

MALONE, LARISSA, PH.D., MAY 2015

FOUNDATIONS, LEADERSHIP AND  
ADMINISTRATION

MY EXISTENCE DIDN'T MAKE NO DIFFERENCE TO THEM: PERCEPTIONS OF  
TEACHER EXPECTATIONS AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS AND  
THEIR FAMILIES (212 pp.)

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The purpose of this qualitative research was to understand the perceptions of African-American students and their families regarding teacher expectations and the experiences that shaped these perceptions. The study sought to understand the ways in which members of the African-American community processed and responded to schooling based on their interpretation of educational institutions' expectations. Critical Race Theory served as the theoretical framework which posited that culture is critical to human agency and race is relevant, salient, and is an undeniable influence on the structure of all American institutions, including schools.

Findings revealed African-Americans perceived that educational institutions of America, as a whole, are inherently designed to obstruct progress towards social justice. The emergent themes of ethnic identity, racial socialization, cultural mistrust and resilience and their relevance to and the way in which they informed perceptions of teacher expectations and the discourse surrounding majority-minority relations and cultural negotiations are discussed. This inquiry concluded that the perceptions of teacher's lower expectations influenced both African-American students' approach to schooling, but did not deter them from high achievement and encouraged African-

American parents' activism in countering racial biases to guide their students through school. Implications for diverse school communities include systemic efforts of inclusion, equitable treatment of all students and racial reconciliation as an integral part of increased African-American student achievement.

**Keywords:** teacher expectations; critical race theory; ethnic identity; cultural mistrust; racial socialization; resilience; racial reconciliation