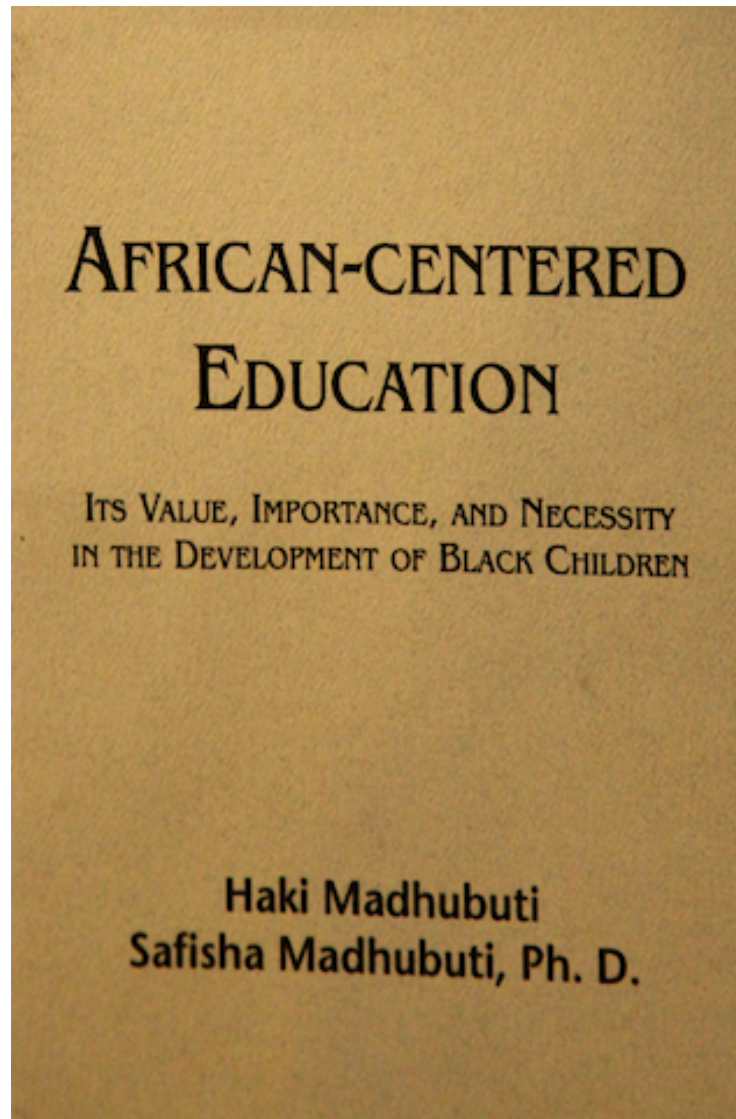**Ancient Kemetic Symbol representing The Eye of Horus (all seeing eye)**

APPENDIX II

<u>The Zulu Declaration</u>

I.
I am.
I am conscious and aware.
I am unique.
I am the face of humanity;
The face of humanity is my face.
The infinity is a unity; it cannot be destroyed.
I am a constituent of the unity.
I cannot be destroyed;
The infinity and I are inseparable
I am eternal; I am the secret that drives out all fear
Perpetual evolution is my destiny
I evolve forever, in response to the challenge of being human
I have mind to light my path in the mazes of cosmic order.
This mind has many sides;
It comprehends all things.
It establishes my right to latitudes; to being heard;
It makes me feel at home in the cosmic order.
My neighbor has a mind.
It also comprehends all things.
My neighbor and I have the same origins.
We have the same life-experience and common destiny;
We are the obverse and reverse sides of one entity.
We are unchanging equals.
We are the faces which see themselves in each other;
We are mutually fulfilling complements;
We are simultaneous legitimate values;
My neighbor's sorrow is my sorrow;
His joy is my joy.
He and I are mutually fulfilled when we stand by each other in the moments of need.
His survival is a precondition of my survival.
That which is freely asked or freely given is love
Imposed love is a crime against humanity.
I am sovereign of my life;
My neighbor is sovereign of his life;
Society is a collective sovereignty;
It exists to ensure that my neighbor and I realize the promise of being human.
I have no right to anything I deny my neighbor;
I am all; all are me.
I come from eternity;
The present is a moment in eternity;
I belong to the future.
I can commit no greater crime than to frustrate life's purpose for my neighbor.
I define myself in what I do to my neighbor.

I am the servant of my ancestors;
My ancestors are humanity;
All I live for is to be the best that I can be.
There are no frontiers I cannot cross,
For I, the person, am my own challenge.
I am Father-Mother;
I am the cluster of phenomena, which constitute me.
I am father-mother-child.
I am the past, the present and the future
I have no beginning and no end;
I am the geodesic circle which Father and Mother merged to become me.
I extend myself into the child.
I am the brick out of which society is built;
I am the Eternal Person
In everything I think and do, I describe myself;
We have in us everything we need to evolve;
To discover satisfying dimensions of being human;
To realize the promise of being persons.
I know I shall prevail,
For, I know who I say I am;
He has not been born who shall say he has conquered me!

APPENDIX III:
Resources utilized for African
Centered continuing education programs

AFRICAN-CENTERED EDUCATION

ITS VALUE, IMPORTANCE, AND NECESSITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK CHILDREN

Haki Madhubuti
Safisha Madhubuti, Ph. D.

Letter to Participants

December 1, 2011

To Whom It May Concern (Director):

My name is Auburn Ellis, a student at National Louis University currently conducting dissertation research on the successes and challenges of African Centered schools. I am pursuing an EdD in Adult Education, and the focus of my research is on creating an appropriate African Centered curriculum that can be incorporated into a continuing education program for public schools teachers.

After looking at your mission statement and values online, I am intrigued and want to know more about your practice. With your permission, I would like to gather information relative to the successes you have had with your students. I am certain that children of the African Diaspora can be successful if curriculum is aimed at helping them overcome challenges!

At your convenience, could you let me know the best time to contact you to discuss this further? I would love, with your permission, to set up interviews with you and the educators at your school. If you agree, please be assured, as the attached informed consent indicates, neither you, the name of your educational institution, or any other participants will be made public. As a student of the Africentric Paradigm, and one who has a shared commitment to the appropriateness of this being included in public schools and mainstream education, I am excited about interacting with you. Hope to hear from you soon!

Auburn Ellis, MA
Doctoral Candidate: National Louis University
312*545*0094
perryellis32@gmail.com
auburn.ellis01@my.nl.edu

INFORMED CONSENT-PARTICIPANT

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study that will take place from September 2011 to September 2012. This form outlines the purposes of this study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

I consent to participate in a research project conducted by Auburn E. Ellis, a doctoral student at National Louis University located in Chicago, IL.

I understand that this study is entitled Integrating Aesthetics: Improving Continuing Education through Africentric Practice. The research questions guiding the study are (1) Why is the African Centered Paradigm more effective for teaching members of the African Diaspora? (2) In what ways does creativity (Kuumba) help enhance curriculum for both students and practitioners, and (3) What African Centered curriculum, values, or methods could be modified and dispersed in regular public schools to help practitioners better serve children of the African Diaspora? The purpose of the study is to create an appropriate African Centered curriculum that can be incorporated into a continuing education program for public schools teachers.

I understand that my participation will consist of one interview lasting 1-2 hours in length with a possible second, follow up interview lasting 1-2 hours in length. I understand that I will receive a copy of my transcribed interview at which time I may clarify information.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time without prejudice until the completion of the dissertation.

I understand that only the researcher, Auburn E. Ellis, will have access to a secured file cabinet in which will be kept all transcripts, taped recording, and field notes from the interview(s) in which I participated.

I understand that the results of the study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, but my identity will in no way be revealed.

I understand that in the event I have questions or require additional information I may contact the researcher: Auburn Ellis @ 312-545-0094
Email Address: perryellis32@hotmail.com, auburn.ellis01@my.nl.edu

If you have any concerns or questions before or during participation that you feel have not been addressed by me, you may contact my primary advisor and Dissertation Chair: Dr. Scipio A.J. Colin, III, National Louis University, 122 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60603, 312-621-9650, Ext 3326; email: scolin@nl.edu & scipioc3@cs.com.

Participants Signature: _____ date: _____

Researchers Signature:_____
date:_____

APPENDIX VI: IRRB QUESTIONS

Briefly describe the purpose of your study and, in non-technical terms, what the participants will be asked to do, and what the processes and procedures for data collection are. Append relevant instruments (i.e., protocols, questionnaires, surveys).

The purpose of the study is to identify and examine three Afrocentric public schools in order to determine 1) unique problems that student populations face and how they are overcome through curriculum 2) successes and challenges using Afrocentric themes and curricula 3) use of creativity in the classroom with different curricula 4) academic improvement and data collected 5) What methods could be used in regular public schools to increase efficiency of continuing education and student success.

Prior to conducting interviews and surveys, a document analysis will occur. Most of this information can be found online, or be requested from administration. Looking closely at the mission statement, vision, values, curriculum outlines, board meeting minutes and any other documents will provide pertinent information relative to each school's practice. Is the institution public, private, or charter, and how does this affect the funding and ideas? What do they view as African centered education and based on what premise? Why do they feel African centered education is critical for children of the African Diaspora?

2. Describe any potential risks or benefits (emotional, physical, social, or political) to your participants.

Potential risks of the study include emotional or social ramifications, based on conversations about students' lives and personal experiences in the classroom. The benefits include expanding the knowledge base of Africentric curriculum in the field of adult education. Benefits also include spreading the knowledge that has been ascertained through African centered practice.

3. Give the anticipated ages, gender, and number of participants, and explain how and where they will be recruited.

The ages of the participants will all be over 21 and will include both males and females. They are certified teachers, administrators and staff members of local schools. The participants will be determined after meeting with administration from each school; I am looking for individuals who have worked in African centered schools for 1-3 yrs, and hopefully some who have worked is a regular public school as well, so they can compare the two experiences. They will answer a series of open-ended questions relative to the research questions.

There will be 3 interview participants from a total of three schools, a teacher, administrator and one other person to be determined. That is a total of nine interviews. Surveys will be distributed to 10 people from each of the three schools, to obtain a broader perspective.

4. Describe the procedures for obtaining informed consent as provided for the Code of Federal Regulations, section 46.116. Append the informed consent form and any other forms used.

I will obtain informed consent by sending the required letter (enclosed) to the participants and a brief explanation of the research and topics I wish to explore.

APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH QUESTIONS GUIDING THE STUDY

1. How are conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm reflected in educational environments and incorporated into curriculum and instruction at an African Centered institution?

2. How are the problems that result from sociocultural and intellectual racism addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content?

3. What are the design and objectives of continuing education programs implemented at African Centered institutions?

4. What culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to traditional continuing education models for K-12 practitioners?

APPENDIX VIII: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Can you share why you chose this educational route? (teaching in a school that supports an African Centered Paradigm)

- How are the Seven Principles of the Nguzo Saba incorporated into school culture and classroom curriculum?

- Can you share how your school approaches curriculum design?

- When these activities were designed, how are they intended to help students overcome external challenges

- What African Centered principles and terms are integrated into daily activities of students and how does it enhance the curriculum?

- A lot of authors, Colin, Locke, and Asante that have written or spoken of the importance of creativity relative to liberation. How is creativity (Kuumba) used in the classroom to enhance curriculum development? Please give specific examples.

- What are some of the ways that you have seen student ownership and selfethnic image develop though the African Centered model? Give specific examples.

- What continuing education is provided and how is it approached?

- Can you share more about the linkage your educational institution has established with the community? (Ujima)

- Could you share with me what you feel are some of your most meaningful educational experiences relative the African Centered Paradigm?