

EXAMINING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AFRICAN
AMERICAN TEACHERS INSTRUCTING AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN
KANSAS CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Over several years the American public educational system has failed to address one of the most infuriating problems faced by our nation, narrowing the achievement gap in urban districts with urban learners. Historically, minority students have not paralleled the academic performance of their White counterparts. Nationally there have been repeated attempts and continuous research to solve the vexing problem and inadequacies of this gap; however, the solution is still very complicated.

Many discussions have taken place on how one must look beyond the test scores when it comes to educating children; however, as a nation, test scores are still the leading determinant of our students success and their ability to compete locally, nationally, and globally. What factors contribute to the test performance of urban students? Might the cultural gap between teachers and students be important to consider?

This dissertation compares the achievement of African American students with African American teachers with the achievement of African American students with other teachers in the KCPS, using the Acuity math assessment. An analysis of the data collected in this study was completed to enhance the understanding for educators, especially in the urban core, bringing light to a subject that has been among closing the achievement gap.