

Factors Influencing African Americans To Select Teaching Careers
In Vocational Education
And Experiences That Relate To Their Progress
In Vocational Teacher Licensure Programs

by

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(ABSTRACT)

There is currently a shortage of African American vocational teachers. If the shortage is to be averted, vocational professionals must find ways to increase the number of African American teachers in vocational education (Arnold & Levesque, 1992; Martinez, 1991; Young, 1989).

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influenced African Americans to become vocational teachers and to identify experiences related to their progress in vocational teacher licensure programs. Factors identified as influencing African Americans to select vocational teaching careers were linked with factors found in the O'Neil, Meeker, and Borger (1978) Sex Role Socialization and Career Decision-Making model.

This qualitative study consisted of structured interviews with 12 college students who were preparing to become vocational teachers. Students were interviewed at 6 campuses in 2 southeastern states. Students represented vocational programs in (a) agriculture education, (b) business education, (c) family and consumer sciences education, (d) marketing education, (e) trade and industrial education, and (f) technology education. Six of the students were from predominantly white universities and 6 students were from Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The findings of the study revealed that the most significant influences behind respondents choosing vocational teaching careers related to teacher role models, family support, altruism, the intangible benefits of teaching, and love for vocational professions. Most of the factors identified related to factors found in the O'Neil et al. (1978) model. A factor, entitled the Spritual Factor, emerged in addition to those identified in the original O'Neil et al. model. Positive relationships with knowledgeable faculty, supportive peers, active participation in vocational organizations, and confidence in academic preparation, enhanced the progress of students in vocational licensure

programs. All universities selected in the study shared similar elements. Students and faculty at HBCUs, however, tended to lean toward a student-centered focus while students and faculty at predominantly white universities tended to lean toward an academically-oriented focus.

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Chapter I

Introduction

It may be difficult to imagine being the only teacher of color employed at a school for ten years or more. It may be as difficult to imagine graduating from high school as a student of color and never experiencing lessons from a teacher of the same race or culture. These experiences are quite real for a large number of African American teachers and students in today's society. Current literature indicates that African American teachers maintain a limited presence in the nation's educational work force. This situation constitutes a crisis in the teaching profession (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1989; Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Hunter-Boykin, 1992; King, 1993; Turner, 1996). The shortage of African American teachers extends throughout all fields of education. Vocational education is among the fields where a paucity exists (Arnold & Levesque, 1992; Martinez, 1991). It is necessary to find ways to alleviate the African American teacher shortage in vocational education, because the shortage is becoming more prevalent each year (Young, 1989). A research effort to increase the African American vocational teacher pool serves as the focus of this study.

The presence of African American teachers, and other teachers of color, is particularly important in vocational education. A dramatic impact on the changing ethnic and racial composition is occurring in the work force (Michael-Bandele, 1993). Demographers predict that by the year 2000, women and persons of color will comprise 80% of new labor force entrants (Newby, Smith, Newby & Miller, 1995). Vocational teachers are charged with the responsibility of successfully preparing the work force of the 21st century. This makes a larger African American teacher pool in vocational education particularly important.

Throughout the 1990s, teachers' cultural backgrounds continue to be very different from the cultural backgrounds of their students. Current statistics approximate that 31% to 34% of the nation's school population consists of students of color (Collison, 1996; Turner, 1996). Yet, only 7% to 13% of the nation's population consists of teachers of color (Collison, 1996; Snyder & Hoffman, 1995; Turner, 1996). The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1994) projects that by the year 2000, an average of 40% of the nation's students will be of color. By the same year, less than 5% of the nation's teachers will be of non-white races. Projections indicate these statistics have, and will continue to, bifurcate (Carnegie Forum, 1986; Irvin, 1990; Justiz & Kameem, 1990; Newby, Newby, Smith & Miller, 1995; Tewel & Trubowitz, 1987; Turner, 1996).

There is concern regarding the low numbers of African American professionals in vocational education (Arnold & Levesque, 1992; Martinez, 1991). Riviera-Batiz (1995) suggests that students of color are over-represented in secondary vocational programs. Yet, in 1991, only 2% of those preparing to become vocational teachers were African Americans (AACTE, 1994). African Americans constitute a mere 7% of the faculty at secondary institutions and 5% of the faculty at post-secondary institutions (Martinez, 1991). These statistics provide strong indications that efforts are needed to increase the number of teachers of color in vocational education.

Because a significant number of African American students do not fare well in traditional academic high school settings, vocational education will play an increasingly important role in providing career skills for African American youth. African American teachers can positively influence the attitudes of African American students toward learning, self-concept, and identification with society. This makes their presence in vocational education pertinent (Martinez, 1991). Ultimately, an African American teacher presence in vocational education will serve to help overcome growing social and economic concerns among this citizenry (Jennings, 1991; King, 1993).

Educational leaders should direct their attentions toward increasing the number of African American teachers within vocational education. This is currently an area in which they are underrepresented (Arnold & Levesque, 1992; Martinez, 1991, Young, 1989). By identifying factors that influence African Americans to become vocational educators and understanding their experiences during teacher preparation, one can take steps toward recruiting African Americans to this field. This study focuses on creating a framework that determines the influences on African Americans who become vocational teachers. In addition, it seeks to understand how their experiences in teacher-preparation programs affect their career decisions. Ultimately, this study will provide suggestions to help avert the African American teacher shortage in vocational education.

Negative Impacts of the African American Teacher Shortage

African American teachers are vital to the future of a culturally diverse work force. African American teachers' limited presence negatively affects culturally isolated white students whom society does not provide with learning opportunities from teachers of different ethnic backgrounds. The shortage of African American teachers reduces teacher role models who foster success in African American students (Arnold & Levesque, 1992). It renders them with an inability to show African American children that teaching is a viable profession and impedes their ability to serve as educational leaders (Arnold & Levesque, 1992; Justiz & Kameem, 1990; King, 1993; Martinez, 1991; Page & Page, 1984). Also, there is a greater chance for academic demise among students whose cultural characteristics are devalued or unrecognized (King, 1993). Dilworth (1990) noted that teachers of color bring an understanding of the backgrounds, attitudes, and experiences of various cultures. White teachers need teachers of color to gain an understanding of effective ways to communicate and deal with students of color. "Lee, Lomotey and Shujaa (1990) contend that an African American teaching perspective is needed to produce an education that contributes to achieving pride, equity, power, wealth, and cultural continuity (p. 47), as well as to advance character development within the context of the African American community and culture" (King, 1993, p. 117).

In a society of increased diversity, there are far-reaching implications for the decline of teachers of color (Justiz & Kameem, 1990). Because teachers are a primary source for the education of tomorrow's work force, it is necessary that they be active in the work force. Furthermore, because American society is diverse, it makes sense that the teaching force also be diverse (Michael-Bandele, 1993). Teachers of color must be present to serve as "cultural translators" (p. 2) that help all children understand diversity. The ability to work with diverse

cultures will be a necessary work skill for all Americans. The presence of African American teachers in vocational education will be pertinent to the attainment of this skill.

Theoretical Background

The O'Neil, Meeker, and Borger (1978) model of career decision-making (see Appendix C) provided the theoretical framework of this study. Like other career development models by education leaders such as Holland, Roe, and Super, the O'Neil et al. model does not focus on the career decision process of African Americans. In fact, the O'Neil et al. model is based on a cross-section of white high school, undergraduate, and graduate students. Parham and Austin (1994) attest that it is unnecessary to devise new career development theories based solely on African Americans. Instead, they suggest existing theories can be recognized, extended, and reframed to encompass an African American perspective. In addition, O'Neil et al. (1978) suggested that this model could be extended to other audiences. The O'Neil et al. model comprises factors found to be critical in the career decision process. Because of this, I linked the O'Neil et al. model with an African American career-choice perspective through African and African American psychological and sociological literature. This link helped form the theoretical base of the research. In addition, the model provided a framework for developing an understanding how African Americans make career decisions and why African Americans choose to become vocational teachers. Studies that link the O'Neil et al. model with an African American career-choice perspective are discussed in the literature review.

O'Neil et al. define a career decision as a process where the occurrence of a specific career selection becomes more probable than any of its alternatives (Brown-West, 1990). Researchers found that multiple factors play a role in the career decision process (Harren, 1979; Osipow, 1973). The O'Neil et al. model indicates that six major factors and 22 sub-factors are major determinants in the process. They identify the six major factors in the model as (a) the Familial Factor, (b) the Individual Factor, (c) the Societal Factor, (d) the Socioeconomic Factor, (d) the Situational Factor, and (e) the Psychosocial-Emotional factor. O'Neil et al. found each of the six factors to be attributable variables in career choice processes. Even though these factors are not all inclusive, they tend to affect career decision-making (O'Neil et al., 1978). Elements of the O'Neil et al. career decision-making model are:

1. Familial Factors include the family's attitude regarding career choices. They also include an individual's childhood experiences as well as maternal and paternal role models.
2. Societal Factors include the values, attitudes, and practices society places on various career choices. Educational experiences, peer group influences, and depiction of the mass media make up this factor.
3. Situational Factors involve unpredictable situations that shape career choices. They include the elements of chance and the course of least resistance.
4. Socioeconomic-Economic Factors relate to society's economic condition, and social, racial, and ethnic group membership. This factor includes sex discrimination, and the supply and demand of jobs.
5. Individual Factors involve those things individuals expect of themselves, as well as their abilities, interest, attitudes, and need to achieve.

6. Psychosocial-Emotional Factors are defined as problem areas that can restrict, limit, or influence career development. They involve the fear of failure, fear of success, lack of confidence, lack of assertiveness, and role conflict (O'Neil et al., 1978).

The six major factors and the 22 sub-factors that make up the O'Neil et al. model served as the theoretical base of the research. The model created an understanding of how individuals make career decisions. I used the model as a basis for determining factors that influence African Americans to become vocational teachers. The model served as the source for determining the factors that influence the career decisions of African Americans in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Additionally, the O'Neil et al. model served as the basis for determining interview questions and establishing research categories.

African Americans' Reasons for Entering and Not Entering Teaching Professions

As the turn of the century nears, the career opportunities available to African Americans increase tremendously. African Americans are aware of the numerous career opportunities and are deciding to choose careers that provide promising futures (King, 1993; Brown, 1991). Business and management professions are among the hottest career choices for African Americans who are entering the work force. Teaching is among the least popular career choices (U.S. Department of Education and National Center for Education Statistics, 1995). Furthermore, those African Americans who are choosing to teach are not seeking endorsements in vocational education (AACTE, 1989).

The literature cites several reasons African Americans do not enter teaching professions. Among the leading reasons are decreases in the number of African Americans entering and completing college and decreases in the number of African Americans declaring education as a major. Other reasons include the availability of alternate career choices that provide greater career advancement and higher salaries, and the institutionalization of teacher competency testing (Haberman, 1989; Hunter-Boykin, 1992; Irvine, 1988; Justiz & Kameem, 1990; King, 1993; Larke & Larke, 1995; Page & Page, 1984; Tewel & Trubowitz, 1987).

Among the reasons for choosing to enter teaching professions include desire to give back to the community, desire to work with children, desire to serve as role models, the influence of significant others and former teachers, and desire for time off and increased job stability (Gordon, 1993; King 1993; Newby, Smith, Newby & Miller, 1995; Toppin & Levine, 1992).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influence African Americans to select vocational teaching careers and to identify the experiences related to their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Factors that influence African Americans to select vocational teaching careers relate to factors identified in the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making. Factors identified in the model pose as a guide for understanding African American career choice processes. Because O'Neil et al. identify specific factors that shape career development processes, their model serves as a foundation leading to an understanding of the ways African Americans choose vocational teaching careers.

Researchers stress the need for more inquiry regarding factors that influence the career decisions of African Americans (Irvine, 1988; Osipow, 1983; Parham & Austin, 1993). This concern extends to African American vocational professionals in both secondary and post-

secondary settings (Arnold & Levesque, 1992; Martinez, 1991; Young, 1989). There is currently no research that directly addresses the factors that influence African Americans to become vocational teachers. Results from this study will be used to develop a framework for attracting African Americans to the profession.

Hunter-Boykin (1992) states “America needs more qualified college-educated teachers from both its white and black colleges and universities if it is to avert the impending shortage of teachers” (p.485). For this reason, I researched the experiences of African Americans as they prepare to become vocational educators at both historically black and predominantly white universities. The experiences of African Americans during vocational teacher preparation are important to this research effort. Insight into both the influences and experiences of African Americans who are making career decisions may create a comprehensive framework for understanding why African Americans choose vocational teaching careers and the experiences that lead them to vocational teacher certification. This research effort will help narrow current gaps in the literature regarding this subject.

Research Questions

The following research questions posed as a guide for the study. They helped to formulate, but not constrain the study:

1. What were the factors that influenced African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers?
2. How did the factors that influenced African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers relate to the O’Neil, Meeker, and Borger career decision-making model?
3. What were the experiences that enhanced the progress of African Americans who are currently involved in vocational teacher-preparation programs?
4. How did experiences in vocational education teacher-licensure programs at predominantly white and historically black colleges and universities vary between students at the two types of institutions?

Definitions

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): “Accredited institutions of higher education established prior to 1964 with the principle mission of educating black Americans” (Snyder & Hoffman, 1995, p. 496).

Licensure: The process, set forth by the Board of Education, that prescribes the certification requirements for individuals to become teachers. Teachers and other school personnel are licensed to maintain standards of professional competence (Virginia Department of Education, 1993).

NCATE Accreditation: Schools accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education volunteering to undergo rigorous evaluations of teacher education programs. These schools have been judged by guidelines authorized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Commission on Recognition of Post-secondary Accreditation. Institutions that receive this national accreditation have demonstrated excellence in the design and delivery of instruction, faculty qualifications, supervision of clinical experiences, advisory and counseling services, student admissions, and adequate and up-to-date resources. NCATE accredited schools equip

teachers with the skills necessary to make them successful within their chosen field (Wise, 1994-95).

Race/ethnicity: “Categories used to describe groups to which individuals belong, identify with, or belong in the eyes of the community. The categories do not denote scientific definitions of anthropological origins. A person may be counted in only one group” (Brown-West, 1990, p. 4).

African American: “Any person of African descent who was born in the United States or became a naturalized citizen of the United States” (Yates-Meniffee, 1992, p. 23). African Americans are identified as a subgroup of people of color. Because of the history of African American literature, the researcher uses this term interchangeably with black.

Black: “A person having origins in any of the black racial groups in Africa. Normally exclude persons of Hispanic origin” (Snyder & Hoffman, 1995, p. 499). For the purpose of this study, the researcher uses this term interchangeably with African American.

People of color: “African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American racial groups” (Michael-Bandele, p. iv, 1993).

White: “A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East. Normally excludes persons of Hispanic origin” (Snyder & Hoffman, 1995, p. 499).

Vocational education: “Organized educational programs, services, and activities that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for paid or unpaid employment, or for additional preparation for a career, requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree” (Snyder & Hoffman, 1995, p. 502). For the purpose of this study, vocational education fields include: Agricultural Education, Business Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Marketing Education, Technology Education, and Trade and Industrial Education.

Delimitations and Limitations

1. This study is delimited to three historically black universities and three predominantly white universities in two southeastern states.

2. This study is delimited to African Americans in the following six vocational programs: agricultural education, business education, family and consumer sciences education, marketing education, technology education, trade and industrial education.

3. Due to the qualitative nature of the study, a small number of individuals were selected as respondents. Any conclusions formed are based on findings from a limited number of respondents. Attempts will not be made to generalize to a larger population.

4. This study is limited to information gathered from open-ended interview questions. Data analysis is based on the assumption that the information is trustworthy. Participants may bias interview information in attempts to please the researcher. Some individuals may not provide candid responses or may be unwilling to provide personal information about past educational experiences.

5. Due to the limited availability of respondents, those selected for the study were not equally gender balanced.

Significance of Study

Factors that influence African Americans to become vocational teachers are not addressed by prior research. In fact, studies are limited regarding African American vocational teachers and administrators (Arnold & Levesque, 1992). The National Association for the Advancement of Black Americans in Vocational Education (NAABAVE) surveyed fifty states regarding the employment status of African American vocational educators. Limited information was found regarding African American employment in vocational administrative and teaching positions. Of the studies concerning minority vocational teachers, findings conclude that African Americans are underrepresented as vocational teachers (Young, 1989). African American high school and college vocational students are not taught by comparable numbers of African American vocational teachers. Arnold & Levesque (1992) state “Increasing the percentage of vocational teachers who are African American would provide needed role models and advisors for black vocational students. Further, these black teachers might be able to encourage black students from low socioeconomic backgrounds to participate in vocational education...” (p 76). Additionally, increasing the number of African American vocational instructors at post-secondary institutions may lead to greater participation among African American college students in vocational programs (Arnold & Levesque, 1992).

If there is a need to increase the African American teaching pool in vocational professions, one must direct attention to the factors that influence African Americans to enter the profession. One must also direct attention to the experiences of African Americans as they participate in vocational teacher-licensure programs. After identifying the influences and experiences behind African American career choices, educators can develop a working framework to attract African Americans to vocational teaching careers. Eventually, teachers can use educational settings to help increase the African American vocational teacher pool. Identifying factors and experiences of African Americans currently in vocational licensure programs may provide insights into the personal motivations of future African American vocational teachers.

Findings in this study are pertinent in allowing current teachers, teacher educators, admissions personnel, and counselors to gain a better understanding of effective recruitment processes for future African American vocational teachers. By understanding the influences behind African American career choices, and determining their experiences in preparing to become vocational teachers, one can arrive at the most effective methods of attracting African Americans to the field.

Findings from this study may extend to teacher educators as they gear curriculum and courses toward attracting this audience. Ultimately, this study will add to the body of knowledge regarding ways to avert the crisis of the African American vocational teacher shortage. According to the Hudson Institute (cited in Michael-Bandele, 1993), “The years ahead will demand an understanding of and an ability to interact people from varied cultural backgrounds. The ability to work effectively with diverse populations will be an essential work skill. The presence of teachers of color in the classroom is likely to contribute to the attainment of this skill” (p.2).

Summary

There is currently a shortage of African American teachers (AACTE, 1989; Brown-West, 1990; Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Hunter-Boykin, 1992; King, 1993; Turner, 1996). This shortage extends to vocational teaching fields. In vocational fields, an African American presence is particularly important due to the changing ethnic and racial compositions of the work force (Michael-Bandele, 1993). The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influence African Americans to select vocational teaching careers and to identify experiences related to their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Factors identified as influencing African Americans to select vocational teaching careers were linked with factors identified in the O'Neil et al. career decision-making model. This link was used to create an understanding of why African Americans chose to become vocational teachers and to develop a framework for attracting more African Americans to the profession.

If the shortage is to be averted, vocational professionals must find ways to increase the number of African American teachers within vocational education (Arnold & Levesque, 1992; Martinez, 1991; Young, 1989). Vocational educators must not only identify the factors that influence African Americans to become vocational teachers, but also must gain an understanding of the experiences that enhance their progress in vocational teacher-licensure programs. After gaining an understanding of both the influences and experiences of African Americans who become vocational teachers, vocational educators can concentrate on efforts to attract and retain African Americans in vocational licensure programs.

Chapter II Review of Literature

Career Development Theory

Work is an important element of human behavior. Through the years, it has been difficult to determine the manner in which individuals select various jobs and careers. Career development theory helps create an understanding of the variety of ways men and women make career decisions. Additionally, it serves as a basis for describing and discussing behavioral phenomena in an understandable fashion. Current theories of career development and career choice provide frameworks for future theories. Furthermore, they serve as fragments that create systems by which portions of human behavior integrate with specific human problems (Osipow, 1983).

Anne Roe, John Holland, and Donald Super are among the most noted contributors of career development theory. Their works are cited as foundations upon which new theories are formulated and developed. Even though none of their theories incorporate race significantly, researchers credit them with being cognizant of race as a factor in career development (Parham & Austin, 1994). Additionally, their studies help shape the theoretical base of this study.

A model of career decision-making by O'Neil et al. (1978) serves as the theoretical base of this study. Like Roe's, Holland's and Super's theories of career development, the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making is not based on an African American career-choice perspective. In fact, it is based on predominantly white high-school, undergraduate, and graduate students. One should note that this model does not specifically intend to provide a complete framework for understanding the career decision-making process for African Americans. It does, however, serve as a framework for building an understanding of the process. Parham and Austin (1994) maintain that it is unnecessary to devise new career development theories based solely on African Americans. Instead, they suggest existing theories can be recognized, extended, and reframed to encompass an African American perspective.

The O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making is based on previous theories of career development. Research by Holland, 1973; Roe, 1957; and Super, 1957 are included in aspects of the model (O'Neil, Ohlde, Toffelson & Pigott, 1980). The O'Neil et al. model includes six major factors and 22 sub-factors that affect an individual's career choice. This career decision-making model postulates that individual, societal, familial, socioeconomic, situational, and psychosocial-emotional factors affect career decision-making processes.

O'Neil et al. (1978) identify the major themes of the model as follows:

1. Familial Factors include the family's attitude regarding career choices. It includes an individual's childhood experiences as well as mother's and father's role models.
2. Individual Factors involve those things individuals expect of themselves, as well as their abilities, interests, attitudes, and need to achieve.
3. Societal Factors include the values, attitudes, and practices society places on various career choices. Educational experiences, peer group influences, and mass media depiction makes up this factor.
4. Socioeconomic Factors relate to society's economic condition, as well as social, racial, and ethnic group membership. This factor includes sex discrimination, and the supply and demand of jobs.

5. Situational Factors involve unpredictable situations that shape career choices. It includes the elements of chance and of taking the course of least resistance.

6. Psychosocial-Emotional Factors are defined as problem areas that can restrict, limit, or influence career development. It involves the fear of failure, the fear of success, the lack of confidence, the lack of assertiveness, and role conflict (O'Neil et al., 1978). The model is shown in Figure 1.

It is necessary to develop a link between the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making and African American culture. In order to create an understanding of the career decision-making process of African Americans in general, and specifically, the manner in which they choose careers in the field of vocational education. While developing this understanding, one must look at the cultural, racial, socioeconomic, social, and Individual Factors that affect the way African Americans make career decisions. This section of the literature discusses how internal and external influences shape the career decision processes of African Americans. Additionally, it links the O'Neil et al. model with an African American career-choice perspective.

African Americans tend to be influenced more by subjective indicators than objective indicators when choosing careers (Fisher & Griggs, 1995; Schulenberg, Vondracek & Crouter, 1984; Wilson & Allen, 1987). Because of cultural influences, African Americans are linked with the following characteristics:

1. Strong emphasis on collective work and responsibility (Karenga as cited in Riley, 1995).
2. High levels of personal efficacy (Wilson & Allen, 1984).
3. Emphasis on interdependence and affective orientations (Nobles, 1972; Boykin, 1983; Kimbrough & Salomone, 1983).
4. High educational aspirations.
5. Negative perceptions of the opportunity structure.
6. Influence by significant others when choosing careers.
7. The guidance of authority figures (Parham & Austin, 1994; Kimbrough & Salomone, 1993).

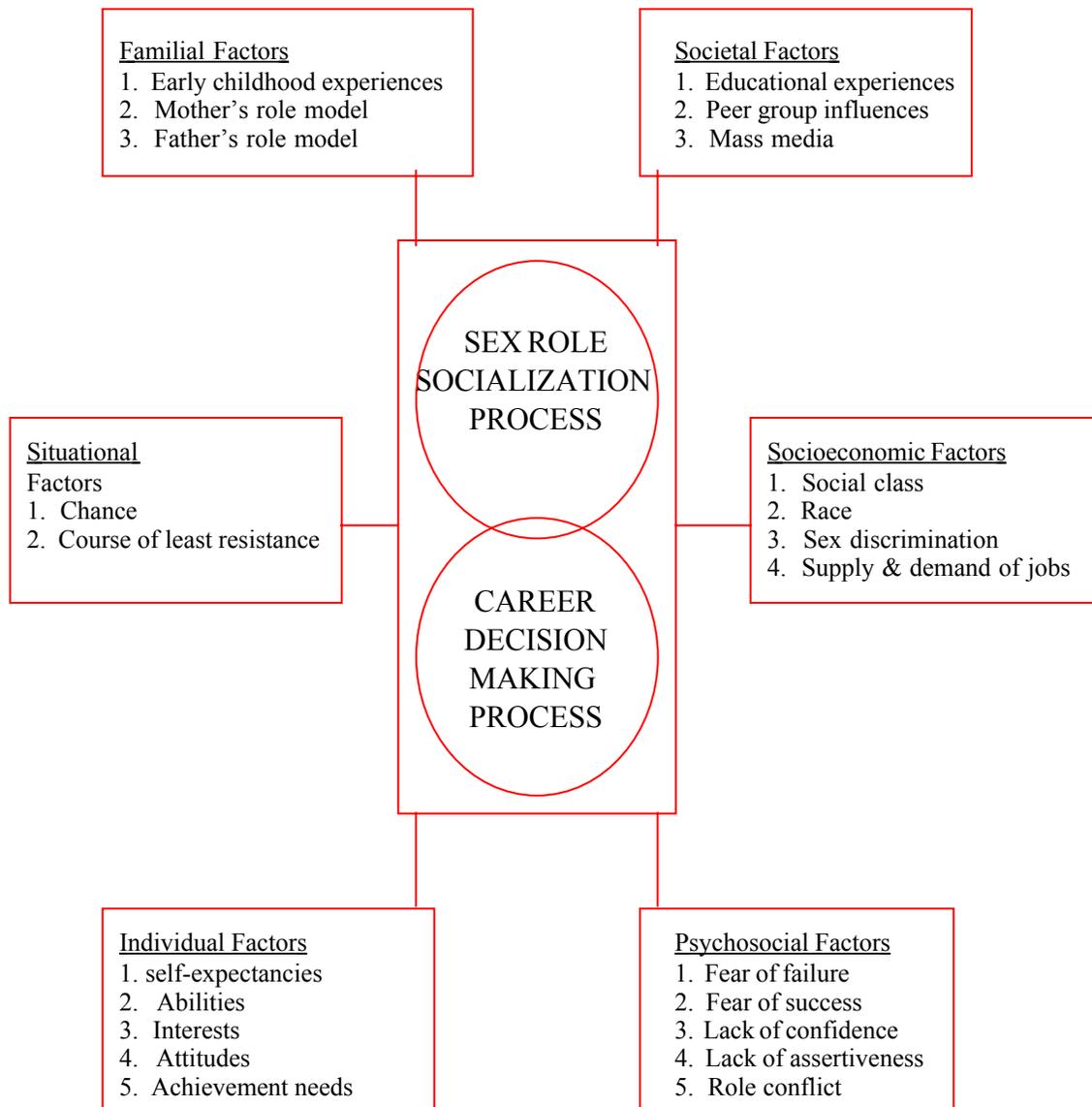


Figure 1. The O'Neil, Meeker, and Boger Model of Career Decision-Making, 1978. Factors Affecting the Sex Role Socialization and Career Decision-making Process by O'Neil, Meeker, and Boger, 1978.

Objective factors such as socioeconomic status, IQ, and parent's occupational status have less of an influence on African Americans' career development than subjective factors (Fisher & Griggs, 1995; Kerchoff & Campbell, 1977; Schulenberg et al., 1984). All the subjective factors listed are linked with aspects of the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making. These cultural dimensions should be explored for the racial and cultural implications they have for African Americans who are in the career decision-making process (Parham & Austin, 1994).

The Origins of African American Career Choice Behavior

The following discussion of African culture provides a link to the O'Neil et al. model. Much of the culture that exists within African American society is derived from African roots. African belief systems place great influence on the values, culture, educational experiences, and learning styles of African Americans (Boykin, 1983; Herskovitz, 1958). Arguments exist regarding the influence of African culture. Some argue that 250 years of slavery render African Americans with no distinct culture of their own (Hill, 1993). Others argue to the contrary. Herskovitz (1958) noted, "Negroes in the United States are not Africans, but they are descendants of Africans. There is no more theoretical support for a hypothesis that they have retained nothing of the culture of their African forebears, than for supposing that they have remained completely African in their behavior" (p. 145).

A strong cultural pattern that derives both from African roots, and from circumstances of racism and poverty is the kin help network (Stack, 1975). Explanations of the kin help network are necessary to understand the notion of interdependence, desires for collective work, and other attributes that are linked with African American culture (Karenga cited in Riley, 1995; Nobles, 1972). An understanding of the kin help network is also necessary for understanding how the familial, societal, and Socioeconomic Factors identified by O'Neil et al. may affect the career choices of African Americans.

Stack (1975) studied the kin help network and found it to be an extended cluster of people related through children, marriage, and friendship. The kin help network continues throughout African American families today and plays an important role in the socialization process of African American families (Burlew, Banks, McAdoo & Azibo, 1992; King, 1976). Ties, typically formed among women, are used to rally the domestic functions of feeding, clothing, and child care. The kin help network consists of immediate family members, extended family members, neighbors, teachers, and ministers, who work together to assure the survival and well-being of families within the community. It represents a pattern of interlocking mutual relationships that extend beyond family bonds. Families live in separate domestic units that function independently but are linked by an arrangement of shared help. The kin help network provides a strong explanation of the desire for interdependence and collective work found among African Americans (Riley, 1995). Without the kin help networks, high levels of interdependence, and collective work ideals, African Americans would have been unable to overcome the economical and social injustices they historically have endured in the United States (Burlew et al., 1992).

According to psychologist Madge Willis (cited in Burlew et al., 1992), high levels of interdependence are based on a pattern of cooperation that exists among African Americans. Cooperation, sharing, and working together are behaviors that have become survival strategies for

African Americans in a society of discrimination. Interdependence among African Americans is also a carryover from African society, where cooperation and communal life are social norms. These explanations can be linked to aspects of the socioeconomic factor identified in the O'Neil et al. factor.

Parham and Austin (1994) discussed works regarding value orientations of African Americans. They determined that a great commonality exists among authors researching this topic. Parham and Austin (1994) found that African Americans are more prone to collective work and group orientations. They also found that African Americans tend to be interdependent versus competitive, affectively oriented versus rationally oriented, and relationship oriented versus task oriented. Furthermore, they traced these specific findings to African principles (Karenga cited in Riley, 1995).

Haussler and Reiskin's (1995) study, focusing on the values that motivate multi-cultural students to choose careers, also found that most young students of color seek careers that allow them to be challenged and to help others. The notion of shared help is cited as a reason African Americans historically accord high rank and status to educators (Marable, 1993). As time passes, however, other professions are becoming more highly regarded than teaching (Irvine, 1988).

The link of African and African American culture is necessary to establish the roots of African American career behavior. In the sections that follow, specific factors found in the O'Neil et al. model are linked with an African American career-choice perspective.

Familial Factors

According to Blau and Duncan (1967), "Family life has important bearing on occupational life" (p. 410). Research credits African American families and parental role models with being foremost factors in the educational achievement of African Americans (Wilson & Allen, 1987). It is obvious from these statements that family has an important bearing on both the career development and educational decisions of African Americans. Because educational decisions often have a direct bearing on career decisions, it is necessary to discuss how Familial Factors affect both the educational and career aspirations of African Americans.

During the years when children are making educational and career decisions, levels of parental education seem to outweigh other variables (Bracey, 1992). Mothers' employment status and mother-child relationships provide major influences on the vocational outcomes of African American children. For women in particular, mothers seem to be working models of success from which daughters shape vocational choices. Daughters often gain knowledge of occupations through working mothers. Particularly, a mother's satisfaction with her occupational role affects the daughter's occupational aspirations. Fathers' roles tend to complement daughters' vocational choices (Schulenberg et al., 1984).

Racial and Familial Factors also play a role in the occupational aspirations of sons. In 1978, Hurst found that when socioeconomic status was considered for males, employed mothers had more effect on the vocational outcomes of males than unemployed mothers. Additional research indicated employed mothers tended to shape the sex role concepts of males (Schulenberg, et al, 1984).

In 1977, Kerchhoff and Campbell studied the antecedents of educational ambition in black and white twelfth grade boys of high and low socioeconomic status. Mothers' education levels served as a strong source of influence in goal setting. Kerchhoff and Campbell also found mother's influence to be significant even in families where the father was present. Seemingly, mothers play a more important role in goal setting among African Americans than among whites. The educational level of mothers in African American families is often higher than the educational level of fathers. This may explain the effect mothers have on educational and occupational attainments of African Americans.

Work by Wilson and Allen (1987) sought to find the effects of the family, school, society, and other mediating factors, on the educational attainment of young black adults. These factors guided Wilson and Allen's understanding of African Americans' educational attainment. Two-hundred and one young black adults were surveyed. In reporting on the influence of parents, findings showed mothers' encouragement to stay in school provided more influence than father's encouragement.

Research by Wilson and Allen (1987) showed that the influence of family members on educational attainment was mixed. Respondents whose mothers completed more years of school showed higher educational attainment. Furthermore, respondents whose mothers encouraged them to get better jobs had more years of schooling. Wilson and Allen's research did not find the influence of fathers, counselors, or teachers to significantly affect educational attainment. Overall findings suggest the major predictors of educational attainment are the patterns of courses taken, along with mothers' education and fathers' encouragement. The most significant finding from Wilson and Allen's research is that the educational attainment of African American mothers is significantly related to the educational attainment of children. Young adults with highly educated mothers complete the most years of school (Wilson & Allen, 1987).

Gwyned Simpson conducted a study to determine the factors that influence African American women to enter the law profession. A sample of 238 bar-certified African American women lawyers was used for the study. Findings showed that many of the women studied attributed success to the influences of a working mother role model. They indicated that working mothers had a profound influence on their career orientations and career behavior. Many of the women in the sample exhibited high levels of self-efficacy. They attributed this to the positive influence of teachers who believed they could achieve. Overall findings from the study indicated that family and cultural values, as well as positive role models, greatly impacted the career development process of African American women (Simpson, 1996).

According to King (1993), participants whose mothers had higher levels of educational attainment were likely to be attracted to teaching. In addition, 53% of the participants in King's study said that they had mothers who were very encouraging in their choice of a teaching career. King felt this finding indicated that the participants who came from families with mothers' possessing higher levels of educational attainment were attracted to teaching because of various family values instilled at home. Mothers' educational levels influenced participants' attraction to teaching. Additionally, it created a desire to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds, a desire to be creative, and a feeling that their abilities were well suited for teaching. Additionally, King felt mothers' educational level may have affirmed the abilities of participants.

Parham and Austin (1994) suggested that the notion of significant others having influence over the career choices of children is no new idea. The positive and negative career experiences in parents' lives have implicit and explicit lessons for the way children make career choices. Parents exert a great deal of influence over the career choices and academic majors of their children. In their studies, Parham and Austin found that African Americans tend to rate relatives, close friends, and African American counselors as preferred sources of help about academic and career concerns.

Newby, Smith, Newby, and Miller (1995) conducted a study to determine the influences high school students' background characteristics place on their perceptions of teaching as a career. In the study, Newby et al., administered "The Teaching as a Career Inventory" to 863 students of color. Findings indicated that females tend to value teaching more highly than males. Females also rated the profession as being more important than males did. Surprisingly, more males than females reported that significant others influenced their pursuits of a teaching career. Unlike the previous studies, Newby et al.'s overall findings showed that the majority of students sampled said no one influenced their decision to pursue teaching.

Societal Factors

O'Neil et al. identify Societal Factors as the values, attitudes, and practices that society relates to appropriate career choices. The educational experiences that shape African Americans' career paths are discussed in a later section of this literature review. The influence of peer groups and the media are discussed here.

Peer group influences among African Americans increased significantly within the past thirty years. In the early '50s, the influence of peers ranked fourth behind family, school, and church influences. The only factor ranked lower than peer influence was the influence of television. Television showed less influence on African Americans in the '50s because it was not invented until 1948. In the '80s, peer influence ranked number two, second only to family influence. In many families, peer influence ranks as the number one influence on children (Kujufuu, 1988).

According to Kujufuu (1988), African American youth spend more time watching television than European American and Asian American youth. African American youth spend an average of more hours per week watching television than European American youth spend. In addition, research reports African American males watch more television than members of any other racial, ethnic, or gender group (Harris, 1992). There are no findings, however, to suggest the media directly influences African Americans' choice of a career in vocational teaching.

Individual Factors

Individual Factors are identified by O'Neil et al. as an individual's need to achieve, along with their abilities, interests, and self-expectancies. Aspects of self esteem, educational aspiration, and personal efficacy provide clear indicators of the education and occupational attainment levels of African Americans (Schulenberg et al., 1984). African Americans have been unable to avoid the discriminatory practices of the work place. Additionally, the social structure invalidates the effects of socioeconomic background, educational attainment, and occupational status. With this being the case, African Americans' ability to succeed must be intrinsic (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Portes & Wilson, 1976). In view of the opportunity structure, it is evident that

whites have a greater chance of succeeding than African Americans. One can explain this by indications that African Americans and women are relative newcomers to the occupational hierarchy. This provides evidence that intrinsic factors become more important than extrinsic factors to the occupational process for African Americans (Schulenberg, et al., 1984).

Research by Kerchoff and Campbell (1977) concerning school influence indicated most African American students express strong senses of personal efficacy. Young African American adults possessing a strong sense of personal efficacy showed significantly higher educational attainment. Sixty-four percent of students surveyed in the Kerchoff and Campbell study indicated feeling they could successfully run their lives. Sixty-two percent thought it more advantageous to plan their educational future than to relying on luck. African Americans tend to regard education as highly as whites. In the aggregate, African American seniors and white seniors have the same desires to enroll in four-year colleges and obtain bachelor's degrees (Bracey, 1992).

In 1992, Griggs, Copeland, and Fisher studied factors that contribute to the academic and vocational development of African American and Latino youth. Data for this study were collected from junior and senior college students. Most of the participants indicated having high levels of control over vocational choices and tended to attribute career decisions to themselves as opposed to outside factors. Very few felt they chose careers based on fate or luck.

Fisher and Griggs (1995) conducted a study investigating the subjective factors influencing the career development of African American and Latino college students. Findings in this study were similar to those in the 1992 study. Of the students sampled, findings showed that the personal attributes that most influenced career choices were goal orientation and self confidence. Strong belief systems, shaped by family, religion, and personal reflection, were also identified as influencing career choice.

Socioeconomic Factors

O'Neil et al. identify Socioeconomic Factors as the social, racial, and economic factors that affect career choices. The socioeconomic status variable incorporates other variables such as paternal and maternal educational attainment, family income, paternal occupation, parental encouragement, values, and vocational maturity (Schulenberg et al., 1984). The work of Blau and Duncan (1967) is among the most noted regarding the impact of family background, socioeconomic status, and level of education on the adult occupation and income of males. Blau and Duncan's research led to the development of the status attainment model. This model closely relates family socioeconomic backgrounds, family structure, and racial and ethnic background, with educational and occupational attainment. Within the status attainment model, Blau and Duncan found that a family's socioeconomic status positively correlated with the educational and occupational attainment in males. In the broader social context, a family's socioeconomic status and ethnic membership influenced educational and vocational development. Blau and Duncan's research further showed, however, that African American males did not attain the occupational status of white males. Even when the family's socioeconomic background, educational attainment, and career beginnings were equal, the educational and occupational status attainments of African Americans and whites never matched.

One should note that much of Blau and Duncan's work data obtained in the early '60s, before the civil rights movement. Significant economic and government policy shifts have influenced the upward mobility of women and people of color. Furthermore, factors beyond the individual's control exert a great influence on job status. This makes Blau and Duncan's original model less applicable to minorities and women (Wilson & Allen, 1987). Furthermore, the generalizability of their findings to today's society is questionable.

More factors than socioeconomic status play into the determination of African Americans' educational and vocational attainments. Racial and ethnic backgrounds tend to also be associated with vocational choice (Schulenberg et al., 1984). Treiman and Terrell (cited in Schulenberg et al., 1984) conducted secondary research on Blau and Duncan's model and determined that socioeconomic background did not correlate with the educational and occupational goals of black males. This suggested that Blau and Duncan's model was not applicable to African American men in the '60s (Schulenberg et al., 1984). Other studies suggest that socioeconomic status is a stronger predictor of the educational and occupational attainment of whites than blacks (Schulenberg et al., 1984; Portes & Wilson, 1976).

Kimbrough and Salomone (1993) researched the diversity and stratification that exists within African American society. They found that social ranking within the African American community tended to differ from rankings within the dominant society. While social class and status within the dominant society were frequently measured by socioeconomic status, social class and status within the African American community were more often ranked by an individual's family, church, and group contribution. Individuals' who were accorded high status within the African American community were those who possessed skills that others desired, were older persons who were respected as individuals, or were those who were trying to assist other African Americans.

As one adds the variable of gender, the impact of socioeconomic background on vocational development changes. Researchers positively link socioeconomic background with the educational aspirations of both males and females. Socioeconomic background has less explanatory value for females' vocational choices than for males' vocational choices. Men of high socioeconomic status tend to have higher vocational expectations than men of lower socioeconomic status. There is seemingly little difference between high and low socioeconomic status and the vocational choices of women. This finding suggests that vocational orientation in females is not closely associated with socioeconomic background (Malone & Shope, 1978).

Findings from the previous studies are necessary to link African cultural roots to current African American culture. These studies are also necessary to link the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making to an African American career-choice perspective and provide reasons why African Americans make various career decisions. Each of the studies helps create an understanding of how one links the societal, familial, individual, socioeconomic, situational, and psychosocial factors to African Americans. Once individuals create an understanding of how African Americans make career decisions, they can develop successful models of career decision-making that take cultural, racial, social, and economic differences in account.

Situational Factors

O'Neil et al. identify Situational Factors that affect career choices as the unforeseen factors, chance events, and available options offering the least resistance, hard work, and difficulty. African Americans have limited views of their career choices. Additionally, they suffer from career ceilings (Kujufuu, 1988). Clearly the occupational structure remains a major factor that links racial background with vocational development (Schulenberg et al., 1984).

The Fisher and Griggs (1995) study not only identified the role models that affect African Americans' choices of a career, but also mentioned critical events as major factors that influenced the career choices of African American and Latino undergraduates. Critical events are unexpected situations that directly or indirectly affect an individual's career development. Griggs and Fisher found that critical events played a vital role in the career development of African American and Latino undergraduates. The most unusual circumstances, such as death of family members, severe illnesses, and close friends dealing with drug addiction, affected career decisions. The greatest influences of critical events centered on helping individuals vicariously learn what not to do, helping avoid similar calamities, and providing a desire to achieve future success. The role of critical events helped students overcome career obstacles and contributed to career decisions. The role of critical events, however, was not specifically linked to African Americans' choices of careers in vocational teaching.

Psychosocial-Emotional Factors

Psychosocial-Emotional Factors are the emotional, personal, and social barriers that prevent individuals from making adequate career choices. There is evidence suggesting that a person's psychological attitude toward work is a determinant of success or failure in the labor market (Hill, 1993). Shade (1993) defines the world view of African Americans as cautious, suspicious, and apprehensive. This is a result of being victimized by a history of racial prejudice and living in an urban society. Social systems exert more control over African Americans' career opportunities than over whites (Griffith, 1978; Gordon, 1993). Partly due to racism, a real and perceived opportunity structure differs for African Americans and whites. African American youngsters have the same occupational dreams as white youngsters. As young African Americans grow older, they hear discussions of racism from working family members and friends. They then begin to shape their perceived opportunity structure around the occupations of individuals within their community (Griffith, 1978).

Shade's perception of African Americans' world view is supported by the research of Parham and Austin (1994), who postulated that the stereotypical occupational structure that exists in American society influences African Americans' career outlook. African Americans have been historically portrayed as having vocational handicaps, negative orientations to work, and restricted access to career employment information. Parham and Austin noted that self-efficacy theory postulates that persons' expectations of outcomes influence their willingness to expand energy toward career goals. This means that career perceptions can become a self-fulfilling prophecy for African Americans. According to Parham and Austin, individuals select jobs in which they visualize themselves. Their perceptions of opportunity may be diminished by career environments characterized by discrimination in hiring, lower wages, few opportunities for promotion, and harassment.

Research by Kerchoff and Campbell (1977) provides evidence regarding the manner in which African American's perceptions of the opportunity structure shape their desire for status. Research from the early '60s indicated that even when holding social status and education constant, African Americans attained lower economic and career status than whites. Even though this research is somewhat dated, these findings may negatively affect the way African Americans view the opportunity structure. Kerchoff and Campbell also found that even when African Americans desire high levels of attainment, limited access to goals may render them unlikely to reach goals. Some authors even suggest that academic performance and educational ambition are associated with one's belief of the availability of opportunity.

The History of Vocational Education in the African American Community

Historically, vocational education has been integral to the educational development of African Americans (Jennings, 1991). Formal vocational education started in the late 1880s as the manual training movement, as an attempt to integrate manual skills into academic curriculums. The integration of skills and curriculum was an attempt to make intellectual concepts more relevant for the many students who were dropping out of school (Cremin, 1961). In the early 1900s, a rapidly industrialized nation soon turned vocational education into industrial training. Industrial training was industry relevant and served the labor demands of an industrialized nation. More so, it offered an educational response to rural poor and European working class immigrants, as well as to unemployed Black Americans in the south (Anderson, 1982).

In the south, industrial training evolved into a way to provide blacks with white moral values and occupational skills that kept them in subservient social and economic classes (Lazerson & Grubb, 1974). Southern whites were interested in preserving academic subjects for themselves and establishing southern blacks as agricultural, industrial, and domestic workers. This justified the desire of southern whites to extend academic education to blacks in separate, but equal, black land grant institutions. The Morrill Act of 1862 established land grant and historically black colleges and universities. It also established them as racially separate institutions. Historically black colleges offered instruction in agriculture, mechanical arts, and home economics. The curriculum and training in historically black colleges resulted from strong agrarian educational reform movements that sought to keep vocational agriculture education in rural schools. The north, which maintained the presence of more egalitarian principles, still provided limited education for blacks. Most schools there established separate but equal education, as well. Schools in the north and south did not prepare blacks for integration into white society or white labor markets. Blacks were found in mostly unskilled jobs where they were denied the skilled and semi-skilled jobs available to whites.

For blacks, industrial education lay in the hands of the black educational leaders of the day. Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois had much to do with the role of industrial education in the black community. The two black educational leaders represented different philosophies of industrial education and academic preparation for black Americans. Both, however, sought an education for blacks that would successfully prepare them for viable entry into the work force.

Most whites supported Washington's notion of vocational education. Because of this, the support of Washington's educational philosophy served to shape the vocational experiences

of black Americans today. Blacks remained within industrial training, agricultural work, and domestic service well into the early 1900s. It was not until the early 1930s that black educators pushed for vocational counseling among black students. At this time, they were encouraged to choose middle-level skilled occupations as opposed to the lower skilled occupations for which they were trained. It was not until World War II, however, when the demand for civilian labor increased, that job opportunities were created and improved for black men and women. During this time, blacks were given more job opportunities, were moved from vocational education, and were encouraged to enter colleges and universities for academic education (Arnold & Levesque, 1992).

The history of black Americans within vocational education serves as a basis for understanding African American attitudes toward the field of vocational education. Vocational education maintains a common perception of being a “dumping ground” (p. 13) for African Americans and other minority groups. Research indicates because of this perception, many black parents have negative attitudes toward vocational education and often discourage their children from enrolling in vocational programs or vocational occupations (Young, 1989).

Studies by Arnold and Levesque (1992) and King (1976) found that most black students view vocational education favorably and are, in fact, positive about it. This is particularly the case for students involved in vocational courses. The most negative attitudes about vocational education come from white, male, non-vocational students of higher socioeconomic backgrounds. Researchers also found, however, that many African American students believe that vocational education is used to educate blacks in trades and blue collar jobs that keep them in inferior employment positions. In addition, they feel that white collar jobs are more desirable (King, 1976). Because of these findings, and the discouragement of parents, African Americans may tend to avoid vocational education (Arnold and Levesque, 1992). This supports a need for increasing the number of African American teachers who can provide positive views of vocational education for today’s youth.

Reasons African Americans Do Not Enter the Teaching Profession

An abundance of information exists regarding reasons African Americans do not choose to enter teaching professions. At one time, the teaching profession was viewed as an important seat of power and influence in the African American community. The profession, however, has since lost much of its appeal (Michael-Bandele, 1993). Economic and social factors play a role in the decline of the number of African American teachers (Haberman, 1989). Authors write extensively on declines in the number of African Americans who choose to enter teaching. Specific reasons for the decline of African American teachers are compiled from the literature of Haberman, 1989; Hunter-Boykin, 1992; Irvine, 1988; Justiz and Kameem, 1990; King, 1993; Larke and Larke, 1995; Michael-Bandele, 1993; Page and Page, 1991; and Tewel and Trubowitz, 1987.

Desegregation and Brown vs. Board of Education. In the early to mid 1900s, teaching was one of the few professions available to educated African Americans. The field of teaching historically attracted large numbers of minorities who entered the profession to gain upward mobility (Irvine, 1988). Between 1954 and 1970, African American teachers constituted the

largest minority teaching subgroup (Michael-Bandele, 1993). Those who began teaching during this time taught in legally segregated schools.

Desegregation, and the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education* in 1954, initiated major changes in the perception of teaching. In addition, it caused a deterioration in the status of teaching for African Americans (Hunter-Boykin, 1992; Irvine, 1988). After *Brown* won the case, desegregation began taking place in schools. The largest sub-group of minority teachers, who were once highly regarded classroom teachers, were given lower teaching positions, non-teaching positions, or were dismissed from their jobs. In addition, white school administrators were opposed to the enforcement of *Brown vs. the Board* and failed to support job reclassification (Irvine, 1988; Michael-Bandele, 1993). Teachers in desegregated schools suffered conflicts with colleagues, administrators, and white parents. The competence of many teachers was challenged solely on the basis of race (Foster, 1990).

Decline in the number of African American college students. According to the U.S. Department of Education (1996) high school drop out rates for African Americans between the ages of 16 and 24 decreased during the 1993-94 school year. Even though the number of African American high school graduates has increased in recent times, fewer of these graduates are enrolling in college. Data indicate that African American college enrollments increased slightly, but the increases do not match those made by whites (U.S. Department of Education, 1995). The small percentage of growth in college enrollment is minimized when compared to the projected growth in the African American population throughout the United States. Statistics from the U.S. Department of Education (1995) indicate that since 1976, African American college enrollment increased by 9%. In Virginia alone, projections show that by the year 2005 the African American population will increase by 20.2% (El Nassar, 1996).

Besides the decreasing enrollment by African Americans when compared to the population growth and significant growth in white college enrollment, data show that fewer African Americans are earning degrees from post-secondary institutions. Not only have African Americans earned significantly fewer bachelor's degrees from colleges than their white counterparts, they take longer to complete degrees than whites (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

African Americans indicate a firm interest in educational development and hold a college education in high regard. There is little evidence that the desire and interest to go to college has changed within the African American community (Bracey, 1992). Fewer African Americans, however, are enrolling in four year colleges and universities. According to the American Council on Education (1989), during 1975 and 1985 African American and white high school seniors maintained similar plans and aspirations for completing four years of college. While white high school seniors' chances for going to college increased, African American high school seniors' chances decreased. Reasons for the decline in African American college enrollments include limited availability of financial resources, increased tests and admission standards, and military recruitment.

Decline in the number of African Americans declaring education as a major. Data from the U.S. Department of Education (1995) indicate that the number of bachelor's degrees conferred in education has dropped considerably in comparison to other fields. In 1992, fewer African

Americans earned degrees in education than in 1977. By 1992, more African Americans obtained degrees in humanities, social and behavioral sciences, health sciences, computer sciences, and engineering. In addition, a survey conducted on African American twelfth graders in 1992 showed that only 3.7% expected that they would be teachers by age 30. A higher percentage of the students surveyed indicated that they would be in business and management professions, business owners, technical workers, salespeople, and military, police, or security officers (Snyder & Hoffman, 1995).

According to Sabrina Hope King (1993), the number of degrees conferred to African Americans in education fields dropped by 50% between 1971 and 1987. This drop occurred at both the bachelor's and master's degree levels. Furthermore, the number of African Americans majoring in education has dropped at twice the rate of whites majoring in education. King suggests that this drop is not only due to a decreased interest in education as a major, it but that also reflects changes in teacher certification and competency testing. There has been a slight increase in the number of African Americans majoring in education since 1989. King attributes this increase to the national attention to the minority teacher shortage and to the recruitment efforts of historically black colleges and universities.

According to the AACTE Survey of Teacher Education Enrollments, the greatest proportions of teacher education students are pursuing degrees in elementary education. Vocational education ranks among the lowest choices of education majors, at 2% (see Figure 2).

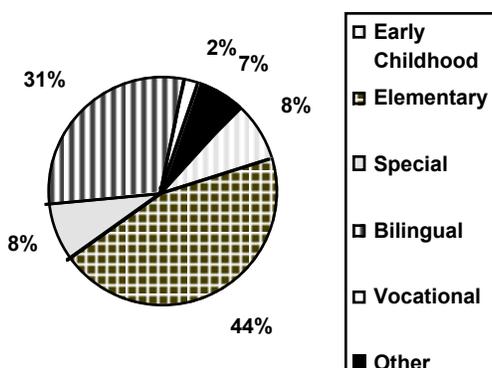


Figure 2. SDCE Undergraduate Enrollment by Discipline, 1991. AACTE, Survey of Teacher Education Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity and Gender.

Increase in the number of available career options with greater financial rewards and prestige. What professions are young African Americans choosing to enter? As previously stated, in the early part of the century, many professions were not available to African Americans. Teaching, nursing, and social work were among the few promising professions (Riley, 1995; Irvine, 1988). This helps explain the previously strong association between African Americans and the teaching profession (King, 1993). More than ever in the history of our country, African Americans have greater access to upwardly mobile professions. Careers in law, medicine, computer science, and engineering have become more

accessible than ever before. New career opportunities are partially due to the civil rights movement of the '60s, affirmative action, federal intervention, and pressure from members of the African American community for more opportunity. If past conditions of teaching continue, the profession will continue to attract first-generation college students from middle to low income families (1993).

An important variable in the decision to choose professions other than teaching is salary (Hunter-Boykin 1992; Justiz & Kameem, 1990; King, 1993; Page & Page, 1984). According to Michele-Bandeale (1993) salary is indicated as the largest reason for not entering the teaching profession.

In 1991, Ebony magazine listed the ten most promising jobs for African Americans. The jobs were chosen because they offered high earnings and great security for African Americans. According to Brown (1991) in Ebony magazine and the U.S. Department of Labor in The Occupational Outlook Handbook (1996), professions in accounting, health administration, architecture, educational administration, computer science, law, plumbing, nursing, engineering, and specialty medicine all paid salaries higher than teaching. Accounting, for example provides entry-level salaries of \$25,000 to \$30,000 a year. Computer scientists earn entry level salaries of \$34,100 to \$55,000 a year. Teaching, however, provides entry level salaries of \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year.

In view of other professions, salaries provided by teaching simply do not compare. Although teaching salaries have improved, they are still lower than salaries provided in virtually any other field requiring a bachelor's degree (Tewel & Trubowitz, 1987). African Americans have numerous career opportunities that provide higher salaries and more promising futures than teaching. They are opting for those opportunities (King, 1993). Many professions, such as those indicated above, can be obtained through a four-year college degree. Others require additional years of schooling, but the salary payoff may be worth the cost of education. Furthermore, many of the other professions do not have the testing requirements of teaching.

Teacher competency tests. One of the foremost reasons for African Americans failing to enter the teaching profession centers around the institutionalization of teacher competency tests. "The institutionalization of teacher competency tests seems to be the greatest threat to the survival of black teachers" (Irvine, 1988, p. 505). The National Teachers Examinations, officially initiated in 1940, was used to set a common standard for teaching and teacher education and to insure quality in the teaching profession (Wilson, 1985).

Competency tests have expanded rapidly since the mid '70s. It has now evolved into a sophisticated practice that includes admissions testing, certification, and classroom effectiveness. The Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST), the National Teacher's Exam (NTE), and the recently adopted PRAXIS exams are among the most noted teacher competency exams. Together, the NTE and PPST exams have eliminated some 21,515 African American teacher candidates in nineteen states (Michele-Bandeale, 1993).

African Americans fail in disproportionate numbers (Dilworth, 1990; Smith, 1989; Waters, 1989). While 93% of white Americans pass the examinations on the first attempt, only 39% of African Americans pass (Michele-Bandeale, 1993; Smith, 1989). In addition, those who fail the first time are less likely to pass when they make additional attempts (Rodman as cited in

Irvine, 1988). According to Smith (1989) disproportionate numbers of prospective teachers of color are being screened from the profession by teacher competency tests.

King (1993) noted that recent data relating to teacher competency tests suggest that African Americans who receive high scores on the NTE test are most likely to come from families of higher socioeconomic status. In addition, they are also more likely to have been in the top 25% of their graduating class.

Research shows that teacher competency test requirements have deterred African Americans' interest in the teaching profession. African American college graduates pay close attention to teacher licensing requirements when making career decisions. Because of the requirement, they turn away from the teaching profession and seek alternative careers (King, 1993).

Additional factors that cause a decline in the numbers of African American teachers include a large number of retiring teachers and the poor working conditions that exist in many schools (Hunter-Boykin, 1992; King, 1993). Another factor is the discouragement by family members to enter the profession. Many family members encourage children to enter professions that promise more lucrative salaries and higher prestige. In addition teachers often berate the profession and advise students to choose occupations other than teaching (Hunter-Boykin, 1992; Justiz & Kameem, 1990).

Reasons African Americans Choose to Enter the Teaching Profession

One can use studies regarding the factors that influence the career choices of African Americans and other minorities, to explain why African Americans choose to enter the teaching profession. Many of the factors previously indicated to affect the African American career-choice perspective serve as explanations of why many African Americans choose to become teachers (Fisher & Griggs, 1995; Simpson, 1996). Studies by leaders in the field are discussed. I used results of research by Gordon, 1993; King, 1993; Newby, Smith, Newby, and Miller, 1995; and Toppin & Levine, 1992, to determine the significant reasons why African Americans enter the teaching profession. The primary factors identified by these authors are: (a) desire to give back to the community, (b) the influence of significant others, and (c) teacher role models. Additional factors include desire to work with young people, feelings that abilities are well suited for teaching, and desire for vacation time and job security.

Desires to give back to the community and make a difference in the lives of young people. One of the major attractions to teaching stems from a desire to repay the community as a whole, and students in particular, for the success the individual has attained (King, 1993; Toppin & Levine, 1992). This desire is also linked to findings of Boykin (1983), Karenga cited in Riley (1977), Kimbrough and Salomone (1983), and Nobles (1972), which identify African Americans as having a desire for collective work and responsibility, and for interdependence. In 1992, Steigelberger conducted research on a sample of education students at the University of Toronto. The sample consisted of students from mostly white backgrounds who were obtaining degrees from various programs. She found that one of the most common themes regarding why students wanted to become teachers was the desire to make a difference and to make a positive contribution to the community. Steigelberger's research is an indication that the desire to give back to the community extends racial and ethnic boundaries.

Gordon (1993) interviewed 140 teachers from urban school districts of various racial and ethnic backgrounds to determine why they chose to enter the teaching profession. She found that one fourth of all the subjects in the study said they entered the profession to make a difference and to give something back to the community.

Toppin and Levine (1992) interviewed 11 graduate students of color to determine what influenced them to become teachers. The 11 individuals tried other professions before entering teaching. Toppin and Levine found that the students interviewed recognized the notion of repaying the community as fundamental to their choice of becoming teachers. In addition, subjects in the study shared a desire of community membership with children and a commitment to the well-being of the community. Findings from Toppin and Levine's study can be linked with findings from Fisher and Griggs (1995). Both studies found that minority high school students desired jobs that allowed them to give back to the community.

Serow (1993) surveyed the increasing pool of nontraditional and second career teachers to determine their reasons for choosing teaching. Serow found that nontraditional teachers have a highly altruistic intent when choosing teaching professions. Their change to teaching careers stemmed from their desire to give something back to the community. According to Serow, 24 out of 26 individuals indicated that a sense of satisfaction from helping others was the reason they decided to enter teaching.

Influence of role models and significant others. Blau and Duncan (1967) stated, "Family life has an important bearing on occupational life" (p. 410). Role models and significant others tend to have a great amount of influence over the career choices of African Americans (Fisher & Griggs, 1992, 1995; Parham & Austin, 1994). This finding can also be linked to research that shows that African Americans have a great amount of reverence for adults and community leaders (Kimbrough & Salomone, 1983). This may explain the influence of parents and teachers over African Americans' decisions to teach.

Most of the individuals interviewed in Gordon's study indicated that their decision to enter teaching was due to the influence of family members, teachers, or friends. Over half of the participants in Gordon's study stated their decision to enter teaching had its roots in family. Individuals who came from a family of educators indicated that parents exerted an even stronger influence over their decision to become teachers. While mothers and fathers tended to have significant influences over African Americans' decision to become teachers, Gordon (1995) found mothers to have the strongest influence.

In the previously mentioned Newby et al. (1995) study, they sought to determine minority high school students' perceptions of teaching as a career choice. Even though they found that most students said they were not influenced by anyone to pursue a teaching career, males were more likely to report that significant others influenced them to enter the teaching profession. Interestingly, Newby et al. (1995) determined many students in their study were discouraged from considering teaching as a career choice. They also found that lack of financial support, career awareness, and the lack of positive information about the field provided additional barriers to teaching. Newby et al. (1995) also suggested that early recruitment was important for attracting minority students into teaching.

Newby et al.'s (1995) suggestions for early recruitment was substantiated by research from Recruiting New Teachers, Incorporated (1993) and King (1993). Recruiting New Teachers, Incorporated (1993) stated, "Recent studies show that career choices are made at a younger age than previously thought and teachers have a very pervasive role in determining whether a young person enters the teaching profession" (p. 3).

Page and Page (1984) found 40% of the high school students surveyed made their decision prior to age 15, 40% decided at age 15 or 16, and 20% made the decision to pursue teaching at 17 or 18. King (1993) found 24% of the prospective and beginning teachers surveyed made decisions to become teachers during elementary school years. Fifty-one percent of participants in King's study indicated undergraduate school years as the time for making decisions to become teachers (King, 1993). Both King (1993) and Page and Page (1984) agreed early discussion about teaching as a career choice was one of the most influential factors affecting a career choice in teaching.

The teacher role is so significant that students who decide to teach often teach the same subject and grade level as that of the teacher who influenced them most. Teachers are critical to the promotion of the teaching profession. Even though families and friends provide support and encouragement in career choices, it is often a special teacher who inspires individuals to become teachers (Berry, 1989). Haberman (1989) suggested that prior school experiences serve as the most powerful influence on the way majority and minority populations perceive teachers and the teaching profession. He noted that most individuals make their choices to enter, or not enter, the profession, based on personal school experiences. Teachers not only inspire students, but also create love for the subject matter (Gordon, 1993).

A study by Berry documented evidence that teachers are very influential in a teaching career choice during pre-collegiate years. Unlike previous studies, many participants in Berry's study found teachers to be the most influential in discouraging them from teaching. Parents who were teachers were discouraging as well (Simpson, 1996). There are many students already influenced by the negative factors involved in teaching. According to Berry (1989), whether teachers are good or bad, they have tremendous influence over students' decisions to teach. Sometimes, negative experiences with teachers are cited as inspiring students to select teaching as a profession (Gordon, 1993; King, 1993; Newby et al., 1995). Negative experiences such as racism, neglect, and discouragement have served as the reasons individuals were inspired to teach (Gordon, 1993).

Additional reasons for choosing teaching. The desire to work with young people is frequently cited as influencing African American individuals to teach (King, 1993; Gordon, 1993). Many individuals' desire to teach comes from a love of children and people and an attraction to children who show reverence for teachers. Those who have worked with children as an aide or youth assistant often indicate a desire to become teachers. In fact, some African American individuals see community involvement as crucial to the development of a good teacher (Gordon, 1993).

Women once sought teaching professions because of the time it allowed for rearing children. Even though this is not one of the determining factors for African American women to choose the teaching profession, it is still listed as a desirable trait (Gordon, 1993). The desire for

vacation benefits is indicated as a reason for choosing teaching (King, 1993; Gordon, 1993). Other reasons for African Americans choosing the teaching profession include: feelings that abilities are well suited for teaching, desire for job security, desire to be a role model, and the desire to have teaching as a second career (King, 1993; Gordon, 1993).

The College Experiences of African Americans

Recruiting and retaining minority undergraduates is essential to increasing the number of African Americans earning bachelor's degrees. Recruiting and retaining African Americans, and other undergraduates of color, is necessary to insure equity in college experiences and to improve learning environments (American Council of Education, 1989). Colleges and universities fight to recruit the best and the brightest students. Students of color are often overlooked in college bidding wars for academic stars. Without a pool of college graduates, the pool of potential teachers decreases.

Historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) continue to award a significant number of degrees earned by African Americans (Carter and Wilson, 1989; Snyder & Hoffman, 1995). African American college enrollment as a percentage of total enrollment at HBCUs in Virginia is above 80%. The African American college enrollment at predominantly white colleges in Virginia is below 8% (Arizona State University, 1993). Haberman (1989) indicated that future African American teachers will come from rural areas and small southern towns, and will attend HBCUs. In 1993, 105 HBCUs enrolled over 17% of all African American college students. In 1990, 27% of all bachelor's degrees earned nationwide were earned by African Americans from HBCUs. Not only do HBCUs play a prominent role in the education of African Americans, but they also play a prominent role in the preparation and production of African American teachers. In 1974, 9,051 African American teachers were awarded degrees from HBCUs. Unfortunately, enrollments at HBCUs represent a small fraction of total college enrollment. In addition, many HBCUs are being forced to close, merge, or change status (Carter & Wilson, 1989).

Davis (1991) studied the importance of social support networks and minority undergraduate student academic success related outcomes. Davis contends that social support is positively related to health and well-being. The more social support received from close relationships with family, friends, acquaintances, co-workers, and the community at large, the better an individual's health and well-being. Fleming (cited in Davis, 1991) indicated that partly due to differences in social support, African Americans at predominantly black colleges differ in their intellectual and psychosocial development from African Americans at predominantly white colleges. The patterns of intellectual development are more positive at predominantly black colleges. Additionally, students exhibit closer relationships with faculty, greater satisfaction with academic lives, enhanced involvement with career processes, improvement in academic performance, more enterprising vocational interests, and the maintenance of higher occupational aspirations. This is quite the opposite of black students' experiences at predominantly white colleges. African Americans at predominantly white colleges reported dissatisfaction with academic life, negative attitudes toward teachers whom they feel graded unfairly, limited return for time and effort invested in school work, and the lack of a net improvement in academic performance. In addition, many African Americans in white schools showed no attachment to a role model, and had fewer positive high educational aspirations. According to Fleming, African

Americans in black institutions also experienced better social adjustment than African Americans in white institutions.

Davis (1991) found that African Americans on white campuses are forced to rely on white students and white professors in making adjustments to campus life. These settings are unfamiliar to many African Americans who have been educated in predominately black secondary school settings. African Americans at predominantly black schools are not forced to cope with unfamiliar circumstances. They have opportunities to participate in social networks that are predominantly black.

Davis (1991) argued that African Americans use support systems to help buffer many social, psychosocial, and academic difficulties that are part of campus life. This relates to studies of the African American kinship networks, communal life, and interdependence that stems from African roots (Karenga, as cited in Riley, 1995). The support systems maintain individual self esteem and life satisfaction, increase social and academic competence, and help in contending with difficulties of stress (Davis, 1991).

Davis' (1991) findings showed that professor/student/staff relations are strong predictors of satisfaction with campus life for African American students on both black and white campuses. Black students' college outcomes are more favorable when they participate in extra-curricular activities sponsored by student organizations. Students on predominantly black campuses view extra-curricular activities as a reflection of their interests. Finally, Davis found that student support predictors (participation in student organization, relations with faculty and students, black student unity, and black male/female relations) were poor predictors of African American student outcomes on predominantly white campuses. This indicates that African American students on white campuses do not benefit from black support networks to the same degree as African Americans on predominantly black campuses (1991). This finding relates to the suggestion by the American Council of Education that some black student support services should be reassessed because they are limiting and provide marginal success (1989).

Summary

To determine the factors that influence African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers, it is necessary understand the African American career-choice perspective. In 1978, O'Neil et al. derived a career decision-making model that outlined six major factors and 22 sub-factors that affect individuals' career choice processes. The six major attributable factors in the O'Neil et al. model affecting the career decision-making process are familial, societal, individual, psychosocial-emotional, situational, and socioeconomic. African and African American psychological and sociological literature link the O'Neil et al. model with an African American career-choice perspective.

Based on findings from the literature, family has an important bearing on both the career development and educational decisions of African Americans (Parham & Austin, 1994). Levels of parental education, specifically of the mother, seem to have a major influence on the vocational outcomes of African American children (Simpson, 1996; Wilson & Allen, 1987). Fathers' roles tend to be more supportive in the career decision-making process of African Americans (Schulenberg et al., 1984).

Among the Societal Factors that affect the career choices of African Americans, peer groups maintain an increasingly high level of influence. African American youth are linked with the media, particularly through the medium of television (Gordon, 1993). There are no findings, however, to suggest that the media is directly linked to African American's career choices in vocational teaching professions.

African Americans have a strong desire to go to school; however, the unavailability of financial funding often limits their attempts (Bracey, 1992; American Council on Education, 1989). Once enrolled in college, African Americans are choosing careers other than education (AACTE, 1994). African American enrollment in vocational education majors is at an all-time low (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

Schulenberg et al. (1994) indicated that among the Individual Factors affecting career development, self esteem, educational aspirations, and personal efficacy are clear indicators of educational and occupational attainment. The abilities of African Americans to succeed in a discriminatory opportunity structure are credited to intrinsic factors.

Concerning Psychosocial-Emotional Factors identified by the O'Neil et al. model, African Americans are cautious, suspicious, and apprehensive about the labor market (Griffith, 1978; Gordon, 1993; Shade, 1993). Their negative views of the labor market are marked by experiences of racial prejudice and discrimination in hiring and promoting (Parham & Austin, 1994).

Regarding Situational Factors, critical events are noted to have a major influence on the career choices of African Americans. Unexpected situations, such as the death of a family member or the drug addiction of a friend, play a vital role in the career decisions of African Americans (Fisher & Griggs, 1995).

The literature finds Socioeconomic Factors less applicable to the career-choice perspective of African Americans and women (Malone & Shope, 1978; Wilson & Allen, 1987). A more appropriate stratification of African American society is based on family and group contribution to society (Kimbrough & Salomone, 1993).

Chapter III Research Methodology

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influence African Americans to become vocational teachers. In addition, this study sought to determine the experiences related to the progress of African Americans in vocational teacher-licensure programs. This chapter describes the (a) research design, (b) study population, (c) interview, (d) validity and reliability, and (e) analysis of the data.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What were the factors that influenced African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers?
2. How did the factors that influenced African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers relate to the O'Neil, Meeker, and Borger career decision-making model?
3. What were the experiences that enhanced the progress of African Americans who are currently involved in vocational licensure programs?
4. How did experiences in vocational education teacher-licensure programs at predominantly white and historically black colleges and universities vary between students at the two types of institutions?

Research Design

A qualitative research methodology was chosen for the study. The qualitative measurement consisted of face-to-face structured interviews with open-ended interview questions. Constant comparative analysis, explained later in this chapter, was used to code and analyze the data. Qualitative research was necessary to capture the respondents' attitudes, beliefs, and views of the issues. It provided an opportunity to glimpse into the "character, organization, and culture" (McCracken, 1988, p. 17) of African American students who are currently preparing to become vocational teachers. Furthermore, it provided information on how they perceive their experiences in vocational teacher-preparation programs. I chose to use qualitative research because the factors influencing students' decisions to become vocational teachers and their experiences in vocational teacher-licensure programs are thought to be varied and numerous. Additionally, qualitative research allowed me to ascertain descriptions and interpretations of factors in settings where respondents were most familiar.

Research categories were formed from the literature review and the career decision-making model of O'Neil et al. The six major factors and 22 sub-factors of the model served as the basis for deriving the interview questions used in the study and served as a guideline for sorting data into categories. Interview questions were formed as they related to factors identified in the literature as prevalent to an African Americans' career-choice perspective. Questions were inclusive enough to allow respondents to focus directly on factors within the O'Neil et al. model. Additional interview questions were added, based on findings from the literature, to determine the experiences of African Americans preparing to become vocational teachers.

The following factors were used to help develop research categories:

1. Familial Factors include the family's attitude regarding career choices. They also include an individual's childhood experiences as well as maternal and paternal role models.

2. Individual Factors involve those things individuals expect of themselves, as well as their abilities, interest, attitudes, and need to achieve.
3. Societal Factors include the values, attitudes, and practices society places on various career choices. Educational experiences, peer group influences, and depiction of the mass media make up this factor.
4. Socioeconomic-economic factors relate to society's economic condition, and social, racial, and ethnic group membership. This factor includes sex discrimination, and the supply and demand of jobs.
5. Situational Factors involve unpredictable situations that shape career choices. They include the elements of chance and the course of least resistance.
6. Psychosocial-Emotional Factors are defined as problem areas that can restrict, limit, or influence career development. They involve the fear of failure, fear of success, lack of confidence, lack of assertiveness, and role conflict (O'Neil et al., 1978).

Study Population

The population of the study was African American students participating in vocational teacher-preparation programs. McCracken (1988) suggests that respondents in qualitative research are not a sample and should not be governed by sampling rules. McCracken (1988) suggests that eight respondents are sufficient for qualitative research purposes, because generalizability is not the aim of qualitative research (1988, p. 17). I designated 12 respondents to be interviewed for this research study.

Six endorsements, under the umbrella of vocational education, served as the focus of the study. Twelve interviews, with two interviews per vocational endorsement, elicited equal representation from the six vocational areas. Of the 12 respondents selected, five respondents were female and seven respondents were male. Respondents who had been in vocational teacher-preparation programs for at least a year were selected. To gain further insight into students' experiences, schools with varying racial status (historically black, predominantly, public, or land grant) were chosen. Of the 12 interviews that were conducted, six of the respondents were selected from historically black universities and six respondents were selected from predominantly white universities.

The limited availability of students for the study, and the depth of information sought, dictated that respondents be purposely selected. Respondent selection was based on references provided by the university professors who led the programs of each vocational endorsement. The program leaders received oral and written information regarding the nature and purpose of the study. I believed the program leaders had insight into the career goals of the students and helped select adequate respondents for the study.

Once respondents indicated an interest in participating, they were asked to sign a consent form. After all consent forms were returned, two respondents were selected from each vocational program to participate in the interviews. All respondents were reassured of anonymity prior to the interviews. Respondents were informed, both verbally and in writing, of measures to assure anonymity. Prior to being interviewed, all respondents were informed that they would be audio-taped and video-taped. They were each reassured that the audio-tapes and video-tapes would be destroyed after the data was analyzed.

Respondents were selected from six universities. University selection was based on the following criteria from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (Wise, 1994-95):

NCATE accreditation. Schools accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education volunteered to undergo rigorous evaluations of teacher education programs. These schools have been judged by guidelines authorized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Commission on Recognition of Post-secondary Accreditation. Institutions that receive this national accreditation have demonstrated excellence in the design and delivery of instruction, faculty qualifications, supervision of clinical experiences, advisory and counseling services, student admissions, and adequate and up-to-date resources. NCATE accredited schools equip teachers with the skills necessary to make them successful within their chosen field.

Affiliation or control status as identified by NCATE. Universities were selected based on their status as public or land grant institutions and their designation as either historically black or no racial affiliation. Two land grant institutions were selected from the state of North Carolina. Two land grant institutions were selected from the state of Virginia. Also, two public institutions were selected from the state of Virginia (see Table 1).

Table 1. Table listing of pseudonyms for universities from which respondents were selected.

Affiliation or Control Status	State A		State B
	public	land grant	land grant
No Racial Affiliation	Thomas Jefferson University	James Monroe University	Theodore Roosevelt University
Historically Black Institutions	Jesse Jackson University	Martin L. King University	Malcolm Little University

Vocational teacher licensure programs. Each of the six schools offer vocational teacher-preparation programs. Although each school designates its vocational program by a different name, all universities selected have at least two individual teacher-licensure programs that fall under the umbrella of vocational education. Schools within two southeastern states were selected primarily because they met all the identified NCATE criteria. Additionally, all schools selected were within a five hour range of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. This allowed interview data to be more easily obtained. The six selected universities contain teacher-licensure programs with the following endorsements:

1. James Monroe University: Agricultural Education, Business Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Marketing Education, Technology Education, and Trade and Industrial Education.
2. Theodore Roosevelt University: Agriculture Education, Marketing Education, and Technology Education.
3. Thomas Jefferson University: Technology and Industrial Education, and Marketing Education.
4. Martin L. King University: Agriculture Education, Business Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Technology Education, and Trade and Industrial Education.
5. Jesse Jackson University: Technology Education and Trade and Industrial Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences Education.
6. Malcolm Little University: Agricultural Education, Business Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Technology Education, and Trade and Industrial Education.

The Interview

Lincoln and Guba (1985) found that the interview is used to obtain the feelings, events, motivations, organizations, claims, and concerns of individuals in past, present, and future experiences. Interviews also seek the rich words of the individuals being studied to allow a clear understanding of their situations (Ely, 1991). Interviews allow the flexibility needed to reach the respondent's view of the issues (McCracken, 1988). This study used interviews to allow respondents to express the individual feelings, events, and motivating factors that influenced them to become vocational educators. In addition, it allowed them to share their experiences in teacher-preparation programs.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), structured interviews are best used when the problem has been clearly defined by the researcher before the interview. Structured interviews were appropriate for this study because the theoretical model and the literature review provided the ground upon which to base the interviews. Structured interviews also helped clearly establish the categories and relationships that I investigated. Additionally, there was a general idea behind the factors that affected the career choices of African Americans, their reasons for choosing and not choosing teaching careers, their past vocational education experiences, and their experiences in attending both predominantly white and historically black universities.

I sought to determine each individual's specific influences and experiences in choosing teaching careers in vocational education. Open-ended questions took advantage of the depth and breadth derived from individual responses (McCracken, 1988). Because interview questions must be open enough to allow the respondents to share their views, open-ended questions allowed me to focus on the respondents' personal responses to the research questions listed at the beginning of this chapter.

My face-to-face interviewing and data analysis skills were developed in a nine hour workshop conducted by The Center for Interdisciplinary Studies and the Center for Survey Research at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. In the workshop, I experienced step-by-step procedures for preparing and conducting face-to-face interviews. Practice interviews were conducted and sample transcripts were coded and analyzed under the guidance of experienced research professors at the university.

The interviews were approximately 50 minutes in length. A series of demographic questions was used to ascertain basic descriptive details about respondents. Demographic questions were followed by a series of detailed questions. The detailed questions were used to delve into each respondent's specific feelings, insights, and experiences (McCracken, 1988).

Four field test interviews were conducted with students on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University prior to the actual interviews used for the study. Field test respondents in teacher education programs, both inside and outside of vocational education, were interviewed and audio-taped. Field test interviews were conducted to clarify any ambiguities found in the instrument.

Validity

Credibility, which serves to establish validity in qualitative research, develops confidence in the truth of a study's findings. Credibility is the ultimate test of internal validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that prolonged engagement and triangulation are techniques to insure credible findings and credible interpretations of the findings.

Prolonged engagement was used to develop acquaintances with the respondents. This was achieved through informal phone conversations, allowing the researcher time to become familiar with each respondent (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I came from the same ethnic culture as respondents. In addition, I shared similar educational experiences. Because of that, a cultural understanding and a level of trust were in place prior to conducting the actual interviews. According to Schuman and Converse (cited in Kane and Macaulay, 1993) the race of the interviewer is most important when racial issues are addressed.

McCracken (1988) suggested that even though familiarity with the culture may dull the investigator's power of observation and analysis, it provides a strong advantage in qualitative research. Acquaintance establishes a level of trust and allows delicate insight into the culture. Informal phone conversations before the interviews also served as a method to develop a relationship with respondents and explain the nature of the study. At the interviews, time was allotted for informal conversation to discuss my personal background and to develop a comfort level with each respondent.

Triangulation was defined by Ely (1991) as the convergence of data gathered by different methods, such as observation and interview, to determine that the data is trustworthy. Triangulation was obtained through audio-taping, video-taping, respondent validation, and my personal observations. Audio-tapes and video-tapes insured that I obtained accurate depiction's of the interview data. Copies of the transcribed interviews were mailed to respondents to further verify data accuracy.

There is no credibility without dependability in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba suggested that dependability can be established through (a) the establishment of appropriate inquiry decisions, (b) review of interviewer bias in order to resist early closure, (c) established categorical schemes and exploration of all areas, (d) resistance to practical pressures, and (e) findings of both positive and negative data.

The theoretical framework provided by the O'Neil et al. model and information obtained from the review of literature helped me establish a list of interview questions that elicited answers to the four research questions. This helped me determine what interview questions were

appropriate to ask respondents. In addition the interview format helped me establish categories and themes used in the findings.

To limit bias in the study, I sought clarification for any answers that were not clearly stated. This helped to resolve any unclear data obtained in the interviews. An approximate 50 minute time limit was placed on interviews in order to resist early closure or extending interviews too long. Open-ended questions allowed enough flexibility to reformulate categories in response to data that emerged from the research. A structured interview procedure was developed to keep me from interjecting any opinions and experiences that may have been similar to the respondents' experiences.

The O'Neil et al. career decision-making model was used to help develop categories for coding and analyzing data. This allowed findings to relate back to the theoretical foundation. In addition, it was used to insure that all research categories were sufficiently covered. Both the positive and negative responses of subjects were identified and listed in the study.

A balanced gender pool of respondents was sought; however, five respondents were female and seven respondents were male. To gain equal representation of experiences respondents were obtained from predominantly white and historically black universities. In addition, an equal number of respondents from each of the six vocational areas were represented.

The interviews were audio-taped, transcribed, and coded. Both audio and video-taping was used to guard against missed or deleted information due to my inexperience as a researcher. The interviews were transcribed and coded to allow me to form the initial categories of the study. The final research categories were determined by content analysis procedures.

Analysis of the Data

A favored method of establishing reliable results is through constant comparative analysis, which provides a way to analyze written material in a reliable fashion (Silverman, 1993). This method allows the researcher to "establish a set of categories and then count the number of instances that fall into each category" (p. 9). I obtained category saturation when words, actions, or events of the data became repetitive. Repeated occurrences and patterns of categories were sorted into factors identified within the O'Neil et al. model. Factors were sought in addition to those identified in the model, as well. This led to the final categories presented in the findings and conclusions. The emerging categories led to the development of conclusions regarding the factors that influence African Americans to become vocational teachers and the experiences related to their progress during teacher preparation.

Immediately after the interviews were conducted, I personally transcribed audio tapes using a word processor. Interviews were saved as both hard copies and computer files. The written transcriptions were analyzed to determine whether the categories established by the O'Neil et al. model were applicable to African Americans when choosing vocational teaching careers.

Summary

Face-to-face, open-ended interviews served as the research methodology. This methodology was used to determine the influences of African Americans who chose to become vocational teachers and their experiences while enrolled in vocational licensure programs. Factors

within the O'Neil et al. career decision-making model were examined to determine their applicability to an African American career-choice perspective.

Twelve respondents were purposively selected from six universities in two southeastern states. The vocational programs represented were (a) agricultural education, (b) business education, (c) family and consumer sciences, (d) marketing education, (e) technology education, (f) trade and industrial education.

Qualitative researchers use methods different from quantitative researchers to establish validity and reliability. The methodology was explained to show how validity and reliability were established in the study. My preparation for conducting interviews has been discussed previously, since I served as the primary research tool (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data collection and data treatment methods have been described in depth.

Chapter IV Analysis of the Data

Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the research study described in chapter three. The purpose of this study was to identify factors that influenced African Americans to become vocational teachers and to determine the experiences that enhanced their progress in vocational teacher-licensure programs. The vocational programs from which respondents were selected were (a) agricultural education, (b) business education, (c) family and consumer sciences education, (d) marketing education, (e) technology education, and (e) trade and industrial education.

Summary of the Methodology

Two respondents from each vocational program were selected for interviews, thus allowing equal representation from the vocational programs. In addition, equal representation was sought from both predominately white and historically black universities in two southeastern states.

Twelve respondents were interviewed at the campuses where they were enrolled in vocational teacher education programs. Face-to-face interviews, of approximately 50 minutes in length, were conducted with each respondent. Because it was necessary to establish credibility in the findings, triangulation was achieved through perceptions gained from audio-tapes, video-tapes, and my personal perspective. In addition, respondents were asked to verify their responses after the data was transcribed. I transcribed each audio-tape and coded and analyzed the word processor files.

The constant comparative method of analysis was used to analyze the data. This method served to confirm the influences and experiences of respondents who prepared to become vocational teachers and to discover any factors and sub-factors that emerged in addition to those found in the model.

The following four research questions posed as a guide for the study:

1. What were the factors that influenced African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers?
2. How did the factors that influenced African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers relate to the O'Neil, Meeker, and Borger career decision-making model?
3. What were the experiences that enhanced the progress of African Americans who are currently involved in vocational licensure programs?
4. How did experiences in vocational teacher-licensure programs at predominantly white and historically black universities vary between students at the two types of institutions?

It was necessary to review the theoretical model used to formulate categories. O'Neil et al. found six major factors to be attributable variables in career choice processes. Even though these factors were not all inclusive, they tended to affect career decision-making (O'Neil et al., 1979). In addition, the model was used to help form the initial categories into which data was sorted and categorized. All evidence is presented in this chapter.

Specific elements of the O'Neil et al. career decision-making model are:

1. Familial Factors include the family's attitude regarding career choices. They also

include an individual's childhood experiences, as well as maternal and paternal role models.

2. Societal Factors include the values, attitudes, and practices society places on various career choices. Educational experiences, peer group influences, and depiction of the mass media make up this factor.

3. Situational Factors involve unpredictable situations that shape career choices. They include the elements of chance and the course of least resistance.

4. Socioeconomic Factors relate to society's economic condition, as well as social, racial, and ethnic group memberships. This factor includes sex discrimination, and the supply and demand of jobs.

5. Individual Factors involve those things individuals expect of themselves, as well as their abilities, interests, attitudes, and need to achieve.

6. Psychosocial-Emotional Factors are defined as problem areas that can restrict, limit, or influence career development. They involve the fears of failure, fears of success, lack of confidence, lack of assertiveness, and role conflict (O'Neil et al., 1978).

Presentation of the Findings

The goal of this chapter is to provide answers to each of the research questions. Questions were answered by referring directly to evidence gathered from respondent data. All findings were supported by verbatim responses. The findings were separated into two parts. The first section of findings presented evidence related to the influences of African Americans who chose teaching careers in vocational education. The second section of findings presented evidence related to the experiences of African Americans who were preparing to become vocational teachers.

The first section included specific findings that answered the research questions one and two. The second section included specific findings that answered research questions three and four. Refer to the research questions in the earlier part of this chapter for specific references. In the first section of the findings, I first identified the factors that influenced African Americans to choose teaching careers in vocational education. This section was delineated into categories identified by the O'Neil et al. model. This was done to add clarity to the presentation of findings and make it easier to refer to the model when answering research question number two. At the end of each section, I related the factors that influenced respondents to become vocational teachers directly to factors identified in the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making. This served as my method for answering research question number two without repeating the verbatim responses. The summary was used to tie all findings together and directly answer each of the four research questions. Refer to the summary section at the end of this chapter for this information.

In order to maintain anonymity in the findings, a configuration of two numerical codings was included with each verbatim response. The first number in the configuration referred to the specific student response (refer to Appendix A for a complete description of each respondent). The second number in the configuration referred to the specific interview question answered (refer to Appendix B for the interview questionnaire).

The Influences of African American Vocational Teachers

Familial Factors

According to O'Neil et al. (1978), Familial Factors include an individual's childhood experiences as well as maternal and paternal role models. Familial Factors are identified by Brown-West (1990) as "Those factors that influence the career direction of an individual, which may begin at home." Family support regarding vocational teaching choices was identified as a factor that influenced African American respondents to become vocational teachers. Respondents' career choices were influenced when parents, particularly mothers, supported their decisions to become vocational teachers. Six respondents in the following section indicated that the presence of parental support, particularly maternal support, influenced their decisions to teach:

9:6. "They're (parents) very supportive of me."

11:6. "I guess all my family, they always supported me."

2:6. "Um, really it's my mother. My big mother. She didn't get past elementary (school). She supported me and just always told me I could do anything I wanted to do and could be anything I wanted to be."

5:6. "I just said Mom, I want to major in technology education. Her first question was 'Well, what's that?' I said, 'Well, it's basically just wood shop and electronics and drafting. I'll probably be teaching kids in high school.' She was like, 'That seems interesting. You know you've got my support, baby.'"

1:6. "Teaching was never brought up until I told my mom one day that I'm switching from management to business education. And you know she was fine. She was happy about it and gave her support."

4:6. "She (stepmother) supported me in any decision I made. No matter what it was. If I wanted to change to this degree or that degree, still she was there for that support...whatever I wanted to do, she would support me in it."

Not only did respondents indicate that the presence of parental, specifically maternal support, influenced them to choose teaching careers in vocational education, but respondents indicated that encouragement toward achieving educational and career goals influenced them to become vocational teachers. The following three respondents indicated that parents pushed them toward educational and career goals. This, in turn, influenced them to pursue teaching careers in vocational education.

3:6. "I had parents who really pushed me. You know, when I felt like I wanted to give up (in school), they were there to push me just that much harder."

5:6. "I guess all my family, whatever I wanted to do, they always pushed me towards that (teaching), cause they could see I was happy doing it."

3:6. "My dad pushed me. My dad often told me...he was like...I remember one time when I was in the sixth grade. 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 says, 'Yeah, well you see, you're not gonna be a dumb black child. You're gonna strive. We don't have any dumb people in our family, and we're not gonna start now.' I'm not ever gonna

forget that. From that day, I've been striving ever since.”

5:6. “My mother, she never let me slack off. She just kept pushing me and just accepted that whatever I wanted to do was fine.”

1:6. “(I said) ‘Mom, I’m gonna own my own business. I’m gonna be rich.’ My mom’s a nurse, so she never actually thought about teaching, but she was willing to push me to do whatever I wanted.”

Early exposure to the field of teaching, by family members who were teachers, was cited as a factor that influenced respondents to pursue vocational teaching careers. Fathers, siblings, and mothers particularly, provided exposure to the field of teaching by allowing respondents to take part in school environments, educational activities, and teaching situations. Exposure to environments both in and outside of vocational education were identified. The following five respondents indicated that family exposure including spouses and mothers particularly influenced their career pursuits as vocational teachers:

2:6. “My mom did teach at Sunday school. As far as Sunday school is concerned, I love what she did with the students and how she got them involved in Bible study and everything. I thought it was excellent.”

7:6. “Well, they (mother and sister) had never said verbally that’s (teaching) what they would like for me to do, but I mean, just hanging out around my mother’s school...just getting a feel for what teachers do, I liked it...Talking to my sister’s students when I go home on occasions. You just get a sense of fulfillment. You know you talk to the kids and they listen to you. It’s just they have fun when you come in there (the classroom).”

7:6. “Just enjoying the kids, how they interact with my mother and sister, had an emphasis on it (decision to teach). Just the whole involvement with them totally. Going to PTA meetings, seeing...I mean, she (mother) would force me to go, but when I’d get there I would enjoy it. Seeing how the parents would interact with the principals and teachers, and getting a sense of how to run my own classroom and eventually my own school.”

11:6. “I visited my mother’s school just to get a feel for how things would be up front, just to understand where parents come from, knowing what questions to ask for my own kids and stuff like that. That whole background and that whole involvement made me kind of interested (in teaching).”

3:6. “You could say I grew up in an educational system. During the summers, if I wasn’t at a summer camp doing some educational activities, I was with my mother helping her out. You know how teachers always come back right before school starts to get the classroom set up.”

11:6. “I really think that if my mother had not been a teacher, I probably would not have known what to do in the classroom. Seeing her be a teacher probably made me understand the profession a whole lot better.”

4:6. “You know, I just kinda watched my husband and said, ‘Well he seems to be pretty comfortable with teaching.’ I would visit the school where he works and I liked the atmosphere.”

3:6. “Being in the school where my godfather taught (agricultural education), I looked at the way he dealt with discipline on a regular basis. I said, well, this might not be a bad field to go into.”

Two respondents, in the field of agricultural education, indicated that experiences with fathers provided exposure to their chosen vocational fields. This exposure influenced both respondents to become vocational teachers. Both students were enrolled in agricultural education programs:

3:6. “I was usually with my dad over at his high school. Being an agriculture teacher, he’s in charge of landscaping. He also had an animal program when I was real small...My godfather taught me in the ninth grade...agriculture. I was always surrounded by it in some way, shape, or form.”

12:6. “Well, I was probably about two or three starting off. I was riding on a tractor. I would ride out with my dad and feed cattle, play with the little baby calves, just do different things.”

3:6. “Dad, he always surrounded me with some kind of farming activity. When I was little, just growing up, he always had me traveling around with his students to different FFA contests. He would take me up to the meeting at N.C. Department of Agriculture when I was twelve years old. I didn’t understand why I was going, but over the years I started to learn.”

How do findings regarding the support of family members relate to the O’Neil et al. career decision-making model? Findings from responses listed in the above sections supported the presence of Familial Factors identified in the O’Neil et al. model. These findings referred specifically to the presence of sub-factors two and three, entitled “mother’s role model and father’s role model” respectively (see Appendix C for model identification). Each of these sub-factors, found in the O’Neil et al. model, served to influence African Americans in their choices of vocational teaching careers.

According to Brown-West (1990) “Childhood experiences are defined as your early childhood experiences regarding appropriate career decisions” (p. 51). Few respondents indicated that childhood experiences directly influenced them to become teachers. Respondents indicated, however, that early childhood experiences exposed them to the vocational orientations that developed their interests in vocational subject matter. Four respondents alluded to early childhood experiences that exposed them to the vocational programs in which they eventually concentrated:

3:6. “I lived on a farm in North Carolina...I grew up on a small farm, probably about 200 acres. We raised beef cattle. When I was real small, we would take care of the livestock. By us raising cattle, I’ve always been around agriculture in one way or another.” (agricultural education student).

9:6. “I was always into hands-on activities. Taking stuff apart when I was little, you know...taking things apart when I wasn’t supposed to and putting it back together...When I was deciding on what type of job that I wanted to do, I was taking that into consideration.” (technology education student).

6:6. “I always liked to draw when I was little.” (trade and industrial education)

student).

11:6. “I loved to play house when I was younger. I always set up my dolls and dressed them. I had one of those kitchen play sets I would play with all the time!” (family and consumer sciences education student).

How did findings regarding early childhood experiences relate to the O’Neil et al. model? Verbatim responses in the above section further supported the presence of Familial Factors and validated that these factors influenced respondents’ decisions to become vocational teachers. In addition, verbatim responses substantiated presence of sub-factor one, entitled “early childhood experiences.” This evidence indicated that sub-factor one influenced respondents to pursue careers in vocational teaching.

Summary of Familial Factors. Respondents identified the support of family members, particularly mothers, as a factor that influenced pursuits in vocational teaching careers. Family members, particularly mothers, provided support systems and pushed respondents to become successful in educational and vocational pursuits. Parents employed in educational fields were credited with exposing respondents to teaching situations and to aspects of vocational concentrations. These served as factors that influenced respondents to become vocational teachers.

Respondents made some general references to fathers serving as sources of support in vocational teaching decisions. They were referred to more specifically as sources of exposure for introducing respondents to vocationally oriented activities. Early childhood experiences were also indicated as a factor that provided exposure to vocationally related experiences and influenced respondents to select vocational teaching careers.

Findings validated the presence of the Familial Factor and each of the sub-factors found in the O’Neil et al. model. Each of the three sub-factors was identified as influencing respondents’ career choices as vocational teachers.

Societal Factors

Societal Factors include the values, attitudes, and practices society places on various career choices. These factors included educational experiences, peer group influences, and depiction from the mass media (O’Neil et al., 1978). According to Brown-West (1990) “Educational experiences are defined as an educational institution’s values, attitudes, and practices related to appropriate career choices. They aid in forming occupational choices” (p. 54). The effects of teachers and educational experiences in various forms played a major role in African American respondents’ decisions to teach. Respondents in this section made numerous references to the influences of teachers. Teachers influenced respondents’ career choices in education through behaviors displayed in the classroom. Teachers from both secondary and post-secondary schools played major roles in influencing respondents to become vocational teachers.

Personal interest displayed toward respondents and teachers’ roles as helpers, role models, and pushers toward academic success influenced respondents in their pursuits to become vocational teachers. The following five respondents indicated that teachers influenced them to teach by helping with academic pursuits. Teachers provided help on assignments both in and outside of the field of vocational education:

10:7. "I would say we had this lady within our church that was a former teacher. She like helped me with a lot of my school work."

6:7. "My high school drafting teacher helped me out a lot, and he still follows me now. He gave me good recommendations (for college)."

5:7. "He (professor) does more for us than I think any other advisor does for their students. You can come to him, let's say I have to write an essay and I have to turn it in. I can bring it to him at any time, he will help me with it. He will also check it... You know, that's how he is."

7:7. "In the tenth grade I had a biology teacher who just helped me out. I mean he related biology to some of the things that were important to me, and at the time that was football."

12:7. "My high school agriculture teacher gave all of us so much help. I mean, I don't know how I would have gotten out of biology if it was not for him... You probably ask, 'Why did your agriculture teacher help you in biology class?'"

Four respondents indicated teachers influenced them by serving as role models both in and out of the classroom. Teachers were perceived as role models that had positive influences on respondents' decisions to teach. Both African American and white teachers were identified as role models:

10:7. "It's kinda like that's who I want to be like. And in some factors I guess I'm following in her trail, because I'm also in the ministry. That was one of the influences, finding another woman in that (the ministry) and who loved computers also... Mrs. _____ is also African American. Like I said, she is my role model.

6:7. "He knows what I'm doing now and he checks up on me every so often. He lives down the street from me. He's is always checking on me. He is a good role model for me." (Basic Technical Drawing teacher).

10:7. "When I met Mrs. _____, it was great. It was just great. I now had somebody to identify with. I had somebody who persuaded me that it's okay, I can do this (succeed) too. I can be in this position (teaching) also. She was a real role model."

9:7. "Mr. _____ used to be the head of the department here. He was a real old white man, very soft spoken. By the way he talked, it made you listen... You wanted to listen to what he had to say. Just working with him for a few months, I liked the type of person he was. Every once in a while, he would show me different things about my culture. I mean with that, it's hard not to talk to him, its hard not to listen to him."

12:7. "Believe it or not, a Caucasian teacher served as a big role model for me. We really didn't have any black teachers in my school."

Respondents indicated teachers who monitored their academic progress and pushed them to reach academic and career goals, inspired them to become vocational teachers. The following three respondents indicated that a push from a teacher influenced them to pursue vocational teaching careers:

1:7. "I think here when Dr. _____ came... she talks to me. When she found out

that (business education) was what I was interested in, she stayed on me to try to keep me focused in that direction.”

5:7. “It’s just hard to say what he does (major professor), he has done so much. He has opened our eyes... he just keeps us going...He stays on our case when we do slack off. That’s one thing, I guess he doesn’t let us slack off. He stays on our case.”

11:7. “Like my mother, she (teacher) just kept pushing me (toward career goals).”

2:7. “When I got here, Dr. _____, he’s terrific, he’s my mentor. I was already in this major as far as...it’s called industrial arts education...and he just pushed me and pushed me. He told me I could do whatever I wanted to do. He put me in that (technology education) competition for a reason, because he knew I would go for it.”

1:7. “When I was at _____ University, no one really mentioned options as far as teaching. But here, they (teachers) stress it more and once they find you, they stay on you. They kind of push you along.”

Vocational teachers exposed respondents to activities found in vocational areas. This exposure to vocational fields influenced respondents to pursue careers in vocational teaching. The exposure served to develop respondents’ interests in vocational areas. The following three respondents indicated that exposure to vocational teaching fields influenced them to become vocational teachers:

9:7. “Sometimes if I was too bored with it (class), my teacher would come and he would show me how to do things in the shop...When they (other students) went into the shop...if I got bored with what I was doing, I would go in and help him (the teacher)...I was extensively working with computers all the time. I worked with my teacher with metals and all kinds of stuff like that...I thought about this later on (when making a career decision).”

6:7. “My twelfth grade basic technical drawing teacher was like, ‘You’re doing well in your work. Why don’t you try this (technical drawing)?’...so I tried it!”

11:7. “My high school home economics teacher noticed I was the best at decorating cakes. She gave me an opportunity to make a cake for a wedding show. It really sparked my interest in family and consumer sciences.”

Respondents indicated teachers, both in and outside of vocational education, influenced them to become vocational teachers. This influence was based on teachers’ actions in the classroom or through their reverence for vocational education fields. The following respondents indicated that the actions of teachers, both in and outside of the classroom, influenced their career decisions as teachers:

3:7. “That summer I met Dr. _____, our chairperson at the time. Dr. _____ you could say was everybody’s mom and dad. Dr. _____ had a great influence on me. He really showed me what you could do if you strive to do something. He strongly supported agriculture education.”

12:7. “I would say one individual, Mr. _____, he was our horticulture teacher in high school...He brought a different phase to the program. He was fresh out of _____ University, about 22 or 23 years old. Fresh of energy. I looked at him. He came there every day, and he enjoyed what he was doing...He really

influenced me.”

7:7. “Mrs. _____ was my twelfth grade English teacher. She had a lot of influence on me. When I told myself what I wanted to do, I would go into her class as a senior and I would just see how she’d run her class and how laid back and how leisurely the class was, but we always got things accomplished.”

11:7. “In the twelfth grade, there was the one teacher who kinda set the classroom standard or set the classroom arena of how I wanted to teach the class. So that kind of influenced me.”

1:7. “No one really (influenced me) as far as a professor until I came here. I would have to say Dr. _____ not only influenced me, but a lot of other students to pursue that area (business education), because she gives you the information. A lot of people don’t know business education...Dr. _____ is the newest faculty member here in this department, but she’s kind of the business education person in this department. So she influenced me, I would have to say, more than anyone.”

Teachers served as direct influences in the pursuits of vocational teaching careers. Three respondents indicated that teachers made statements that directly encouraged them to teach:

4:7. “I have Dr. _____ for most of my classes now. I had like two classes with her and she would always say that a teaching degree was better than nothing. She would always say, ‘An old teaching degree is better than nothing. I know a lot of you don’t want to be teachers, but its better than nothing.’”

8:7. “My sister is at _____ high school, that’s where I graduated from. One of the teachers there said, ‘Well, maybe you would like to be a teacher.’ I said, ‘No, I don’t think so...My initial thing was to go to _____ University and try to do something that way...But for some reason I am here and that’s how it ended up...Dr. _____ said, ‘You would do fine at teaching, you should consider it.’”

5:7. “The older teachers around me who worked in the school kind of hyped me up. They said, ‘Well, you’re good with kids, you ought to teach.’”

How do findings regarding teacher role models relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Verbatim responses, listed in the above section, supported the presence of Societal Factors. The influences identified in this section related to teacher role models. Teacher role models, however, was not distinctly identified by O’Neil et al. as a sub-factor in the model. Findings based on verbatim responses related teacher role models most closely with sub-factor one, entitled “educational experiences (see Appendix C for model identification). Teacher role models provided strong influences over teaching career choices.

Educational experiences influenced respondents to become vocational teachers. Successful social and academic experiences, gained at school, served to influence respondents to select careers as vocational teachers. Additionally, success in vocational areas sparked interest among respondents to seek further vocational experiences. Five respondents indicated that successful social and academic experiences in vocational programs developed their interest in vocational fields:

10:7. “I guess by having that closeness (with professors) and hanging out on campus where I did, led me to a lot of opportunities. I ended up holding a lot of positions at

the campus. I mean, the president knows me by name.”

6:7. “I never had a problem doing my homework...I did pretty good in school.”

9:7. “There was a project that I had worked on (in high school) for TSA. I had worked with a CNC lathe and I had to enter it into a competition. That lathe took me a long time...Working as hard as I did, I got first (place) in the region and I got first (place) in the state. I went to the national level and that was a huge accomplishment for me. I enjoyed that and I knew that it was nothing like technology.”

2:7. “Dr. _____ always had the big dog on the porch. The big dog would mean that you have an “A,” but you have like a 99% or 100% as an average in the class. So my challenge was always to be the top dog...We had competitions like that. My goal was to beat them (males in class). So that’s how it (technology education) all started to interest me... “He (the professor) got me involved just by me saying that I wanna do this. He started taking me around to different (technology education) conferences and getting me out there. I started speaking and then I started doing little small teaching sessions here and I enjoyed it.”

3:7. “My teacher would take me on a lot of public speaking contests and I won in that contest in ‘92 or ‘93. That really influenced me.

Positive experiences gained during student teaching and substitute teaching influenced respondents to select career choices in vocational fields. Respondents were influenced by students’ positive reactions to them as teachers and by their ability to maintain discipline in the class. Four respondents indicated that positive experiences gained during student teaching and substitute teaching influenced them to teach:

5:8. “I know how teachers have to put up with these kids, but after doing my student teaching and working with Mr. _____, I realized that these kids are not that bad. They just need someone to guide them, that’s all.”

8:8. “When I was student teaching, I was at the same school for the whole entire 14 weeks. When I left, their response to me leaving...they were angry with me (for leaving). I went to someone in particular and said, ‘You’re one of my best students, what’s wrong?’ She said, ‘I will never forgive you for leaving us.’”

8:8. “I had the opportunity to substitute teach at a high school, so that’s how I decided (to teach). I guessed that I may be able to survive, cause I had control of the class, they respected me. I was not a child to them, I was Ms. _____. So it (the decision to teach) kind of happened quickly...I think the thing that really got me was the closeness and the rapport I was able to establish with students while I was substituting.”

4:8. “I was a little afraid to go into the classroom and face the students. I was really apprehensive about that, and that’s why I decided to substitute teach. I went into the class and I could hear the student’s going, ‘Yeah, a sub?’ I said, ‘Okay, come in here and have a seat.’ I started that mother role...Then they sat down! So it went well. It really changed my mind (about entering the field of teaching).

Respondents indicated that the educational experiences that influenced them to teach were not always inside of the classroom or school. Four respondents indicated desires to teach were sparked by opportunities to provide experiences in arena outside of the classroom or school:

9:8. "I helped coach my brother's little league team. I had to help one day, because the coaches weren't able to come to practice...You know, maybe because I'm younger I can understand how they think better."

7:8. "I started coaching little league teams when I was in high school. I loved it. I knew then that I definitely wanted to be in a profession where I would be around kids."

2:8. "In eleventh grade I started doing choreography. Back then I was in high school and I loved to teach dance. It started off as teaching dance. I was the instructor of many dance pieces that were going on in the community. So it started off like that. Then something just hit me (about teaching)."

1:8. "I was working in tenth grade with children in an after-school program. The little kids would just gravitate towards me. I always found it strange that I couldn't go anywhere in New Jersey...The little kids would run up to me with their moms...That made me feel good. It's like I always felt I could make a difference."

Respondents were attracted to the hands-on aspect of vocational areas and cited this as a factor that influenced them to become vocational teachers. Respondents indicated a desire to teach in areas that provided students with practical learning experiences. Respondents also were attracted to the field based on opportunities to work in areas that related specifically to vocational fields. Six respondents indicated that access to the hands-on learning experiences gained in vocational areas influenced them in their choice of a vocational teaching career:

12:8. "I knew I wanted to be a vocational teacher in high school. I was always into hands-on activities...and that's what vocational teaching is all about."

9:8. "I love the hands-on activity which it (technology education) involves."

2:8. "I read up on engineering and I found out it was a lot of theory. Being a dancer and being in the arts, a lot of theory is not what I go for really. I like hands-on. I like something that makes me work, that makes me take something apart and put it back together."

3:8. "I just enjoy working with animals and being outside. I wanted a job at the research farm. You know, just to have something to do and get that practical experience. I would say that being able to work with agriculture, the animals and plants, really influenced me."

10:8. "I love computers, I always have...I guess it's a love hate relationship. They hate me and I love them! I knew I wanted to do something with computers."

7:8. "When I was in the tenth grade, I enrolled in the travel and tourism program...I found out that was a class I enjoyed. I never finished the program, but I knew I had the basis for it so I knew I wanted to study it. I've grown fond of the travel and tourism industry, just the whole vocational teacher outlook."

How did findings regarding educational experiences relate to the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making? The verbatim responses listed in the above section substantiated the

presence of the Societal Factor. These verbatim responses specifically supported the presence of sub-factor one, entitled “educational experiences” (see Appendix C for model identification). There were numerous references to the sub-factor’s influence on vocational teaching career choices.

According to Brown-West (1990) “Peer group influences are defined as those values, attitudes, and behaviors of your peers regarding appropriate career choices. One’s peers often have an effect on how society is viewed” (p. 60). Respondents indicated that negative reactions from peers influenced them to pursue vocational teaching careers. Ironically, the negative reactions of peers motivated respondents to pursue vocational teaching careers, in order to be different from peers. Three respondents indicated that the negative reactions of peers challenged them to pursue vocational teaching careers in order to be different:

2:7. “I just couldn’t put up with it (what friends would say about the decision to teach). Actually it started off as hurt in the beginning cause people thought, because I’m a dancer, I have no smarts. I have no intellect. But I took that hurt and made it into another challenge.”

6:7. “I told my friends that this (teaching drafting) is what I wanted to do. I was like, ‘This is what I like.’ You know, it’s different.”

3:7. “They (friends) didn’t actually inspire me to go into it (teaching). They were actually against me, which in turn, pushed me toward it. It’s almost like an inverse effect. They didn’t want me to go into it, but I got into it anyway...At first I was embarrassed about wanting to be a teacher, because it seemed that all my friends thought I was settling for a lower profession. They wanted me to be a doctor or lawyer or something. You know, the careers that black folks feel are successful. Lawyers are a dime a dozen...The more I thought about what they were saying, the more I wanted to become a teacher.”

How did findings regarding peer influences relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? The verbatim responses listed above substantiated the presence of Societal Factors. Specifically, evidence from responses listed above supported the presence of the second sub-factor in the model, entitled “peer influence” (see Appendix C for model identification).

“The mass media is defined as those attitudes and behaviors depicted on radio, television, and in movies, books, and magazines, regarding appropriate career choices. One of the most powerful controlling forces in America, the media, mirrors society at large and portrays events the way it perceives things to be” (Brown-West, 1990, p. 64).

Negative portrayals of the teaching profession by the media influenced respondents to choose teaching careers in vocational education. Negative media portrayals of both teaching and vocational fields served to motivate students to enter vocational teaching professions. Five respondents indicated that desires to fight the media’s negative perceptions influenced them to pursue careers as vocational teachers:

1:8. “It’s (teaching) probably more important as far as the continuation of our race than any other profession...It kind of motivates me when someone says something negative about what I believe in. It makes me more determined to prove my point. So I would have to say, their (the media) negative comments had a positive influence

on me.”

7:8. “To hear comments (from the media) like, ‘Teachers aren’t doing their jobs, and things like that, has influenced me to make sure I become a near perfect teacher or a teacher that’s doing his job.’”

9:8. “When I become a teacher, I want my students to think, to use their own judgment, not to be swayed by what the media says, because the media is not always right.”

5:8. “Basically I try not to listen when they talk down on the profession. Cause I look at teaching as more than just being a baby sitter. I would like to prove that.”

3:8. “It (the media) really pushed me as far as a public relations tool for agriculture...I really saw that farmers needed a voice. In other words it (the media) made me want to get out here and make a positive influence and say, ‘This is not the case.’”

How did findings regarding negative portrayals of the media relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Verbatim responses, from the section above, further supported the presence of Societal Factors. In addition, responses supported the presence of the third sub-factor, entitled “mass media” (see Appendix C for model identification). Ironically, negative influences derived from the presence of the third sub-factor (mass media) also influenced African Americans to pursue vocational teaching careers.

Summary of Societal Factors. Respondents cited the influence of teachers, in several different roles, as a factor that influenced them to become vocational teachers. Teachers were cited as academic helpers and as individuals who pushed respondents toward levels of educational and vocational success. Teachers were indicated serving as role models to respondents. All of the positive roles and behaviors, displayed by teachers, influenced respondents to select teaching careers in vocational fields.

Respondents indicated that teachers provided exposure to vocational fields and to teaching experiences. This served to develop an interest in vocational teaching fields. Several teachers directly encouraged respondents to become vocational teachers. This persuaded respondents to pursue careers in vocational teaching.

Educational experiences in the classroom provided opportunities for success in vocational programs. Several experiences related to the profession of teaching were gained outside of the classroom. Student also were positively influenced by student teaching and substitute teaching experiences. Each influenced respondents’ decisions to pursue vocational teaching careers. Additionally, respondents indicated preferences for teaching in vocational programs because of the practical hands-on experiences provided in vocational fields.

Peers’ negative reactions toward respondents’ decisions to teach provided motivation for pursuing vocational teaching careers. In addition, most respondents noted an awareness of the media’s negative perceptions of both the vocational field and the teaching field. This too was cited as a motivation to enter vocational teaching fields.

Respondents validated the presence O’Neil et al.’s Societal Factors. In addition, all three sub-factors, entitled “educational experiences, peer group influences, and mass media,”

respectively, were indicated to influence pursuits in vocational teaching fields. The model, however, failed to include the presence of a sub-factor entitled “teacher role models.”

Individual Factors

Individual Factors are those things individuals expect of themselves, as well as their self-expectancies, abilities, interests, attitudes, and needs to achieve (O’Neil, et. al, 1978). Self expectancies are identified by Brown-West (1990) as “The internal beliefs that a person’s actions will determine the rewards he or she receives in life” (p.65). Respondents indicated that they were influenced to teach based on the personal rewards that they felt would be gained from teaching. In addition, respondents were influenced to teach based on expectations that they would be able to see the fruits of their work as vocational teachers. Four respondents related to influences created by the personal rewards they expected to gain as vocational teachers:

2:9. “For me, it’s always been about wanting to make my mark. Me wanting my students to come back and say, ‘You know Ms. _____ you’ve done this for me, you’ve done that for me’...If I go out into the hallway, I have students wanting to hug me because they wish I was still teaching them.”

8:9. “Just seeing someone else be able to become successful...Just seeing the student be able to give back the information, and make a good grade.”

11:9. “Seeing my students be successful is worth more to me...Knowing that I’ve touched the life of a student.”

9:9. “When I teach them stuff, it makes me feel good when I see their eyes light up from different things that I teach them.”

Respondents also indicated that seeing the fruits of their work as teachers influenced them to become vocational teachers:

8:9. “Seeing them be successful, pass the class with the highest mark that they could have possibly passed with, giving their all. Just knowing I had a part in it.”

9:9. “Because of me, I want them to be better thinkers.”

7:9. “I want the satisfaction of having your students become successful or the satisfaction of your students being productive in whatever they do...There has to be a sense of gratification or a sense of positiveness...so that you don’t have to look at your paycheck all the time.”

How did findings regarding desires to experience the personal rewards of teaching relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Findings, based on the above verbatim responses, supported the presence of Individual Factors. Because self-expectancies are defined as the internal beliefs that a person’s actions will determine the rewards received in life (Brown-West, 1990), findings regarding desires to experience the personal rewards of teaching related specifically to the first sub-factor, entitled “self-expectancies” (see Appendix C for model identification). This finding indicated that self-expectancies served as an influence to pursue vocational teaching careers.

Abilities are defined as strengths, power, talents, or skills (Webster, 1990). Abilities can be developed over a period of time. Brown-West (1990) states, “Feeling confident about one’s own ability is a portion of what goes into a student’s overall expectancy of being successful,

since a student can have a high confidence level, but still express a low expectancy of reaching a desired goal...”(p. 66).

Respondents felt that they possessed abilities and strengths as teachers. Their perceptions of these strengths made them feel that they would make good vocational teachers. This influenced them to pursue vocational teaching careers and affirmed confidence in their decisions to become vocational teachers. Seven respondents referred to their perceptions of the abilities and strengths they possessed as vocational teachers.

1:9. “One thing about me, I plan everything.”

2:9. “I have the ability to be creative in the classroom.”

11:9. “My teacher would tell me I had the ability to change things (in the classroom) if I wanted to. I said, ‘You know, you’re right.’ ”

2:9. “I’m a go-getter and I’m very focused. If I’m teaching technical writing...I look for the creative spark.”

12:9. “I have the ability to understand that each student is not going to be the same.”

4:9. “I try to maintain discipline and let them (the students) know the importance of being respectful...I’m able to carry that over well.”

5:9. “I am able to take information, adjust it, and put that knowledge into teaching other people. That’s one reason that makes me want to become a teacher, also.”

9:9. “I’m young enough to be able to relate to young people...”

5:9. “I am able relate to them because, like I said, I’m from a single parent home...I just feel I can relate to them...Just growing up in the late 80s, I listened to rap music. I can relate to that, and I don’t feel a lot of teachers can relate...The way I teach, people grasp onto it. It’s just a natural thing, I don’t know. I’m not trying to brag. It’s just a natural thing.”

Respondents were influenced to pursue vocational teaching careers based on their abilities and desires to provide leadership to students. Five respondents indicated that their abilities to lead students would make them good teachers. The presence of these abilities attracted them to vocational teaching careers:

7:9. “I am a good leader...I felt I could lead some people.”

12:9. “I know I could be strong leader. I feel that is a strength African Americans have naturally, anyway.”

5:9. “When you are in the army, they teach you to become a leader and an officer...When I was in high school I was put in a leadership position. I was teaching new cadets how to twirl (a rifle). They were grasping it more from the way I was teaching. That’s one of the things that made me want to teach.”

3:9. “I also believe I am a good leader. I’ve been chosen to go to several leadership workshops, so somebody obviously thought I was a good leader.”

1:9. “I like to lead. I like to set examples for people.”

3:9. “Agriculture teachers are seen as leaders in their community...I might leave the community with some technical knowledge about agriculture. I also provide leadership for children.”

How did findings regarding strengths and abilities relate to the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Findings related to verbatim responses in the above sections further supported the presence of Individual Factors. Verbatim responses supported the sub-factor entitled "abilities" (see Appendix C for model identification). Abilities, often perceived as strengths by respondents, influenced them to become vocational teachers.

Interest is defined as something that involves, excites, or gets the attention (Webster, 1990). Respondents indicated that an interest in working with both the technical and the hands-on aspect of vocational teaching influenced them to pursue vocational teaching careers. Nine respondents indicated that technical interests related to vocational fields influenced them to become vocational teachers:

11:9. "I was interested in nutrition, healthy living, things like that. I have always been into those kinds of issues. I guess it was only natural for me to pursue this field."
(family and consumer sciences education)

7:9. "The travel and tourism class really interested me. We stayed in it from eleventh to twelfth grade. I knew I had the basis for it and I wanted to study it."
(marketing education)

1:9. "I always wanted to run my own business and work in a business setting."
(business education)

10:9. "I don't know what really got me into computers. I guess my first one was a Commodore 64. Everybody else had one." (business education)

6:9. "I was in high school, I was in geometry and we had to draw shapes and I did pretty good. I liked that. I liked drawing." (trade and industrial education)

12:9. "I have always loved animals." (agriculture education)

2:9. "A lot of people make technology out to be a very hard subject where you're just racking your brain. But, actually when you sit down with it, you can have a lot of fun in this field...We have a mixing board here. It's very old equipment. I love taking it apart and putting it back together. Its exciting to me." (technology education)

3:9. "I like being able to teach students how to grow plants. I love the university research farm here." (agriculture education)

5:9. "I said, 'I think I could like this. I like working with wood. I like the CAD.'" (technology education)

6:9. "I really like the architectural part of drafting. You get to use your own ideas and you put your own thoughts together in technical drawing...I like architecture because you can be your own person. Basically you are on your own person, you are free." (trade and industrial education)

Respondents stated that interests in the hands-on aspect of vocational teaching influenced them to enter the field. This aspect of vocational teaching was an influence to technology education and agriculture education respondents specifically. Five respondents mentioned being influenced to teach based on an attraction to the hands-on aspects of vocational fields:

2:9. "I love hands-on activity and working with technology and computers."
(technology education)

3:9. “You have to get your hands dirty. I don’t care what nobody tells you, you get your hands dirty in agriculture...And me personally, I like to work with my hands, also. I really felt like I could do that in agriculture.” (agriculture education)

12:9. “I like that it’s hands-on. You have to be hands-on in this field” (agriculture education)

9:9. “I like working with my hands. I feel that I got pretty decent hands to work with things.” (technology education)

5:9. “Instead of sitting at the board and writing all day, I can actually take them (students) into the shop...Let’s do something...That’s what I like to do, hands-on. The same with CAD upstairs.” (trade and industrial education)

Desire to work with children, and with people in general, served as an individual influence that attracted respondents to vocational teaching careers. Respondents indicated that a love for children sparked desire to become vocational teachers. In addition, desire to interact with students and people influenced their decisions. Eight respondents referred to the interest of working with children as an influence to pursue careers in vocational teaching:

7:9. “Just working with kids. I like working with kids.”

9:9. “Because of my little brother, I love kids.”

6:9. “I like the aspect of children.”

1:9. “I like the social interaction with the kids.”

11:9. “I like kids. I always have.”

8:9. “I love to interact with students.”

9:9. “I’m also a people person, you know. I love to interact with people, and I guess you can see that when I work as the mascot.”

7:9. “It would be strictly my own personal love of people (that led to a desire to teach).”

3:9. “I like to get out and talk. I like to meet people. I’m not afraid to tell people what I think...I believe in being out there, being a people person.”

How did findings regarding interests in vocational and teaching activities relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Findings based on responses located above further validated the presence of Individual Factors. Respondents indicated that interest in working with children and people, interest in hands-on learning activities, and interest in the technical aspects of vocational education influenced their decisions to teach. These findings validated the presence of the third sub-factor, entitled “interests” (see Appendix C for model identification). This sub-factor influenced respondents based on feelings that vocational teaching fields provided opportunities to develop those interests.

Achievement needs are desires to achieve certain goals in life (Brown-West, 1990). Respondents indicated a desire to help African American students. This served as an influence to enter vocational teaching fields. Respondents sought vocational teaching careers out of a genuine concern to help students become better individuals. Eleven respondents indicated that a desire to help students influenced their decisions to become vocational teachers:

1:9. “Back then (when deciding on a career), I was thinking about helping people, teaching kids how to open their minds and just getting common business sense.”

5:9. “There are so many people where I come from who need help. If you think of a job, something that you would be able to do and make a living and help those people, the only thing that comes to mind is teaching.”

11:9. “I would be a good teacher, I think, for the fact that I genuinely care about people...And it’s just, I feel I owe so much because I have so much. If there is a way that I could help every kid, I would.”

7:9. “I wanted to start (teaching) on the high school level because I wanna help kids get to school like my coach helped me get to school...I just owe students because if it wasn’t for someone helping me, I wouldn’t be who I am right now. So in a sense, I wanna help...I wanna help kids get into college so they can get an education.”

9:9. “As a teacher, you’re developing someone’s life. You’re helping them with their life and molding them into not what you want them to be, but someone who is productive in society...So that’s a goal that I set for myself. Being successful and trying to help other people.”

12:9. “Also helping the students. Making the students good people.”

3:9. “Some people say, ‘Look, you can get a doctorate so that means you don’t want to stay in the classroom and help the students.’ If I can get into a higher position, I can kind of help pull some other folks along.”

5:9. “Always set the example...If you say you’re gonna help them (students), then help them. They expect you to help them. Most of them might not say it, but they expect you to help them.”

4:9. “I have always liked helping people. That was the thing I liked about medicine. That was the reason, just helping people.”

8:9. “I like letting others learn. To help others learn is what I like to do.”

11:9. “Being helpful, it’s (teaching) just all about helping somebody.”

7:9. “I will feel that I have excelled if marketing has helped them (students) in their lives.”

10:9. “At the community college I ended up being the lab assistant...I really enjoyed helping people with their system and I figured out this would help me find some of the (necessary) teaching skills...It makes me feel great that after they (students) were exposed to my help, by the end of the summer, they could come out producing documents.”

6:9. “I want to be in a role that I could help somebody else. Hopefully I will be in a subject that I enjoy doing.”

Not only did respondents indicate that desires to help students influenced them to teach, they indicated that desire to give back to the community served as an influence to become a vocational teacher. Five respondents indicated that a desire to give back to the community influenced their pursuits in vocational teaching careers:

9:16. “At day camp I was a basketball coach. I just did a lot of things to give back to my community. When I think of giving back, I think you can affect a lot of people by teaching...If I can kind of be like a big brother or a father figure to the students...Just get them to think twice before they sell drugs or give into peer pressure. I think that

would be the greatest thing that I could give back.”

12:16. “I try not to think of it as just teaching the students...I wanna give them something that I have so they can give something back in return...It’s all about what we’re gonna give back.”

2:16. “Specifically, there are so many things I want to give back. I’ve already done tutoring. I wanna give more than that. I wanna do an after school program.

11:16. “I really want to make a mark in education or a mark in the community. That’s my thing. I want to make a mark in the community.”

10:16. “I’m the type of person who tends to give back. I don’t want you to have to go through what I went through...I want to give more (to students) than just, ‘Okay, here’s what we’re gonna do today.’ I want to be somebody that they feel open to come to.”

How did findings regarding desires to be helpers and to give back to the community relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Verbatim responses, from above, served to further substantiate Individual Factors. Verbatim responses specifically substantiated the fifth sub-factor, entitled “achievement needs” (see Appendix C for model identification).

Achievement needs are defined as desires to reach certain goals in life (Brown-West, 1990) Respondents indicated that desires to be helpers, as well as desires to give back to the community, provided reasons for becoming a vocational teacher. This validated “achievement needs” as a sub-factor that influenced respondents’ decisions to become vocational teachers.

Attitudes are dispositions, feelings, or thoughts that relate to career decisions. They included individuals’ perceptions of the role of teaching. Findings indicated that respondents maintained attitudes that vocational teaching fields were important. This served as an influence that attracted them to enter vocational teaching professions. Three respondents were influenced to teach based on attitudes that their specific vocational area was important:

1:9. “What you teach in business, everyone can relate to. You need to be able to take care of your personal finances...I taught a class on credit the other day and those things are important. Where I come from, no one really discusses those things...We now focus on African Americans creating jobs and I think business education is crucial as far as getting that knowledge out to people.”

7:9. “Vocational education gives kids the opportunity to find out who they are, find out some of the things that they’re good at, and just building a trade for themselves so that they can have a step A and a step B.”

11:9. “I think the information taught to students in family and consumer sciences is information that will be beneficial throughout life. Everyone needs to understand proper diet and nutrition, family planning, maintaining a household budget, things of that sort.”

How did findings regarding attitudes that vocational areas were important relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Findings from the above verbatim responses provided more evidence supporting the presence of Individual Factors. Responses indicating attitudes that vocational areas were important validated the fourth sub-factor, entitled “attitudes”

(see Appendix C for model identification). The presence of this sub-factor supported evidence that it served as an influence in vocational teaching career choices.

Summary of Individual Factors. Many respondents indicated that opportunities to affect the lives of students provided personal rewards. They indicated a desire to help students in their personal and education pursuits, and to give back to the community. This served as an influence for entering vocational teaching fields. Respondents indicated their abilities to be good teachers and provide leadership for students influenced them to teach as well.

Respondents referred to the influence that technical interests played in their decisions to become vocational teachers. In addition, they cited the hands-on aspect of vocational teaching as an influence. Opportunities to work personally with individuals, and the attitude that vocational areas were important to the education development of African American students, served as incentives for entering vocational teaching fields.

The presence of the Individual Factor in the O'Neil et al. model was substantiated by evidence in this section. Responses substantiated the fact that the presence of all five sub-factors, entitled (a) self-expectancies, (a) abilities, (c) interests, (d), attitudes, and (e) achievement needs, affected their decisions to become vocational teachers. Additionally, all five sub-factors were found to influence respondents' career decisions to become vocational teachers.

Socioeconomic Factors

Socioeconomic Factors relate to society's economic condition, social, racial, and ethnic group membership. This factor includes sex discrimination and the supply and demand of jobs. Brown-West (1990) defines social class as "The social and economic level of you and your family" (p. 86). Findings relating to social class status were discussed from a perspective of financial support and salary offerings. Respondents indicated that the availability of financial support did not directly influence them to teach; however, it influenced them to attend particular universities. For some respondents it determined whether they would attend college at all. Six respondents indicated that choices to attend a particular university were attractive because of the availability of scholarships or other financial support:

5:8. "By going to the army, it really helped me, because the GI bill and all of that pays for my school now."

3:8. "I was on full scholarship when I came here. I was a Chancellor scholar. Full ride for four years. I was accepted at all three of the universities I applied to. It (the scholarship) wasn't offered at the other universities. That's why I'm here."

11:8. "My parents were going to send me to college regardless, but by having a full scholarship, that was money they could save themselves and do what they wanted to do."

7:8. "I received a full ride here for playing football."

8:8. "I received a scholarship to attend this university."

12:8. "I received an initial free semester to come here, because they offer that to black students here."

Respondents discussed the salaries offered in teaching. Most agreed that the salaries paid to teachers were too low. Salary had both a positive and a negative affect on respondents'

decisions to teach. Five respondents indicated that they felt low salaries deterred their decisions to become vocational teachers:

- 4:10 “I wanted to make money, and I don’t see that (teaching) as a way to make money.”
- 6:10. “I guess you look at teachers, they don’t get paid much. It makes me second guess this whole thing (decision to teach) sometimes.”
- 10:10. “Salary became a factor when I found out you make only \$1,200 more (a year) for a bachelor’s versus a master’s degree.”
- 12:10. “I want to do something where I can be happy and get paid.”
- 3:10. “I need to get a job that’s gonna pay more than just the basic 10 or 12 month salary of a teacher. Because I know I love to have something nice to drive, a nice home.”

Other respondents indicated that they did not view the salaries paid to teachers as being too low. For them, salaries did not serve as a deterrent to enter the field. These respondents referred to the intangible benefits of teaching as the influence for becoming vocational teachers. Seven respondents indicated that intangible benefits influenced them to teach more than the teachingsalaries:

- 11:10. “Starting off now as a high school teacher is around \$27,000 to \$28,000. I know that I looked at a lot of jobs, and a lot of entry level jobs pay less than that...I’m in this because I want to help students learn.”
- 6:10. “I feel for what you do, it’s (the salary) is pretty reasonable.”
- 8:10. “I’ve never been paid a teacher’s salary, so it’s more than what I’m making now and I seem to be doing okay. I’m sure after I really get into it (teaching), and get the salary, that will be fine. I don’t think of this job in terms of money, I think of it in terms of success of another person.”
- 2:10. “Money was never a factor...I want to make a mark on the community...It (decision to teach) has nothing to do with money. I don’t have to get paid.”
- 4:10. “I’m not looking at teaching as far as making a great income...I know I can’t get wealthy teaching. I’m not looking at teaching as a means to make me wealthy. I have other ideas for that!”
- 5:10. “It’s (teaching) not really for the money, because sometimes teachers don’t really make a lot of money. I can continue to do odd jobs on the side...It’s more important to teach than to worry about the money you make.”
- 7:10. “I mean even though teachers aren’t paid that much, it is a successful job, because you’re developing someone’s life. It (salaries) has not affected me at all. I basically know what the pay is for teachers and I guess I look forward to more than just getting paid. I understand the pay is low, but it’s all right.”

Respondents were influenced to become vocational teachers based on the availability of vacation benefits and opportunities to have weekends off. Seven respondents indicated that time off was a benefit of teaching and influenced them to choose vocational teaching careers:

- 11:11. “Weekends off, summers off, what else could you ask for?”
- 6:11. “You get summers off. That’s one of the great benefits to me.”

12:11. “The summers off...I think its wonderful.”

3:11. “I have to admit, I like having summers off. I want to have summers off and the holidays.”

7:11. “The vacations are important to me...Vacations are probably the best. If you want, you can get summers off. You get all the holidays the school gives, Christmas vacation...”

5:11. “People don’t consider that you have summers off, that you get all the holidays off and the weekends off. That’s important to me.”

4:11. “I wanted a whole summer off. That’s when I really thought about teaching.”

10:11. “Well, the hours are great...I think it’s a great thing 7:00 to 2:00.”

Respondents were influenced to become vocational teachers because it provided a career safety net. Respondents felt that a teaching degree would provide them with a certification that could be used if other career options failed. Three respondents indicated that they were influenced to become vocational teachers because it provided a field to fall back on:

4:11. “You can always fall back on teaching. A teaching degree is better than nothing.”

1:11. “I would like to focus on teaching. ‘Cause you can always fall back on teaching if you don’t like industry.”

12:11. “I thought I would be able to get a better job in industry. It (teaching) was just more or less something to fall back on.”

How did findings regarding economic growth relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Evidence provided by verbatim responses, in the above section, supported the presence of Socioeconomic Factors. Because social class is related to economic growth, (Brown-West, 1990) verbatim responses in this area supported the presence of sub-factor one, entitled “social class” (see Appendix C for model identification). These findings also support evidence that Socioeconomic Factors influenced respondents’ decisions to become vocational teachers.

Race is referred to as a distinction based on an individual’s skin color or ethnic origin (Webster, 1990). Respondents referred to race from the perspective of the strengths present in African American teachers. Respondents did not refer to race as an influence for choosing vocational teaching careers.

There were no verbatim responses that related to race as an influence on African Americans choosing vocational teaching careers. Race was therefore not substantiated as a sub-factor under O’Neil et al.’s Socioeconomic Factor. Additionally, race was not shown to influence respondents’ decisions to teach.

According to Brown-West (1990), “Sex discrimination is defined as your experience of personal and societal discrimination on the basis of sex” (p. 89). Respondents recognized the presence of sex discrimination, or distinctions made between males and females, in vocational areas. Seven respondents indicated an awareness of sex discrimination in various vocational fields:

3:14. “I will tell you even with my own professors here, females and males are treated two different ways...agriculture education, no matter how you slice, is a good ole boy network. Its a known fact that in the USDA system, there are a lot of racial and

gender discrimination suits.”

12:14. “Agriculture education is definitely a male-dominated profession. Don’t let anyone fool you into believing otherwise.”

8:14. “It seems like there are more women (in marketing education). All of the males I know happen to be white males, too. I’m assuming most females are the ones who teach marketing education.”

2:14. “It happened (evidence of sex discrimination) during my student teaching...Students would leave the room, go to where a male was teaching to verify that my answer was right.”

1:14. “The big thing we hear is guys can’t type.”

9:14. “When I was in the classroom like at the high school level, I noticed when you like have one or two females in class, they (males) tend to move away from her.”

11:14. “This is probably biased within itself, but I would almost do a double take if I saw a male in family and consumer sciences.”

Respondents viewed the presence of sex discrimination as a challenge that influenced them to enter vocational teaching fields. Women, particularly, perceived sex discrimination as a challenge and as a motivator for entering male dominated vocational teaching areas. Two respondents indicated the presence of sex discrimination served as a motivation for entering vocational teaching careers:

2:14. “It upset me, but after I thought about it, it kind of motivated me to prove my point.”

6:14. “Once I get out into the work force in schools, there are not many female teachers, but I can handle it. I’m not gonna feel less of a person because I am female.”

How do findings regarding evidence of sex discrimination relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? The verbatim responses, listed above, further supported the presence of Socioeconomic Factors. More specifically, verbatim responses supported the presence of sub-factor three, entitled “sex discrimination” (see Appendix C for model identification). The presence of this sub-factor served as a challenge that motivated respondents to pursue vocational teaching careers.

Supply and demand refers to the level of job availability. Respondents indicated feeling that the availability of teaching careers, in specific vocational programs, influenced them to teach. Eight respondents happily indicated that they felt jobs would be available in their vocational areas:

10:12. “The year 2000 calls for more technology. We are gonna need the teachers to teach computers.” (business education)

12:12. “Now it’s (demand) very high. It’s very good right now. If you’re in this major right now and you’re graduating in the next two years, it’s very good.” (agricultural education)

9:12. “There are rows upon rows of people needing technology teachers.” (technology education)

2:12. “There’s a big demand now (for technology education teachers), and from

what I've heard, several teachers will be retiring in the next five to 10 years.”

3:12. “When I graduated in December, I had three phone calls the same day I graduated wanting me to come to work.” (agriculture education)

6:12. “I know that technology education is one of the most demanding professions. There are jobs out there when it comes to looking for employment.” (trade and industrial education)

4:12. “I can easily get a job if I promote myself. You know, let them know I have special skills, that I can do a variety of things. I don't think I will have a problem with getting employed in my area (family and consumer sciences).”

11:12. “It took me a little while, but I was able to find a job...One that I really like.” (family and consumer sciences)

How did findings regarding the availability of vocational teaching jobs relate to the O'Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Verbatim responses further substantiated the presence of Socioeconomic Factors. Responses regarding a large supply of vocational teaching jobs, related specifically to sub-factor four entitled “supply and demand of jobs” (see Appendix C for model identification). The presence of this sub-factor indicated that it influenced respondents' decisions to become vocational teachers.

Summary of Socioeconomic Factors. Most respondents recognized the low salaries paid to teachers. Even though many respondents viewed the low salaries as negatively influencing teaching decisions, most viewed salaries positively. Respondents who viewed salaries positively related to the intangible benefits that influenced vocational teaching decisions. Vacation time and weekends off were indicated as a major influence to enter vocational teaching positions.

Respondents who recognized the demand for vocational teachers indicated that it influenced their vocational teaching decisions. Respondents also recognized issues of sex discrimination in vocational teaching fields. Most respondents who experienced incidents of sex discrimination indicated that it served as a motivation for entering vocational teaching fields.

Findings indicated that the Socioeconomic Factors influenced respondents' decisions to become vocational teachers. The three sub-factors of social class, sex discrimination, and supply and demand of jobs, influenced respondents' decisions as well. The sub-factor of race, however, was not found to influence respondents' decisions to teach.

Situational Factors

Situational Factors are events or circumstances that are unplanned or unexpected. Situational Factors are associated with chance events that lead to a career decision, or the choice of a career path, that serves as a course of least resistance (O'Neil et al., 1978). Chance is defined as an unpredictable event or occurrence that happened without cause (Webster, 1990). Respondents perceived the receipt of promotional materials from universities as chance occurrences. Receiving written promotional materials from vocational departments, or through unplanned contacts with a teacher, influenced respondents to pursue careers in vocational education. Six individuals indicated that written promotional materials from universities, or contact with a teacher who promoted the field, influenced them to become vocational teachers:

10:8. “I guess if _____ University had never sent that information, if it had never fallen into the right hands, I never would have considered it (business

education), cause I never would have thought I could get in.”

2:8. “I happened to receive a letter in the mail promoting this department (marketing education) and that sparked my interest. That’s how I got over here.”

5:8. “I hadn’t even given thought of technology education. Well, let me jump back. After going through the student handbook that showed all the majors, I looked at technology. Technology education really jumped out at me because of the courses...I liked the wood shop, the CAD, the drafting.”

12:8. “Before I came to this department I was undecided...Somehow, I bumped into Mr. _____. He is good at finding undeclared majors. So I bumped into him and here I am.”

1:8. “I mentioned when I first came here that I wanted to teach. When they found me, they jumped on me just like that. They wanted to keep me. It was like business education really wants me...So then, I really kind of jumped into it as far as wanting the opportunity.”

11:8. “My current advisor caught me one day when I was wandering through the hall. She asked if I had ever thought about teaching cause the field needed more black teachers. Thank goodness she did that!”

How did findings regarding the promotion of vocational areas relate to the O’Neil et al. model? The verbatim responses listed above substantiated the presence of the Situational Factor. These responses referred specifically to sub-factor one, entitled “chance.” Because respondents related promotional occurrences with chance events, it substantiates “chance” as a sub-factor.

Course of least resistance is defined as the available options offering the least resistance, hard work, or difficulty (Brown-West, 1990, p. 93). Respondents indicated that opportunities to save credits when transferring from community colleges or from other majors influenced them to pursue vocational majors at various universities. Four respondents indicated being influenced to enter vocational teaching fields at particular schools, out of a desire to save credits towards completion of vocational programs:

8:8. “I graduated with a major in fashion and a minor in marketing. I ended up doing retail...I didn’t like the hours, didn’t like the set up, didn’t like the people...So, I came back and talked to Dr. _____. She said, ‘Well, you have all the core classes, do you want to go ahead and get your teacher certification?’”

5:8. “It was either this (Technology Educational) or history. Once again...history...I didn’t know anything about history...The history department was like, ‘Well, you can come over here.’ I said to myself, ‘Do I really want to take that much history?’ I decided on technology.”

4:8. “I decided I had been in the medical field for like 17 years. I wanted to get out. I’m really tired. I was going back to the same setting...I said, ‘Do I wanna get stuck in a hospital or a health department?’...I was tired of sickness. That was the main thing, I needed wellness...So, I thought about it and went to Dr. _____. She told me my courses would transfer, so that made it easy.”

10:8. “It was more about getting my bachelor’s degree and not losing my credits versus planning to become a teacher...I received information from _____ University

and it was talking about a 2+2 transfer program after two years of community college. I knew the person down there and I heard the program was great. If I had attended other colleges in the state or outside the state, I would have ended up losing credits.”

How did findings regarding desires to save college credit relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? Verbatim responses from this section further supported the presence of Situational Factors. Because respondents indicated that saving course credits made it easier to enter vocational majors, sub-factor two, entitled “course of least resistance,” is substantiated (see Appendix C for model identification).

Summary of Situational Factors. Respondents indicated receiving written promotional materials, and being unexpectedly approached by a teacher promoting vocational majors, as a chance occurrence. These chance occurrences served to encourage respondents to pursue careers as vocational teachers.

Several respondents stated that they entered teacher-preparation programs because it allowed them to avoid losing college credits after transferring from another university, community college, or major.

Findings substantiated the presence of Situational Factors in the O’Neil et al. model. In addition, findings substantiated the presence of the two sub-factors, entitled “chance” and “course of least resistance,” respectively. These sub-factors also influenced respondents’ decisions to become vocational teachers.

Psychosocial-Emotional Factors

The Psychosocial-Emotional Factor involves problem areas that can restrict, limit, or influence career development. They involve fear of failure, fear of success, lack of confidence, lack of assertiveness, and role conflict. “Fear of failure is defined as being seen or judged as inadequate and unsuccessful” (Brown-West, 1990, p. 94). Respondent fears related directly to competency testing and discipline. The presence of these factors provided undesirable influences that were possible deterrents in vocational teaching career choices. Two respondents expressed fears of failing competency exams. They did not indicate, however, that these fears dissuaded them from pursuing vocational teaching careers:

5:15 “People have been passing this test for years (NTE). I was afraid I would have trouble with it.”

11:15. “They told us that 99% of students here pass on the first attempt. I was still scared because I know African Americans typically don’t do well on those tests.”

Two respondents expressed fears that related to dealing with students and parents:

3:15. “My two anxieties are to deal with an administration that doesn’t understand you and to deal with the discipline problems, of course.”

2:15. “The scariest thing about teaching is being in a situation where you have a student that tells you a personal problem and you give your advice and it turns out to be wrong.”

“Lack of assertiveness is defined as the lack of initiative to express yourself and to act in your own best interest” (Brown-West, 1990, p. 94). Respondents indicated that fears related to an inability to discipline students made them question their decisions to teach. Four respondents expressed fears in disciplining students in class:

4:15. “I was afraid of getting up in front of the whole classroom full of students and not being able to, you know, control them. They would just get totally out of hand and the principal would come down and say, ‘This woman can’t control her class.’ ”

6:15. “I was scared that I wasn’t gonna be able to control my class...I don’t have too much to say.”

8:15. “My greatest fear was how the students would react to me. Will they be disrespectful? Will they look at me as a joke? Could I handle them?”

7:15. “I was afraid of running into myself. Like the things I used to do in high school, running around, just driving teachers crazy and always having to be told to sit down, stop talking, quit running your mouth.”

“Role conflict is defined as the feelings of frustration over being pulled in opposite directions by your roles” (Brown-West, 1990, p. 95). Only one respondent addressed problems related to role conflict. The respondent who addressed role conflict was the only non-traditional respondent in the study. This was also the only respondent in the study who was married with children.

4:15. “That year (first year in program) was very stressful on me. I was a full-time worker and I had a full load and I had two kids and a husband. I wanted to be able to take some of my classes through independent study.”

How did findings regarding fears of failing competency tests and fears of an inability to discipline students relate to the O’Neil et al. model of career decision-making? There were limited responses related to this category; however, the presence of responses did substantiate evidence of Psychosocial Factors. Verbatim responses related to fears of failing competency tests and fears of disciplining students substantiated the presence of sub-factor one, entitled “fear of failure,” and the presence of sub-factor five, entitled “lack of assertiveness” (see Appendix C for model identification). The limited number of responses related to role conflict did not substantiate it as a sub-factor in the model. In addition, the lack of references made to fears of success or lack of confidence indicated that they were not sub-factors in the model that influenced respondents to become vocational teachers.

Summary of Psychosocial-Emotional Factors. Respondents indicated fears of failing competency tests. Respondents also indicated fearing misunderstandings that could develop among teachers, administration, and students. Additionally, they feared being a source of misguidance for students. Other respondents’ fears related to those that existed within the classroom, such as an inability to control the class and fears of disciplining students. O’Neil et al.’s Psychosocial-Emotional Factors were found to relate to an African American vocational teaching career-choice perspective.

Spiritual Factors

One factor not included in O’Neil et al. career decision-making model emerged from the analysis. Because of the qualitative nature of this study, findings related to this additional factor can only be applied to the respondents in this research study. I entitled the emerging factor the Spirituality Factor. I defined this factor as a feeling that a higher power, or a spiritual occurrence, led individuals to teaching careers. This factor manifested itself through what individuals felt was a calling to the profession. This factor included feelings that career decisions were directed by the

influence of higher power. In addition, it included teaching experiences that were gained through church or through individuals met in church. Several respondents indicated being influenced to teach in the vocational field based on feelings that they were called to the profession by a higher power:

5:8. “As far as my decision to teach, I would say maybe God planned it. I’m glad He did because I am enjoying it.”

12:8. “I just so happened to see Mr. _____ (the teacher whom recruited this individual into vocational program) that day. It’s funny how God finds ways to lead you in certain directions.”

11:8. “Unless the Lord really changes my heart, I will be a teacher.”

2:8. “Something just stood out about it (Technology Education). Something just stood out about it. I don’t know if God was telling me, ‘Look this is going to happen in the future.’ It was a spiritual thing, but it’s paid off.”

12:8. “I think God’s plan was in this decision (to teach). I don’t know whose plan it was, but it wasn’t mine at first.”

Two respondents indicated being influenced to teach based on feelings that a higher power would protect them from negative occurrences in teaching:

2:15. “A lot of people are scared of violence in the schools, that doesn’t scare me. That’s because I have, not a higher being, but I believe in God, so He will protect me as far as I’m concerned.”

4:15. “I was worried about a classroom full of students and not being able to control them. I said, ‘Okay Lord, you know I can do all things through you’...(later that day) My husband said, ‘I know you didn’t have any problems did you? I said, ‘no, no I didn’t.’ ”

Two respondents indicated that an individual in church influenced them to become vocational teachers:

10:6. “We had a lady within our church who was a former teacher. In some factors I guess I’m following in her trail, because I, too, am in the ministry...When I went to community college, the computer teacher really ended up becoming my mentor. Um, on top of it, she is my assistant pastor. So that was a really big influence.”

2:6. “I respect my mom totally as far as being a Sunday school teacher and getting students involved. I mean they know the books of the Bible by heart and they’re only like six or seven years old...If my mom gets kids enthused about church like they were about Joseph and Mary, I said that (teaching) is (a) good (profession).”

Summary of Spiritual Factors. Several respondents referred to the influences of a higher power encouraging them to become vocational teachers. Others indicated a higher power serving as protection from negative occurrences in teaching. Respondents also indicated having received influences to teach from individuals involved in church settings.

Experiences at Predominantly White Universities and HBCUs

This section includes the presentation of findings related to the second half of this study. The goal of this section was to present findings related to the experiences of African Americans

in vocational teacher-preparation programs. It includes findings that specifically answered research questions three and four.

I first provided findings that answered research question three. Findings that answered this question were supported by verbatim responses. In addition, findings that answered research question three were organized according to categories identified as prevalent in the literature. The categories for data organization were identified as (a) experiences related to faculty relationships, (b) social adjustment, (c) participation in social activities, (d) career guidance, and (e) academic preparation (Davis, 1991). Within each of the identified sections, answers to research question four were provided. This organizational structure was used to provide clarity in the presentation of findings, relate finding back to research questions, and avoid repeating verbatim responses in answering research question four.

Student and Faculty Relationships

According to Davis (1991), the more social support received from close relationships with family, friends, acquaintances, co-workers, and the community at large, the better an individual's health and well-being. For college students, faculty often served several of these roles. Respondents indicated having positive experiences with faculty at both predominantly white universities and historically black universities. Two respondents at historically black universities indicated that positive experiences with faculty who took a personal interest in their academic achievements enhanced their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs:

1:20. "They've treated me well here and they have given me a lot of love in this (vocational) department as far as giving me confidence...Here it's like they have more of an interest in you."

11:20. "Teachers here took an interest in my success. They followed through to see that I made it through the difficult times."

Respondents indicated that teachers who took on parental roles served as support systems during teacher preparation. Three respondents at historically black universities indicated that the faculty's role as a parent enhanced their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs:

2:20. "Dr. _____ is great. He's great 'cause not only was he my mentor, but when I got here I was very young...He almost took the role as my father...He and his wife stepped in and they became not only my mentors, but (he) also (became) my second father."

3:20. "Dr. _____, we call her mom. You know, she looks out for you."

4:20. "She (professor) will kind of discipline you and say, 'Well, you can do better than that!' She's kinda like a mother figure, really...I would have to say the relationship (with the professor) is good because of that."

Respondents indicated that faculty attempts to develop open and comfortable relationships with students enhanced their progress in vocational licensure programs. Respondents also indicated that attempts by faculty to develop open and comfortable relationships, made them feel more comfortable in academic settings. Five respondents at historically black universities indicated that attempts by faculty to develop open relationships enhanced their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs:

3:20. "Like you saw, I went into Dr. _____ office right there...You know, I can walk into his office at any time and be like, 'I have a problem.' He says, 'Let me buy you lunch, let's go out and talk about it.' "

5:20. "The professors here...can relate to you. I feel I can talk to a professor."

11:20. "I can sit down and talk with her in her office. Her doors are always open to us."

7:20. "My relationship with faculty here is very pleasant, very personal...Not where you talk about your personal business, but I mean you have a good relationship."

6:20. "Whenever you have a problem, you can feel free to talk to them...on a one-to-one basis."

Respondents indicated that help and support provided by faculty enhanced their experiences in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Respondents indicated that faculty members were most helpful when they were readily available and went out of their way to provide support in academic situations. Five respondents at both historically black and predominantly white universities indicated that help and support provided by faculty enhanced their educational experiences in vocational teacher-preparation programs:

4:20. "I always enjoy talking to Dr. _____. She is very helpful. She is always encouraging me to do better."

5:20. "They stay here if you need help. Most of them (faculty) are here to help students."

2:20. "I can't speak on him as a chairperson, but as my instructor, he has advised me in the best way possible."

6:20. "They're very helpful and they are right here."

12:20. "I find there are a lot of supportive faculty in this department."

9:20. "Dr. _____ and Dr. _____, they stick their neck out for us. They do whatever they have in their power to...They help me out with problems."

Respondents indicated that knowledgeable vocational faculty enhanced experiences in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Faculty who were knowledgeable of vocational subject matter and served as leaders in the field of vocational education enhanced the educational experiences of respondents. Overwhelmingly, respondents recognized faculty at predominantly white universities as being knowledgeable in the field of vocational education:

8:20. "Dr. _____, she's wonderful...She's probably had the most influence on me as far as what I've learned related to marketing."

10:20. "I rate my experiences with Dr. _____ very highly. She's very knowledgeable of various teaching styles. In her class, we did role plays, teacher demonstrations and stuff to kind of define our teaching styles. I could see that when I went to the school to teach, that's what I used."

7:20. "The teachers here understand what's going on. They provide helpful hints with the personal experiences they encountered from being in the work place...You also learn from things they've done well."

9:20. "They're very knowledgeable and very professional."

12:20. "They set the standard in the field. My professors are highly regarded in our

vocational field. That makes you want to learn from them.”

Respondents indicated that the teaching styles of faculty influenced their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Respondents indicated that faculty who possessed teaching styles that were unique, or provided hands-on learning opportunities, enhanced their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Two respondents at historically black universities identified that teaching styles providing opportunities for active learning enhanced experiences in vocational teacher-preparation programs:

2:20. “The teaching side, he’s not a lecturer. He’s a hands-on instructor. He gives you the material. He lets you know the important facts, and then he gives you the problems so that you apply them. He has a teaching style that I like.”

11:20. “She (professor) has the most unique teaching style. She always gets you out of your seat in class. We do lots of group activities, role plays, things like that. You just automatically like the way she teaches.”

Summary of the faculty relationships that enhanced the progress of respondents.

Respondents indicated that the experiences that enhanced their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs related to faculty who took an interest in their academic achievements and developed open relationships with students. Faculty who were helpful and supportive in academic pursuits, and were knowledgeable of vocational subject matter, provided experiences that enhanced progress in vocational licensure programs. In addition, faculty who possessed teaching styles that provided active, hands-on learning experiences were perceived as providing excellent teacher preparation experiences.

Varied Student and Faculty Relationships in Vocational Licensure Programs

The responses below, when compared to the above responses, indicated differences regarding faculty relationships in vocational licensure programs. Respondents indicated that faculty at historically black universities used teaching styles that provided active, hands-on learning experiences. Respondents felt that vocational teachers at predominately white universities used teaching styles that required less active involvement with students. They perceived that these teaching styles made it difficult to learn the material:

8:20. “If I had an a question, I may have been overlooked.”

9:20. “Sometimes you tell them (professors), ‘I don’t understand your teaching methods, because you just sit there and you talk at us. We’re not understanding what you are saying’ ...They’re (professors) like, ‘I’m teaching you the information and you should get it.’ ”

12:20. “It just seems that their (white professor’s) teaching styles are different. It seems to be a colder learning environment with them.”

Respondents also indicated differences in regards to the approachability of faculty at predominantly white universities and at historically black universities. While faculty at historically black universities were viewed as open, several respondents felt vocational teachers at predominantly white universities were less approachable:

8:20. “She’s been an overall good professor, but stand-offish at times.”

12:20. “You wouldn’t dare walk in the office without making an appointment first.”

10:20. “Some of the professors I encountered, being at a research university and all...

they are more interested in their research than they are with me as a student.”

Summary of varied experiences related to faculty relationships. Respondents indicated having varied experiences as they related to faculty relationships at predominantly white universities and historically black universities. Although some experiences were the same at both types of institutions, respondents explained different experiences relating to faculty approachability, faculty knowledge levels, and faculty teaching styles.

Social Adjustment

Davis (1991) concurred that support systems maintain individuals' self-esteem and life satisfaction, increase social and academic competence, and help in contending with the difficulties of stress. He contended that the more social support received from close relationships with the community at large, the better an individual's health and well-being.

Respondents' viewed the presence of family-like campus environments as experiences that facilitated social adjustments and enhanced progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Evidence of family environments within vocational programs were identified through the presence of close relationships with peers. Three respondents on historically black campuses viewed the campus as having more of a family environment:

6:17. “Well, really it's like a family here (in vocational education)...I guess we all have a common bond.”

11:17. “We (members of the vocational department) are all quite close here. We fight and we make up. Its kind of like families do.”

3:17. “I have people who just come by my office. They might not have anything to talk about, but they just want to come by and talk.”

Respondents viewed peers who were very supportive and helpful as enhancing progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Respondents indicated that peers were supportive and helpful in the completion of vocationally related course assignments. Three respondents on historically black campuses indicated that supportive and helpful peers enhanced progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs:

1:19. “We've all had our problems...no one has had it easy. When I was at _____ University, no one talked to anybody...Here, I talk to people. We call and we help each other out with class work.”

11:19. “Everybody helps each other out in this (vocational program). The teachers help the students, then the students turn around and help each other...You know there's always something we don't understand.”

5:19. “Most of my friends I have known since freshman year and we have become closer. I am here on campus with them. I can call someone up if I need help.”

Respondents viewed positive recognition, and the respect of peers, as experiences that enhanced progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Two respondents at historically black universities enjoyed peer recognition:

2:19. “Basically, I have a lot of respect. I'm not saying that to brag on myself. I've been through a lot...and to get where I am now has been a struggle, so they (peers) respected me for that.”

11:19. “I'm one of the student that are recognized around here (campus)...It makes

me feel good.”

Respondents identified small vocational class sizes as enhancing their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Respondents felt that small class sizes created opportunities to develop relationships with other vocational students and with faculty as well. Two respondents at predominantly white universities recognized opportunities to develop closer relationships with faculty and other vocational students due to the small sizes of vocational classes:

7:19. “Because of the fact that I see them all the time and we take the same classes, I’ve grown to where I have a relationship with them (other students in vocational program). A lot of them are very quiet, but they are also very helpful...They are helpful because each of us has our own ideas about what we want to do...You learn to take in other people’s ideas.”

11:19. “Because we have small vocational classes, all the vocational students get to know each other very well. We also get a chance to know the professors a little better.”

Summary of enhancing experiences related to social adjustment. Respondents indicated that vocational programs that provided family-like campus environments and peers who were supportive and helpful in academic pursuits provided social adjustment experiences that enhanced their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Other experiences, such as peer recognition and respect, and small vocational class sizes were identified as enhancing experiences as well.

Varied Social Adjustment in Vocational Licensure Programs

Respondents indicated that their social adjustment experiences did vary. Respondents at predominately white universities expressed feeling unwanted by peers. Respondents on historically black campuses indicated the presence of family-like environments. Two respondents attending predominantly white universities expressed the fact that peers made them feel unwanted and unwelcome:

10:19 “I’ve had a hard time on campus. I think because it’s so big...I am accustomed to seeing everybody and saying, ‘hi.’ When I came here, it was totally different...Down here, the racism is there, and you never quite know where you stand with somebody else.”

12:19. “I never quite felt like I belonged here.”

Summary of varied experiences related to social adjustment. Respondents indicated varied social experiences on historically black and predominantly white campuses. The particular experiences that varied related mainly to feelings of peer acceptance. Several respondents indicated the presence of family-like environments on historically black campuses, but indicated feeling unwanted by peers on predominantly white campuses.

Varied Levels of Participation in Vocational Activities

Davis (1991) indicated that students who attended historically black universities had different social experiences than students who attended predominantly white universities. Davis indicated that African American students’ college outcomes were more favorable when they participated in extra-curricular activities sponsored by student organizations. He also

contended that African Americans who attended historically black universities had more opportunities to participate in social networks. On a whole, African Americans at historically black universities were more actively involved in vocational club activities. Furthermore, they were more likely to serve in leadership positions in vocational clubs and organizations. Respondents at historically black universities actively participated in the following vocational organizations:

- Phi Beta Lambda (Business Education)
- Alpha Tau Alpha (Agriculture Education)
- Gamma Sigma Delta (Agriculture Education)
- MANNERS (Agriculture Education)
- Society of Plastic Engineers (Technology Education)
- Technology Education Collegiate Association (Technology Education)
- Photography Club (Technology Education)

Attended International Technology Education Association Conference
 Respondents at historically black universities also indicated the opportunities vocational education provided for leadership. Respondents indicated holding leadership positions in the following organizations:

- Business school ambassador
- Work with NCATE committee
- Ambassador of School of Agriculture.
- President of MANNERS
- Chair of Pyramids Design Club

Respondents indicated being involved in vocational clubs and organizations at predominately white universities, but in fewer numbers. No respondents indicated serving as leaders in vocational organizations. Davis (1991) contended, however, that participation in student organizations was a poor predictor of African American student outcomes on predominantly white campuses. Students indicated being involved in the following vocational clubs and organizations:

- Technology Education Collegiate Association
- Iota Lambda Sigma
- Phi Beta Lambda
- Association of Marketing Education Students

Career Guidance

Davis (1991) found that African American students at historically black universities exhibited enhanced involvement with career processes. Two respondents at historically black universities indicated receiving personal feedback from professors regarding job opportunities. They perceived this experience as one that enhanced their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs:

5:22. “He (the instructor) explained how my options would be open to like industry, teaching...He’s has done so much...He’s given me a chance to teach a class over at _____ company.”

11:22. “We have a board which posts all the job openings. I find that to be very helpful...The professors around here let you know when jobs come up. They even give you some information on how to interview for positions and stuff.”

Respondents at predominantly white campuses recognized that careerguidance was available, but was expected to be sought more directly.

8:22. “Dr. _____ would give us heads up (about job opportunities) or ask if you would like to go somewhere. She would say, ‘You need to write to this. Here’s the address for the application.’” But other than, that there was not any structured place for the entire department where you could go (and seek job opportunities).”

10:22. “No not really (when asked if respondent had received career guidance). I don’t know if it was their fault or mine.”

12:22. “We would have job boards and things of that nature, but no professors ever let us know personally about job opportunities.”

Respondents viewed helpful information regarding standardized tests as enhancing their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Two respondents indicated that helpful competency test information served to ease their tensions and enhanced their progress in vocational preparation programs:

3:14. “If you don’t pass the NTE, you don’t graduate, bottom line...They (faculty) have given me a lot of guidance on the NTE, preparing me for standardized tests like the GRE. ETS (Educational Testing Service) was giving out free...they (ETS) were trying to test certain things on that test and my professor let me know about that. Not everybody knew they were giving the GRE free...We raise money, and we pay for our NTEs and GREs...Since I didn’t have that pressure of paying for it, I was like, ‘hey, if I mess up it didn’t cost me anything.’”

5:14. “Mr. _____ makes us take the NTE during our sophomore year. That way, if we fail it then we have plenty of time to prepare to take it again.’ ”

Varied Career Guidance Experiences in Vocational Teacher Programs

Respondents indicated that experiences with vocational guidance were different at predominantly white and historically black universities. Vocational faculty at historically black institutions tended to provide more direct personal information regarding job openings in vocational fields. Vocational faculty at predominantly white universities tended to provide more vague references to job openings. In addition, vocational faculty at historically black universities provided frequent opportunities to take competency tests in non-threatening environments.

Summary of both enhancing and varied experiences related to career guidance.

Respondents indicated that experiences with vocational faculty who provided personal feedback regarding job opportunities enhanced their experiences in vocational teacher-preparation programs. In addition, helpful information relating to competency testing was viewed as enhancing respondents’ progress in vocational preparation programs.

Academic Preparation

Respondents discussed academic performance from a perspective of their feelings regarding vocational preparation. Respondents in this section discussed the academic preparation

provided in vocational teacher-preparation programs. Two individuals attending predominantly white universities felt that experiences with vocational subject matter academically prepared them for career success. This served to enhance their experiences in vocational teacher-licensure programs:

8:22. "I have learned a tremendous amount. I've learned how to write papers. Everything that I'm doing. I'm being taught the things that are gonna better me and make it necessary for me to get a job."

12:22. "I have gained access to technologies that I couldn't have imagined."

Respondents also referenced experiences in vocational teacher-preparation programs that left them feeling unprepared for career success. Two students at historically black institutions indicated feeling unprepared for vocational teaching environments:

3:22. "I don't feel that I had enough observation time, you know to go out (to school sites)...I really felt like I needed more observation time...And also, as far as making a lesson plan...man. Making a lesson plan was the hardest thing for me. I find it real hard making lesson plans...I feel like I was not properly prepared for that."

11:22. "One thing I feel we need here at _____ University is more computer applications. We have a computer lab and that multi-media class I was showing you, but we really don't have enough computer teaching."

Summary of enhancing and varied experiences related to academic preparation.

Respondents indicated that adequate academic preparation enhanced their progress in both vocational teacher-preparation programs and prepared them for vocational teaching careers. Respondents at predominantly white and historically black universities indicated feeling differently about the academic preparations gained in vocational teacher-preparation programs.

Summary of the Findings

The factors that influenced African Americans to become vocational teachers. The specific derivation of each of these factors are found in verbatim responses listed in the above section. Presence of the following factors influenced African Americans to become vocational teachers:

- Parental, particularly maternal, support in educational achievements and career goals.
- Early exposure, by parent educators, to educational environments.
- Childhood exposure to vocationally related experiences.
- Student-centered focus displayed by teachers in vocational classrooms.
- Support by vocational teachers regarding academic pursuits.
- Enjoyment of the profession displayed by vocational teachers.
- Direct suggestion to become a teacher.
- Active-learning environments that provide hands-on learning activities.
- Positive student teaching and substitute teaching experiences.
- Opportunities for successful social and academic experiences in vocational programs.
- Availability of financial support for students interested in vocational teacher

education programs.

- Knowledge of the intangible benefits of vocational teaching such as rewards gained from student learning, opportunities to work with children, and opportunities to give back to the community.
- Knowledge of time flexibility and vacation benefits provided to vocational teachers.
- Belief that jobs will be available in vocational specialty area.
- Identification of teaching strengths and leadership abilities as vocational teachers.
- Desire to work with young people.
- Interest derived from exposure to the technically related vocational activities.
- Written promotional materials and verbal promotion from representatives of vocational programs.
- Flexibility in working with the programs of study for transfer students
- Recognition of a student's feeling that he or she may have a naturally predisposed calling to the profession.

Factors influencing African Americans to become vocational teachers, as they relate to the O'Neil et al. model. Presence of the following factors and sub-factors in the O'Neil et al. model influenced African Americans to become vocational teachers (see Appendix C for identification of the original model):

- I. Familial Factors
 1. early childhood experiences
 2. mother's role model
 3. father's role model
- II. Societal Factors
 1. educational experiences
 2. teacher's role model
- III. Situational Factors
 1. chance
 2. course of least resistance
- IV. Socioeconomic Factors
 1. social class
 2. supply and demand of jobs
- V. Individual Factors
 1. self-expectancies
 2. abilities
 3. interests
 4. achievement needs

Experiences that enhanced the progress of African Americans currently enrolled in vocational licensure programs. The specific derivation of each of these factors can be supported by verbatim responses listed in the above sections. Presence of the following experiences enhanced the progress of African Americans enrolled in vocational licensure programs

- The presence of vocational faculty who take personal interests in students' academic and vocational achievements.

- Vocational faculty who take on paternal, nurturing roles.
- Vocational faculty who provide open and comfortable relationships with students.
- Vocational faculty who are knowledgeable of vocational subject matter.
- Vocational faculty members who make themselves readily available for student help.
- Vocational faculty who provide hands-on learning activities.
- Peers who are supportive and helpful in vocational programs.
- Small vocational class sizes.
- Active participation and leadership opportunities in vocational clubs and organizations.
- Vocational faculty who provide personal career guidance.
- Vocational curriculums that strongly prepare students for vocational teaching careers.

Varied experiences in vocational licensure programs. Respondents identified different experiences at predominantly white and historically black universities. Those differences related to faculty relationships, social adjustment, participation in vocational activities, career guidance, and academic preparation. Respondents at historically black universities indicated having closer relationships with faculty. In addition, they indicated being more involved in leadership roles in vocational clubs and organizations, were more comfortable with the social environment, and received more direct guidance involving vocational careers. Respondents at predominantly white universities gained a higher level of respect for the knowledge levels of faculty, enjoyed close relationships with peers developed in small class vocational classes, and felt that they had been adequately prepared to enter the work force.

Chapter V

Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations

Purpose of Study and Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influence African Americans to select vocational teaching as a career. In addition, this study identified the experiences related to their progress in vocational teacher-preparation programs. The factors found to influence African Americans to become vocational teachers were related to factors identified in the O'Neil, Meeker, and Borger (1978) model of career decision-making. The experiences of African Americans at both historically black and predominantly white universities were analyzed to determine whether they varied.

The goal of this research was to determine the factors that led African Americans to teach and to identify their experiences in preparing to become vocational teachers. This goal was accomplished through a qualitative research methodology. Structured interviews, with open-ended questions, served as the primary data-gathering instrument. Interviews were used to obtain knowledge of respondents' feelings regarding career-choice influences.

Twelve African American respondents were selected from six universities located in two southeastern states. Respondent selection was based on (a) students' presence in vocational teacher education programs for at least one year, and (b) advisors' confidence that respondents would complete the teacher education program. School selection criteria were based on (a) the presence of a vocational teacher education program, (b) NCATE accreditation, and (c) the racial affiliation of the university, as categorized by NCATE. Audio-taped and video-taped interviews were transcribed into word processor files. The files were coded and analyzed to establish data categories.

Factors relating to the O'Neil et al. (1978) model of career decision-making served as the theoretical base of the study and were used as a basis for determining the influences behind African Americans' decisions to become vocational teachers. The major factors identified by the model were (a) Familial Factors, (b) Societal Factors, (c) Situational Factors, (d) Socioeconomic Factors, (e) Individual Factors, and (f) Psychosocial-Emotional Factors. An additional factor, the Spiritual Factor, was identified based on findings in this study.

Four questions posed as a guide for the study:

1. What were the factors that influenced African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers?
2. How did the factors that influenced African Americans to choose vocational education teaching careers relate to the O'Neil, Meeker, and Borger career decision-making model?
3. What were the experiences that enhanced the progress of African Americans who are currently involved in vocational licensure programs?
4. How did experiences in vocational education teacher-licensure programs at predominantly white and historically black colleges and universities vary between students at the two types of institutions?

Conclusions and Discussion

The Factors that Influenced African Americans to Become Vocational Teachers as they Relate to the O'Neil et al. Model of Career Decision-Making (1978)

Each of the factors below were presented in an organizational structure established by the O'Neil et al. model. Because the findings were presented in this manner, conclusions were presented in this manner to add clarity to the presentation of conclusions. This section is arranged in an order such that the stronger factors were presented first.

Societal Factors. According to Berry (1989), it is often a special teacher who inspires individuals to become teachers. Secondary and post-secondary teachers both inside and outside of vocational programs served as the single greatest source of direct and indirect influence in African Americans' choices of vocational teaching careers. Based on the number of references to teachers, I concluded that teachers' influence ran deeper than any other source of influence. Vocational teachers served as vital links to the field of vocational education and provided major sources of exposure to vocational learning environments. This conclusion supports the literature of Berry (1989) and Gordon (1993), who documented that teachers provide a great amount of influence on career choices in education. In addition, it supports Berry's (1989) finding that teachers are critical in the promotion of the teaching profession.

Respondents indicated that teachers helped and supported them in academic pursuits. Directly, teachers suggested to the respondents that they become vocational teachers. Indirectly, teachers influenced vocational career choices through their actions inside and outside of the classroom. Based on these findings, I concluded that student-centered teaching behaviors greatly influenced African Americans to become vocational teachers through a mixture of direct and indirect influences.

Respondents indicated a love for the hands-on and practical aspects found in vocational subject matter. I concluded that these were particularly important teaching methods for attracting African Americans to vocational teaching fields and created a love for vocational subjects. These conclusions substantiated Gordon's (1993) findings that teachers not only inspire students, they also create love for the subject matter.

Respondents revealed that successful social and academic experiences in vocational programs motivated them to enter vocational teaching fields. I concluded that opportunities providing social and academic success served as crucial elements to developing interest in vocational education. In addition, African Americans who achieved academic success in vocational classrooms or experienced success while involved in vocational co-curricular clubs and organizations maintained strong interests in vocational fields. These conclusions support findings by Davis (1991), who indicated that support networks in academic settings are pertinent to the success of African American students.

Based on respondents' reactions to negative peer influence and negative media portrayals, I concluded that their decisions to become vocational teachers were made independently of outside forces or, sometimes, to refute such influences. This conclusion validates Schulenberg et al.'s (1984) finding that intrinsic factors, more than extrinsic factors, become important to the occupational processes for African Americans.

How does the influence of Societal Factors on African Americans' decisions to teach relate to the O'Neil et al. model? A large number of verbatim responses and references to teacher role models were present. This indicated that both Societal Factors and teacher role models influenced African Americans' decisions to become vocational teachers. From this finding, I concluded that Societal Factors provided the single greatest source of direct influence on African Americans' decisions to become vocational teachers. In addition, teacher role models emerged as a single sub-factor. Teacher role models was not identified as a sub-factor in O'Neil et al.'s original model, but maintained a presence strong enough to exist as its own sub-factor. If this model is to relate to an African American vocational teaching career-choice perspective, teacher role models should be identified as an individual sub-factor within the O'Neil et al. model.

"Educational experiences" stood firmly as a sub-factor. Because this sub-factor greatly affected African Americans' choices to become vocational teachers, it should also be included in the model if it is to relate to an African American career-choice perspective. Because few respondents referenced sub-factors entitled "peer group influences" and "mass media," I concluded that these sub-factors did not greatly influence African Americans' choices of vocational teaching careers. Furthermore, they should not be included in the model if it is to relate to an African American vocational teaching career-choice perspective.

Familial Factors. Blau and Duncan (1967) identified the family as having an important bearing on the occupational life of individuals. The literature named family as a foremost factor in the educational achievements of African Americans (Parham & Austin, 1994; Wilson & Allen, 1987). The findings of this study indicated that parents, and other family members, provided influence more through support systems than through direct encouragement to enter vocational teaching fields. I concluded that family members provided the single greatest source of indirect influence regarding educational achievements and decisions to become vocational teacher. This conclusion supports the literature of Griggs et al. (1992), who found that parents' influence over career choices was shown through work ethic, support, and expectations of achievement.

A large number of respondents referred to the influence mothers provided through support systems. This support was viewed as important in the lives of African American respondents. From these findings, I concluded that mothers provided major influences in the vocational outcomes and educational attainment of respondents. This conclusion supports the literature of Schulenberg et al., 1994; Kerchoff & Campbell, 1977; Wilson & Allen, 1987; and Simpson, 1996, who found mothers to be major sources of influence on the academic and vocational pursuits of African Americans.

Mothers provided major sources of influence because they tended to be present in the homes more so than fathers. This is supported by Kerchoff and Campbell (1977) who indicated that more fathers tend to be absent in African American families. Fathers, individually, did not prove to be major sources of influence in the choice of a vocational teaching career. In this study, I concluded that father's roles were identified, as they were identified in the literature, as support persons of vocational teaching career choices (Schulenberg, 1984).

When respondents were young, mother and fathers who worked as teacher provided a great deal of exposure to the field of teaching. This finding supports Gordon (1995) who revealed that parent educators exert a strong influence over teaching decisions. Based on this

finding, I concluded that parent educators greatly influenced respondents to become vocational teachers because of early exposure to teaching. In addition, early exposure to both educational situations and to vocational experiences provided lasting effects on individuals' career choices in vocational teaching. This supports the finding of Page and Page (1984), who agreed that early discussion about teaching as a career choice was one of the most influential factors affecting a career choice in teaching.

How does the influence of Familial Factors on African Americans' decisions to become vocational teachers relate to the O'Neil et al. model? Familial Factors provided significant indirect influences on African Americans' decisions to become vocational teachers. A large number of responses were made in reference to sub-factors entitled "early childhood experiences" and "mother's role model." Fewer respondents referenced sub-factor three, entitled "father's role model." These findings indicated that father's role model influenced respondents in lesser degrees. I concluded that each of the three sub-factors influenced respondents to select vocational teaching careers. Further, the presence of all sub-factors allowed me to conclude that Familial Factors have a strong influence upon African Americans' vocational teaching career-choice perspective.

Socioeconomic Factors. The American Council on Education (1989) suggested that limited financial resources are a reason for the decline in African American college enrollments. African American respondents admitted giving preference to four-year institutions that provided financial support through scholarships, reduced tuition, and other financial incentives. I concluded that the availability of financial resources had the greatest affect on respondents' selection of colleges to attend. In addition, African Americans' decisions to attend schools with vocational teacher-preparation programs were guided by the availability of financial resources.

The literature cited salary as an important variable in the decision to choose professions other than teaching (Hunter-Boykin, 1992; Justiz & Kameem, 1990; King, 1993; Page & Page, 1991). According to Michele-Bandele (1993), salary is indicated as the largest reason for not entering the teaching profession. Even though respondents recognized the prevalence of low salaries, a larger number of respondents took greater interest in the intangible benefits of teaching. This evidence supports findings by Kimbrough and Salomone (1993), which indicated that social status within the African American community is more likely to be ranked by an individual's contribution to the family, church, and to the African American group as a whole. I concluded that low teaching salaries did not deter African Americans from choosing vocational teaching careers. Further, African Americans tended to be very attracted by the intangible benefits of teaching vocational subjects.

Respondents' constant references to the tangible benefits of summers off, weekends off, and vacation time, allowed me to conclude that vacation benefits served as the most important tangible benefit relating to vocational teaching careers. This conclusion agrees with findings from King (1993) and Gordon (1993), who indicated that vacation benefits served as an influence to teach.

Kerchoff and Campbell (1977) indicated that perceptions of the opportunity structure affected the expected career attainments of African Americans. Most respondents believed that jobs were available to them in vocational teaching areas. I therefore concluded that African

Americans' perceptions that they were in demand as vocational educators influenced them to enter vocational teaching fields. In addition, they pursued vocational concentrations that placed them in high demand.

How did the influence of Socioeconomic Factors on African Americans' vocational teaching career choices relate to the O'Neil et al. model? Frequent responses relating to Socioeconomic Factors indicated that they influenced African Americans' career choices. More specifically, numerous references to the sub-factors, entitled "social class" and "supply and demand," allowed me to conclude that they influenced African American respondents to pursue vocational teaching careers. The other two sub-factors entitled "race" and "sex discrimination," did not provide major influences. Therefore, if this model is to relate to an African American vocational teaching career-choice perspective only the sub-factors entitled "social class" and "supply and demand" should be included. The other sub-factors should not be included.

Individual Factors. Findings indicated that respondents felt they possessed natural strengths for teaching and natural abilities that related to vocational teaching professions. This finding agrees with Newby et al. (1995) and Toppin and Levine (1992) who found that feelings that abilities are suited for teaching provide a reason African Americans become teachers. Respondents also indicated strong interests in the technical aspects of vocational education. In addition, respondents' beliefs in the importance of vocational subject matter further boosted their influence to enter vocational teaching professions. I concluded that respondents were influenced to teach based on confidence in natural skills they felt enhanced their abilities to be vocational teachers. In addition, frequent exposure to the technical areas of vocational education also influenced respondents to pursue vocational teaching careers.

A large number of respondents indicated strong desires to work with either children, students, or with people in general. This finding agrees with Gordon (1993), who indicated that a desire to teach comes from a love of children. In addition, a strong desire to give back to students, and to the community, served as an influence to teach. According to the literature, one of the major attractions to teaching stemmed from a desire to give back to students and to the community as a whole (Gordon, 1993; King, 1993; Steigelberger, 1992; Toppin & Levine, 1992). I concluded that African Americans who are people oriented tended to become vocational teachers. Furthermore, desire to give back to the community as a whole were derived from the high value African Americans placed on community viability. This conclusion is supported by Kimbrough and Salomone's (1993) finding that status within the African American community was measured by contributions to the group as a whole.

How does the influence of Individual Factors on African Americans' decisions to become vocational teachers relate to the O'Neil et al. model? Individual Factors also provided a significant amount of influence on African Americans' choices to become vocational teachers. The large number of responses that were identified with sub-factors two and three, entitled "abilities" and "interests," respectively, allowed me to conclude that they provided great influences on African American respondents' vocational teaching career choices. Fewer references made to the other sub-factors indicated that their influences on vocational teaching career choices were less. I concluded that Individual Factors and all sub-factors within this category can be related to an African Americans' vocational teaching career-choice perspective.

Situational Factors. Griggs, Fisher, and Copeland (1992) suggested that most African Americans had high levels of control over vocational choices and tended to attribute decisions to themselves as opposed to outside factors. Very few respondents in this study indicated choosing vocational teaching careers based on fate or luck. Therefore, I concluded that these African Americans made conscious plans to become vocational teachers and did not enter the field based on chance occurrences.

According to Haberman (1989) and Lankard (1994), only a small percentage of African American community college graduates transfer to four-year institutions. I concluded that respondents who attended community colleges were more likely to transfer to vocational teacher education programs that allowed them to apply credits toward the completion of programs of study.

How does the influence of Situational Factors on African Americans' vocational teaching career choices relate to the O'Neil et al. model? Situational Factors also influenced African Americans' decisions to become vocational teachers. The presence of both sub-factors, entitled "chance" and "course of least resistance," influenced African Americans. From this, I concluded that O'Neil et al.'s Situational Factors and the two sub-factors within related to African Americans' vocational teaching career-choice perspective.

Psychosocial-Emotional Factors. Respondents expressed a lack of confidence through fears of an inability to effectively handle discipline problems. Fears of failing competency tests were also expressed, but were not indicated as a deterrent for entering vocational teaching fields. I concluded that a lack of confidence served as a deterrent for respondents desiring to become vocational teachers; however, the presence of opportunities to take the test at no financial loss increased confidence in their abilities to complete vocational programs.

Based on the few responses related to O'Neil et al.'s Psychosocial-Emotional Factors I concluded that they can be related in only a minor way to African Americans' vocational teaching career-choice perspective.

Spiritual Factors. African American respondents felt that belief in a higher power may have influenced their decisions to become vocational teachers. They spoke freely about their belief in this influence. From this, I concluded that respondents seriously viewed belief in the influence of a higher power. Their beliefs in the influences of a higher power influenced their decisions to become vocational teachers. I suspect that the strong presence of Spiritual Factors may be attributed to the number of respondents whose fathers' were ministers.

The additional factor that emerged, entitled the "Spiritual Factor" maintained a presence strong enough to stand alone as a major factor. It should be included in the O'Neil et al. model, if this model is to relate to African Americans' vocational teaching career-choice perspective.

Additional Discussion Concerning Students' Decisions to Become Vocational Teachers

Seven major factors were identified as influencing African Americans' decisions to teach. Specific conclusions related to each individual factor were identified in the above sections. O'Neil et al. indicated that six major factors and 22 sub-factors influenced career decision-making processes. The six major factors relating to the model were (a) Familial Factors, (b) Societal Factors, (c) Situational Factors, (d) Individual Factors, (e) Socioeconomic Factors, and (f) Psychosocial-Emotional Factors. All factors did not influence African Americans to become

vocational teachers. One additional factor that was not included in the model emerged from the findings. That factor was entitled the Spiritual Factor.

In the sections above, I explained the presence of all major factors and sub-factors that related to an African American career-choice perspective. Overall, all major factors and sub-factors identified in the O'Neil et al. model did not apply to an African American vocational teaching career-choice perspective. However, most major factors and sub-factors did. In order to apply this model to an African American vocational teaching career-choice perspective, one major factor should be added entitled "Spiritual Factors," one sub-factor should be added entitled "teacher role models," and several sub-factors should be removed. The sub-factors that should be removed were those entitled (a) peer group influences, (b) mass media, (c) race, (d) sex discrimination, (e) fear of success, (f) lack of confidence, and (g) role conflict. After revising the model in this fashion, the O'Neil et al. model could easily relate to an African American vocational teaching career-choice perspective (See Appendix D for adaptation of original model).
The Experiences that Enhanced the Progress of Students in Vocational Teacher-Licensure Programs

Faculty relationships. African American respondents reacted positively to faculty members who were caring and took an interest in them as students. In addition, they reacted positively to faculty who (a) made obvious attempts to develop close relationships with students, (b) were helpful to students regarding both academic and career concerns, (c) were knowledgeable of vocational subject matter, and (d) used teaching styles that provided hands-on learning experiences. I concluded that positive interactions with faculty enhanced feelings of satisfaction among students in vocational teacher-preparation programs. My conclusions support Davis' (1991) finding that relationships with faculty are strong predictors of satisfaction with campus life for African American students.

Social adjustment. Davis (1991) indicated that social support was positively related to the well-being of African American students. Findings indicated that students felt more comfortable in academic settings where they were readily accepted by peers. My conclusion supported Davis' finding that close relationships with peers, provided through support and recognition, enhanced the progress of African Americans in vocational teacher-preparation programs.

Careerguidance. Respondents preferred faculty to personally discuss career opportunities and to post job openings in obvious locations, as opposed to posting opportunities in locations that frequently changed or were difficult to find. Respondents became frustrated in situations where career opportunities were not made obvious and they were forced to hunt for posted job opportunities. I concluded that personal discussion and convenient information regarding career opportunities enhanced the progress of students enrolled in vocational licensure programs.

Academic Preparation. Respondents reacted positively to intense academic preparation that made them feel adequately prepared to enter job markets. I concluded that respondents who felt academically prepared were confident in vocational teaching career choices. In addition, confidence in academic preparation enhanced the experiences of African Americans in teacher-preparation programs.

The Varying Experiences of Students in Vocational Teacher-Licensure Programs

Findings of this research agreed with findings in the literature. Davis (1991) and Fleming cited in Davis (1991) contended that the experiences of African American vocational students enrolled at predominantly white and historically black universities varied. I found that African Americans enrolled in vocational programs at historically black universities and those enrolled at predominantly white universities experienced different relationships with faculty. In addition, they experienced different social interactions on campus, different confidence levels regarding academic preparation, different levels of involvement in co-curricular clubs and organizations, and different levels of exposure to career opportunities. Based on evidence from the findings; however, I concluded that the overall experiences of African Americans at predominantly white and historically black universities tended to vary. Respondents indicated that they shared some similar experiences at predominantly white and historically black universities. Students at historically black universities focused on the presence of closer relationships with faculty and peers while students at predominantly white universities focused on the quality of academic preparation. I concluded overall that faculty and students at historically black universities tended to express a student-oriented focus, whereas, faculty and students at predominantly white universities tended to express an academically-oriented focus.

Final Discussion Comments

Throughout the interviews with students in this study, I encountered evidence of distinct influences that lead to students decisions to become vocational teachers. Students indicated that teacher role models, family support, altruism, and a love for vocational subject matter, clearly influenced their decisions to become vocational teachers. Evidence of these factors are further supported by the theoretical base of the O'Neil et al. career decision-making model.

Students in this study provided evidence that their educational experiences in vocational teacher licensure programs were enhanced by strong relationships with knowledgeable faculty, supportive peers, opportunities to become involved in vocational organizations, and strong academic preparation. While students shared similar educational and social experiences at both predominantly white and historically black universities, their verbatim statements indicated that they felt students and faculty at the two types of institutions shared a different focus.

The findings from this study related specifically to the 12 African Americans students who were preparing to become vocational teachers. Being that African American subjects served as the focus of this study one could think that the characteristics, influences, and experiences related only to this particular racial group. I believe, however, that the characteristics, influences, and experiences found in this study related not only to African Americans in vocational fields, but can be found within all individuals who are interested in becoming teachers.

Recommendations

Influencing Factors Concerning Vocational Teaching Careers

1. Parents, particularly mothers, were viewed as major sources of support in African Americans' choice of a profession. Since the presence of support was important in the lives of African Americans, vocational school personnel should work to rally family support. Guidance counselors and vocational teachers, who have a direct link to parents and students, should use

opportunities for recruitment to promote the field of vocational teaching to this audience. In addition, college recruiters should promote vocational teacher education programs in forums where parents are present in great numbers. Promotion should take place in an open forum so that parents and students have opportunities to develop an appreciation of vocational teaching professions.

2. Family members who were teachers provided rich sources of exposure to the field of teaching. Vocational teachers and guidance counselors should seek African American students who come from families of educators, target those students, and directly discuss the options of vocational teaching as a career choice. If parent educators are receptive to the idea, vocational teachers, guidance counselors, and parents should work together to articulate vocational teaching career paths for African American children.

3. Secondary vocational teachers and teacher educators should be aware of their positions as role models for African American students. They should seriously consider the examples they set for students both in and outside of the classroom and focus on student-oriented behaviors. They should take special consideration to run classrooms effectively and efficiently. Teachers should make vocational curriculums and teaching methods attractive to African American students by utilizing hands-on learning activities and creating active learning environments. In addition, vocational teachers should express an enjoyment of the profession.

4. While African American students are in junior high and high school, secondary vocational teachers should provide as much early exposure to the field of vocational education as possible. This exposure should concentrate on the technical aspects of vocational education. Teachers should encourage African American students to become involved in vocational classroom activities and co-curricular clubs and organizations that foster social and academic success. Additionally, they should encourage African American students to seek leadership roles within clubs and organizations.

5. Vocational teachers and teacher educators should identify academically successful African American students and direct them toward the field of vocational teaching. This can be done by encouraging successful African American students to think about vocational teaching careers, then urging them to pursue paths that lead to success in that career. Because students were greatly influenced by both the tangible and intangible benefits of teaching, teacher educators should take time to verbally promote these benefits to students.

6. Through early field experiences, teacher educators should provide as much exposure to positive classroom learning environments as possible. During student teaching, teacher educators should be careful to place African American students with cooperating teachers who are highly regarded in vocational education and are experienced in mentoring teachers of color. If necessary, vocational teacher educators should provide training for cooperating teachers that will help them become successful mentors to African American students.

7. Vocational teacher educators should provide guidance counselors, secondary vocational teachers, personnel at community colleges, and personnel in other colleges within the university, with written materials promoting the field of vocational teaching. The promotional materials should highlight efforts to tailor programs of study to the individual needs of students.

8. College recruiters and teachers should think seriously about developing relationships with church representatives in the African American community. Relationships should be developed with churches known for promoting strong youth programs. Churches within the African American community serve as rich resources for locating students who are academically talented and maintain strong moral values. Many churches welcome opportunities to provide career exposure for young African Americans. In addition, the field of teaching is highly regarded in African American churches.

Creating Enhancing Experiences in Vocational Licensure Programs

1. Vocational teacher educators should take time to show personal concern for African American students. Additionally, they should take personal interest in the academic and vocational progress of African American students. Teacher educators should make efforts to appear approachable by opening their offices and classrooms to students who seek help. Vocational faculty should take time to develop personal relationships with African American students through social activities.

Faculty who are unfamiliar with African American culture should be involved in cultural and social activities that pertain to African Americans. This will create a forum that allows African Americans to become comfortable expressing aspects of their culture. Faculty who are unaware of ways to approach African American students about various cultural issues should make efforts to attend cultural diversity training workshops or African American cultural events. This will help develop an understanding of African American culture and cultural concerns.

2. Vocational teacher educators should take a sincere interest in helping students academically prepare for educational and vocational success. Vocational faculty should adjust and redirect teaching styles and pedagogy based on the concerns of African American students, and other students as well. Faculty must be prepared to spend time helping African American students address academic concerns in a one-on-one environment.

3. Vocational teacher educators should continue to seek knowledge and stay abreast of the latest vocational teaching literature. In addition, vocational faculty should be knowledgeable of technological advancements and make them a part of vocational teaching methods. Secondary vocational teachers and teacher educators should continue to prepare African American students for a technologically-advanced work force. African Americans students must be provided with technological and vocational skills that will enable them to be competitive in the job market. For teacher educators, this may mean encouraging African American students to pursue licensure in two subject areas.

4. Vocational faculty should make attempts to provide classroom environments that nurture positive social relationships among students. They should provide opportunities for students to develop peer relationships through collaborative and cooperative learning projects.

5. Vocational faculty should post vocational career opportunities in obvious locations. When time permits, faculty should personally inform African American students of the job opportunities for which they feel students are best suited.

Recommendations for Future Research

There should be further research conducted regarding the factors that influence African American students to become vocational teachers and the experiences that enhance their progress while enrolled in vocational teacher-licensure programs. Many of the factors identified in this research can be studied individually. The findings in this study indicated that teachers as role models affect African Americans' decisions to become vocational teachers. Further research should be conducted to determine how these role models influence African Americans to select teaching as a career.

The influence of vocational teachers and the educational experiences they provide for African American students should be carefully examined to determine teaching methods and classroom environments that create desires to teach. Based on these findings, further research should be conducted to determine how the teaching styles of vocational educators enhance the learning environments of African American students. In addition, research should be conducted to determine how educational experiences that enhance the progress of African Americans in vocational teacher-licensure programs should be merged into vocational teaching curriculums.

Findings from this study were used to develop an adaptation of the O'Neil et al. (1978) model of career decision-making (See Appendix D). This working model serves as a basis for attracting African Americans to vocational teaching fields. Further research should be conducted to determine how the adaptation of the O'Neil et al. model can be implemented to attract African American students to vocational teaching fields.

Based on the outcomes of this study, I have enumerated the following four specific recommendations for further research:

1. How can a model be fully developed to attract African American vocational students to vocational teaching fields?
2. How do the influences of teacher role models affect African Americans teaching decisions?
3. How do the teaching styles of vocational educators affect the career choices of African American students in vocational programs.
4. What is the impact of African American teachers on the progress of students in vocational teacher preparation programs?

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Appendix A
Profiles of the 12 Respondents in the Study

Respondent # 1

This male respondent is a second-year master of education student seeking certification in business education. He is the oldest of three boys in a single parent household. He transferred from a predominantly white university to a historically black university to complete his education. He is a first-generation college graduate and tentatively plans to pursue a Ph.D. in vocational and technical education. Eventually, he plans to return to his home town to become a business teacher.

Respondent # 2

This respondent is a second-year female master of education student who is currently seeking licensure in technology education at a historically black university. Her father is a mechanic and her mother teaches Sunday school in a local church. She also has two sisters and one brother employed in fields outside education. All members of her family are involved in the arts. This respondent is a first-generation college graduate who plans to pursue a Ph.D. in technology education immediately after graduating.

Respondent # 3

Respondent number three is a male respondent who attends an historically black university. He completed student teaching in the fall and is currently enrolled as a master of education student in agricultural education. He was reared on a farm and comes from a long line of educators. His grandfather was a college professor at the university he currently attends. His father is a high school agriculture teacher and his mother taught home economics before passing away. This respondent is an only child who has tentative plans to pursue a doctoral degree in vocational and technical education after teaching in the classroom for several years.

Respondent # 4

This female respondent is a non-traditional, adult student who has returned to an historically black university to obtain licensure in family and consumer sciences. She worked as a licensed practical nurse for 17 years before returning to school. She was reared by her stepmother who worked most of her life at a dry cleaning business. Her spouse is currently employed as a teacher in a local school system. She has two children, one girl and one boy.

Respondent # 5

This male respondent is a first-year master of education student in technology education who just completed student teaching. He is commissioned as a second lieutenant in the army. He is a first-year college graduate and has a younger brother. This respondent is enrolled in an historically black university where his younger brother attends as a freshman. He plans to complete his military requirements, then return to the classroom as high school teacher. He has future plans to obtain a doctoral degree in vocational and technical education and would like to work as a professor at the college he currently attends.

Respondent # 6

This female third-year undergraduate student is seeking licensure in trade and industrial education. She is preparing to student teach next school term. She is enrolled in an historically black university. Both her mother and father are teachers in a local school system. She plans to

teach in a secondary setting, but eventually plans to obtain a master of education degree in technology education.

Respondent # 7

Respondent number seven is a male student enrolled at a predominantly white university as a marketing education student. He completed one year in a teacher education program. He is currently a leading football player at the university he attends. His stepmother is a high school principal and his sister works as an elementary school teacher. His father is a minister. This respondent plans to work as a high school teacher and hopes to become a principal of his school.

Respondent # 8

This female respondent is enrolled as a second year master of education student seeking licensure in marketing education. She studies at a predominately white university. She is currently completing student teaching. She comes from a military family that has traveled all over the world. Her father is an officer in the army. Her sister is employed as a teacher in a local high school. She has been promised a job as a marketing coordinator in the fall.

Respondent # 9

This third-year male student is enrolled as a student at a predominantly white university. He is seeking licensure in technology education. His father is employed by Federal Express. He has one sister who has a bachelor of science degree in computer science. He also has a younger brother who is an honor roll student in elementary school. He plans to teach technology education in a secondary school setting after completing his degree

Respondent # 10

This female respondent completed student teaching and received licensure in business education. She is currently enrolled as a master of education student in business education at a predominantly white university. She is an only child and a first-generation college graduate. Her father is a computer technician, and her mother is employed as a nursing assistant. She plans to teach at a community college upon graduation.

Respondent # 11

Respondent number eleven is a female student who obtained licensure in family and consumer sciences two years ago. She is currently a first year home economics teacher in a secondary school setting. Her mother is a high school teacher and her father is minister. She graduated from a predominately white university.

Respondent # 12

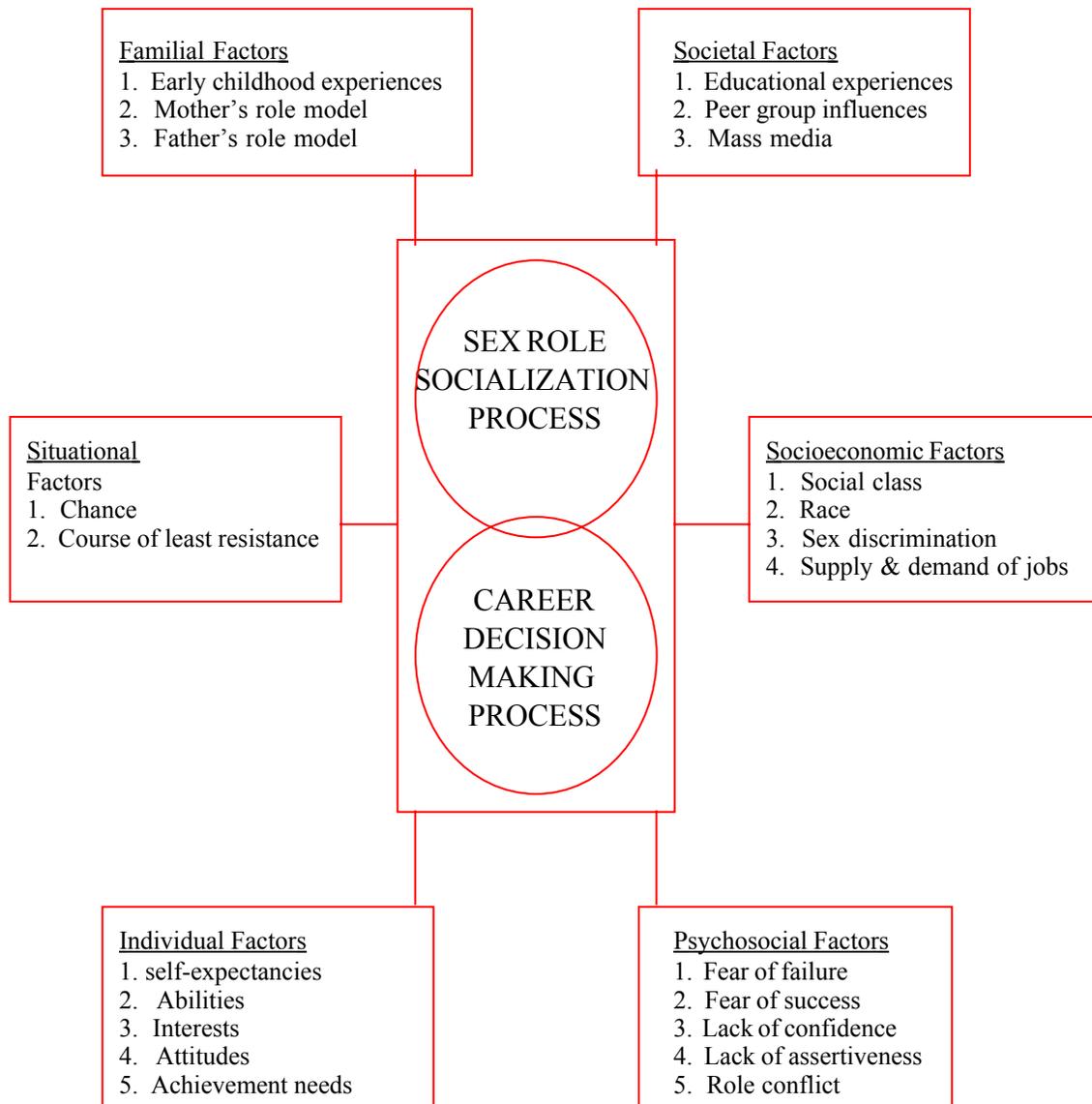
Respondent number twelve is a male student enrolled as a senior in agriculture education at a predominately white university. He expects to complete student teaching in the fall. His grandfather was a farmer. His father is a minister and his mother works as a secretary in the church his father leads. He would like to work as an agricultural teacher in secondary school setting, then return to school for a masters degree.

Appendix B
Interview Instrument

1. Tell me a bit about where you are from and your family upbringing.
 2. At what point in your life did you decide you wanted to become a teacher?
 3. Was teaching your first career choice?
 4. Do you intend to teach when you graduate?
 5. Tell me when you decided you wanted to become a vocational teacher. Why?
 6. Did anyone in your family influence you to become a vocational teacher?
 7. Did anyone outside of your family influence you to become a vocational teacher?
 8. Were there any factors, other than people, that influenced you to become a vocational teacher?
 9. What are some factors within you, personality traits, feelings, interests, or abilities, that may have caused you to choose vocational teaching as a career?
 10. Was money a factor in your choosing vocational teaching as a career?
 11. What is it you like about the job of vocational teaching?
 12. What are your perceptions about the supply and demand of jobs in your vocational subject area?
 13. Are there any characteristics about African Americans that you feel make them good teachers? Did any of those characteristics influence you to teach?
 14. Did being male or female influence your decision to become a vocational teacher?
 15. What are your fears about going into teaching?
 16. What do you feel you have to offer as a vocational teacher?
- Questions related to the educational experiences of respondents:
17. How would you rate your social experiences at _____? Why?
 18. How would you rate your educational experiences in your teacher education program? Why?
 19. How would you rate your relationship with your peers in the vocational teacher preparation program? Why?
 20. Discuss your relationship with teachers in the vocational teacher preparation program.
 21. List the vocational clubs, organizations, and extra-curricular activities in which you are involved.
 22. Do you feel that members of your vocational department have provided you with any career guidance? How about experiences with subject matter?

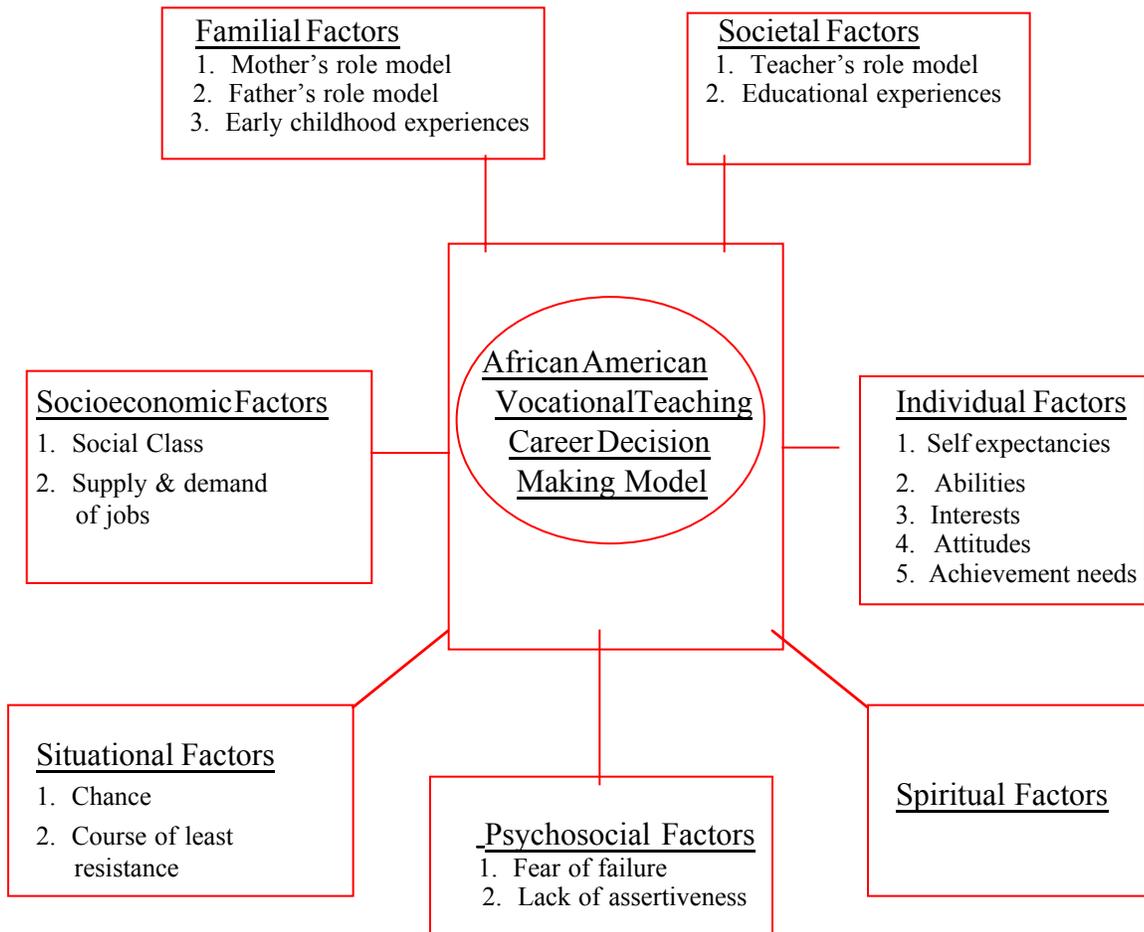
Appendix C
Theoretical Model

The O'Neil, Meeker, and Borger Model of Sex Role Socialization and Career Decision Making, 1978.



Appendix D

Adaptation of the O’Neil, Meeker, and Borger Career Decision-Making Model as it relates to an African American vocational teaching career choice perspective.



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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy, Vocational and Technical Education. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, Virginia.
 Concentration in Marketing Education. Expected August 1997.
 Dissertation Title: Factors Influencing African Americans To Select Teaching Careers In Vocational Education And The Experiences Related To Their Progress In Vocational Teacher Licensure Programs.

SECONDARY AND UNIVERSITY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Teaching Assistant and University Student Teaching Supervisor,
 College of Human Resources and Education, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia. September 1995 - Present. Assistantship provides opportunities to develop the skills and abilities of teacher educator.
 Responsibilities:

- Teaching courses entitled Small Business Operations, Human Relations in the Work force, Internship in Business, and Marketing Curriculum courses to undergraduate students.
- Developing syllabi and handouts for all courses taught.
- Evaluating student performance and assigning grades.
- Placing and supervising marketing business interns.
- Developing rapport and establishing working relationships with area employers.
- Advising undergraduate students.
- Serving as the advisor of the Association of Marketing Education Students.
- Supervising, observing and evaluating marketing education students throughout the student teaching experience.
- Helping student teachers select resource materials for classes taught.
- Working with marketing teacher coordinators to create successful and positive educational experiences for student teachers.
- Developing, organizing, and facilitating student teaching learning seminars.
- Videotaping student teaching seminars.
- Using e-mail for assignment submission and feedback to student teachers.
- Guiding and counseling student teachers.

Marketing Education Teacher Coordinator, Roanoke County Schools, Roanoke, Virginia. September 1989 - July 1995.

Responsibilities:

- Taught Marketing Co-op, Entrepreneurship, and Introduction to Marketing courses to students in grades 10 -12.
- Developed lesson plans and activities to guide student learning.
- Evaluated student performance and assigned grades.
- Placed students in part-time marketing related jobs within the Roanoke Valley.
- Fostered and maintained business relationships with local employers.
- Developed individualized training plans for students.

Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) District Advisor, Roanoke, Virginia. September 1993 - July 1995.

Responsibilities:

- Coordinated DECA competitive events for eight schools systems throughout southwest Virginia.
- Planned, organized, and facilitated Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) district and state competitions.
- Developed and wrote DECA district and state contests.

