

inquiry, the sample selection, data collection, data analysis and theoretical framework.

The issues of validity, trustworthiness and reliability, all critical aspects of qualitative research, were discussed. Finally, I concluded with an examination and disclosure of my personal interest, as a researcher, in the topic.

and warm and is dominated by numerous photographs of Stephen and his wife. He welcomed me to sit on the couch and turned the volume down on the television. He walked through the home and straightened things that were already straight. There were the biblical and religious themes throughout the house. There were picture framed engraved with notable scriptures. Bibles and religious books were located on the counter that connected the kitchen and living room, while biblical whatnots were placed throughout the sitting area. He offered me food and beverage and finally sat on the opposite end of the couch.

He initially doesn't want a pseudonym to protect his identity, replying, "Girl, I don't care. I ain't got no secrets." This humorous introduction illustrates Stephens has a carefree demeanor and he is forthcoming and optimistic.

Summarized Narrative

Stephen was born to a sixteen year old, who dropped out of school in the 10th grade. The first born of three siblings, Stephen's life has been anything but conventional. Stephen didn't have many fond memories of primary school; however, being recognized for his academic achievements is one of them. He didn't grow up with many material things and recalled one particularly embarrassing occasion,

"I had to go to school with probably like five outfits and my shoes had holes in them and stuff like that and I was so embarrassed...I think it affected me throughout my entire life, you know what I'm saying? That is why when I got old enough to get a job and stuff like that, my clothes and appearance were just so important me. I remember going to school and having holes in my shoes and just

The apartment living room was comfortable and clean, decorated with shades of browns and red. Candice offered a tour of her home, showing that each room had its own theme. Shades of greens and tans adorn one room, while plum, reds, and golds ornament another. I couldn't help but think to myself, this home was not what people would view as "low-income." Seemingly reading my mind, she interjected, "I can do a lot with clearance items and thrift store finds, huh?" The tour concluded and she invited me to sit on the couch and start the interview. When asked if she was ready to begin the interview, she exhaled and with visible trepidation responded, "Yep. I guess..."

Summarized Narrative

Candice, a self-proclaimed tomboy, is a twin. "Fraternal" she said immediately after divulging that information and added that "these births must run in the family." The birth of twins is unique in its own right but what made this these set of twins, Candice in particular, even more unique was the fact that her mother decided to give her to her mother to raise while she kept and raised the other twin.

She remembered primarily wearing hand-me-downs and on special occasions, she was able to buy some clothes from either the local dollar store or Fred's Discount store. She expressed that Wal-Mart was too expensive for her grandmother's fixed income who constantly reminded, "I can't afford that." With a look of disgust on her face, she recalled how her grandmother took her to a church's bazaar that also held a flea market and bought her numerous bras and outfits that were placed in plastic bags. She remembered the shame of knowing that wearing a stranger's clothes was the best that she had, saying, "I'm embarrassed by it, but at the same time, I didn't have a lot of stuff, so I took it."

everybody, you know what I am saying? Especially with the stigma of our race and the majority of our men being in prison and just being single and parenting a bunch of kids. I think you need that education because the economy is down and if you don't have it. I mean some people won't even consider you if you don't have your credentials so I feel like you need your education.

Yes, yes. I feel like to accomplish what the White people accomplish we have to have more, a bunch more to me in my mind. We have to be just... they don't, they can't have a reason to deny us. We have to be that good at whatever we do. That is my personal feeling because I feel like if you apply for a job and both of you all are equal they going to most likely go with the White person.

The following comment was in regards to which did he believe played a larger part in his life, race, being a Black man or being low-income, Stephen said:

I would like to say poverty in itself is just like, to me it was hard to go through when you don't feel like you... what is going to happen or you can't do nothing. You just stuck. They don't have no money to do nothing, you can't do nothing and I feel like me being in poverty and not having a support system and then having to half raise my brother and sister just affected me completely all during life. It still affects me now.

Renee' explained, "I don't think education is really pushed for African Americans. I'm not saying that you don't have a lot for...from my personal experience, I don't see education being really big. I'm going to tell you my view and this is me, a lot of times coming out of high school for a lot of African American families such as mine it's like once you graduate and you are out of the house you're starting from ground zero."

communities similar to theirs while also providing the community with positive role models, inspiring others in the community to pursue to higher levels in education.

Recommendations for Future Research

In Closson's (2010) critique and discussion on critical race theory's place in adult education, the researcher mentions that "There clearly has been considerable discussion of race and racism in adult education" (p. 262). Indeed it has, seemingly more garnered to the historical place African Americans have in the field. Closson (2010) also noted that at that time, the only handbook that had devoted an entire chapter to the topic of race and racism was the *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education* (Wilson & Hayes, 2000). Interestingly, later that year a handbook entirely devoted to race was published, *The Handbook of Race and Adult Education: A Resource for Dialogue on Racism* (Sheared, Johnson-Bailey, Colin, Peterson, & Brookfield, 2010). Despite these notable contributions on race, research concentrating on low-income and first-generation Black adult learners is scarce, even though previous literature has indicated that this group has unique characteristics that should be explored.

This study is an addition to a gap in the literature on first-generation and low-income students by focusing on Black adults. Future research concentrating on adults who belong to differing racial minority groups, alongside their White counterparts, would definitely benefit the field by providing a more specific understanding of what is needed to reach individuals within the racial minority groups and the adult first-generation, low-income groups as a whole.

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recorder on a laptop. All information obtained will be treated confidentially. Your name will not be used in connection with the information you provide. To protect your identity, you will be given a pseudonym (fake name) for privacy.

*Income requirements will be given once participant has contacted me.

If you would like to be a part of this research, please contact me by email or by the phone numbers provided below.

Sincerely,

Tennille Lasker-Scott

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If employed, how many years have you been employed at your current job? _____

How many adults are in the household? _____

How many adults in the household are employed? _____

How many adults are employed full-time or part-time?

Full-time _____ Part-time _____

How many dependents do you/head of household currently have (those counted on tax reports)?

What was **your** (include all contributors, spouse, etc.) total household income last year before taxes?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$11,500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$11,501 to \$15,500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,501 to \$19,500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$19,501 to \$23,550 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$23,551 to \$27,550 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$27,551 to \$31,550 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$31,551 to \$35,600 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,601 to \$39,600 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$39,601 or more |

Complete **ONLY** if you currently attend a university or college (community and technical college included)

What was your (include all contributors, spouse, etc.) total household income last year before taxes?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$17,235 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$17,236 to \$23,265 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$23,266 to \$29,295 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$29,296 to \$35,325 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,326 to \$41,355 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$41,356 to \$47,385 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$47,386 to \$53,415 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$53,416 to \$59,445 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$59,446 or more |

Parental Background Information:

What is your parent's highest educational level? (Choose One)

Mother/Female guardian:

- Less than high school Completed some high school High school graduate
- Completed some college

What is your parent's highest educational level? (Choose One)

Father/Male guardian:

- Less than high school Completed some high school High school graduate
- Completed some college

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled “**Our Story: African American Adult’s Perceptions of Formal Education**” conducted by Tennille Lasker-Scott, from the Department of Lifelong Learning, Administration, and Policy (Adult Education Program) at The University of Georgia (706-542-2214) under the direction of Dr. Juanita Johnson-Bailey, Professor, Department of Lifelong Learning, Administration, and Policy, Adult Education Program, The University of Georgia (706-542-2848). I understand that my participation is voluntary.

I can refuse to participate and can withdraw my consent at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits which I would otherwise be entitled. If I decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as mine will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed.

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of race and class status of socio-economically disadvantaged adult African Americans on their educational participation and their educational pursuits. If I elect to participate in this study, I will be asked to do the following:

1. Participate in a one-hour interview with the researcher;
2. Answer questions and share stories about experiences as a low-income, African American adult.

I may be asked to participate in a follow-up 30 minute interview.

The interviews will be audio-recorded, and transcribed, with the tapes stored in the researcher’s secure office location. No information about me, or provided by me during the researcher, will be shared with others without my written permission. The information I provide will remain confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form, unless otherwise required by law. For purposes of confidentiality, the research data will be coded and my real name will not be recorded in the data, on tape, or in the transcripts. All data transcription will occur by the researcher and that I will be allowed to review the tapes or transcripts upon my request. The researchers will keep the audio-recordings and key code, for purposes of validating the participants’ statement/responses. The audio-recording and key code will be kept for a period of three (3) months after completion of data collection, as to ensure that the participant has adequate time to listen to recording and validate any member checking activities, if needed. After the three (3) month period, all-recordings and key-codes will be destroyed.

I will not receive cash, but will receive one (1) \$20 Wal-Mart gift card as a gift of appreciation from the researcher.

The benefits for me are that I will have the opportunity to share stories of my life, with specific focus on my academic career. Furthermore, I understand this study may increase understanding of how persons who self-identify as being African American and socio-economically disadvantaged status came to hold certain ideas on the level of importance of education and if their perceptions are direct results of the interconnection of their race and class.

Some participants of this study, while reflecting on past events, could possibly have feelings of discomfort when discussing situations that occurred or circumstances that they previously endured. I will be able to take breaks at any time and I may ask the researcher to move on to another topic if I don't want to answer any questions.

The researcher will answer any questions about the research now or during the course of the research project (501-908-6045 or 706-850-6443; email: tjlasker@uga.edu).

I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

Date

Name of Researcher (Print)

Signature

Date

Name of Participant (Print)

Signature

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 629 Boyd Graduate Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; Email Address: IRB@uga.edu.

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following guide will be used in the study of **Our Story: African American Adult's Perceptions of Formal Education**. The questions are subject to change based on the participant's responses.

What's your best memory of elementary school?

What's your best memory of school after elementary school?

What's your most negative memory of school?

What are some important stories of school or education (good or bad) that you have heard from family members?

How was school or education discussed in your home?

What family member was involved in your schooling?

Who helped you with homework?

Who went to PTA meetings or talked with teachers?

Who looked at your report card?

Who in your family has the most formal schooling?

How does your family regard this person, think of this person?

Who in your family has the least amount of formal schooling?

How does your family regard this person, talk about this person?

How would describe your family's educational profile from the following choices?

Most family members have high school degrees.

Most family members do not have high school degrees.

Most family members attended college.

Most family members attended some college.

Most family members did not attend college.

Education and educational pursuits are discussed positively in my family.

Education and educational pursuits are not discussed in my family.

Education is seen as connected to success.
Education is not seen as being connected to success.

Who do you see as the most successful African Americans in the United States?

How has their education contributed to their success?

What message or meaning is there for you in their story for you as a Black person?

What message or meaning is there is this story for Black people?

What do you think of the following statements?

Education makes everyone equal.

Education levels the playing field.

Education is important for Blacks and other minorities in America.

Education does not make a difference to Blacks and other minorities in American
because of racism.

What has encouraged you to pursue an education?

What has discouraged you to pursue an education?

What place does education have in your life?

What place, if any, does education have in your future plans?

What advice would you give a Black child or family member regarding education and
what it can do for them?

If you could change anything about your educational history what would it be?

Is there anything that I have not asked that you would like to discuss?

Is there anything that you would like to ask me?