

HOW PARENTS INFLUENCE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS' DECISIONS TO PREPARE FOR VOCATIONAL TEACHING CAREERS

Jewel Evans Hairston

Bowling Green State University

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine how parents influence African American students' decisions to prepare for vocational teaching careers. Qualitative methodology addresses the research objectives. Twelve African American college students were interviewed to determine how parents influenced them to prepare for vocational teaching careers and specific vocational concentrations. The following five influences emerged: (a) desire to imitate parents' altruistic behavior and role as community contributors; (b) high academic and career expectations by parents; (c) parental support for academic and occupational endeavors; (d) parents providing early exposure to vocational subject matter and/or the teaching field, and (e) parents aiding in the discovery of aptitudes and interests in vocational subject matter. Implications for recruiting African American students are discussed.

The career choice process of young people can easily be compared to rocks in a rock polisher. "All kinds of people grind away at them...but, parents are the big rocks in the tumbler" (Otto, 1989, p. 2-3). Indeed, parents serve as major influences in the lives of their children (Otto, 1989). Of the factors that influence career choice processes, family members, particularly parents, are the most influential determinant of career plans, occupational aspirations, and occupational expectations (Hines, 1997; Lee, 1984; Leong, 1995; Parham & Austin, 1994). "Even if schools had the resources with which to meet young people's career guidance needs, neither teachers nor counselors can replace the influence parents have on their sons and daughters career plans" (Otto, 1989, p. 1-3).

Although the literature is replete with factors influencing the career choice processes of individuals from various races and nationalities, research highlighted the influence and support of significant others as foremost factors in the career choices of African Americans (Kimbrough & Salomone, 1993; Parham & Austin, 1994). African American parents, specifically, serve as major influences that define the career choices of African American youngsters (Leong, 1995; Parham & Austin, 1994).

Teaching is a career that is widely available for African Americans today. Extreme shortages, however, exist within many teaching concentrations. A specific need for vocational teachers exists where there is an over-representation of African American students and an under-representation of African American teachers (Irvine, 1988; Newby, Newby, Smith & Miller, 1995; Riviera-Batiz, 1995). The shortage of African American vocational teachers becomes more evident when one considers that only 2% of African Americans in the United States are preparing to become vocational teachers. Additionally, African American vocational educators constitute a mere 7% of secondary faculty members and 5% of post-secondary faculty members (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1994). Discerning the influence of African American parents over their children's career choices may be useful for addressing this long-standing shortage.

The vocational teacher shortage is extensive; thus, finding solutions that will lead to solving the problem are imperative. Identifying adequate solutions may derive from identifying the influences of African Americans who enter teaching careers. If parents serve as major influences in the career choice processes of African American children, their influence may provide key determinants behind motivations to enter the specific field of vocational teaching. Thus, the focus of this study is to determine how parents or parental caretakers influence African American students' to prepare for vocational teaching careers.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Career choice theory provides roadmaps for interpreting career choice processes. Many well-known career choice theories, however, fail to directly address the career behavior of ethnic minority groups, particularly African Americans (Leong, 1995; Osipow, 1983; Roe, 1956). The major criticism of many influential theories that focus on parental influences and career choice processes embody a lack of concept focus relevant to African American career choice processes (Leong, 1995). Very often, African Americans are treated as a homogeneous group with little consideration being made for intra-group differences. This practice typically confounds the effects of race, gender, culture, and class. Additionally, racial differences in African American cultures are often compared with the characteristics of Whites who are typically considered the norm in American society. In this comparison, the racial differences of African Americans are frequently treated as deficiencies with little caution exercised to positively elucidate the observed difference (Ponterotto, 1988; Simpson, 1996).

Because most traditional career choice theories lack emphasis for African Americans, a review of relevant literature may provide a meaningful knowledge base for interpreting this phenomenon. To date, much of the research addressing African American parental influence focused on career aspirations. Generally, parents' career aspirations aid children in selecting occupational goals, influence their knowledge of occupations, and familiarize them with occupational roles and requirements. Whether the child internalizes those aspirations is greatly determined by numerous values found within the home. The occupational orientations of parents familiarize children with occupational roles, while the value orientations of parents provide the learning environment that motivates the aspirations of children (Lee, 1984). The aspirations of African American parents specifically provide powerful influences over their children's career choices (Dawkins, 1989). This influence may be due to the close social networks found within African American families (Riley, 1995). Furthermore, the perceptions of African American parental expectations exert greater influences on the career aspirations of their children than do individuals of other cultures (Evans, 1976; Fields, 1981).

Upon analyzing the specific roles of parents in this process, the literature clearly identified mothers as the most influential parent (Bracey, 1992; Dawkins, 1989; Fields, 1981; Simpson, 1996). In early adulthood, many African American children, particularly African American females (Bracey, 1992; King, 1993; Simpson, 1996) are influenced by the aspirations of their mothers. The employment status of mothers, as well as the mother-child relationship, influence the vocational outcomes of African American children (Bracey, 1992). African American mothers influence their children by establishing middle class values of hard work and responsibility, placing emphasis on education, maintaining high expectations, and introducing cultural values (Simpson, 1996). As opposed to mothers, fathers play more of a complimentary role in career decision-making (Schulenberg, Vondracek & Crouter, 1984).

A study by King (1993) specifically linked parental behavior to the career choice of teaching. In King's study, 53% of the participants identified mothers as very encouraging in their choice of teaching. Additionally, mothers in the study created a desire in their children to work with individuals of diverse family backgrounds, to be creative, and to feel that their abilities were well suited for teaching.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Because the shortage of vocational teachers is a prominent issue, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE) is assessing the state of the current vocational teacher shortage (Farrell, 1998). A search of the literature did not reveal current studies that focus on increasing the number of African American vocational teachers—a group that has much to contribute to the career preparation of a culturally diverse work force of the 21st century. African American teachers serve as cultural translators that help all children understand diversity. Additionally, because they provide a teaching perspective needed to produce an education for all students that contributes to achieving pride, equity, power, wealth and cultural continuity, as well as character development within the African American culture, their presence is needed in the vocational classroom (King, 1993).

If parents are identified as the number one influence on African American children's educational and career planning decisions (Orfield & Paul, 1995), further research may be useful in determining how African American parents influence the specific career choices of their youngsters (Leong, 1995). Therefore, studying the singular influence of parents or parental caretakers on vocational teaching career goals will make a contribution to career development literature while simultaneously seek solutions to the African American vocational teacher shortage.

The following served as research objectives of the study:

1. Identify how parents or parental caretakers influence African American students to prepare for vocational teaching careers
2. Identify how parents or parental caretakers influence African American students to select specific vocational teaching concentrations.

METHOD

Participants in the study were enrolled in vocational licensure programs at six universities in two southeastern states. All programs were accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The six universities included in the study maintained enrollments of 6,000 to 25,000 students; three were Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and three were Traditionally White Institutions (TWIs).

The qualitative nature of the study necessitated the selection of respondents who could provide useful data for addressing the research objectives. To purposefully select a small homogeneous group that would provide rich responses to the interview questions, initial selection criteria were established. I sought African American respondents who showed promise for graduating from a vocational teacher licensure program and who were most likely to enter a vocational teaching career after graduation. Thus, respondents were selected based on the following criteria: (a) junior or senior year status in an accredited vocational licensure program; (b) nomination by the department chair who observed the student's interest in a vocational teaching career and was confident of the student's program completion; and (c) acceptable academic standing determined by grade reports held by department chairs. Respondents were preparing to teach in the vocational program areas of agricultural education, business education, marketing education, technology education, trade and industrial education, and work and family studies education.

Fifty-one African American respondents met the initial criteria for the study. Another criteria for the study, individuals who attributed their vocational teaching career choice to parental or parental caretaker influence, also needed to be determined. A questionnaire was developed for this purpose. A panel of professional peers reviewed each questionnaire item to determine that all questions facilitated identification of participants who met this second criterion. The questionnaire also included demographic questions that would allow me to contact individuals for follow-up interviews. Using this questionnaire, the 51 participants were asked to identify the greatest personal influence that led to vocational teacher preparation. This question helped determine who had been mostly influenced by parents or parental caretakers to prepare for vocational teaching careers. Of the 51 participants selected for the study, 41 returned the questionnaire. Those who did not mention parents as their single greatest influence were not retained for the study. Eighteen participants identified parents as their greatest influence for preparing for vocational teaching careers. Of the 18 respondents, 12 were willing to participate in the study. Seven respondents from the pool were male, five respondents were female. Ages ranged from 20 to 29 years. Six of the respondents attended HBCUs and six attended TWIs. Two respondents were interviewed from each of the six vocational program areas.

To allow a holistic view of the phenomenon under study, I used qualitative research methodology (Patton, 1990) to collect data from the 12 remaining respondents. Patton noted that qualitative data consists of detailed descriptions of events, situations, interactions, and observed behaviors, as well as direct quotes from individuals about their beliefs, experiences, attitudes, and thoughts. One-on-one interviews with open-ended interview questions allowed me to ascertain personal perceptions and interpretations of how parents influenced African American students to prepare for vocational teaching careers.

During the interviews, respondents were asked to respond to the following questions: (a) How did your parents influence your decision to prepare for a career as a vocational teacher? and (b) How did your parents influence your decision to select your specific vocational concentration? Probing questions were included but are not specifically stated because they differed slightly depending upon how respondents addressed the two main questions of the study. Probing questions focused on the parent-child interactions and the experiences parents provided during childhood that potentially influenced respondents to choose vocational teaching careers and specific vocational teaching concentrations. For example, several respondents were asked to elaborate on a specific item purchased by a parent or a memorable activity or experience shared with parents that influenced their vocational teaching career choice.

Respondents were interviewed at predetermined campus locations. Each respondent was assured confidentiality verbally and in writing. The one-on-one, audio and video taped interviews lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Respondents validated transcribed interview data by verifying that their thoughts and actions were accurately represented.

To develop a trustworthy study, it was necessary to establish credibility, transferability, and confirmability of the data, the data interpretations, and the conclusions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To ensure credibility, data collection methods were triangulated because “no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival cause factors. Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observation must be employed” (Denzin, 1978, p. 28). Triangulation was accomplished using audio taped interviews, video taped observations, and respondent verification of transcribed data. Transferability was established by providing “thick descriptions” (p. 279) of findings for determination of their appropriateness in other settings. Confirmability was insured by clearly outlining the data collection methods, and withholding interview tapes, records of data analysis, and transcripts for any necessary reanalyses (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The transcribed data were initially analyzed using NUDIST software. The NUDIST software program facilitated the division of transcribed text into smaller units of information. This allowed me to attach codes to the units then locate those units that were commonly coded. The transcribed data were fractured and reassembled in different combinations. Data were further analyzed and refined according to the constant comparative method (Silverman, 1993). As units of data were analyzed, they were continuously compared to and against other units including the unit itself. This process allowed me to ascertain the meaning of data, generate additional questions, and develop new categories in the study. Ultimately, it allowed me to confidently identify the five parental influences presented as results.

RESULTS

Five parental influences emerged from the data: (a) desire to imitate parents' altruistic behavior and role as community contributors, (b) high academic and career expectations by parents, (c) parental support in academic and occupational endeavors, (d) parents providing early exposure to vocational subject matter and/or the teaching field, and (e) parents aiding in the discovery of aptitudes and interests in vocational subject matter. The first three influences led respondents to prepare for vocational teaching careers and address the first research question of the study. Respondents discussed the parental influences that led them to prepare for the career of teaching in general, as well as vocational teaching specifically. The remaining two influences led respondents to enter specific vocational teaching concentrations and address the second research question of the study. Respondents discussed how those influences affected their decision to prepare for specific vocational concentrations. Results pertaining to the five influences are presented in the following sections.

DESIRE TO IMITATE PARENTS' ALTRUISTIC BEHAVIOR AND ROLE AS COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTORS

Respondents shaped this theme by discussing how their parents' roles as community contributors influenced their desires to give to others through the general career of teaching, as well as through the specific teaching concentration of vocational education. Feelings of pride were evident as respondents referred to the numerous contributions of their parents within local communities. Consistent references to parents' community contributions through work, church, social, and

civic organizations highlighted the impact of these contributions. Like their parents, respondents were eager to make notable contributions to the community. More than a third of respondents expressed they could contribute to the community by becoming vocational teachers. For example, after discussing the contributions of a mother to a local elementary school, a work and family studies student indicated that vocational education was a way to make direct community contributions: “My mother was always doing something in our local community...I feel being in work and family studies allows me to indirectly work in a capacity where I can make contributions to local areas around the school.”

As students acknowledged the altruistic nature of parents, they appeared to tap into their personal desires of benevolence. Respondents acknowledged their parents’ roles as helpers then cited their personal desires to help children through teaching. Approximately one-fourth of respondents indicated that vocational education, more than other subject areas, would provide opportunities to help others because of the natural tie between vocational subject areas and community involvement. Furthermore, giving back to other African American students was identified as a very attractive quality of vocational teaching.

HIGH ACADEMIC AND CAREER EXPECTATIONS BY PARENTS

This theme derived from parental expectations regarding educational endeavors, academic achievement, and career goal success. Respondents consistently recalled parents pushing them to earn outstanding grades as opposed to being content with average grades. Expectations of academic achievement affected respondent’s perceptions of their vocational teaching career goals. Furthermore, expectations of outstanding grades made respondents set high personal expectations during the teacher preparation process. Because parents expected them to excel during vocational teacher preparation, they diligently worked to achieve the career goal of vocational teaching. An agricultural education student recalled how his father pushed him to achieve academic success and discussed how it affected his attitude to achieve as he prepared for a vocational teaching career:

I got my first “C” when I was in the sixth grade. I was like, ‘Well Dad, all the rest of the kids have “Cs.” He said, “Yeah, well you see, you’re not going to be a dumb black child. You’re gonna strive. We don’t have any dumb people in our family, and we’re not going to start now.” I won’t forget that. From that day, I’ve been striving ever since.

According to Sanders (1997) many African American parents engage in positive racial socialization with their children and emphasize the importance of hard work, a good education, and racial pride for survival in society. Because of high academic expectations, respondents displayed determination to excel during the vocational teacher preparation process. Respondents believed that their parents viewed academic success as key to occupational success and perceived academic success as increasing their chances of successfully becoming vocational teachers.

PARENTAL SUPPORT IN ACADEMIC AND OCCUPATIONAL ENDEAVORS

All respondents in the study indicated a sense of parental support for their vocational teaching career choice—support that strongly encouraged them to seek and complete pursuits in the field of vocational teaching. Respondents’ indicated that career choice apprehensions were eased when parents approved of their decisions to prepare for vocational teaching careers. Furthermore, parental support indicated career choice approval and elicited expressions of pride among respondents as they witnessed their parents’ esteem for vocational teaching. Parental support was

additionally motivating when parents showed interest, support, and involvement in respondents' vocational student organization activities.

Mothers were cited as particularly influential because they provided support that eased respondents' apprehensions about vocational teacher preparation. This finding adds to myriad literature citing the strong influence of mothers on the career choice of children (Bracey, 1992; Dawkins, 1989; Fields, 1981; Simpson, 1996). Many respondents shared the feeling of one work and family studies education student who indicated, "My mother encouraged me when school was hard and told me to hang in there because I would do just fine... I really couldn't have done it without her."

PARENTS PROVIDING EARLY EXPOSURE TO VOCATIONAL SUBJECT MATTER AND/OR THE TEACHING FIELD

It became initially evident that exposure to the field of teaching in general often related to preparing for vocational teaching specifically. Thus, this theme was based on teaching-related and/or vocationally-related experiences gained during childhood. Vocationally-related experiences are those that can be associated with specific vocational concentrations.

Respondents with parent educators were strongly influenced to enter teaching. Their parents helped them gain an understanding of the field through direct, frequent, and early exposure to the profession. At a young age, respondents developed an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and lifestyles of a teacher and eventually began to consider teaching. One respondent preparing to become a marketing teacher explained, "...just hanging out around my mother's school, just getting a feel for what teachers do, I liked it...That whole background and involvement made me kind of interested in teaching."

Respondents were introduced to vocationally-related experiences during early ages. All respondents entered the specific vocational concentration they associated with the experiences they shared with parents during childhood. They remembered the first childhood experience with a parent, the first childhood responsibility obtained from a parent, or the first toy purchased by a parent that created initial interests in vocational subject areas.

The simultaneous introduction by parents to vocationally-related activities and to the general career of teaching was extremely influential. Herein lies the link between the choice of the general field of teaching and the choice of vocational teaching specifically. The notion of being surrounded by the teaching profession, intermingled with exposure to vocational activities, lead respondents to an understanding of teaching as well as to an understanding of vocational content. An agricultural education student recalled experiences with his parent educator that influenced him to prepare for a vocational teaching career in agricultural education:

Dad, he always surrounded me with some kind of farming activity. At two or three I would ride out with my dad and feed cattle, play with the little baby calves, just do different things... He (dad) always had me traveling around with his students to different Future Farmers of America (FFA) contests. He would take me up to the meeting at the (state) Department of Agriculture when I was 12 years old... I was always surrounded by it (agriculture) in some shape or form.

King (1993) found that early discussion about teaching as a career choice was one of the most influential factors affecting a career choice of teaching. King indicated, "The more familiar an individual is with the requirements and rewards of the work world, the better equipped they are to make a career choice" (p. 204).

PARENTS AIDING IN DISCOVERY OF APTITUDES AND INTERESTS RELATED TO VOCATIONAL SUBJECT MATTER

Respondents were strongly influenced to teach vocational subjects when parents encouraged pursuits of activities associated with vocational concentrations. From there, students began to discover aptitudes for technical areas within specific vocational concentrations. Respondents who discovered strengths and interests in the hands-on aspects of vocational subject matter with their parents were interested in continuing those interests later in life. A technology education student recalled how his grandfather (his parental caretaker) influenced his decision to focus on the specific concentration of technology education by providing access to technology based activities:

I was always into hands-on activities. Taking stuff apart when I was little... Sometimes we (grandfather and I) would have contests to see who could put things together the fastest. I realized I was good with that kind of stuff... When I was deciding on what type of job that I wanted to do, I was considering that.

IMPLICATIONS

In this study, parents or parental caretakers helped develop interests in vocational teaching careers and specific vocational concentrations. Parents accomplished this by serving as role models who enhanced the altruistic desires of respondents, supported respondents' decisions to pursue vocational teaching careers, set high achievement goals that would allow respondents to complete the teacher preparation process, and introduced the positive aspects of teaching and vocational subject matter at a young age. Additionally, parents involved children in hands-on learning experiences, provided opportunities that nurtured interests in vocational subject matter, and created environments that nurtured the discovery of aptitudes for vocational content.

Although the goal of this study was to determine the influence of parents on their children's decisions to prepare for vocational teaching careers specifically, respondents made numerous references to parents influencing their decisions to become teachers in general. It is important to note that the desire to teach in general and the desire to teach vocational subjects specifically is not mutually exclusive. For some respondents, parents influenced their desires to become teachers before they discovered a specific vocational subject area. For other respondents, parents fostered love for a specific vocational subject prior to influencing their decision to prepare for teaching. In any respect, the choice to prepare for a career in vocational teaching was attributable to the positive experiences, and to the overall support and encouragement provided by parents. Much can be learned from the positive career influences of parents in this study. The behaviors displayed by these parents should be mimicked in vocational educational environments frequented by young African American students. For example, those individuals who work closely with African American students in vocational settings should support student's decisions to enroll in vocational courses and should cultivate learning environments that foster student success.

To support the possible career choice of vocational teaching during years when students are making career choices, the parent-child interactions and learning environments fostered by parents should

be duplicated specifically by those who closely interact with African American students such as vocational educators, guidance counselors, administrators, and college and school system recruitment personnel. These individuals should interact with African American students on a personal level while exposing them to learning activities, projects, and co-curricular activities that will help identify interests, abilities, and aptitudes for vocational subject matter. While doing so, vocational educators and personnel should exhibit a pedagogy of care and concern for African American students' personal and educational success.

The high expectations of parents in this study and the response it caused within respondents should motivate guidance counselors and teachers to set high academic standards and target academically successful students for vocational programs. Because children's perceptions of expectations affect their academic achievement (Gill & Reynolds, 1996), parents, vocational educators, and administrators should expect students to perform well in vocational classes.

Based upon respondent's reverence for their parent's community contributions and the altruistic desires it tweaked, it is beneficial to highlight the community development potential of vocational teaching. Vocational student organizations provide specific implications for community outreach and should be used as a tool for attracting African American students to the profession. Additionally, vocational programs at the secondary and post-secondary levels should be promoted by emphasizing participation in co-curricular organization activities.

In summary, all parental influences derived from this study have implications for vocational education. These influences, which include parents serving as role models of altruism, parental support for career goal achievement, high grade expectations, introductions to the positive aspects of teaching and vocational subject matter, parents involving children in hands-on learning experiences, and the creation of environments that nurture the discovery of vocational content are all important in creating interest in vocational education and vocational teaching. Each factor serves as a necessary element that creates excitement in vocational subject matter and incites desires to be a part of vocational teaching. It may not be possible to duplicate all of the parental influences presented in this study, but emphasizing and utilizing these influences may provide ways to motivate African Americans to become vocational teachers and may provide answers to alleviating the shortage of African American vocational teachers.

REFERENCES

- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (1994). *Teacher education pipeline III: Schools, colleges, and departments of education enrollments by race, ethnicity, and gender*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 369 780)
- Bracey, G. W. (1992). Predicting school success for at-risk children. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 74(2), 104-117.
- Dawkins, M. P. (1989). The persistence of plans for professional careers among blacks in early adulthood. *Journal of Negro Education*, 58(2), 220-233.
- Denzin, N. K. (1978). *Sociological methods*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Evans, C. (1976). *Significant other influence and career decisions: Volume I. black and white male urban youth*. Ohio: National Center for Vocational Education Research. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 159 332)

Farrell, G. (1998, September). Voc. ed. teacher recruitment at crisis level nationwide. *Education Daily*, 31(182), 1&3.

Fields, B. A. (1981). Some influences upon the occupational aspirations of three white-collar ethnic groups. *Adolescence*, 16(63), 663-684.

Gill, S., & Reynolds, A. J. (1996, August). *Role of parent expectations in the school success of at risk children*. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavior Development, Quebec, Canada.

Hines, M. S. (1997, March). *Factors influencing persistence among African American upperclassmen in natural science and science related majors*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Irvine, J. J. (1988). An analysis of the problem of the disappearing black educator. *Elementary School Journal*, 88(5), 503-514.

Kimbrough V. D., & Salomone, P. R. (1993). African Americans: Diverse people, diverse career needs. *Journal of Career Development*, 19(4), 265-279.

King, S. H. (1993). The limited presence of African American teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 63(2), 115-149.

Lee, C. L. (1984). An investigation of the psychosocial variables in the occupational aspirations and expectations of rural black and white adolescents: Implication for vocational education. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 17(3), 28-440.

Leong, F. T. L. (1995). *Career development and vocational behavior of racial and ethnic minorities*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Newby, D., Smith, G., Newby, R., & Miller, D. (1995). The relationship between high school students' perceptions of teaching as a career and selected background characteristics: Implications for attracting students of color to teaching. *The Urban Review*, 27(3), 235-249.

Orfield, G., & Paul, F. G. (1995). *High hope and long odd: A major report on Hoosier teens and the American dream*. Indianapolis, IA: Indiana Youth Institute. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 378 463)

Osipow, S. H. (1983). *Theories of career development* (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Otto, L. B. (1989). *How to help your child choose a career*. Florida: State Department of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 336 506)

Parham, T. A., & Austin, L. A. (1994). Career development and African Americans: A contextual reappraisal using the nigrescence construct. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 44*(2), 139-154.

Silverman, D. (1993). *Interpreting qualitative data*. London: Sage Publications.

Simpson, G. (1996). Factors influencing the choice of law as a career by black women. *Journal of Career Development, 22*(3), 197-209.