

**THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL LEADER MAKES EFFORTS TO CLOSE
BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT GAPS THAT PROMOTE RECONCILIATION OF
VALUE DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION**

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Abstract

The Black male achievement gap is a particularly unique phenomenon in that Black male students surpass every other racial and gender category in educational achievement gaps (NCES, 2014a, 2014b; NAEP, 2015). Many researchers point to a fundamental conflict over values that has resulted in this lingering gap (A. Ferguson, 2000; Fordham, 1996; Ogbu, 2004). The school leader uniquely influences the values of the school and the school's collective efforts to close Black male achievement gaps (Begley & Johansson, 2003; Stefkovich & Shapiro, 2001). Yet, more knowledge is needed to understand how values influence school leaders' actions, and how a school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps may also reconcile value differences (Stefkovich & Shapiro, 2001, 2003). This study uses Argyris and Schön's (1978) theory of action as a theoretical framework to analyze a school's process of responding to the Black male achievement gap, focusing on the school leader's efforts to close these gaps. The theory of action framework allows the school leader's efforts to be mapped, distinguishing between espoused and in-use theories of action and understanding if and how the in-use theories reconcile value differences within the school organization.

INTRODUCTION

Achievement gaps in education continue to exist and are particularly pronounced for Black American male students (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Education Progress [NAEP], 2013, 2014). Research into sources of the Black male achievement gap have revealed historical value differences between the dominant White culture and the subdominant Black culture are a source and current preserver of this gap (A. Ferguson, 2000; Fordham, 1996; Jenkins, 2006; Kozol, 2005; Noguera & Wing, 2006; Ogbu, 2004). An unresolved tension between differing societal values has resulted; within the context of the school, an institution many Black males perceive as White, these tensions can result in conflict (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2007; Cassidy & Stevenson, 2007; A. Ferguson, 2000; Jenkins, 2006).

The school leader has a considerable influence on the values of the school and on the school's collective efforts to close Black male achievement gaps. More than the other members of the school organization, the school leader is able to influence the school's internal strategies, processes, policies, and academic outcomes (Begley & Johansson, 2003; Stefkovich & Shapiro, 2001; Starratt, 2012; Theoharis & Haddix, 2011). Because the school leader's values govern the leader's actions as he/she affects school processes and outcomes, the values the school leader holds have a greater influence on the collective behavioral culture of the school than that of other members of the school organization.

Yet, the school leader's values and goals to close Black male achievement gaps may differ from those values and goals of other members of the school organization. How do the school leader's values influence his/her actions, and how do differences in values in the school organization influence the school leader's actions, if at all? Clearly, more knowledge is needed to understand how values influence school leaders' actions (Frick, 2009; Law & Walker, 2005; Parkes & Thomas, 2007). Further, researchers have not yet addressed how a school leader's efforts to close the Black male achievement gap may also reconcile value differences, a source of this gap (Begley, 2003; Gardner, Cairns & Lawton, 2000; Stefkovich & Shapiro, 2001, 2003). The purpose of this study was to use a theory of action framework to describe a school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps within the school and to explore how these actions may promote reconciliation of value differences within the school organization (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1989b). Use of a theory of action framework allows researchers to understand if and how these efforts reconcile value differences in the school organization. The specific research questions this study sought to answer were:

Central Research Question

To what extent is the school leader making efforts to close Black male achievement gaps that promote reconciliation of value differences within the school organization?

Issue Questions

1. What efforts are being made by the school leader to close Black male achievement gaps within the school?

2. What values¹ are guiding these efforts to close Black male achievement gaps within the school?
3. If and how are these efforts reconciling value differences between the school leader and the staff members as these members of the school organization work to develop and implement the leader's efforts?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to use a theory of action framework to describe a school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps within the school and to explore how these actions may promote reconciliation of value differences within the school organization (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1989b). Accordingly, this literature review describes how school leaders and their school communities reconcile value differences in their efforts to close Black male achievement gaps. The literature review sections include an overview of the Black male achievement gap, three major content areas – the influence of values on school leaders' actions, school-level responses to Black male achievement gaps, and the ways in which organizations are internally reconciling value differences through organizational learning – a theoretical framework, and a conceptual framework.

Overview of the Black Male Achievement Gap

The Black male achievement gap refers to historical and enduring disparities in academic performance between Black males and other race and gender categories (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2014a, 2014b; NAEP, 2013, 2015). Though research in the field has divided between structural and cultural positions, this study reviews the literature in an effort to discern how the two positions intersect in the school setting (Fergus, Noguera, & Martin, 2014). Further, the review focuses on the White-Black schism in achievement because the White-Black relationship formerly existed as a master-slave, oppressor-oppressed dichotomy. This former dichotomy is presently relevant as a source of differing values between the two groups and a source of the Black male achievement gap (Barrett, 2010; Brooks, 2012; Fordham, 1996; Ogbu, 2004). This study defines values as the results of valuation – placing a determined measure of goodness, correctness, or rightness on a thing (Frankena, 2006; Lewis, 1946; MacLeod, 1987; Ogbu, 2004).

In the national arena, the Black student body as a whole scored lower, estimated by the mean score, than every other racial/ethnic group in math, reading, writing, and science (NAEP, 2011)². The mean reading score gap between the White and Black student bodies, as a whole, was wider in 2015 than in 1992 (NAEP, 2015). The Black male achievement gap is particularly pronounced when compared to the other racial and gender groups (CRDC, 2009; NAEP, 2015; NCES, 2014a, 2014b; U.S. Census, 2011). Black males rank high among middle and high school students in dropout rates (NCES, 2014a; National Center of Juvenile Justice [NCJJ], 2014) and school suspensions and expulsions (CRDC, 2009, 2014). As a group, they are prominently present

¹ Here, the term value(s) is used as defined in the “Definition of Values” section.

² The most recent scores for writing and science were for 2011.

among students who score low on standardized tests (NAEP, 2015; NCES, 2014b) and are placed in special education or on low-level educational tracks (The National Association for the Education of African American Children with Learning Disabilities [AACLD], 2010; The Education Trust, 2005). Black males are underrepresented in academically gifted classes and are overrepresented in underachieving student groups and among students that choose to disengage in school (College Board, 2013; NAEP, 2014; The Education Trust, 2013).

Numerous researchers agree the inequalities persisting in the field of education are a sign of a greater social malady (Basch, 2011; R. Ferguson, 2014; Fordham, 1996; Howard, 2010; Jenkins, 2006; Ogbu, 2004). Institutional racism asserts racism may be maintained in society's institutions without individual acts of racism because racism has been built into and maintained within society's structures (Blauner, 1972; Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967; Knowles & Prewitt, 1969; Lavelle & Feagin, 2013). The dominant White culture has defined the meaning of success and how to obtain it (Barrett, 2010; Fordham, 1996; Jenkins, 2006; MacLeod, 1987; Ogbu, 2004). Many Black males are faced with the burden of satisfying two opposing value systems – a White culture assigning them to an inferior subdominant position and a Black culture assigning them to a respected leadership one (Brooks, 2012; A. Ferguson, 2000; hooks, 1992; Jenkins, 2006; Ogbu, 2004; West, 2002). Within the context of the school, an institution many Black males perceive as characteristically White, pressures intensify on many Black male students to satisfy differing value systems (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2007; A. Ferguson, 2000; Fordham, 1996; Ogbu, 2004).

Researchers have not examined how value differences between the White and Black American cultures may serve as a source of the achievement gap (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2007; Basch, 2011; Diamond, 2006; A. Ferguson, 2000; Jenkins, 2006; Ogbu, 2004). Some researchers, however, have identified contrasting attributions of goodness or correctness as a source of the Black male achievement gap; these attributions of goodness or correctness are the act of valuating, as defined in this study. For example, Ogbu (2004) stated a people's collective identity might be expressed through attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, language, and cultural symbols. He described how many Black Americans felt pressured to talk and behave in a manner consistent with the Black person defined by a White society – an inferior person. Additionally, A. Ferguson (2000) described how school staff attributed negative behaviors by White male children to the inexperienced and innocent naïveté of childhood, while they attributed negative behaviors by Black male children to willful and sinister disobedience (A. Ferguson, 2000). Therefore, the assertion in this study that value differences are a source of the Black male achievement gap does not arise from researchers in this area of literature citing this term "value differences" as the source. Rather, this assertion arises from researchers identifying the White culture's and Black culture's contrasting attributions of goodness or correctness as a source of the Black male achievement gap.

School Leaders' Efforts

School leaders uniquely influence the internal characteristics and processes of a school (Evers & Lakomski, 1991; Gardiner et al., 2009; Starratt, 2012; Theoharis & Haddix, 2011). Values do influence leadership actions (Beard, 2012; Gardiner et al., 2009; Normore & Jean-Marie, 2008). The process of how values actually guide, influence, or inform leadership decisions remains unclear, however. The literature revealed school leaders experienced internal discord when forced to negotiate between their personal and professional value systems (Frick, 2009; Gold et al., 2003; Law & Walker, 2005). They also experienced external resistance from staff members

who did not share these same values (Gardiner et al., 2009; Normore & Jean-Marie, 2008; Mukuria, 2002; Theoharis, 2007). The negative effects of these tensions created an interesting parallel to the effects of Black male students attempting to satisfy competing value systems; yet these tensions also revealed a need to conduct further research on reconciliation of value differences within the school organization, the staff members being particularly pertinent to this study.

School-Level Responses

Researchers suggested many strategies to close these gaps: culturally responsive strategies (Brown et al., 2011; Yerrick & Johnson, 2011), counseling-based initiatives (Miranda et al., 2007; Schellenberg & Grothaus, 2009), teaching positive self-talk and academic optimism (Brown et al., 2011; Miranda et al., 2007), improving student engagement and attendance (Fisher et al., 2011; McGee, 2004; Moses et. al, 1989), utilizing best teaching practices in the classroom (Carter, 2000; Howard, 2010), directly teaching literacy and social skills for success in the classroom (Cartledge et al., 2008; Moses et. al, 1989), and implementing extra-curricular programs (Hemmings, 2007; Howard, 2010). Several studies implemented a specific strategy within a school (Fisher et al., 2011; Hemmings, 2007; Schellenberg & Grothaus, 2009). Other studies examined schools that demonstrated success in closing the achievement gap (Brown et al., 2011; White-Smith, 2012). Though some studies identified espoused values, most of the studies did not identify the actual values guiding the specific actions required to fulfill the intervening strategies (Brown et al., 2011; Fisher et al., 2011; Howard, 2010; Schellenberg & Grothaus, 2009; Yerrick & Johnson, 2011; White-Smith, 2012). None of the studies articulated how these strategies reconciled the value differences within the school community (Bruce et al., 2009; Brown et al., 2011; Cartledge et al., 2008; Fisher et al., 2011; Howard, 2010; Miranda et al., 2007; Schellenberg & Grothaus, 2009; Yerrick & Johnson, 2011; White-Smith, 2012). Within both categories, however, school leadership emerged as a key component in the implementation and success of these strategies.

Organizational Learning

Collaborative efforts in pursuit of organizational learning involves negotiating and overcoming value differences between organizational members (Finnigan & Daly, 2012; Korach, 2011, 2012; Paul, 2003). In the K-12 context, the school leader-staff member relationship is reciprocal as they negotiate value differences arising in the process of developing and implementing the school leaders' efforts (Finnigan & Daly, 2012; Korach, 2011, 2012). Further, this study's theoretical framework emphasizes Model II and double-loop learning as necessary in reconciling value differences and increasing organizational effectiveness; the literature on organizational learning affirmed these assertions (Finnigan & Daly, 2012; Korach, 2011, Jashapara, 2003; Mayer et al., 2013).

Largely, studies in this body of literature promoted double-loop learning as a replacement for single-loop learning, which is inconsistent with the perspective of Argyris and Schön (1978, 1989b). None of the studies articulated the governing variables guiding organizational actions (Finnigan & Daly, 2012; Gapp & Fisher, 2006; Korach, 2011; Jashapara, 2003; Mayer et al., 2013). The literature did not reveal how the collaborative efforts reconciled value differences (Finnigan & Daly, 2012; Jashapara, 2003; Korach, 2011; Paul, 2003). Some studies suggested reconciliation

may not have occurred (Finnigan & Daly, 2012; Korach, 2011, 2012). Further, the literature revealed the first source of value differences in the developing and implementing of the school leader's efforts toward change arise from the school staff members (Finnigan & Daly, 2012; Gardiner et al., 2009; Korach, 2011, 2012; Normore & Jean-Marie, 2008; Theoharis, 2007). Given the background literature, this study seeks to understand the extent to which the school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps reconciles value differences within the school organization.

Theoretical Framework

Argyris and Schön's (1978, 1989b) theory of action framework aids in understanding if and how a school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps reconcile value differences within the school organization. According to Argyris and Schön (1989), two theories of action are at work within any given situation – the espoused and the in-use. Each theory, whether individual or organizational, states that in a given situation (S), if one intends a certain consequence (C), do action (A) (Argyris, 1999; Argyris & Schön, 1978). The theory of action framework differentiates between the strategies the school espouses and the ones actually implemented (Argyris & Schön, 1978).

This framework distinguishes which in-use strategies are aligned with Model I versus Model II theories-in-use. The difference between the two models originates with their governing variables. The governing variables that guide these Models are the purposes the actor intends to fulfill through the designated actions; these governing variables include values (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Argyris & Schön, 1989b). Model I governing variables seek to control the environment, suppress negative inquiry, and preserve self (Argyris, 1999; Argyris & Schön, 1989b). Model II governing variables seek to share control of the environment through valid information, openness, and free and informed choices (Argyris, 1999; Argyris & Schön, 1989b).

When presented with a problem, an individual may exercise single-loop or double-loop learning. In single-loop learning, the individual will change action strategies while maintaining the same governing variables to achieve the desired consequence (Argyris & Schön, 1989b). If the original intentions of the actions match the consequences and the problem is solved, then single-loop learning is sufficient. Single-loop learning draws on tacit knowledge and is, therefore, appropriate for routine tasks (Argyris & Schön, 1989b). Because single-loop learning serves to improve routine tasks without taking time to diagnose the underlying governing variables, single-loop learning is simply fine-tuning efficiency. A double-loop issue arises when changing the action strategies alone will not achieve the intended consequences; the action strategies are no longer effective (Argyris & Schön, 1989b). Whereas single-loop learning focuses on fine-tuning efficiency, double-loop learning focuses on fine-tuning effectiveness. Through double-loop learning, the individual can reexamine the governing variables and change these variables before implementing a new action strategy (Argyris, 1999; Argyris & Schön, 1989b).

The following tables present Model I, opposite Model I, and Model II theories in use. The tables depict how the different governing variables in each Model guide different action strategies and lead to different consequences and learning outcomes for the behavioral culture.

Table 1 *Model I theories in use*

Governing Variables	Assumptions	Action Strategies	Consequences in the Behavioral Culture	Learning and Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define my goals and achieve them through unilateral control ▪ Maximize winning and minimize losing ▪ Minimize generating or expressing negative feelings ▪ Act rationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I understand the situation ▪ Differing perspectives are wrong ▪ My feelings are justified ▪ My motives are pure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocate my position ▪ Keep reasoning private ▪ Be persuasive ▪ Appeal to larger goals ▪ Do not ask others about their reasoning ▪ Withhold information ▪ Create rules to censor information and behavior ▪ Ease in (ask questions without explaining my intentions behind the question; ask leading questions with the intention of producing a predetermined answer) ▪ Unilaterally protect myself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Single-loop learning ▪ Misunderstanding ▪ Unproductive conflict and defensiveness ▪ Self-fulfilling, self-sealing processes ▪ Reduced quality of work life ▪ Actor viewed as defensive, inconsistent, incongruent, competitive, controlling, fearful of being vulnerable, manipulative, withholding of feelings ▪ Defensive norms: mistrust, lack of risk taking, conformity, external commitment, emphasis on diplomacy, power-centered competition, and rivalry ▪ Little freedom of choice and internal commitment ▪ Little testing of the theories publicly; much testing of the theories privately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decreased learning ▪ Decreased effectiveness of organization

Source: Argyris & Schön, 1989b; Argyris et al., 1985; Schwarz, Davidson, Carlson, McKinney, & Contributors, 2005

Table 2 *Opposite Model I theories in use*

Governing Variables	Assumptions	Action Strategies	Consequences in the Behavioral Culture	Learning and Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation of everyone in defining purposes ▪ Everyone wins, no one loses ▪ Express feelings ▪ Suppress intellectual reasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I know the right answer ▪ Others will come to this right answer by themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emphasize inquiry ▪ Unilaterally give up control ▪ Ease in if others do not arrive at the answer I have defined as right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased misunderstanding, unproductive conflict and defensiveness ▪ Reduced quality-of-work life ▪ Oscillation between opposite Model I and Model I ▪ Unilateral control is camouflaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decreased learning ▪ Decreased effectiveness of organization

Source: Argyris et al., 1985; Schwarz et al., 2005

Table 3 *Model II theories in use*

Governing Variables	Assumptions	Action Strategies	Consequences in the Behavioral Culture	Learning and Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Valid information ▪ Free and informed choice ▪ Internal commitment ▪ Compassion ▪ Bilateral protection of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I have some information ▪ Others have information ▪ Each of us may see things the others do not see ▪ Differences are opportunities for learning ▪ People are trying to act with integrity given their situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Test assumptions and inferences ▪ Share all relevant information ▪ Use specific examples ▪ Explain reasoning and intent ▪ Focus on interests, not positions ▪ Combine advocacy and inquiry ▪ Jointly design the approach ▪ Discuss undiscussables ▪ Use a decision-making rule that generates the commitment needed ▪ Effective problem solving and decision making ▪ Protection of self and others is a joint enterprise and oriented toward growth ▪ Seek to reduce blindness about my own inconsistency and incongruity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Double-loop learning ▪ Increased understanding ▪ Reduced unproductive conflict and defensiveness ▪ Increased trust ▪ Reduced self-fulfilling processes ▪ Increased quality-of-work life ▪ Actor experienced as minimally defensive, a facilitator, collaborator, choice creator ▪ High authenticity and freedom of choice ▪ Minimally defensive interpersonal relations and group dynamics ▪ Learning-oriented norms: individuality, open confrontation on difficult issues, public testing of theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased learning ▪ Increased long-run effectiveness of organization

Source: Argyris & Schön, 1989b; Argyris et al., 1985; Schwarz et al., 2005

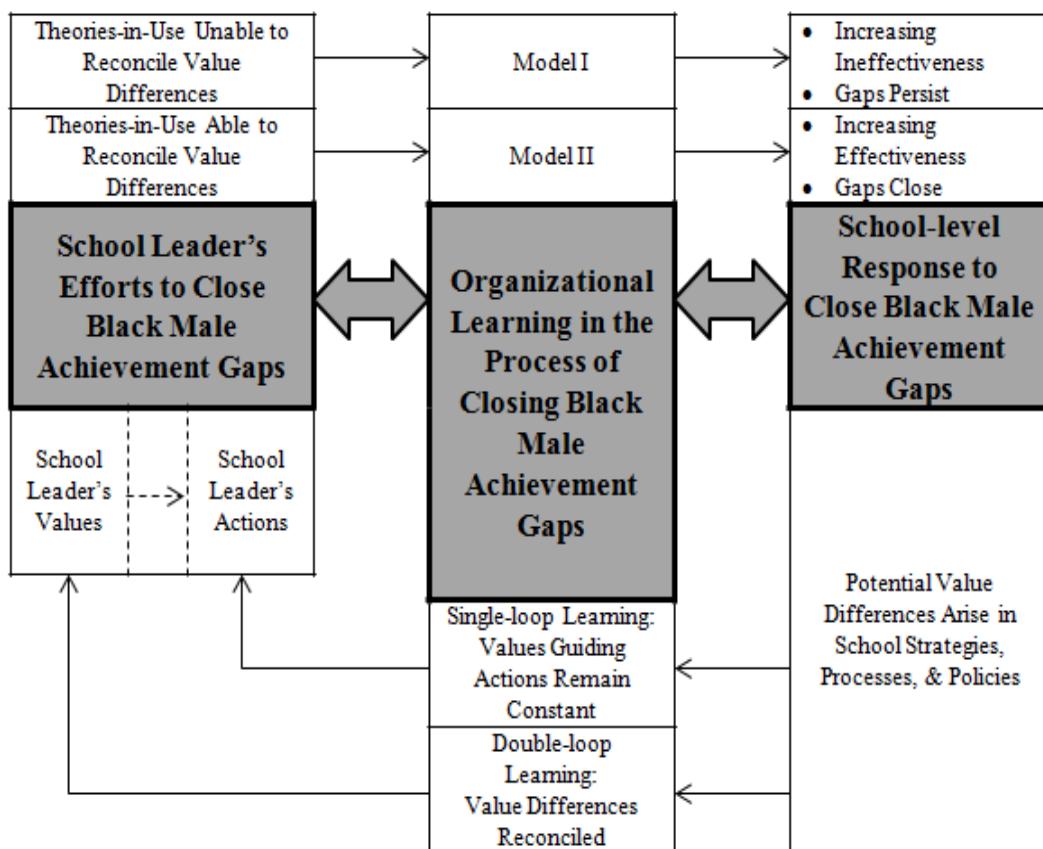
Because of its governing variables, or values, Model I theories-in-use inhibit inquiry into the values underlying actions, and therefore, prohibit double-loop learning. Model II theories-in-use enable double-loop learning when single-loop is no longer sufficient and is leading to decreasingly effective outcomes. Finally, Argyris and Schön's (1978, 1996) perspective asserts individual actions as representative of the organizational collective (Argyris, 1982, 1995, 1999).

The values underlying individual actions provide insight into the collective behavioral culture that independently influences its members (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1996). By revealing these values, the researcher determines if reconciliation has occurred in the efforts to close Black male achievement gaps.

Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework visually represents the focus of this study and connects the literature to the problem with respect to Argyris and Schön's (1978, 1989b) framework.

Figure 1. A School Leader's Efforts to Close Black Male Achievement Gaps within the Leader's School



The conceptual framework depicts the process of a school leader developing and implementing efforts to close Black male achievement gaps. The school leader's efforts are the impetus of the collective school-level response and are actions guided by the school leader's values. The school-level response is the avenue through which schools address the internal process factors that have been cited as perpetuating the Black male achievement gap (Brown et al., 2011; Howard, 2010; Schellenberg & Grothaus, 2009). The school-level response is also the place where potential value differences arise within the school organization. As the school leader works with

staff members to develop and implement efforts, the staff members are the first potential source of value differences.

Organizational learning occurs in the process of the school leader's efforts influencing the school-level response and the school-level response influencing the school leader's efforts. If the school leader's theories-in-use are guided by values that are unable to reconcile value differences, the school's efforts will become increasingly ineffective and gaps will persist (Argyris, 1999). In the same manner, efforts that are guided by values that enable reconciliation will lead to increasingly effective outcomes, closing these gaps. Further, organizational learning presents an opportunity for the school to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. As obstacles and conflicts arise within the school-level response, the school leader can either respond through single-loop or double-loop learning – ideally, single-loop for efficiency and double-loop for effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

This study was designed as a descriptive embedded case study. This type of case study seeks to determine whether a particular aspect of a case may be described using a given theory – in this case, the theory of action framework (Scholz & Tietje, 2002; Yin, 2009). This study used the theory of action framework to describe a school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps within the school and explored how these actions may have promoted reconciliation of value differences within the school organization (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1989b). The embedded case study is appropriate because the study seeks understand a particular aspect of the case, as opposed to the case as a whole (Scholz & Tietje, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Sampling and Participants

Purposeful sampling allowed for the selection of information-rich cases and data (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Further, the typical sampling technique of purposeful selection determined the case criterion (Merriam, 2009). The criteria essential for the selection of the case were a public charter school, in which more than 1/3 of the student population is Black, that is actively engaged in efforts to close Black male student achievement gaps, and that is currently demonstrating evidence of a White-Black achievement gap on the school district's comprehensive assessment. DAY Middle School³ is a charter school in an urban Mid-Atlantic region that fulfilled the case criteria.

Context of the Study

DAY Middle School uses an inclusive education model with an academic and social development curriculum. All students take the same core classes, and instruction is differentiated. The school day incorporates remediation and extension with small groups of students. Advisory groups aid in establishing school norms, community, and culture to support the goals of the school. The social curriculum focuses on developing seven social-emotional skills in the students: cooperation, communication, assertion, responsibility, empathy, engagement, and self-control.

³ DAY Middle School is a pseudonym used for the school research site.

These skills are combined with a focus on the school's espoused community values: compassion, contribution, courage, integrity, and self-discipline.

DAY Middle School developed a mentor elective for its struggling Black and Hispanic male students. The elective is led by two or three, Black or Hispanic, male staff members⁴ and includes only Black and Hispanic male students. The mentors create a safe-space for the students by allowing the boys to speak freely. The mentors aim to be role models for the students, encouraging those surrounded by and accustomed to a negative urban environment to see and embrace a different perspective. DAY Middle School also developed gender-specific student-staff conferences to address the needs of its Black male students. These conferences include all boys in the middle school. The goal is to engage the boys in conversations surrounding age-appropriate topics that may not be included in the academic curriculum but are relevant to the development of the social curriculum, are relevant to the boys, and are likely to affect their school performance if not addressed.

Finally, DAY Middle School's leader operates from a position of shared leadership with a small administrative team. The leadership team consists of the school leader, a director of student services, an instructional coach, and a dean of students. Understanding this shared leadership model is foundational to understanding the development and implementation of the school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection occurred simultaneously with data analysis because analysis in the process of collection allows for inductive themes to emerge (Merriam, 2009). Data collection focused on those school leader's efforts specifically directed to closing Black male achievement gaps. Finally, data were collected through semi-structured initial and second in-depth interviews with the school leader, semi-structured initial and second in-depth interviews with staff members, multiple sets of observations, and analysis of documents.

Data analysis consists of three steps: (1) preparing and organizing the data; (2) reducing the data through coding; and (3) representing the data in figures, tables, and/or a discussion (Creswell, 2007). The data were transcribed and organized into tables (see Tables 6-10). In the etic phase of coding, the data were examined through the lens of the theory of action framework (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 2009). Then in the emic phase, the data were examined through inductive open coding to allow for new salient themes to emerge (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). The data are presented using rich descriptions and concise maps of the theories of action (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). The following figure (Figure 2) depicts the format of the maps.

⁴ The term "staff members" refers to all personnel working at DAY Middle School. The school regularly incorporated its non-teaching staff into mentoring roles and the school's community. Thus, we use the term staff members to include these personnel as well as to protect the identity of the school and its staff. If it is pertinent to identify the staff member's role, specifically, then we refer to that member as "teacher" or "administrator", etc.

Figure 2. Format of a Theory of Action Represented in a Map

Contextual Cue	Governing Variable	Action Strategy	Consequence
Excerpt from data	Value guiding the action	Action in-use	Consequence of the action

Source: Argyris & Schön, 1989b; Argyris et al., 1985

RESULTS

This study used a theory of action framework to describe a school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps within the school (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1989b). Data analysis revealed an organizational division between the process of developing and implementing the school leader's efforts. This study also purposed to explore how the leader's actions may have promoted reconciliation of value differences within the school organization. Values and actions aligning with Model II theories of action emerged in development; values and actions aligning with Model I theories of action emerged in implementation.

The Process of Development

The following table provides a summary map of the process of development: the values guided the actions in the process of development, which led to the school's developed efforts. The emergent values of shared leadership, equity, and inclusion guided the interactions among the school leader and staff members as they engaged in this process. Three themes characterized these interactions: openness in staff relationships, data as a means to reconcile value differences, and internal commitment. These interactions resulted in the production of broad and specific efforts to close Black male achievement gaps. The specific efforts were developed for the needs of the school's Black male students.

Table 4 DAY Middle School's Process of Developing the School Leader's Efforts to Close Black Male Achievement Gaps

Process of Development Among School Staff			
Deductive Frame ⁵	Values	Actions	Efforts Produced
<i>Inductive Themes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shared Leadership ■ Equity ■ Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Openness in staff relationships ■ Use of data to reconcile differences ■ Internal Commitment 	<p>Broad Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Differentiated Instruction ■ Intensive Periods ■ Advisory Groups ■ Student-specific Strategies <p>Specific Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Boys-only Conferences ■ Mentor Electives

Shared leadership. The shared leadership model had four decision categories: (1) decisions made by only the administrative team; (2) decisions made by the administrative team with additional staff input; (3) collaborative decisions, where each member had an equal voice; and (4) decisions delegated to an individual or group. The participants described the four categories as less hierarchical and more of a malleable structure to help clarify responsibilities in daily decision-making.

The repeated emphasis on the leadership model as a means of making decisions indicated the school leader valued shared leadership. The school leader underscored, “the leadership operates as a team so no decisions are made in isolation.” Understanding the basic structure of this model and its fluidity lays a foundation in understanding the process of development and how the other guiding values worked in concert with the value of shared leadership. The school leader emphasized this fluidity and her collaboration within this model.

I have a zillion informal conversations... It's “my door's open”, they're on planning and they pop in. (School leader)

Equity. The school leader and her staff considered equity a primary factor in improving the achievement of the school's Black male students. One participant commented, “Our [school leader] is always thinking about stuff... in terms of equity.” Further, the school leader stated she considered the needs of her Black male students before even hiring a new teacher. The school

⁵ The framing of this table was adapted from the concept of mapping a theory of action (Argyris & Schön, 1989b; Argyris et al., 1985). See Figure 2 in the “Data Analysis” section.

leader said, “We are looking from the jump at who we’re bringing into the building in front of our students.” Also, the school leader prioritized equity work in developing staff relationships. All school staff, to include the senior management and operations staff, attended equity meetings. The discussion topics aimed to encourage self-reflection and openness, uncover personal biases, and brainstorm ideas to resolve practical problems the employees encountered within the school.

Inclusion. Participants described how teachers worked hard to build a positive culture of openness and inclusion. In observations, teachers consistently emphasized being at a different level of learning was not stigmatizing. One participant described the format, “It’s differentiated instruction where students can self-select where they go... occasionally we’ll push students who we think can take a higher challenge.”

The participants stated advisory groups provided a social extension to inclusion. Guided by a teacher, students could discuss difficult issues.

[I try to] provide a safe space for them to express themselves... to provide a space and the skills for them to ask questions of each other and offer support to each other.
(Administrator)

The emphasis on inclusion straddled both the academic and social curriculums; yet the equity lens also drove the staff to incorporate elements to address the students’ individual needs and the parents’ individual concerns.

Development: Actions and Their Resulting Efforts

Three themes guided staff interactions within the process of development: openness in relationships within the school staff, an emphasis on data as a means of reconciling differences, and an internal commitment by the staff. These themes emerged as the actions guided by the values of shared leadership, equity, and inclusion.

Openness in school staff relationships. Participants commented that DAY Middle School was unlike other schools in which they had previously worked, due to the shared leadership model.

We communicate as an [administrative team] together... and we may not agree right away, but we usually come to an agreement fairly quickly. (Administrator)

Frequent informal conversations between staff members supported openness in staff relationship.⁶ These informal conversations occurred as a normal rhythm of each day – sporadically, suddenly, yet consistently. Staff members informally conversed on successes within that day, long-range goals, and students’ family needs, among others. Within the shared leadership model, these

⁶ Because of the nature of these conversations, we were not afforded access to the content of these conversations while they were occurring. We did, however, observe teachers frequently requesting a brief moment to speak with the school leader as she conducted her routine classroom observations and teacher check-ins. We obtained additional data on them through the interviews. We sought information on those conversations concerning Black male students and achievement gaps, so we asked participants to recall informal conversations they deemed important in resolving a dilemma surrounding a Black male student. The purpose of these questions was to gain insight into the content of the conversations, while also gathering data relevant to the purpose of the study.

informal conversations supported the more formal structures in the sense that teachers routinely exchanged quick answers and insights, yet followed up through email on issues that might require a more in-depth answer.

Data to reconcile differences. The use of data to reconcile differences supported the first theme of openness in staff relationships. The staff found if they used the sources of data available to them and focused on the information with a commitment to resolve the dilemma under the guidance of the school's values, they were able to be open in their communication.

If we have a disagreement we go back to the data, we go back to what worked, and what didn't work... when you look at the data it takes out all the extra stuff – all the personal stuff. (Participant 2, Administrator)

Internal commitment. Internal commitment undergirded both of the two previous themes. The participants' descriptions and the staff members' exemplifications of shared leadership in action were indicators of the internal commitment held by the school staff as a whole. The staff consistently displayed a high degree of commitment to resolving conflicts and student dilemmas through reconciliation. They committed not to leave disputes unresolved "because that would have a direct impact on the experience of our students." (Administrator)

Staff members also exemplified high levels of internal commitment on an individual basis. In considering expulsion or suspension, the staff involved displayed true internal commitment by working collaboratively to find a solution that would best serve the needs of the student, the student's family, and the school community. The members expressed internal reasons and motivations for an amiable solution; they did not merely adhere to external regulations in compliance with their duties as staff members. One mentor teachers in that scenario exemplified a high degree of internal commitment to the student, seeking to enable the student to succeed inside and outside of the school.

[I was thinking], "What could I do to help if he's expelled and after he's expelled?... Because I know Black male educators are few and far between... [But I was also thinking], "With this particular student... it would be best for him to have another environment... (Mentor teacher)

This genuine sense of compassion for the student and commitment to his success was expressed by every member in the meeting. There was a push and pull between the staff members as they resolved to find the best possible solution for all parties involved; they seriously considered the effects of an expulsion on the student's life and success outside of school.

The Process of Implementation

In implementation, there was no evidence of reconciliation occurring as there was no evidence of value differences arising among staff members in this process. The staff's in-use theories of action reflected Model I, which do not foster reconciliation. The following table presents provides a summary map of the process of implementation. From the lens of the theory of action framework, the broad and specific efforts at the level of development became the espoused efforts at the level of implementation. The values of trust and student success guided the

staff's actions. These values and actions revealed the actual effort in-use to close Black male achievement gaps was to find different strategies to enable the students to embody the school's promoted values promoted and to succeed with the school's curriculum.

Table 5 DAY Middle School's Process of Implementing the School Leader's Efforts to Close Black Male Achievement Gaps

Process of Implementation – Staff to Student				
Deductive Frame ⁷	Espoused Efforts	Values	Actions	Actual Efforts In-Use
<i>Inductive Themes</i>	<p>Broad Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Differentiated Instruction ▪ Intensive Periods ▪ Advisory Groups ▪ Student-specific Strategies <p>Specific Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boys-only Conferences ▪ Mentor Electives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trust ▪ Student success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff autonomy ▪ Staff relationships with students ▪ Staff as school parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Find different strategies to enable students to embody values promoted by school and to succeed within school

Trust. Openness and internal commitment in the staff's relationships led to trust between the school leader and her staff members. The school leader trusted her staff to create, develop, and implement efforts they felt would best enable their students to succeed and close existing gaps. Further, participants commented the school leader allowed teacher teams to resolve dilemmas without her input.

Student success. The staff's internal commitment in development translated into student success in implementation. One participant stated she and the other staff felt responsible for the kids on the weekends; she said this sense of internal commitment translated into monitoring students' daily progress and ensuring the kids knew the staff monitored them. Clearly, staff members valued student success. They sought to enable the students to embody the values espoused by the school and develop the skills needed to complete the academic and social curriculums defined by the school.

So part of the responsibility as [an advisory group] leader is to help them understand... our community values and help them build the skill set to exemplify

⁷ The framing of this table was adapted from the concept of mapping a theory of action (Argyris & Schön, 1989b; Argyris et al., 1985). See Figure 2 in the "Data Analysis" section.

the habits of scholars... the skills that we feel are really important to be a successful student in the school and high school and to be a successful citizen in the world after graduation. (Advisory teacher)

Implementation: Actions and Their Resulting Efforts

The primary interaction in implementation was between the staff member and the student; staff to staff interactions were almost nonexistent. This distinguishing detail is important because this research study sought to analyze value differences arising between the school leader and the staff member. Because of this study's research design, however, the students' theories of action in these interactions were not studied. DAY Middle School's shared leadership structure emphasized the staff member's voice as equally relevant in developing and implementing these efforts. The original design of this study, however, did not account for the situation in which the implementation of the school leader's efforts would be characterized by a high degree of staff autonomy, thus creating a research context in which value differences between staff members did not arise in this process.

Staff autonomy in implementation. The school leader reported she trusted her staff to implement efforts with a high degree of autonomy, though within the bounds of the structures established by the grade-level and subject-level teams. One participant commented, "We can basically shut our door and lead our classroom the way that we want to."

The structures and routines developed by the teams were also bounded by the broad community values of the school; the social-emotional skills from the social curriculum; general school policies, such as regulations on dress codes; general behavior regulations, such as being respectful; and the school's yearly goals. The school leader further extended this trust to the staff members relationships with the students.

Staff member relationships with students. The school leader and her staff valued student success and sought to nurture staff-student relationships in order to facilitate this success. In response to her staff members that had struggled with disruptive Black male students in their classrooms, the school leader affirmed that their "entry point" with these students must be "knowing who [they are when they walk] out of your classroom".

Openness did exist in these teacher-student relationships but not in the same fashion as with the staff members. Rather, the staff used this knowledge of the students and these relationships to enable their students to succeed within the established expectations and values of the classroom and the school. The mentor elective developed the most revelatory relationships. The male staff members strove to develop deep student relationships and provide a safe place for their boys to express themselves.

[We allow] them to build a bridge [between home and school] by building them up, re-defining who they are, as well as cultivating their individuality, while gaining different experiences in life. (Participant 5, Administrator)

In many cases, the mentors realized this space was the only space inside or outside of school that their Black male students could discuss these issues; yet even within these discussions, the mentors sought to guide their students into embodying the values they deemed correct or more appropriate within the school setting and ultimately within society. For example, the mentors gave

guidance on being a man in general, “You don’t always have to fight, man. It can be a different outlook on life.” Participants viewed these relationships with the students as vital to closing academic achievement gaps within the school.

The staff member as the students’ school parent. The school perceived the staff as parental figures for the students during school hours. One participant stated, “Teachers and supporting staff members (kind of) serve as a parent to them here.” Advisory groups, particularly, provided an avenue for all students to have a school parent. Each advisory group leader monitored a small group of students with extra care and attentiveness – the way a parent might pay closer attention to their children on the playground than the other children. Group leaders aimed to provide a voice of reason.

Giving kids an opportunity to reflect like... why might that have been the case, is that right or wrong... and engage kids in the problem-solving process of what we can do moving forward if we recognize we can’t change anyone outside of this building. (Advisory teacher)

The mentor elective and the boys-only conferences also served as main forums for male staff members to develop a parental role with the students. Particularly within these forums, the mentors reported, many of the Black male students were missing a father figure in their homes. One mentor stated, “We know he wants that fatherly figure... so we try to provide at least the bare minimums.” The mentors sought to guide their students in embodying certain values and dismissing others - guidance normally found in a father’s relationship with his children. Another mentor stated, “One thing that we’ve done is constantly provide reminders that he can be successful.”

In summary, the staff members sought different strategies to enable students to embody the values promoted by the school and to succeed within the school. This in-use effort was actually the underlying and unifying goal of the espoused efforts resulting from the process of development and all of the strategies exemplified by the staff members to adjust to the students’ individual contexts and needs.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to use a theory of action framework to describe a school leader’s efforts to close Black male achievement gaps within the school and to explore how these actions may promote reconciliation of value differences within the school organization (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1989b). This study found: an organizational division between the staff’s theories of action in development versus implementation. Further, the school leader and staff members reconciled value differences within the development of strategies to close Black male achievement gaps. There was no evidence of value differences arising between staff members in implementing these strategies. Finally, within this process of implementation, the analysis revealed one underlying, and truly in-use, effort to close Black male achievement gaps.

Organizational learning occurs in the interactions between organizational members. These interactions are the juncture where reconciliation of value differences will occur or not (Argyris et al., 1985). In developing the school leader’s efforts, DAY Middle School’s leadership team used a foundation of shared leadership with an equity lens and an inclusive educational model to foster

Model II theories of action and enable reconciliation of value differences among staff members. Additionally, the shared leadership model synonymized the school leader's efforts with her staff members' efforts. The school's espoused efforts to close Black male achievement gaps represented broad umbrellas within which the staff regularly collaborated to tailor many individual strategies to meet student needs. These broad efforts were truly in-use; however, the in-use action strategies used to develop and implement these efforts were very different and demonstrated the division between development and implementation.

Within development, the breadth of the emergent values and the school's espoused values allowed room for reconciliation within staff interactions. For example, how the school's value of compassion translated into action in the student expulsion case looked very different to each staff member and required reconciling one staff member's version of compassion-in-action with another's; yet the emergent values – shared leadership, equity, and inclusion – fostered a context that allowed staff members to reconcile the collective practical enactment of compassion within the expulsion conference and come to a decision in the case.

The following tables present a summary of the collected data and their correspondence to the emergent themes and Model II theories of action within the process of development. There is one table for each emergent value: shared leadership, equity, and inclusion. In each table, the contextual cue provides the excerpt from the data; the contextual cue is abutted by the emergent value on the left side and the governing variable on the right side to illustrate how the contextual cue applies to both. The governing variable provides the Model II value guiding the theory of action. The emergent actions are the themes the data revealed as characterizing the staff's interactions in the process of development. The action strategies provide the Model II actions that correspond with the emergent actions and are supported by the data from the contextual cue.

Table 6 Model II Theories of Action Present in Staff Interactions During the Process of Development and Corresponding to the Shared Leadership Value

Emergent Value	Contextual Cue	Governing Variables	Emergent Action	Action Strategies
Shared Leadership	<p><i>We all did a consensus vote (a protocol that we followed). Everyone shared the rationale for it or why they voted the way they did.</i></p> <p><i>If we have a disagreement we go back to the data, we go back to what worked, and what didn't work and then we actually come up with a solution.</i></p> <p><i>I feel like [value differences] is something she's [the school leader] always thinking about and she's pretty transparent about it, given our population of students.</i></p> <p><i>I checked myself – my own prejudices against her - that I definitely had her in this box and I reflected on that as [a school leader] it was my job to at least try and help her.</i></p> <p><i>What are the intended results of this decision? What could some unintended results of this decision be? Is this decision going to best serve this student and his family?</i></p> <p><i>And then together we talked through what we'd done... like we literally wrote it down (parent shadow, has been suspended, mentor, contacted coach). We went through the list – he's done service, he's done this, he's done that.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Valid information ▪ Free and informed choice ▪ Internal commitment ▪ Compassion ▪ Bilateral protection of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Openness in staff relationships ▪ Use of data to reconcile differences ▪ Internal commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Test assumptions and inferences ▪ Share all relevant information ▪ Use specific examples ▪ Explain reasoning and intent ▪ Focus on interests, not positions ▪ Combine advocacy and inquiry ▪ Jointly design the approach ▪ Discuss undiscussables ▪ Use a decision-making rule that generates the commitment needed ▪ Effective problem solving and decision making ▪ Protection of self and others is a joint enterprise and oriented toward growth ▪ Seek to reduce blindness about my own inconsistency and incongruity

Table 7 Model II Theories of Action Present in Staff Interactions During the Process of Development and Corresponding to the Value of Equity

Emergent Value	Contextual Cue	Governing Variables	Emergent Action	Action Strategies
Equity	<p><i>We're all broken up into these groups where its people you don't necessarily interact with and we talk about issues that are not always the most comfortable. We address what is our bias.</i></p> <p><i>And then we looked at another kid [his data portfolio] and ran through the same just to make sure we were being equitable.</i></p> <p><i>We [look at] all different types of data - a portfolio approach - student behavior, assessment data, student grades, anecdotal evidence from teachers, classroom observations... all those sorts of things.</i></p> <p><i>My concern for the number of behavior write-ups and the number of times she called my office to have me come either remove a student or talk to a student - deal with the behavior issue - and the number of instances where it was a Black or Brown boy.</i></p> <p><i>The challenges this student already faces. What could I do to help if he's expelled and after he's expelled? How can I still keep in touch with this kid? Because I know Black male educators are few and far between and not a lot of students see a Black male as an educator in schools.</i></p> <p><i>Because we don't necessarily have uniformity and the response from a White male teacher may be very different from that of a Black male</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Valid information ▪ Free and informed choice ▪ Internal commitment ▪ Compassion ▪ Bilateral protection of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Openness in staff relationships ▪ Use of data to reconcile differences ▪ Internal commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Test assumptions and inferences ▪ Share all relevant information ▪ Use specific examples ▪ Explain reasoning and intent ▪ Focus on interests, not positions ▪ Combine advocacy and inquiry ▪ Jointly design the approach ▪ Discuss undiscussables ▪ Use a decision-making rule that generates the commitment needed ▪ Effective problem solving and decision making ▪ Protection of self and others is a joint enterprise and oriented toward growth ▪ Seek to reduce blindness about my own inconsistency and incongruity

<i>teacher... There's some kids who are totally fine to have those conversations with White teachers, White women, or White men and may not see anything wrong with the advice... and then there sometimes the teachers say 'I don't know if I told them the right thing. Can you talk to them?</i>			
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Table 8 Model II Theories of Action Present in Staff Interactions During the Process of Development and Corresponding to the Value of Inclusion

Emergent Value	Contextual Cue	Governing Variables	Emergent Action	Action Strategies
Inclusion	<p><i>[Though] we do pride ourselves on not being completely test driven, [and] we know that there's more to our students than just test scores. We still collect data and use that to inform our instruction or whatever it is that we're going to do to close achievement gaps.</i></p> <p><i>Now I have more data on either what continues not to be successful for them or what actually turned things around for them... planning with that data in mind for the classes that contain the boys that were in that original intensive group.</i></p> <p><i>And so, by having something that is open, we are encouraging all our students to try. And then we also have kids who are quiet and very comfortable sitting back and so as teachers it's our job to look at the data and see if [we are] missing somebody. I would say that we do a really good job that.</i></p> <p><i>Crew is designed to be that family have away from home, that family at school, and your crew leader is sort of a parent figure at school, and serves as the liaison between school and home. Some of that is giving me information to share with families or how to kind of bridge the gap between school and home;</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Valid information ▪ Free and informed choice ▪ Internal commitment ▪ Compassion ▪ Bilateral protection of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Openness in staff relationships ▪ Use of data to reconcile differences ▪ Internal commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Test assumptions and inferences ▪ Share all relevant information ▪ Use specific examples ▪ Explain reasoning and intent ▪ Focus on interests, not positions ▪ Combine advocacy and inquiry ▪ Jointly design the approach ▪ Discuss undiscussables ▪ Use a decision-making rule that generates the commitment needed ▪ Effective problem solving and decision making ▪ Protection of self and others is a joint enterprise and oriented toward growth ▪ Seek to reduce blindness about my own inconsistency and incongruity

Shared leadership, openness in relationships, and internal commitment led the school leader to trust her staff to implement the developed efforts and value student success. This trust and the valuing of student success fostered Model I theories of action because of the emphasis on staff autonomy and building staff-student relationships. Viewing themselves as school parents, staff members collaboratively determined what structures and strategies could be used to support their children (the students). This collaboration resembled a parent-to-parent relationship where both parties honored and respected each other's perspectives, and both parties resolutely committed to gathering all relevant information and finding the best possible solution for their child. Staff members encouraged students to participate but only within the bounds of the school's established values.

Further, these emergent themes created a situation in which the primary interactions were between staff members and students in implementation; the staff implemented their own strategies with the students; and largely classes were led by either one teacher or a primary teacher and an additional supporting teacher; therefore, value differences did not arise between the school leader and her staff or between staff members at this level. If a situation arose in which value differences did need to be reconciled, the staff reconciled the value's practical enactment at the level of development, and they were then trusted to autonomously implement their individual strategies with the students.

The following tables present a summary of the collected data and their correspondence to the emergent themes and Model I (and opposite Model I)⁸ theories of action within the process of implementation. There is one table for each emergent value of trust and student success. In each table, the contextual cue provides the excerpt from the data. Unless otherwise stated, the cue is an excerpt of verbal conversation from an interview or observation. The contextual cue is abutted by the emergent value on the left side and the governing variable on the right side to illustrate how the contextual cue applies to both. The governing variable provides the Model I (or opposite Model I) value guiding the theory of action. The emergent actions are the themes the data revealed as characterizing the staff's actions in the process of implementation. The action strategies provide the Model I (or opposite Model I) actions that correspond with the emergent actions and are supported by the data from the contextual cue.

⁸ Because the ultimate goals of Model I and opposite Model I are the same and both models inhibit double-loop learning, the theories of action according with these two models are grouped in the same tables. Tables 1-3 differentiate between the two models' individual governing variables, action strategies, and organizational consequences.

Table 9 *Model I Theories of Action Present in Staff Actions During the Process of Implementation and Corresponding to the Value of Student Success*

Emergent Value	Contextual Cue	Governing Variables	Emergent Action	Action Strategies
Student Success	<p><i>So part of the responsibility as [an advisory group] leader is to help them understand and really break apart our community values and help them build the skill set to help them be able to exemplify the habits of scholars...</i></p> <p><i>I try really hard to build their sense of independence in the classroom and be more of a facilitator.</i></p> <p><i>In terms of consequences and rewards... a lot of that is developed with students in order to get their buy-in... so if a student breaks something within the contract... "Well look you signed this. This is what we agree upon... these are the consequences we talked about."</i></p> <p><i>It's [the mentor elective] really a way to give them the space to have some of the important conversations. [We allow] them to build a bridge [between home and school] by building them up, re-defining who they are, as well as cultivating their individuality, while gaining different experiences in life. They weren't the best options for our kids... We are all very lucky [because] we all know our students. I know our kids; our principal knows our kids. We are not looking at them as this lump. I can actually tell you this specific student is struggling with these things.</i></p>	<p>[Model I]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define my goals and achieve them through unilateral control Maximize winning and minimize losing Minimize generating or expressing negative feelings Act rationally <p>[opposite Model I]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation of everyone in defining purposes Everyone wins, no one loses Express feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff autonomy Staff relationships with students Staff as school parent 	<p>[Model I]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate my position Keep reasoning private Be persuasive Appeal to larger goals Do not ask others about their reasoning Withhold information Create rules to censor information and behavior Ease in (ask questions without explaining my intentions behind the question; ask leading questions with the intention of producing a predetermined answer) Unilaterally protect myself <p>[opposite Model I]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize inquiry Unilaterally give up control Ease in if others do not arrive at the answer I have defined as right

Table 10 Model I Theories of Action Present in Staff Actions During the Process of Implementation and Corresponding to the Value of Trust

Emergent Value	Contextual Cue	Governing Variables	Emergent Action	Action Strategies
Trust	<p><i>So with that she really trusts us (as a team) to brainstorm ideas and think of ways that we can figure this out. We're allowed to create our own classroom... like we can basically shut our door and lead our classroom the way that want to.</i></p> <p><i>And it's always good to have the input of teachers because they are people who are in the classroom all the time. We don't want to make decisions that are harmful... We know our kids. We know our staff but we're not in the classroom teaching students every day. I chose this strategy because the way I was raised was somewhat similar to our students... for me it's wanting to give back and provide those same strategies that I obtained to some other students who are Black and Brown like me.</i></p> <p><i>And the teachers and I talk a lot about the dynamics of this cohort versus this cohort and we exchange different strategies... like I noticed this works for this one kid... or if you talk to this kid in this particular manner or voice they're not going to respond to you. So we exchange a lot of that information.</i></p> <p><i>A lot of the kids really respond to empowering them with choice, empowering them with... I get that you're a teacher, but I'm also a person... showing that</i></p>	<p>[Model I]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define my goals and achieve them through unilateral control Maximize winning and minimize losing Minimize generating or expressing negative feelings Act rationally <p>[opposite Model I]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation of everyone in defining purposes Everyone wins, no one loses Express feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff autonomy Staff relationships with students Staff as school parent 	<p>[Model I]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate my position Keep reasoning private Be persuasive Appeal to larger goals Do not ask others about their reasoning Withhold information Create rules to censor information and behavior Ease in (ask questions without explaining my intentions behind the question; ask leading questions with the intention of producing a predetermined answer) Unilaterally protect myself <p>[opposite Model I]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize inquiry Unilaterally give up control Ease in if others do not arrive at

	<i>respect, particularly if you come from a different background, a different community.</i>			the answer I have defined as right
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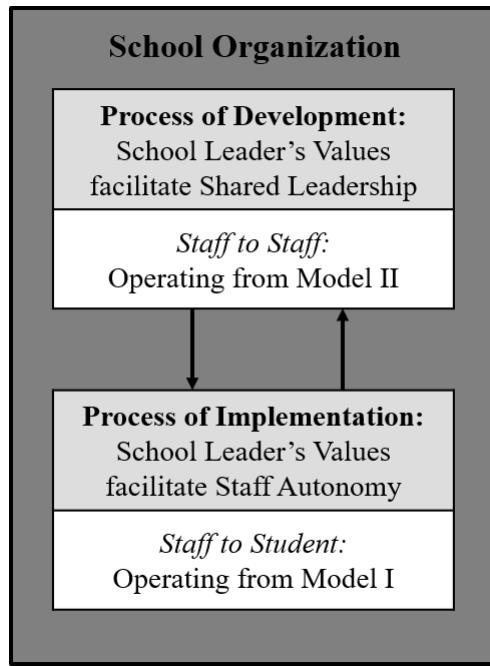
Tables 6-10 demonstrate how the values and themes revealed through inductive analysis accord with the Models' theories of action revealed through the deductive analysis.

DAY School's Conceptual Framework

Below, Figure 3 offers a reimagining of a conceptual framework grounded in the unique characteristics that DAY Middle School revealed in this study. Further, Figure 3 presents an organizational picture of DAY Middle School that focuses on the bounds of the study: using a theory of action framework to describe a school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps within the school and to explore how these actions may promote reconciliation of value differences within the school organization (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1989b).

Affirming the literature, the school leader at DAY Middle uniquely influenced the school's internal strategies, processes, policies, and academic outcomes (Begley & Johansson, 2003; Stefkovich & Shapiro, 2001; Starratt, 2012; Theoharis & Haddix, 2011). As defined in this study, the effort is the combination of the value and the resulting action. In Figure 3, the school leader's values facilitated the shared leadership structure, which provided a frame through which staff members reconciled value differences in the process of development through Model II theories of action. Further, the school leader's values facilitated a context of staff autonomy in implementation and cultivated Model I theories of action within this process. The arrows going between the levels of development and implementation are solid because the relationship between the two levels is known; there was continuous feedback and collaboration as the staff worked to develop and implement the efforts. There are two separate solid arrows to represent the disconnection between the types of in-use theories of action in the process of development versus implementation.

Figure 3. DAY Middle School's Efforts to Close Black Male Achievement Gaps



Model I theories of action are appropriate in a situation where values are being imparted, such as in a school setting or in a parent-child relationship (Argyris et al., 1985; *Bethel School Dist. No. 403 v. Fraser*, 1986; *Parham v. J.R.*, 1979). Within this unique school context, however, the potential remains for the tensions of differing value systems (school versus home or school versus community) to create pressure on the students. The question then becomes how to reconcile value differences when Model I theories of action are the appropriate course of action, and yet the literature has established unreconciled value differences as a perpetrator of the Black male achievement gap (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, 2007; A. Ferguson, 2000; Fordham, 1996; Jenkins, 2006; Ogbu, 2004; Palmer & Maramba, 2011).

The data revealed the unifying goal underlying all the other efforts, and true in-use effort, was to enable the Black male students to embody the values promoted by the school and to succeed within the standards defined by the school. This study's results revealed Model II theories of action were not extended to the students, and therefore, it is likely reconciliation did not extend to the students, the students' parents, or the students' community outside of school.

LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the researcher interpreting the participants' interpretations of their social reality were offset by follow-up interviews with the participants to either confirm or disconfirm the analysis results.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Several areas need further research: (1) how different shared leadership models foster Model II theories of action and, therefore, reconciliation of value differences among the staff members; (2) how a school organization is able to operate from two different in-use theories of action within two different divisions of the organization; and (3) the students' in-use theories of action.

CONCLUSION

More than the other members of the school organization, the school leader uniquely influences the school's internal strategies, processes, policies, and academic outcomes (Begley & Johansson, 2003; Stefkovich & Shapiro, 2001; Starratt, 2012; Theoharis & Haddix, 2011). Yet, the school leader's values and goals to close Black male achievement gaps may differ from those values and goals of other members of the school organization. A review of the literature revealed more knowledge was needed to understand how values influence school leaders' actions, and how a school leader's efforts to close the Black male achievement gap may also reconcile value differences (Begley, 2003; Frick, 2009; Law & Walker, 2005; Parkes & Thomas, 2007; Stefkovich & Shapiro, 2001, 2003).

Responding to this gap, this study found the school leader's efforts to close Black male achievement gaps reconciled value differences between staff members in the process of development, and the one truly in-use effort was to enable the Black male students to embody the values promoted by the school and to succeed within the school's curriculum. It is also important to note that this study's results clearly revealed that Model II theories of action were not extended to the students, and therefore, it is likely that reconciliation did not extend to the students, the students' parents, or the students' community outside of school. Equally, it is still unknown if value differences, as a source and perpetrator of the Black male achievement gap, have been addressed until it is known if reconciliation extends to the school's Black male students or to the most influential source of values in the students' lives, which may their homes and/or community.

DAY Middle School's shared leadership model coupled with the values of equity and inclusion provided a template for how to foster reconciliation through Model II theories of action in a learning organization. If this model could be expanded to include the voices of the students' parents, the students' community, and the school community, as a whole, such a model may be able to overcome the obstacle of using Model I theories of action in implementation while trying to address value differences as a source of the Black male achievement gap. In considering the parents' values and the parents' aspirations for their children's upbringing, educators should consider an assets-based lens emphasizing the strengths and positive qualities the boys, their parents, and their communities have to offer (Dumas & Nelson, 2016; Gutiérrez, 2008). Not inconsequentially, such a model may prove to be truly democratic.

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