We Relate Because We Care: A Case Study on Teacher-Student Relations and Care in a Hip-Hop Based Education Classroom

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This dissertation titled

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Abstract

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We Relate Because We Care: A Case Study on Teacher-Student Relations and Care in a Hip-Hop Based Education Classroom

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This study explored the intersections between relational pedagogy and care between a teacher and his students in a Hip-Hop Based Education (HHBE) classroom. The goal of this qualitative, phenomenological case study was to discover how a middle school teacher experiences relationships with students in his classroom. Data was collected through interviews, observations and focus groups. Findings revealed perspectives about the possible connections between the teacher-student relationship, care and HHBE. Findings also suggest that the teachers’ use of HHBE was informed by an ethic of care and relational pedagogy. This study has implications for teachers as they seek to integrate culturally relevant pedagogy into their practice in order to develop robust relationships with students. Key themes from this study regarding teacher-student relationships in this HHBE classroom include: expressed care, mutuality, illustrations, hip-hop mentality and instructive not punitive actions. Recommendations are provided for teachers, building administrators, and educator preparation.
Dedication

To Patt, Josiah, Joshua, Justus, Danny and Evelyn
Acknowledgments

The journey to complete this dissertation has been long and arduous. However, it is rewarding to finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. I don’t think I would have ever reached this light had it not been for a host of people that provided guidance and encouragement whether knowingly or unknowingly.

To be honest, I had no intention of pursuing a terminal degree. A bachelor’s degree was always my goal. But once I discovered that my passion was education, I knew I had to do more. Without the support of my wife, Patt, I don’t think I would have realized this goal. She has encouraged me every step of the way. My incredible three sons; Josiah, Joshua, and Justus, are the reason I got up every day and persevered to complete this journey. In them, I see opportunity and hope for the next generation. Without my mom and dad, Evelyn and Danny Rawls, I would not have the drive and determination to make it this far. My parents always knew I would pursue a Doctorate even before I did. It was their knowledge, wisdom and understanding that nurtured me along this journey. It was their tenacity and ability to help me cover my fatherly duties (read: take the boys to football practice or pick the boys up from school when I had class or something else) that allowed me to reach that light.

Without Dr. Francis Godwyll, Dr. Dwan Robinson and Dr. Emery Petchauer, I’m not sure how successful I would have been on this journey. While I credit Dr. Jerry Johnson and Dr. Godwyll for showing me the path to get to the light at the end of the tunnel, it was Dr. Robinson who led me down the path like Harriet Tubman. Through Dr. Robinson’s countless hours of guidance, diligence and direction my dreams are realized.
She led me through revision after revision and Dr. Petchauer helped me stomp a path onward and upward. Dr. Petchauer provided me with the nuts and bolts to build myself up to succeed in this journey. It was he who sat with me hours upon end breaking down for me the world of academia. It was he who explained the difference between a resume and curriculum vitae while we spent countless hours digging in the crates or co-DJing some party together. It was he who helped me get my academic legs.

I would also like to thank the rest of my committee (Dr. Weade and Dr. Kessler) whose patience and kindness helped me learn to balance on those legs. Also to Dr. Christopher Emdin, I am truly grateful for your guidance and inspiration. When I see how you make this scholar thing look so easy, I am encouraged to keep pushing.

Academically, I have always been unsure of myself. I have never felt like the smartest guy in any room, and most likely still will not, but I do enjoy learning and I’m not shy about it. I credit Hip-Hop with fostering this thirst of knowledge. From the first time I heard Public Enemy, KRS-One, Brand Nubian and Poor Righteous Teachers; I have been on a quest for knowledge.

As it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a Hip-Hop nation to raise a Doctor of Education from the South Side of Columbus. I most certainly would not be who I am if it weren’t for the South Side of Columbus, Cincinnati, and Ohio in general. My brothers Ronald Thompson (Buka) and James Reese (Big June) helped me navigate through my formative years on my way to college in Cincinnati. Through my journey in the ‘Nati to my career in Hip-Hop, there are way too many people to thank by name. But suffice it to say that I would not have found this light without my brother Otis Sharp, my brothers of
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To those who know me as J Rawls, the Hip-Hop producer, and have supported me; I want to personally thank you. Making music and touring the world was an impossible dream for a kid from the South Side of Columbus. Your support is something that I don’t take lightly. I am grateful for the opportunity. I will never stop creating, but at this point in my life, I feel a duty to help others achieve their dreams. I feel a call to do more for my fellow man in the form of service. Although, I’m not quite sure what that call is yet, I am sure it will present itself soon. I also feel it’s my job to help preserve the culture of Hip-Hop. If we don’t teach the meaning of Hip-Hop culture, then who will? It’s time for ME to step up and share with others the knowledge with which God has blessed me. It is with this on my heart that I realize, even after reaching the light at the end of this tunnel, my journey is just beginning.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

She walked into my office with her head down. She is usually one of my most cheerful students as she is generally energetic and always with a smile. I knew something wasn’t right. After a few pleasantries she finally revealed to me what was the culprit of her angst. She had just found out that she was pregnant. As a high school senior, this was not the route that she wanted to take with her life. She revealed that I was the first person outside of her mother with whom she had disclosed this information. She asked for my advice and had me promise to hold this in the strictest confidence. As I promised that I would keep this confidential and offered her encouraging words, I began to wonder, what made this student feel that she could trust me? Out of sixty-five other teachers and administrators in the building, why did she choose me to confide in? Although this is a student who has performed at a high level in my classroom, she has struggled in other teachers’ classes. Could there be a connection?

Introduction

Why are students more apt to trust some teachers rather than others? What makes a student confide in teacher A as opposed to teacher B? How is trust and harmony built in a relationship between teacher and student? These are questions that many teachers have posed at some point in their career. While Hart, Stewart & Jimerson (2011) contend that student engagement is an important concept connected to student success, Jones (2008) believes that “strong positive relationships are critical” to student engagement (p. 6). Scholars posit that student learning outcomes and engagement are affected by far more than just what happens in the classroom (Aspelin, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Mahiri,
2000). For instance, Gergen (2009) asserts that the relational aspect of teaching is not only important for understanding student engagement, but is the foundation for inspiring student performance. With the ultimate goal of discovering how teachers use care to build relationships with students as its focus; this study examines relationships between teachers and students and how teachers use Hip-Hop Based Education (HHBE) to develop these relationships.

Ladson-Billings (1995b) maintains that developing culturally relevant methods are essential for student learning in urban settings. She emphasizes that “fluid relationships” between teachers and students extend beyond the classroom and into the community, adding value to students’ lives and the community as a whole (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 480). Recent research by Milner (2011) reinforces this idea and even takes it a step further, adding that teachers using a family approach plant seeds in a student’s life that continue to grow long after a student’s academic experience.

Additionally, for many years, scholars have also advocated for involving the community in the learning process to improve student learning and engagement (Dewey, 1897; Epstein, 2011; Sanders & Lewis, 2005). As Ladson-Billings (1995a) and Milner (2011) indicate, the benefits of teachers building relationships with students go far beyond the classroom. Some of these benefits include contributing to the communal development of the student, lasting impressions modeled by the teacher and finally, students who will hopefully contribute to others.

Other scholars confirm similar perspectives. For example, Stuhlman and Pianta’s (2001) study was designed to understand teacher-student relationships by assessing
narratives from teachers about those relationships. They found that (1) the teacher’s narratives corresponded to the observed behaviors of both teacher and student in the classroom, (2) teacher narratives were consistent to previous methods studied about the teacher-student relationship, and (3) teacher relationship narratives and child interactions support claims that there are emotional connections made within the classroom. Sidorkin (2000) theorizes about relationships between teachers and students, stating that building relationships with students should be a priority more so than monitoring behaviors in students. By focusing on the building aspect rather than the present state of student behavior, the teacher promotes a growth opportunity for meaningful interaction.

Noddings (2005) hypothesized about the importance of relationships and caring as a goal and fundamental aspect of education. Both Noddings (2002, 2005) and Sidorkin (2002) concluded that caring relations should be the foundation for educators as they build relationships with students in their classrooms.

Scholars are calling for more research on the importance of building relationships with students (Clemmons, 2006; Frisby & Martin, 2010; Frisby & Myers, 2008; Wilson, Ryan & Pugh, 2010). Students seem to be interested in the personal experiences of their instructors. They are engaged when instructors share these experiences and use them for classroom knowledge (Catt, Miller, & Schallenkamp, 2007). According to Sull (2009), instructors should strive to have an “ongoing positive connection” to students in order to build relationships and ultimately contribute to student success (p. 93). Student interpersonal relationships with instructors have been studied with respect to various fields such as: teacher-student interaction in an elementary
school (Doumen, Koomen, Buyse, Wouters & Verschueren, 2012; Pianta, 1992), teacher-
voice and student connections (Clemmons, 2006), and professor-college student
relationships (Catt et al., 2007; Frisby & Martin, 2010; Frisby & Myers, 2008; Wilson
et al., 2010). Catt et al. (2007) found that teachers who built trust were paramount to
developing students who valued education and learning. In their study, Frisby and Martin
(2010) found that teacher-student relationships were a consistent predictor in
participation, affective learning and cognitive learning. Similarly, Frisby and Myers
(2008) found students’ level of engagement and motivation was directly correlated to the
teacher-student relationship. Lastly, in their study of teacher immediacy, Wilson et al.,
(2010) found that the teacher-student relationship was a predictor of student outcomes.

Fullan (2003) declares teachers must gain their students’ trust. He further explains
that trust is one of the most important elements in developing teacher-student
relationships. Weiner (2003) describes trust as the “bedrock” of teacher-student
relationships (p. 370). Additionally, Docan-Morgan (2009) suggests that trust helps
define and allows these relationships. According to Noddings (2002), this trust can be a
result of care exhibited by a teacher in the classroom. In order to build relationships with
students, teachers should meet students at their level (Emdin, 2009). Meeting students at
their level is defined as teachers working to enhance a students’ current knowledge, using
prior knowledge that students may already have. Some scholars have termed this idea of
meeting students at their level as critical pedagogy (Emdin, 2009; McClaren, 1989;
Morrell, 2002). Stoval (2006) takes this concept a step further noting that critical should
denote the active participation of both students and teachers. Both parties should actively
work to learn and educate one another in the classroom. One possible way to employ this technique is tapping into a popular culture in which most students are involved (Emdin, 2009; Morrell, 2002). Morrell (2002) insists that educators pull elements from popular culture in order to reach students on a critical pedagogical level. Building from the ideology of McClaren (1989), Morrell (2002) theorizes using elements of popular culture as a catalyst to promote development in urban youth. The importance of reaching these students has been stressed in academia for quite some time. Friere (2007), Giroux (1988) and later McClaren (1989) theorized that critical pedagogy was important for students to develop a social justice stance and a consciousness of freedom. These theories subsequently coincide with the HHBE movement, which has pushed for social consciousness from its very beginning.

As previously stated, teachers have questioned why some students approach one teacher over another. The importance of building a relationship with students is one that is often overlooked in academia. This study will focus on how a teacher builds relationships with students in his classroom. Ultimately, through a theoretical framework of pedagogy of relation (Sidorkin, 2000) with a focus on ethic of care (Noddings, 2005), the researcher explored how teacher-student relationships are experienced in an HHBE classroom.

Statement of Problem

Urban youth are being lost in a sea of educational mediocrity in many urban classroom settings. Teachers are fighting an uphill battle of classroom issues. Some of these issues include: achievement gaps in the education of urban youth as compared to
their counterparts from other socioeconomic backgrounds, the gap in technology use between students and teachers and problems with student engagement in the classroom (Emdin, 2011; Hart et al., 2011; Petchauer, 2011).

Additionally, according to the U.S. Department of Education (2015), the national graduation rate for all high school students in the last five years has been between 79% and 82% (para. 1). Although trending upward the last five years, Heckman and LaFontaine (2008) found that high school graduation rates have been trending downward for the past forty years. On average, for instance in 2010, Caucasian students were at an 84% graduation rate, while African-American and Latino students were at a 67% and 71% graduation rate, respectively (U.S. Department of Education, 2015, para. 1). In comparison of 50 of the largest school districts in the United States, only 15 districts have a Latino student graduation rate of above 50%, while 16 of these districts failed to graduate more than half of their African-American students (U.S. Department of Education, 2015, para. 5). Since this study examined a classroom that is primarily minority, these data have relevant implications to this study. Greene (2001) asserts that this large gap in graduation rates proves “there are shortcomings in the education systems that are particular to minority students” (p. 13).

Heckman and LaFontaine (2008) add that high school dropout rates are influenced by both individual and institutional factors among students. These include lack of parental involvement, socio-economic concerns, lack of an influential adult in a student’s life and low student engagement. Rumberger’s (2011) research further suggests that these individual concerns can be shaped by intervention strategies focusing on
values, attitudes and beliefs of students at risk of dropping out. These intervention strategies must be comprehensive, encompassing the social lives, family, and community of these students (Rumsberger, 2001). These comprehensive strategies are shown to enhance the teacher student relationship because they reinforce care in the educational setting. Ubiquitous challenges with student learning and a rising dropout rate means teachers must find ways to build positive interactions with these urban students in order for them to become engaged and become positive contributors to society.

While many of these issues can be attributed to varying factors, Pianta (1999) equates some of them to poor relationships between teachers and students. In a classic study by Whelage and Rutter (1986), poor teacher-student relationships are cited as a contributing factor to student alienation and rejection of school. These theorists suggest that students primarily dropout of school due to systemic flaws in the educational system. Some of these flaws include ineffective teachers and administrators and poor counseling services. In addition, they found that students who had positive adult relationships were less likely to drop out of school (Whelage & Rutter, 1986). To improve academic success of students, educators should strive for authentic relationships with students.

Although most research on teacher student relationships focuses on elementary school, relationships at the middle or high school level have been found to be just as imperative (Baker, Grant, & Morlock, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). According to Pianta (1999), “relationships with teachers are an essential part of classroom experience for all children and a potential resource for improving developmental outcomes” (p. 21). Although research has been conducted about teacher-
student relationships, a study focusing on how a teacher specifically uses a culturally relevant pedagogy such as HHBE to build relationships and care is missing throughout the literature.

**Statement of Purpose**

An understanding of the teacher-student relationship in a HHBE classroom through the theoretical frameworks of pedagogy of relation and the ethic of care (Noddings, 2002, 2005, Sidorkin, 2002) is the purpose of this study. In this research, I studied a middle school classroom to explore teacher-student relationships. This case study focused on experiences in this classroom from the teacher’s perspective to gain an understanding of these teacher-student relationships. My primary aim is to find out how the teacher uses the ethic of care and pedagogy of relation to build relationships with students. Through focus groups with students and observations of the HHBE classroom, I will also attempt to gain an understanding of student perspectives in this HHBE classroom and how these perspectives relate to the teacher’s experiences.

Further, this study explores teacher-student relationships using the theoretical frameworks of pedagogy of relation (Sidorkin, 2002) and the ethic of care (Noddings, 2002) as a foundation. The pedagogy of relation is used to highlight how teacher-student relationships shape student learning. The ethic of care is used to illustrate how nurturing can be integrated into an educators’ pedagogy to connect with students. This study unpacks how the pedagogy of relation and the ethic of care are relevant to HHBE and gives an in-depth explanation of the key elements of each theory, what it is not, and what it looks like in the classroom. This study also provides a thorough overview of HHBE
including a discussion of the shift from its use as lyrics in English class, to understanding how the norms and aesthetics of HHBE play a role in students’ lives. In addition, paradigms on teacher-student relationships and pedagogical practices are used to illustrate how both the pedagogy of relation and an ethic of care can inform teaching practices and how teacher-student relationships can be at the center of learning (Sidorkin, 2002). Bingham and Sidorkin (2004) describe how relational pedagogy can be the catalyst to educational processes, methods, and curriculum. Teachers must establish these caring relationships with students before any real learning takes place. The purpose of this study is to identify how teachers experience the teacher-student relationship and how they use HHBE to help build these relationships. Furthermore, this study also offers insight into the students’ perspectives of what roles HHBE play in the classroom.

While it must be noted that HHBE is not the only method to approach the number of issues faced by urban youth, it is one possible, innovative strategy. In this study, I want to uncover how pedagogy of relation and care are experienced in an HHBE classroom.

**Research Questions**

Since I endeavors to gather an understanding of lived experiences of the participants, the methodology used for this study is a qualitative, phenomenological case study (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011, Patton, 2002). A qualitative approach is the best fit for this study because I explored how teachers and students experience relationships and care (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The central question guiding this study is the following:
How do teachers and students describe their experience with relationship and care in a Hip-Hop Based Education classroom?

Several sub-questions follow this central question. They are:

- How does this teacher use care in his teaching to relate to students?
- How does HHBE affect the teacher-student relationship in this case?
- What are students’ feelings toward the teacher who uses HHBE in the studied classroom?

These questions will guide the entire study including the research and methodology.

**Methodology**

Marshall and Rossman (2011) explain that methodology serves three main purposes. “First, it presents a plan for the conduct of the study. Second, it demonstrates that the researcher is capable of the study. Lastly, it asserts the need for, and offers strategies to preserve, the flexibility of design” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 89).

The methodology for this study will be a qualitative, phenomenological case study. Yin (2002, 2009) explains that a case study approach is appropriate for researchers to understand a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context. For this study, my goal was to experience the phenomenon of teacher-student relations in a HHBE classroom. Participant selection will involve convenience sampling to facilitate the selection of the teacher for the case study. Students will be selected using a purposeful sampling strategy in order to obtain focus group data.

Three modes of inquiry were used for this study. They include teacher interviews, focus groups and participant observation. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive,
in vivo, holistic and pattern coding methods. Credibility was ensured using triangulation, peer debriefing and member checking methods.

**Theoretical Framework**

Freire (1970) argues that all learning is relational. He argues that learning occurs due to interactions between people. Student experiences are the foundation for their own knowledge, and teachers who create a scenario such as the classroom as a novel allow students to share their voice. Yosso (2005) notes that valuing the views of socially marginalized individuals increases cultural capital within the classroom. Similarly, Ladson-Billings (1994) first introduced her theory of culturally relevant (CRP) pedagogy by discussing the importance of teachers hearing the student voice. CRP aligns with relational pedagogy because it coincides with Sidorkin’s (2002) approach to viewing the classroom as a novel.

Shevalier and McKenzie (2012) extend these ideas and suggest that teaching should encompass care ethics and inquiry to form solid relationships. This aligns seamlessly with both Sidorkin’s (2002) and Noddings’ (2002) theories. They expand on this, adding that the goal of CRP “is to respond to students in ways that build positive relationships” (Shevalier et al., 2012, p. 6). Noddings (2002) conception of “caring for” supports this formation of solid relationships in the classroom. The result of teachers caring for students can translate into students who eventually “care about” others, which leads to a sense of social justice. Social justice is the eventual outcome of sustained CRP or culturally sustained pedagogy (CSP). In this sense, Noddings (2002) and Sidorkin’s (2002) theories seem as if they would work simultaneously in a classroom. The question
of how they could be implemented could be speculated. One possible form of implementation could be HHBE. Hill (2009) speaks of the relationships between teachers and students in a HHBE classroom. This study explores the link, if any, of these theories. Furthermore, it also seeks to uncover for what purpose HHBE educators build relationships and care with students. I will use the Jones (2008) Relationship Model in order to measure the students’ relationship with the teacher.

Lastly, in keeping with Petchauer’s (2015) second wave theory of HHBE, I attempt to push the notion of care and relational pedagogy as an important component of HHBE. This study is not solely about Hip-Hop; rather it is about how Hip-Hop connects with care and how teachers use HHBE to build relationships with students. It is my belief that this study can inform the second wave theory of Petchauer (2015) because it explores how a teacher uses samples from both new and old sources to aid students by layering thoughts and ideas to create and understand new concepts. I will seek to illuminate how, through pedagogy, the teacher adds ruptures or ‘breaks’ in the flow of his classroom in order for real learning to take place (Petchauer, 2015).

The literature will highlight that there are several obvious intersections between care and relational pedagogy. However, one possible outcome of this study may be to explore a less obvious link between HHBE and that intersection of care and pedagogy of relation. It is my belief that care and relationships are an important, yet an understudied facet of HHBE. While this intersection has not been denied, it is understated throughout HHBE literature.
Limitations and Delimitations

As is the case with any study that seeks to explore the expressed real lived experiences of its participants, there are several limitations on the generalization of findings. In this research, I made three assumptions that could possibly limit the objectiveness of this study.

First, no two teachers are alike. In effect, no two teachers who use HHBE in the classroom will use relationships and care in the same manner. In addition, this phenomenological study of relationships between teachers and students is a broad idea and I accept the limits that these findings will not be applicable to all students in an HHBE classroom. In other words, I accept that while this study may be transferrable to other HHBE teachers, it may not be generalizable (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Second, in order to narrow the scope of this study, I chose a sample from my immediate area through a convenience and snowball sampling techniques. Marshall and Rossman (2011) explain that a snowball sample “identifies cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information rich” (p. 111). They further explain that a convenience sample saves time and money, but risks credibility (Marshall & Rossman). Foreseeable limits in this study include the reliance on convenience sampling, the implications from snowball sampling, limits of in-depth interviews due to a non-random sample and referrals for finding participants and the bias of the researcher. Again, an in-depth discussion of the limitations to this study will occur in Chapter Three.

Lastly, another possible limitation of this study is researcher positionality. As an educator and a member of the hip-hop community, researcher bias toward the students
and teachers who live the hip-hop culture is a distinct possibility. In experiences as a teacher and working with other teachers, I perceive that when students do not feel as though they have a relationship with a teacher, there is a chasm in the classroom. Additionally, I have also seen the effects of teachers and students who are not on the same page inside the classroom. However, in order to maintain trustworthiness, I maintained a self-reflection journal that was used during the research phase to remind me to minimize my own interests and keep the interests of the participants at the forefront of the study.

**Personal Connection to Study**

As the researcher, I acknowledge immediacy to this study. I have always identified myself through Hip-Hop culture. I grew up in the late 1970’s and 80’s, when Hip-Hop was just getting started. I grew up with the culture. Some of the strengths of this positionality include: professionally releasing music, my travels around the globe performing Hip-Hop music and developing contacts that I have made due to Hip-Hop. As a professional musician who has released Hip-Hop music and who has been able to work with some of the most respected names in the Hip-Hop community, I am in a unique space. This space is further broadened through my international travels to Europe, Asia and South America in the name of Hip-Hop. I believe that Hip-Hop is worthy of being studied because it is so prevalent in our society today. Hip-Hop is no longer a “Black thing,” as evidenced in my travels around the world; it is worldwide and assists in the collaboration between and even the merging of cultures.
Since I identify so closely with Hip-Hop, there are also some potential weaknesses to this study. I identify very closely with the Golden Era (80’s & 90’s), independent/underground Hip-Hop. This is a style of Hip-Hop that is not as popular, especially with the youth of today. This interaction also biases me with some of the Hip-Hop that I listen to. These are some of the issues that may sway at least a few of my opinions and suggestions in a certain direction.

However, in addition to identifying with Hip-Hop, I consider myself to be a dedicated educator and life-long learner. As a graduate of the College of Business at the University of Cincinnati, I was a late bloomer in the field of education. From the time I began teaching at a small charter school in 2002, to the time I received my M.Ed. in 2006; I had fallen in love with educating our youth. My goal is to one day become a professor who teaches teachers to teach. I love being an educator and I love Hip-Hop. I believe that the marriage of my two loves was inevitable.

As a purveyor of Hip-Hop education, along my educational journey, I have met individuals who have similar views because the community interested in Hip-Hop education is growing. For instance, every Tuesday at 9pm, we conduct a Hip-Hop Education seminar online within the application of Twitter (#HipHopEd). Because Hip-Hop is so prevalent in our society, I believe that educators might be able to better relate to our students if they were well versed in the culture of Hip-Hop.

**Definition of Terms**

Convenience Sampling: using sampling results that are readily available due to saving time, money and effort (Patton, 2002).
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP): an approach to teaching that considers the unique cultural backgrounds of youth (Ladson-Billings, 1995a).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: focuses on teachers’ acceptance of their specific cultural heritage and that of the school and curriculum as it relates to the culture of their students (Emdin, 2009).

Culturally Sustained Pedagogy (CSP): “teachers need to meaningfully value and maintain the practices of extending their students’ repertoires of practice to include dominant language, literacies, and other cultural practices” (Paris, 2012, p. 95).

Drama (Drama Queen): Used in this context as problems or issues. A drama queen is a stereotypical term used to describe a female who is perceived to have a lot of problems or cause problems with others.

Ethic of Care: consists of natural caring (a moral attitude that does not require an ethical stance to motivate it), and ethical caring (which is “rooted in receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness”) (Noddings, 2002, p. 2). It is further accented by receptive attention by the cared for, acknowledgement of being cared for, and mutual gain for both the cared for and the person caring (Noddings, 1984, 2002).

Fiending: Slang; meaning to crave a substance, usually an illegal drug.

First Wave of HHBE: According to Petchauer (2015), the “culturally relevant and critical” approaches to education that almost exclusively shaped the early stages of HHBE (p.97).

Flow: in Hip-Hop, relates to how a rapper or dancer presents their work. He says “it must be established for rupture to take place” (Petchauer, 2015, p. 85)
Hip-Hop: Hip-Hop is a culture with roots in music and dance. It is a “cultural resource related to identities, values and aspirations of some youths around the world” (Petchauer, 2011b, p. 769)

Hiphopography: “approach to the study of Hip-Hop culture that combines the methods of ethnography, biography, and social oral history” (Petchauer, 2015, p.98).

Hip-Hop Based Education (HHBE): draws “on a variety of theoretical, empirical and practical insights in order to substantiate the importance and effectiveness of linking various aspects of hip-hop culture (e.g., rap music, turntablism, graffiti, breakdancing, fashion, language) to formal and informal educational processes” (Hill, 2009b, p. 356).

Interpersonal Relationship: the relational process by which teachers and students connect. This has been theorized to determine student achievement outcome (Docan-Morgan, 2009).

Layering: in Hip-Hop culture, how samples are added together to change and transform meaning to create new works (Petchauer, 2015)

Mess With: a slang term meaning giving someone attention or cosigning what they do or stand for. This term is usually used in the context of talking about a person, place or thing.

Pedagogy of Relation (sometimes called Relational Pedagogy): description of a group or pair of people, “who interpret each other’s words and actions through a certain prism of past experiences and culturally and socially induced expectations” (Sidorkin, 2000, p. 3).

Performance: in Hip-Hop, the embodiment of or actually doing something to be a part of Hip-Hop (Petchauer, 2015)
Polyphonic Authority: the power that “teachers share with students in the classroom [as a way to reconcile] “the power imbalance with mutuality of relation” (Sidorkin, 2002, p. 145).

Purposeful Sampling: defined as “information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (Patton, 2002, p.169).

Reality Pedagogy: builds upon culturally relevant and critical pedagogy, moving beyond efforts to address the challenges within urban schools that focus on the academic deficiencies of youth to instead support both teachers and their students in improving their classroom experiences (Emdin, 2009).

Relational Pedagogy: see Pedagogy of Relation.

Rupture: in Hip-Hop, a break in flow. Rupture can only happen when there is flow (Petchauer, 2015)

Sampling: in Hip-Hop music, the process of taking previously recorded pieces of music and weaving them together to create a new musical track. Used in HHBE as a creative process that garners new material from strands of other sources (Petchauer, 2015)

Second Wave of HHBE: According to Petchauer (2015), “manifestations for Hip-Hop education derived primarily from aesthetic forms” such as sampling, flow, layering, rupture, embodiment and performance (p. 97).

Social Capital: one’s commitment to welfare of the society in which they live. It calls “attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations” (Putnam, 1995, p. 66).

Student Engagement: a growth producing activity in which a student is actively allocates
attention in response to the environment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Teacher-Student Relationship (TSR): the relationship between a teacher and student (Pianta, 1999).

The Real: a term from Hip-Hop culture meaning to be 100% honest with someone and tell them the truth even if it will hurt their feelings.

Thot: slang term used to reference a promiscuous female

Urban Youth: marginalized youth, usually of color and lower socio-economic status (Emdin, 2009).

**Organization of Study**

The crux of this study centers on teacher-student relationships. The formation of a positive relationship allows teachers to connect with students and establish trust to forge a firm foundation for the educational process. As such, the purpose of this study is to identify how teachers and students experience this relationship and also to gain a further understanding regarding these relationships.

Chapter Two will provide a comprehensive literature review that will ground relationships in the construct of pedagogy of relation. This will be done in order to explore different ways that people may theorize about these relationships, examine the pedagogy of relation and teacher-student relationships. The researcher will study a teacher using an HHBE approach in order to connect with students in their classroom. The goal of the researcher is to determine how the teacher is using HHBE in a classroom affects the relationships experienced by teachers and students. The researcher is
interested in uncovering what the characteristics of care and teacher-student relationships look like in HHBE.

In Chapter Three, the researcher will describe the methodology that will detail the approach used for data collection, coding and analysis. The methodology selected for this study is a qualitative, phenomenological case study. A case study method will be used in order to ensure rich data is collected. Instruments include: an in-depth interview with the teacher, a focus group to gain student perspectives, and participant observations to observe non-verbal cues.

Chapter Four will unpack the data collected and share the findings regarding how teacher-student relationships are experienced in a classroom using HHBE. It will provide a profile of the teacher by familiarizing the reader with the teacher attributes to hopefully offer insights into how the teacher in this case chose HHBE to relate to students. An understanding of the choices made by the teacher can help shed light on how teachers choose an approach to build these relationships (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004).

In Chapter Five, the researcher will discuss the findings from the study. I will unpack the findings and discuss their relevance to the research questions. In addition, I will make recommendations for building administrators, educator preparers and teachers. Aspects of related topics that lend themselves to further research will also be discussed in this chapter.
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

As articulated in Chapter One, the underlying theoretical framework for this study includes the ethic of care and pedagogy of relation as informed primarily by Noddings (2002), Sidorkin (2002) and Jones (2008) and how a teacher in an HHBE classroom uses them to engage students. Subsequently, this chapter will explore the literature on the primary theories - the ethic of care and the pedagogy of relation. This will include an in-depth analysis on the origins, description and uses of these theories. Further, the literature review will explore the definition of each theory, what each theory looks like in the classroom, and the role of each theory in this study. This chapter will also give a brief overview of both student engagement and HHBE and how they inform this study. The literature review brings to light how teachers use relationships to help connect with students and facilitate with student learning in order to help increase engagement. In addition, the literature reveals why relationships should be the aim of education and how care and HHBE are teaching approaches that can help build relationships.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study focuses on ethic of care (Noddings, 2002) and the pedagogy of relation (Sidorkin, 2002). The Jones (2008) Relationship Model is discussed as well as part of the student engagement framework. Jones’ model informs teacher-student relationships and thus links relationships to student engagement. The literature on HHBE will also be discussed. The flow of the discussion will be as follows: ethic of care, pedagogy of relation, HHBE and the Jones Relationship Model and how it relates to student engagement.
**Ethic of Care**

Care ethics is sometimes viewed as a moral obligation rather than theory. The vast amount of research on care stems from some of the most ancient concepts of Confucian and African Ethics (Sander-Staudt, 2011). One of the more recent platforms on care was Mayeroff’s (1972) theory that caring for others was an extension of caring for oneself. He upheld that care involves preserving the realm of others, and meeting the needs of others and ourselves (Mayeroff). Beginning in the 80’s the ethic of care has been grounded in a framework of feminism as advanced by authors such as Gilligan (1982, 1993), Held (2006), Martin (1995) and Noddings (1984). These authors advance an ethic of care as the foundation of ethical decision making and the most basic moral theory with respect to politics, global and personal reasoning. Gilligan (1982, 1993) was perhaps one of the scholars who greatly advanced the ethic of care movement, claiming that society too often takes the male viewpoint on moral reasoning with no regard for the female voice. Noddings (2002) further developed the idea of care as a feminist ethic and suggested its place within moral education. While authors such as Held (2006), Noddings (2002) and Ruddick (1995) expound on the maternal nature and nurturing aspect of care, others such as Tronto (1993) and Kittay (2005) explore an ethic of care in areas of political science and law. Noddings’ (2005) later work would reflect on the relational aspect of caring set forth by Gilligan (1982) and Tronto (1993). For the purposes of this study and the perspective regarding the ethic of care, Noddings (1984, 2005) will be the scholar that primarily informs this research because it aligns with the overall goal of this study of care in education and its importance in developing the human relationship.
Due to different contextual considerations, a succinct definition of care is difficult to pinpoint. Ruddick (1995) explains that several different, yet overlapping meanings have emerged. Some of these definitions include ideas that are not in line with the meaning of justice and certain relationships (Sander-Staudt, 2011). For the purposes of this study, the primary definition that will be used is the one embraced by Noddings (1984) who explains that care can be broken down into two concepts; natural caring (a moral attitude that does not require an ethical stance to motivate it), and ethical caring (which is “rooted in receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness”) (p. 2). She further explains that in order for one to have care, three items must occur: First, receptive attention, meaning that the carer listens to what the cared for wants. In other words, there is a cyclical relationship in which the person caring hears the voice of the person being cared for. Second, the person being cared for must be receptive to and acknowledge the caring action. Finally, Noddings (2002) suggests that both parties must gain from the encounter.

Noddings’ (2002, 2005) concept of “caring for” (encounters in which one person cares directly for another individual) and “caring about” (when one cares for others simply because they are human beings) (Noddings, 2002) informs how a teacher cares for her students. The differences in “caring for” and “caring about” will be examined in this chapter as it pertains to this study. Teachers using an ethic of care in order to create a sense of connectedness “are the theoretical constructs that take human relationships to the primary building blocks of reality” (Sidorkin, 2000, p. 1). This posture of care embraces teacher characteristics that focus more on the individual student and supports that the
teacher’s own moral responsibility eventually leads to a sense of social justice (Noddings, 2005). We learn to care about others from our experiences of being cared for. Moreover, care is a relational act, geared toward the protection and well-being of the cared for (Gordon, Benner & Noddings, 1996). Noddings (2002) expands these ideas further and posits that “caring starts at home and moves outward until we learn to care about those we cannot care for directly” (p. 31). According to Noddings (2002) the caring that we learned from a young age becomes a part of who we are as people. She suggests that “caring about” adds to our sense of social justice and therefore our sense of social capital is eventually strengthened as a result.

Martin (1995) advocates that all schools should exhibit care, connection and concern (Three C’s) in order to prepare them for a lifetime of interaction with others. For Noddings (2002), education and care intersect because education is vital to the formation of a caring society. Her argument that schools should be modeled after a caring home is similar to Martin’s (1995) Three C’s of Schooling. Noddings (1984) explains how a teachers’ classroom should look from a care perspective, listing four key elements that should be found. First, teachers must model what care looks like for students. Their behavior should demonstrate care in their relations with students (Noddings, 2007). Second, teachers must use dialogue to evaluate the care that they give to students. While contributing to the growth of the cared for, this dialogical process should demonstrate care and allow the cared for (students) to evaluate attempts to care. Third, teachers must commit to the practice of care in order to produce people who care for others. Last, teachers must affirm and encourage the best in the cared for person. Noddings (2002)
concludes that it’s this affirmation that a caring approach in education adds a different dimension to the teaching and learning experience. Buber (2003) also agrees stating that this understanding of care becomes cyclical and even mutual between teacher and student. She labels this mutuality as natural caring and explains that this is similar to the caring a mother has for her child.

Over the years, there have been some areas of debate with Noddings’ maternal approach to an ethic of care in education. Some criticisms include narrow-mindedness (Flinders, 2001; Slote, 2007), essentialism (Spellman, 1988) and care ethics’ emphasis on relationships (Slote, 2010). Most ostensibly at debate are her claims that care is maternal or more feminine in nature (Noddings, 1984). Slote (2010) insists that the emphasis on relationship given by most care ethics theorists can be “one-sided” in that it almost shuts men out of the possibility of natural caring. However, later in her career, Noddings (2007) disputed this, stating that men too can exhibit caring as a basis for prime moral action. Noddings (2007) argues that care is a basic moral tenet that human beings who relate should just do without any prompting. Additionally, some critics have also questioned that showing too much care in a classroom setting equates a teacher to being a friend of a student and that discipline and behavior are not thoroughly addressed (Spellman, 1988). Noddings (2007) defends that the reciprocity in care allows both teachers and students to benefit from caring relationships. However, Flinders (2001) points out that in unequal relationships such as these, this reciprocity is complex and could pose issues of authority in the classroom. Slote (2007) adds that care ethics is merely a component of what is found in moral theories and does not need to be studied.
separately. Noddings (1994) defends this, adding that students should not be spoken to in a condescending manner and that adults should be mindful in their conversations with students in certain situations.

Ultimately, Noddings (2007) suggests that care and education should go hand in hand. She, along with Mayeroff (1972), cites relationships as the primary catalyst for showing care in education. According to Smith, (2004), Noddings describes caring for oneself and others as a reciprocal process; meaning it requires relation. For a relationship to be established there must be at least two individuals. For the purposes of this study, the relationship of the ‘cared for’ and ‘carer’ is key to this study as it is an integral part of the educational process. Sidorkin (2002) adds to this idea of care in the classroom and explores this relationship further with a concept of pedagogy of relation.

The Path to Pedagogy of Relation

The study of relationships between human beings has sparked a vast amount of literature over the past five decades. Research in the fields of social work, nursing, business, psychology and education has permeated the scope of academia. The conceptualization of the teacher-student relationship differs among scholars (Giles, Smythe & Spence, 2012). Even the terminology varies among scholars and some scholars labeling this construct as rapport (Bernieri, 1988; Catt, Miller & Schallenkamp, 2007; Frisby & Martin, 2010; Grantiz, Koernig & Harich, 2008; Gremler & Gwinner, 2000; Hendrick, 1990; Wilson et al., 2010), teacher-student relationships (Baker, Grant & Morlock, 2008; Docan-Morgan, 2009; Frymier & Houser, 2000; Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Hamre & Pianta, 2006; Pianta, 1999; Roorda, Koomen, Spilt & Oort, 2011),
connectedness (Bennett, 1997; Good, Grumley & Roy, 2003; Helker, Schottelkorb & Ray, 2007), interpersonal relationships (Frymier & Houser, 2000; Giles, Smythe, et al., 2012) or relational pedagogy (Aspelin, 2011; Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004; Giles et al., 2012; Margonis, 1999; Pearce & Down, 2011; Sidorkin, 2000).

Much of the empirical studies regarding teacher-student relationships examine the elementary school level. Scholars agree that teachers still play an important role in students at all age levels; even up to higher education (Baker & Morlock, 2008; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Pianta & Allen, 2008). The few studies that have investigated the teacher-student relationship for students at the secondary level have shown that teacher student relationships are crucial (Midgley, Anderman & Hicks, 1995; Murray & Malmgrem, 2005, Wentzel, 2003). However, these studies are dated and there have not been many recent significant studies regarding how a teacher builds relationships and exhibits care with students at the middle school level.

For clarification purposes, this study will simply use the term teacher-student relationship (TSR) to mean the relationship between a teacher and the student. This study will focus on the construct of relational pedagogy as explained by Sidorkin (2002). However, Aspelin (2011) extends Sidorkin’s (2002) work and adds to the scope of understanding and as such, we will use his definition of relational pedagogy. Aspelin (2011) defines relational pedagogy as a “theoretical discourse based on the notion of relationships as the basic unit of education” (p. 10). To illustrate the journey of relational pedagogy, one must first look at educational discourse.
The general notion of educational discourse has taken two distinct paths. The first educational model, which Aspelin (2011) calls “the knowledge effective school”, focuses on the academic achievement of the individual student (p. 6). Students’ level of knowledge is assessed, tested and evaluated in order to place rank among classmates and ultimately, peers from other countries. In this model, more attention is paid to each student’s extrinsic motivation and individual behavior (Sidorkin, 2000). This approach also aims to produce high-functioning, autonomous individuals who can perform well as a member of society. A second model, “the socially oriented school”, focuses on the environment around the school. In this model, group processes and socio-cultural backgrounds are the focus (Aspelin, 2011, p. 6). The aim of this model is to ensure that students are socialized and able to be positive contributors to society (Aspelin, 2011). In search for an alternative, Aspelin (2011) sums up that relational pedagogy “ought to search for a path between a purely individualistic and a purely social understanding for education” (p. 6).

The path to relational pedagogy was created out of a need for a third school of thought to these educational models. Research in this field centers mostly on relationships at an interpersonal level or teacher-student relationships (TSR). Its roots can be traced to Buber (1958) who explained relations in education with his I-Thou and I-It concept. Buber explains when the ‘I’ relates to another human being, the ‘Thou’ meets this ‘I’. However, when the ‘I’ relates to the world, the ‘It’ meets the “I”. In other words, a person reacts in a twofold way when met with distinct types of relational situations. The I-Thou is a mutual correlation between two human beings, while the I-It is an experience
which connects how we personally experience, know and manage things around us. In this concept, participants immediately relate to one another or the relationship is mediated (Buber). With regards to education, Buber (2003) believed that although mutuality is needed for relational education, this was unable to be achieved due to the power imbalance in schools between teacher and student.

Gergen (2009) expands on these ideas, stating that man is a relational being and not bounded living in isolation. His notion that all humans are relational and that no person can step out of relationships implies that our current approaches to learning and socialization should be challenged. Gergen introduces the concept of co-action; meaning actions by all human beings are coordinated through some form of interaction with another human being. In terms of education, this would imply that educational programs should not emphasize individualistic outcomes (Aspelin, 2012). Further, teachers and students co-act or co-exist in each other’s lives and are not in isolation from one another. Aspelin adds to this idea of co-action explaining that the personal aspect of teaching and relationships must be acknowledged. Thus, he divides co-action into two distinct patterns; the concept of co-operation and co-existence, which allows relational pedagogy to recognize the two spheres of education (Aspelin, 2011). Co-operation relations between subjects is purposeful and planned; while co-existence is more unpredictable using more conventional behavioral concepts. The goal, Aspelin perceives, is to show that education is a sum of the personal interactions between human beings.

One of the leaders in the field of relational pedagogy is Sidorkin (2000) whose work has been extended by scholars such as Gergen (2009) and Aspelin (2010). Sidorkin
(2000) believes “that education is a function of specific relations and not behaviors” (p. 1). He emphasizes that there must be a move from a pedagogy of behavior to a pedagogy of relation. Sidorkin links relational ontology, as described by Biesta (2004) and Margonis (1998), to build a case for classifying relational pedagogy in a taxonomic light. Thus the term pedagogy of relations emerges and will be hereon used as a theoretical framework for this study.

In order to describe pedagogy of relation, Sidorkin (2002) disputes Buber’s (2003) claim that true mutuality cannot exist in an I-Thou relationship for teachers and students. Sidorkin (2002) explains that a different viewpoint must be taken in order to understand how mutuality can work in the classroom. Teachers must pay attention to the relations in their classrooms rather than behaviors. Similar to Gergen (2009) and Aspelin (2011), Sidorkin (2002) continues that “relations do not describe an individual; they always describe a group or pair of people” (p. 1). Further, human relations always contain a “component of emotion, attitude, past history and social context” (Sidorkin, 2000, p. 3). Relations can change but they are always just there; they never disappear. Similar to Noddings (2002), Sidorkin (2002) explains that relations are usually associated with feminine qualities, such as feelings or intuition, but this is not enough to really explain what relations are. Since relations can only be described as being between two or more, Sidokin uses the term polyphonic authority to underscore the idea that students should be included in a discussion of classroom relations. He defines polyphonic authority as the power that teachers share with students in the classroom as a way to reconcile “the power imbalance with mutuality of relation” (Sidorkin, 2002, p. 145). Sidorkin further advances
that teachers must relinquish power in the classroom in order to give students reason free participation and allow the dialogical process to occur. Students must be included in the dialogue about relations in schools in order to achieve true mutuality. More about the importance of this dialogue among students and teachers follows.

To move from theory to practice, Sidorkin (2002) believes that we must include the student voice in all aspects of the educational process. Claiming that most of the educational books written today are for the teachers, he even implies that a book be written to be used by both teachers and students for educational practices. Sidorkin sees this polyphonic authority as a solution to the central problem of achieving true mutuality in relational pedagogy. Sidorkin (1996) argues that dialogue in the classroom is so important that it should be considered to be the core of human existence, prompting that we cannot exist without it. Polyphonic authority creates mutuality by allowing the student voice to be central in activities and decision-making. In practice, Sidrokin (2002) describes the teacher making the classroom a novel. In this novel the teacher allows each student to share their stories and to learn from the stories of others in the class. In this respect, the teacher relinquishes her monophonic authority and is more of a guide as each student shares his or her story.

The relevance of pedagogy of relation to this study is paramount as it leads to intrinsic learning through students’ mutual sharing of stories or dialogue within the classroom. Sidorkin (2002) describes these stories as real experiences shared between the teacher and students in the classroom in a manner in which students feel free to participate with stories about their lives and experiences. Sidorkin’s idea that students
need something else besides knowledge from school is a radical notion. His solution is pedagogy of relation, in which the level of coercion in schools is decreased because the student voice is heard and teachers use a polyphonic form of authority. In Sidorkin’s classroom, students gain more than just intellect from school because they are an essential piece to the learning process. While there are several ways to include students as part of this process, using Hip-Hop in the classroom is a method that is rapidly catching on with educators. Though this method was first used just for its lyrical content, it has now become woven into the central fabric of pedagogy in the classroom with which to allow the classroom to become a forum for the student voice. Thus, allowing the voice of the student to be heard aligns with Sidorkin’s (2002) classroom as a novel approach to relational pedagogy. The following discussion on the Jones (2008) model links relationships between the teacher and the student and informs student voice.

The Jones Relationship Model

Jones (2008) asserts, “Positive learning relationships are critical to the education process” (p. 6). He uses these learning relationships to tie in care, explaining that care must be present in order to develop a highly engaged class (Jones). Jones’ ideas align with Noddings, stating “most students will not do their best when it appears that teachers do not have an interest in them or care about their future” (Jones, 2008, p. 2). In order to assist with measuring engagement, Jones developed a Relationship Framework model (Table 1) to gauge these relationships.
Table 1 - Jones Relationship Framework Model (Jones, 2008, p. 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 0. Isolated</strong></td>
<td>Students feel significant isolation from teachers, peers, or even parents. Students lack any emotional or social connection to peers and teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1. Known</strong></td>
<td>Students are known by others and are frequently called by name. Teachers know students and their families, interests, aspirations, and challenges. Students are known by their peers; with whom they interact in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2. Receptive</strong></td>
<td>Students have contact with peers, parents, and teachers in multiple settings. Teachers exhibit positive behaviors of “being there” that show genuine interest and concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 3. Reactive</strong></td>
<td>Teachers, parents, and peers provide help to students when requested, but support may be sporadic and inconsistent among support groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 4. Proactive</strong></td>
<td>Others take an active interest in a student’s success. Teachers take initiative to show interest and provide support. Students and others express verbal commitment for ongoing support and validate this commitment with their actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1: continued

| Level 5. Sustained | There is extensive, ongoing, prevalent, and balanced support from teachers, parents, and peers that is consistent and sustained over time. |
| Level 6. Mutually Beneficial | Positive relationships are everywhere and commonplace in the way that students, teachers, and parents interact and support the student as learner. |


The model explains that the learning relationship can range from isolated to a mutually beneficial relationship for both the student and the teacher. Once a relationship has been established and it reaches a sustainable level, the teacher continually gives support to the student, thereby leading to engagement (Jones, 2008). According to Jones, achieving the highest level in education is rare because relationships fluctuate with time. Although the range of relationships can change, they lead to an important discussion of relationships in the classroom and more specifically for this study, relationships in an HHBE classroom.

**The Evolution of Hip-Hop Based Pedagogy in Education**

In the last two decades, Hip-Hop Based Education (HHBE) has become extremely popular as a form of Ladson-Billings’ (1995a) CRP. Originally used as content in classrooms to reach marginalized youth, the influence of HHBE has grown as the popularity of hip-hop music has become popular worldwide (Hill, 2009). HHBE has
permeated the curriculum at the middle, secondary and collegiate levels of education (Chang, 2005; Emdin, 2009; Petchauer, 2009; Rodriguez, 2009; Stovall, 2006). In the “first wave” of HHBE, as educators began incorporating hip-hop into their pedagogy, many of them used rap lyrics to help engage students in English and Language Arts course work. During this time, hip-hop lyrics were mostly used to develop critical literacy skills (Hill, 2009; Morrell & Duncan-Andrade, 2008) and as text for language classes (Alim, 2007). Reading supplements to aid student learning, such as the Hip-Hop Educational Literacy Program (H.E.L.P.) by Gabriel “Asheru” Benn (Benn, n.d.) and Flocabulary (Beninghoff, 2006) became popular methods of engagement in the classroom. In her dissertation, Hall (2007) insists that hip-hop has an engaging “crossover appeal” with students (p. 38). This crossover appeal refers to the certain aspects of hip-hop culture that are desirable to some youth such as music, rapping and fashion. Hip-hop resonates with many youth and there has been a push to use its appeal to engage them in other aspects of their lives (Petchauer, 2012). Petchauer explains that there are three aspects of HHBE that a teacher can use to add to educational processes and improve student outcomes. These three aspects are as follows:

- Using hip-hop as an educational tool to teach academic content
- Studying hip-hop as a legitimate text in and of itself
- Using habits of body and mind inherent in hip-hop education

As mentioned previously, it is important to point out that HHBE has been vastly associated with CRP for quite some time (Hollie, n.d.; Irby, 2015). More recently, scholars have made a call for a more sustained use of HHBE (Ladson-Billings, 2014;
Culturally sustained pedagogy (CSP) is the next stage of development for culturally relevant pedagogy (Paris, 2012). Paris (2012) defines CSP as pedagogy that “perpetuates and fosters linguistic, literate and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling” (p. 93). Ladson-Billings (2014) suggests that CSP is CRP in practice and is necessary for student growth. She illustrates this with a story of a group that she mentored in which members of the group began to assist each other with learning. She was basically a facilitator who guided student growth by letting students use their own stories to cultivate their own learning process. Her approach for CSP is similar to Sidorkin’s (2002) “classroom as a novel” method for pedagogy of relation. Sidorkin advocates for student learners to share their own story, as Ladson-Billings (2014) approach allows for students to tell their own story. Irizarry (2009) adds that using Hip-Hop in the classroom allows teachers to draw from students’ own experiences. Thus, HHBE is one possible way to achieve polyphonic authority (Sidorkin, 2002). It allows teachers to create novels with their students. In doing so, the teacher creates a polyphonic authority in which both teachers and students are central in activities and decision-making (Sidorkin). In this world, although the teacher is the creator, authority is lost over one’s own creations which leads to an affirmation of students to add their own power to the classroom dynamic similar to what Ladson-Billings (2014) described.

Although some champion the use of Hip-Hop in schools as pedagogy, critics of HHBE have maintained that such methods must be used with caution. The commercialization of Hip-Hop culture has caused it to become liked by some and
distrusted by others. Dyson (2007) and others discuss the tendency for rap music to highlight negative characteristics such as misogyny (Hikes, 2004), violence (Hernandez, Weinstein, & Munoz-Laboy, 2012) and hedonism and offensive language (Wallaert & Wessell, 2011). The popularity of such gangster rap music has created the reluctance of teacher’s trying to bring Hip-Hop into the classroom (Low, 2010). Still others speak on the negative aspects of rap music. Mcwhorter (2008) denotes rap’s destructiveness as partly to blame for low-income urban communities’ inability to improve upon their status. Hicks (n.d.) adds that hip-hop “legitimizes backwardness” and inhibits the potential of young black youth. Despite these and other criticisms of HHBE, scholars still embody using hip-hop sensibilities to culturally relate to urban youth in the classroom (Petchauer, 2011). Although many teachers and administrators are still hesitant to add hip-hop into curriculum in their schools, most admit that students are engaged by it (Low, 2010).

As HHBE has evolved, a new shift is occurring in the use of Hip-Hop in classrooms. The idea of using Hip-Hop culture in the classroom to shape classroom environment, strategies and policy has been termed the “second wave” of HHBE (Petchauer, 2015, p. 97). According to Petchauer, the ‘second wave’ of HHBE should involve an aesthetic approach to practice and a more ethnographic approach to research. He clarifies that the culturally relevant pedagogy that embodied the first wave of HHBE was not “misguided” but “a natural progression” toward growth of the field (Petchauer, 2015, p. 97).
It is this “second wave” of HHBE that could possibly inform this study. Petchauer (2015) lays out how the aesthetic forms of HHBE could be instrumental in “harnessing abstract concepts from hip-hop expressions and applying them in specific educational settings” (Petchauer, 2015, p. 99). He explains how the classroom is similar to major Hip-Hop idiosyncrasies such as sampling & layering, flow & rupture, and performance & embodiment. In Hip-Hop music, beat makers sample notes and sounds from another source and proceed to chop and layer it to create new soundscapes. In this same sense, teachers can sample bits and pieces of information from old and new sources to layer new frameworks in which students can learn (Petchauer, 2010; Petchauer, 2015). While flow in Hip-Hop culture exemplifies aesthetics such as rapping, graffiti, B-Boying (dancing) and DJing (the four elements of Hip-Hop); flow can be defined in the classroom as normal everyday processes. These processes can include the rupture or disruption of those processes in the classroom that are comparable to the breaks in flow in all of the elements of Hip-Hop (i.e. The break in a DJ’s beat juggling routine or the break in a dance routine for a B-Boy). These are changes to the routine that take place and allow progression to happen. As Petchauer (2015) explains, there must be flow before rupture can take place. In Hip-Hop, “catching wreck,” means to achieve respect or receive accolades for a job well done. This means that, as in Hip-Hop, rupture (or wreck) is a natural break in flow and when it occurs in the classroom; this wreck can be a positive or negative experience for both teachers and students. The “affective engagement, performance and embodiment of Hip-Hop” are all expressed as ‘doing’ something in Hip-Hop. In Hip-Hop culture, participants are all involved, and movement is almost
always required (Petchauer, 2015, p. 86). The classroom, in this second wave of HHBE, should also resemble this same scenario; as students should be actively engaged and involved.

As mentioned before, up until now, HHBE has been primarily used as an extension of culturally relevant pedagogy. Scholars are now calling for HHBE to develop its own theories that are guided by aesthetic frameworks and ethnographic research (Dimitriadis, 2015; Irby, 2015; Petchauer, 2015). Petchauer (2015) explains that Hiphopography is one possible approach to researching not only hip-hop culture but also other facets of education. Petchauer offers Alim’s (2006) definition of hiphopogrphy as an “approach to the study of Hip-Hop culture that combines the methods of ethnography, biography, and social oral history” (Petchauer, 2015, p.98). Using a hiphopographic approach could allow the researcher to dig deeper into the methods used to connect Hip-Hop concepts to educational pedagogy. HHBE should be a foundation of theory and not just a subset of culturally relevant pedagogy. As such, he suggests that researchers use HHBE approaches for other aspects of the educational process. Pushing toward theory elicits new directions in exploring different learning styles and learning intelligences through HHBE.

Shevalier and McKenzie (2012) suggest that we should answer the question of why educators should use any form of culturally relevant or critical pedagogy. Actualizing sampling, layering, rupture, flow and embodiment in classrooms alludes to the important question of why or “for what purpose” we should use these approaches to pedagogy (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 88). This study also seeks to question for what
outcomes or what purpose can HHBE be used in the classroom. The connection could possibly be that teachers can use HHBE to exhibit care and build relationships in order to increase both student learning outcomes and engagement (Jones, 2008).

**Student Engagement**

The importance of student engagement is unrivaled in the realm of education. It has become particularly interesting to educational scholars and practitioners. According to Christianson, Reschly and Wylie (2012), student engagement is a relevant construct for all students. Emdin (2011) particularly reports on student engagement among urban youth within content areas of the Sciences. He explains that many scholars such as, Hacker, Nieto and Williams report on the low achievement and engagement of urban youth in all subjects as well (Emdin, 2011, p. 285). The following paragraphs will help underscore the need for the use of the Jones (2008) Relationship Model. In order to understand the usefulness of the Jones (2008) model, one must review the literature about engagement.

Scholars first hypothesized about student engagement in the 1980’s to aid an understanding of student dropout, alienation and boredom problems (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Much of the research on student engagement over the past 20 years has focused on its association to other outcomes such as behavior, attendance, and the dropout/completion rate (Hart, Stewart & Jimerson, 2011). The conceptualization of student engagement, aptly summarized by Carter, Reschly, Lovelace, Appleton & Thompson (2012), was first bifurcated into a self-systems process model and a participation identification model. The self-systems model is constructed from an
interpersonal dynamics perspective while the participation identification model explained how behaviors affect engagement (Carter et al., 2012).

Ultimately, scholars began to interpret engagement as having many layers and as such, recent scholarship identifies four types of engagement experienced from a student perspective: academic, behavioral, cognitive, and affective (Finn & Zimmer, 2012; Smyth, 2006). Carter et al. (2012) explains that academic engagement entails students’ efforts to attend to school tasks such as completed and correct school work; while behavioral engagement denotes the students’ involvement in extra-curricular activities, attendance and participation. Cognitive engagement refers to a students’ perceived pride in their own learning and academic career, while affective engagement is generally characterized by a students’ relationship with staff, teachers and classmates at their school (Carter et al, 2012).

In her landmark empirical study on student engagement at the elementary, middle and high school levels, Helen Marks (2000) further explains that engagement is both a cognitive and psychological process where students assign attention based on other factors such as motivation to learn, the students’ personal learning experience and their personal social experiences. Thus, she posits that engagement is “a psychological process; specifically, the attention, interest, investment, and effort students expend in the work of learning” (Marks, 2000, pp. 154-155). The intersection of these processes that students disburse during learning is a possible indicator of how much students are interested in a particular class.
**Students in grades K-5 are generally engaged.** Research uncovers that student engagement in kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms is not as much of a problem as it is for students in higher grades. Marks (2000) found no real statistics for student disengagement in elementary schools. An explanation for this may be realized from a study regarding the development of youth ages 6-14. In this study, Eccles (1999) classified K-5 students as Middle Childhood. She further clarifies that at this age, students develop “competencies, interests, and a healthy sense of confidence [which enables students] to master and control their worlds” (Eccles, 1999, p. 32). In her study of children’s biological, social and psychological development she offers rich information for understanding why students may be engaged at this age. Children at this age are more influenced by relationships with teachers and are strongly emotionally connected to them as well (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt & Oort, 2011). Roorda et al. (2011) classified teacher-student relationships as essential to the healthy functioning of elementary students in a classroom setting. A recent study by Roorda et al. (2011) found that in addition to influencing student engagement, constructive TSRs are more essential to a student’s development as adolescence is reached. Moreover, the study found that positive TSR’s are even more imperative for at-risk or socio-economically disadvantaged youth (Roorda et al., 2011). Again, through an extensive search, the researcher was unable to find evidence that suggests that students in grades K-5 are generally not engaged in school.

**When and why we start losing students.** Studies on motivation in the classroom have overlapped with engagement studies. According to statistics, 40-60 percent of
students become “chronically disengaged” by the start of high school (Marks, 2000; Sedlak, 1986). Scholars discuss the lack of intrinsic motivation in students as they leave elementary school and enter the middle school grades (6-8); stating that these years are characterized by a change in motivation and a weakening academic performance (Eccles, 1999; Hughes, 2013; Marks, 2000; Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Wigfield, Eccles, Iver, Reuman & Midgley, 1991). Marks (2000) further expounds that disengagement becomes a “pervasive” problem at the middle school level (p. 156). With a downward trend in dropout rates, Alspaugh (1998) attributes this decline with student’s transition from middle to high school, citing changes in the teacher-student relationship from elementary to middle school. Subsequently, Wigfield et al. (1991) postulate that the transition from elementary to middle school elicits changes in students’ self-esteem as well as self-concept. Further research suggests during this transition student goals shift and “self-perception and approaches to learning” become the focus (Midgley, Anderman & Hicks, 1995, p. 91). Thus, students at these ages have conceivably become more self-centered and tend to have a negative connotation toward school and toward teachers (Midgley et al., 1995).

What is happening developmentally with these students? Middle school and high school are most cogently associated with puberty (Eccles, 1999). In addition to this biological transformation, this age period is characterized by social factors such as acceptance and assimilation (Eccles, Lord & Midgley, 1991; Eccles, 1999; Midgley et al., 1995). Moreover, with the onset of middle and high school, the students’ academic environment changes as well. Midgley et al. (1995) continue to explain that new
constraints such as actual class time available, ability assessments and letter grades can contribute to a students’ change in attitude toward school. With new factors such as puberty, class time changes and social issues; students are likely to become less efficacious and quite possibly become disengaged.

Fluctuations in educational and social environments coupled with a change in psychological needs add to distractions that middle and high school age students must face. Once again, care is a critical aspect to student engagement. Therefore, a link between engagement and teacher’s relationships and care is necessary in order to fully understand what is happening developmentally with these students. The Jones (2008) model, which was previously discussed in this chapter, informs the link between the teacher-student relationships and engagement.

**How teachers begin to (engage) build relationships with students at the middle and high school level.** Skinner and Belmont (1993) hypothesized that teachers who build relationships with students strengthen student engagement. Their research also indicates students tend to perform better when engaged in school. They designate this relationship building as “involvement” and describe it as “the opposite of rejection or neglect” (Skinner & Belmont, 1993, p. 573). This involves teachers displaying care and affinity to issues that affect students’ lives.

Building heavily on the extensive body of work on care by Noddings (2005), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) add to the literature on engagement, attributing teachers using multiple voices in the decision-making process to exhibiting care in the classroom. When making decisions regarding students and when viewing ethical dilemmas, this ethic
of care calls for teachers to look at other factors. Similarly, McHugh, Horner, Colditz and Wallace (2012) refer to authentic care, or phrases of care backed with actions; compared to aesthetic care, defined as phrases of care with no action. Authentic care involves teachers building bridges and not barriers to the development of relationships (McHugh et al., 2012; Smart, Kelley and Conant, 2003).

Authentic approaches, including authentic care, that focus on an ethic of care foster a supportive classroom structure, and attunement to students’ needs; all factors that allow teachers to nurture this teacher-student relationship into a positive interaction. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2011) further elaborate that teachers adopting this ethic of care approach take time to learn “knowledge of cultures and diversity” of their students (p. 18). Thus, this ethic of care approach lends itself to the student developing a strong self-concept and strong emotional support (Eccles, 1999). Further, Good et al., (2003) add that when used school-wide, this ethic of care creates a connected school by which relationships are formed between teachers and students. This connected school then becomes a place students “want to be instead of ‘have’ to be…” (Good et al., 2003, p. 44). An ethic of care and connectedness within a school also correspond to Ladson-Billings and Brown’s (2008) idea of fluid relationships among students and teachers who impart a culturally relevant teaching format. According to the Relationship Framework model, Jones (2008) argues that a teacher who routinely exhibits care in a classroom allows a mutually beneficial relationship to occur. This mutually beneficial relationship, that Sidorkin (2000) calls mutuality, aligns with this study contending that a mutually beneficial relationship increases student engagement (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2011).
Students should be the focus of any teacher. Sidorkin’s (2002) pedagogy of relation theorizes that a classroom exhibiting polyphonic authority is ideal. This ideal classroom uplifts student voice with the concept of the classroom as a novel. In addition, Noddings (2007) directs that teachers should model, dialogue about, practice and confirm care in the classroom. These two theories intersect in their belief that the student voice is the most central to student engagement. HHBE is a possible form of pedagogy that can be used to engage, show care and build relationships. The researcher is interested in exploring how a teacher experiences this in his classroom.

Summary

Since the literature shows that most research has taken place at the elementary level, there is an obvious gap in the literature investigating how TSR’s are built in a middle school setting. Moreover, questions of how teachers use relationships and care are not as prevalent in the literature. In order to focus the study, the researcher explored how this teacher builds relationships using the theoretical frameworks of pedagogy of relation and care in his HHBE classroom in order to engage his students. In the next chapter, the research design, methods and data collection will be discussed in detail.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This goal of this study is to gain further understanding of teacher-student relationships, which scholars have proposed enhance student engagement (Eccles, 1999; McHugh et al., 2012; Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Smart et al., 2003). Based on the literature, teachers who built strong relationships, based on caring, with their students acknowledged increased engagement (Jones, 2008). This research looked at the studied HHBE classroom to observe elements of Sidorkin’s (2002) pedagogy of relation and Noddings (2002) ethic of care. Since this study aims to explore how a teacher builds relationships with students, the design of this study is focused on the teacher. However, given that student voice is at the center of both constructs, the experiences of students are included in this study as well. Subsequently, I studied the lived experiences of both teachers and students. By focusing on the experiences of both the teachers and students in the studied classroom, I intend to answer the central and sub research questions, which include: How do teachers and students describe their experience with relationship and care in an HHBE classroom? How does the teacher in this case use care in his teaching to relate to students? How does HHBE affect the teacher-student relationship in this case? What are students’ feelings toward teachers who use HHBE in the classroom? Does an improved teacher-student relationship lead to increased student engagement?

Purpose of the Research

The aim of this research is to gain an understanding of the teacher-student relationship in an HHBE classroom by studying the actions and approaches of the teacher
to build a positive teacher-student relationship in order to keep students engaged. While, the focus of the study is the teacher, my methodology reveals how both the teacher and students experience this relationship. Specifically, I am interested in understanding why the teacher makes the choices he makes in order to build relationships with his students and explore the role of care and relation in an HHBE classroom. The following is a discussion of the study design, credibility and trustworthiness, and delimitations and limitations.

Given that I seek to identify how a group of students and teachers experience a particular instance, a case study approach was chosen for this qualitative research study. According to Yin (2009), a case study is defined as an “empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in” a real-life bounded setting (p. 13). Patton (2002) explains that a case study approach allows me to focus on analyzing a process or a product. I am concerned with the process of relationship building and care in the natural context of a real-life setting of the classroom. Patton goes on to explain that a case study engages the reader in a specific situation (Patton, 2002). The focus of inquiry should be on allowing the reader to understand the case as a holistic phenomenon. In this study, I studied how participants experienced a similar phenomenon of relationships and care in an HHBE classroom.

**Research Design**

Wertz (2011) explains that a phenomenological qualitative approach to research should be used when studying participants lived human experiences. Patton (2002) explains that a phenomenological approach is designed to inquire about how different
people experience a particular phenomenon. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) add that phenomenology is used to understand how one or more participants experience a particular situation. Creswell (2009) notes that phenomenological research is useful for its understanding through the personal narratives of its participants. For this study, I explored the lived experiences of a teacher in one classroom. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998), methods should be “consistent with the logic embodied in the methodology” (p. 31). This study will use interviews for targeted and insightful responses, direct observation for contextual clues and focus groups to investigate the phenomenon within its own context (Creswell, 2009; Kruger & Casey, 2009; Yin, 2009).

A case study appears to be the most appropriate methodology for this study given that I am interested in the lived experiences of teachers and students. A case study approach allows for exploration of a multiple bounded system over several sites (Creswell, 2009). Creswell (2009) further explains that a research question best uses a case study approach when the case involves a clear identifiable case with boundaries, and I seek to find a clear understanding of the phenomenon. In this research, I studied a particular instance of a teacher and his students in a classroom and how each participant experiences his relationship and care.

Several characteristics of this study make it appropriate for qualitative methods. These include naturalistic inquiry, participant observations, and the researcher as the primary data collection instrument (Patton, 2002). Further, characteristics of a qualitative study include the emergence of themes through an interpretive strategy. I used themes that developed as data was collected in order to assist with interpreting the data to gain
insight into the participants’ experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). A qualitative study is appropriate for this research because the aim of the study is to understand how relationships are experienced in the life of both the teacher and student in an HHBE classroom (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, because this study maintains the aforementioned characteristics, the qualitative method is appropriate.

Data for this study was collected using in-depth interviews, observations and a focus group. Interviews were conducted with the teacher using the Teacher Relationship Interview (TRI) (Pianta, 1999). The TRI was designed to give teacher narratives to explore how they build relationships with their students. Classes were observed in order to examine the relationship between the teacher and the students in this HHBE classroom. A focus group was conducted to gauge student perspectives on their experiences in an HHBE classroom. An explanation of each of these data collection instruments and its relevance to this study will be discussed more in depth later in this chapter.

A single case study design as outlined by Yin (2002, 2009) is used for this study. Yin (2009) defines case study as “an empirical [inquiry] that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real life context” (p. 18). A case study approach to research lends itself to in-depth open-ended interviews, focus groups and direct observation in order to discover rich case data for analysis (Patton, 2002). Further, Yin (2009) suggests that observations are necessary to inquire about climate and environment as well as participant behaviors. Patton (2002) concurs adding that observations increase a researchers “understanding of what is important” in a study and what can be evaluated (p. 171). In addition, Yin (2009) also suggests that focus groups are usual methods of
data collections for case studies. Others note that focus groups are used to attain an understanding of attitudes, beliefs, and reaction to classroom situations (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Morgan, 1997). Krueger (2002) elaborates that the researcher is able to gain this understanding by asking questions that “yield powerful information”, and allow for specificity through open-ended questions. In addition, Yin (2009) also offers that in-depth interviews with participants are necessary to gain an understanding of experiences between each party. Both Patton (2002) and Marshall and Rossman (2011) support that interviews can be essential to case studies given that most interviews are open-ended because they tend to be more conversational in nature.

Using Yin’s (2009) five components of case study research design, I believe that a case study will be best suited for this type of research. The components of the design are as follows: a study’s questions; its propositions, if any; its unit of analysis; the logic linking the data to the propositions; and the criteria for interpreting the findings (Yin). I used these five components as a guide to designing my case study. What follows is an explanation of how I integrated these components into my design.

The first component is designed to help a researcher understand the nature of the research. The primary reason a case study works best with this study is because I am asking a “how” research question. Yin (2009), explains, “that case studies are best suited for how and why questions” (p. 2). A case study aligns with this study since I am trying to understand how the teachers and students experienced relationships and care.

Second, propositions for the study include the scope of what should be studied. The propositions for this study include: (1) discovering what drives the teacher to form
relationships with students in the classroom; (2) discovering what role, if any, does HHBE play in fostering these relationships; (3) uncovering the role of care and relation in HHBE and (4) uncovering students’ feelings about care and relationship in this HHBE. Since they align with the research questions, these four propositions will also guide analysis of data collection in Chapter Four of this study.

Third, Yin (2009) explains that some units of analysis can be described as an “event” (p. 29). The unit of analysis clearly defines the actual case, keeping the researcher from studying aspects that don’t actually apply to the case itself. The unit of analysis for this case will be defined as the dyadic relations between the teacher and students. In order to define the fourth and fifth components, one must clearly define the unit of analysis.

Yin (2009) refers to the fourth and fifth component as “linking data to propositions and criteria for interpreting the findings” (p. 29). As Yin (2009) explains, “linking data to propositions and criteria for interpreting the findings are” generally lumped together because they usually foreshadow the data analysis steps (p. 29). The use of both components increases the chances of a solid foundation during the analytic phase. Yin (2009) suggests that the analysis from the case study be calculated as a reflection of the proposition data. One of the analytic techniques for interpreting findings that Yin (2009) suggests is pattern matching. As will be discussed later, pattern matching was used in the coding and analysis phase of this study.

**Setting and site selection.** This research is situated in a public school in a Midwestern city. This setting was chosen for this case study due to convenience
purposes. The site and setting was selected based on the fact that it was a known classroom that used HHBE. As discussed in the previous chapter, research has shown that students begin to become less engaged at school after fifth grade due to changes in motivation, a weakening academic performance, pubertal change and school change (Eccles, 1999; Marks, 2000; Roorda, Koomen, Spilt & Oort, 2011). Moreover, minority students continue to maintain lower graduation rates compared to Caucasian students (Greene, 2001). There are a number of reasons suggested for this such as socio-economic status, home life and underperforming schools (Williams, 2015). I selected my sites for research based on the level of engagement and the need to understand the nuances of lower graduation rates of minority students. I observed a seventh grade middle school English class to gain insight on the personal experiences of relationship and care between the teachers and his students.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), site selection should be focused on the purpose of the research and possibilities of soliciting an ample sample size from the location of the research. Based on the positions of the teacher used in this case, the entire population for this study could entail all teachers who use HHBE in the classroom. Since it is not feasible to study the entire population of teachers who teach middle school students, I will use a case study method to study one such case (Yin, 2009). The literature review and research questions provide focus for the site selection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Marshall and Rossman (2011) explain that researchers in the exploratory phase can only make educated guesses on the “site, behaviors, and rhythms” of the sampled population (p. 105).
Participant selection. With only cursory knowledge of teachers actually using HHBE in the classroom at a middle school level, I relied on personal networks to seek out these teachers. One teacher was identified to use as a case study for this research. Once this teacher was selected, his class was identified as the student participants of this study. The teacher for participation in this study was selected based on a convenience sample. In addition to the above reasons, the teacher for this study was chosen because he identifies with Hip-Hop culture and uses HHBE in his classroom. Specific characteristics of the teacher participant will be included in the next chapter. I believe these characteristics are consistent with my discussion of the second wave of HHBE as discussed in Chapter Two.

As articulated, convenience sampling has been used to select the site and the teacher for this research. This was done in order to save time, money and effort. I realize, however, this sampling technique yields the lowest credibility in a qualitative study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Patton, 2002). The credibility issue is further addressed in the limitations section of this chapter. Additional details regarding convenience and purposeful sampling follow.

Sampling. As mentioned previously, convenience sampling was used to identify the teacher participated in this study. A convenience sample describes a sample chosen due to the accessibility, expediency and availability of the participant (Patton, 2002). According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), a researcher using a convenience sample must be especially mindful of fully describing the characteristics of each participant. As previously mentioned the teacher has been identified using the convenience sampling
method because I had prior relationships with him in both music and educational circles. A sample method such as this is chosen due to ease, time restraints, and cost effectiveness. This sampling technique was selected due to my prior knowledge of teachers that use Hip-Hop in the classroom. I was aware of a seventh grade English teacher at a middle school for this case study and therefore approached this teacher about being in the study. The proposed study was informally discussed with various individuals in an effort to determine if the research topic is of interest to educators in the field. I understand that, from this sample, data analysis cannot be generalized to a larger population yet may be transferrable to other studies.

Although the students of the class were indirectly selected due to the teacher of the HHBE classroom having been chosen, I identified students using purposeful sampling to participate in the focus group. Purposeful sampling is defined as “information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (Patton, 2002, p. 239). He adds that “purposeful sampling is used when a researcher wants to include examples that already fit emergent patterns which confirm and elaborate the findings” (Patton, 2002, p. 239). Yin (2011) adds that purposeful sampling is the selection of participants based on their “anticipated relevance of information to a study’s research questions” (p. 311). Cohen and Crabtree (2006) add that this method is used when “additional examples that lend further support, richness and depth to patterns emerging from data analysis” (p. 1). Subsequently, Gentles, Charles, Nicholas, Ploeg and McKibbon (2015) argue that purposeful sampling has different meanings to different scholars and due to that ambiguity, researchers using this method “should describe what this means in their
specific context” (p. 1779). With this in mind, a description of my purposeful sampling technique for this study is defined in the next section.

Students were purposefully selected to be a part of the focus group based on three factors that occurred as the study progressed. Selections were made after teacher interviews and after some observation. The basis of selection was the students’ seeming interest in Hip-Hop, anecdotes from the interview conducted with the teacher and the students’ perceived engagement level during participant observation. I used this method to save time and allow me to easily identify willing participants for the focus group. In anticipation that all or none of the students would want to participate, I created a plan for each scenario. If no students showed interest in being selected for the focus group, I would request an amended Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct in-depth interviews with any interested students. Conversely, if all the students selected for the focus group would be willing to volunteer, I would proceed as planned. Given that the teacher will probably already have a good working knowledge of the students’ level of interest in the class, I also relied on the teacher for input.

Data collection and instruments. The instruments in the data collection phase consisted of in-depth interviews, focus groups and participant observation. As suggested by Yin (2009), in-depth open-ended interviews should be used for targeted and insightful responses. Further, focus groups coupled with participant observation for contextual clues will be best suited for this study (Kruger & Casey, 2009; Yin, 2009). Yin (2009), also suggests that interviews can be essential to case studies and that most interviews are open-ended due to the fact that they tend to be more conversational in nature. In this
study, in-depth interviews with the teacher were used to gain understanding of how these relationships are experienced between each party. Observations were also used in this research to inquire about the studied classroom climate, the environment, as well as the participant behaviors (Yin). Further, focus groups were conducted in order to gain the perspectives of students regarding the teacher-student relationship. I commenced data collection during the three months of spring quarter 2015-2016. Data collection was continued until the point of saturation. The steps for data collection were as follows:

**Interviews.** Research using interviews was also used to gain an in depth understanding of the participant’s experiences. I conducted two in-depth interviews with the teacher using a variation of Pianta’s (1999) Teacher Relationship Interview (TRI). The TRI is an interview that is designed to measure a teacher’s perception of closeness with his students in his own words. It was used because it highlights teacher-student relationships “from the teacher’s perspective and allows teachers to provide specific examples of interactions with students” (Pianta, 1999, p. 101). This instrument enables the teacher to give his narrative about his interactions with a student, illustrates how he speaks about his student and is intended to display the emotions expressed during these interviews (CASTL Measures, n.d.). It is based on attachment research relating to child-adult relationships and measures “nine aspects of teacher’s narratives about a specific child” (Jennings, 2015, p. 736). The list of the nine constructs measured by the TRI are sensitivity of discipline, secure base, perspective taking, negative affect, agency, helplessness, anger/hostility, positive affect and coherence (CASTL Measures, n.d.). The following is a brief synopsis of each construct.
The sensitivity of discipline measures the teacher’s views on behavior management with regards to the student, while the secure base construct measures a teacher’s understanding of his role of emotional, cognitive, and social support for the student. The construct of perspective taking involves the teacher’s ability to put himself/herself in the mindset of the student. Negative affect reflects the degree to which teachers avoid answering this construct. It measures how teachers neutralize negative emotion in the classroom. Agency measures the teacher’s feelings of how effective he is in the classroom, while helplessness measures how ineffective a teacher feels in the classroom. Anger/hostility measures a teacher’s anger or hostility toward a particular student and positive affect measures the teacher’s positive feelings toward the student. Finally, coherence measures how a teacher expresses his experiences in the classroom. Measuring these constructs allows me to focus on the teacher’s perspective of how he builds relationships and uses care in his classroom.

Since the focus of this study is the teacher’s perspective, the TRI offers the teacher’s “representations of his relationships with his student and of himself as a teacher…” (Pianta, 1999, p. 98). The TRI interview questions are included as Appendix A. The original TRI in this study was obtained from the University of Virginia’s Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning CASTL Measures (n.d.) and Jennings’ (2015) study.

Due to the focus of the study, I added a slight variation to the TRI to include select HHBE components. The variation of this interview system was employed in order to gain understanding of why the teacher chooses an HHBE approach, his experiences
building relationships, and his reflections on these relationships. Using probing interview questions, my goal was to comprehend the teacher’s perception on how he is building relationships in his classroom that elicit responses about his “thoughts and feelings associated with…examples or episodes” (Pianta, 1999, p. 100).

Originally, I had planned to interview the teacher three separate times with regard to three separate students in his classroom. However, due to time constraints and prior teacher commitments, only two interviews came to fruition. I did achieve the goal of interviewing the teacher concerning at least one relationship with a student with whom he felt he had a strong relationship, and a student with whom he felt he had a weaker relationship.

After several observation sessions, I selected two students on whom to focus the interview for the TRI. For interview one, the goal was to try to select a student who seemed to enjoy the class and who showed signs of a positive relationship with the teacher. Conversely, for interview two, I endeavored to select a student who appeared not to have much involvement in the class and who appeared to have a weaker relationship with the teacher.

Creswell (2009) notes that strengths of the interviewing process in general include allowing the participant an avenue to describe what is important to him. Further, it allows the moderator a chance to control the line of questioning, probe for more details and enter the world of the person being interviewed (Patton, 2002). Some weaknesses of interviewing could include the regret of the interviewee following the interview, biases
that the researcher’s presence may cause and time-consumption during the analyzing phase.

**Focus group.** Krueger and Casey (2009) define “focus groups as planned discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment” (p. 5). In this study, I acted more as a moderator and posed questions and topics to monitor group interaction. The aim of the study was to get participants speaking about their experiences with relationship, care and Hip-Hop in the classroom. Focus Group prompts and questions are located at the end of this study in Appendix B. The purpose for using focus groups in this study is to gain student perspective, which allowed me to compare and contrast teacher responses during the TRI. The determination of group size and group structure was formed by using systematic approaches for focus groups (Krueger & Casey). Primary characteristics of the focus group include who will participate in the groups, the amount of structure in the groups, forms of data and formats for reporting data in the analysis phase. An outline of this process follows (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Larson, Grudens-Schuck & Allen, 2004; Morgan, 1997).

The decision on how participants were chosen was formed by the TRI and observation. The interview with the teacher provided insight on which students the teacher had more or fewer narratives. This enabled me to make educated guesses on which students should be selected in order to compare and contrast data from the TRI. I also used data from observations to choose students for the focus group in order to determine which students seemed to be engaged or unengaged. According to Krueger
a focus group should have a target number of 6-8 participants (each selected by invitation only), comfortable environment and circle seating. During the data collection phase, most focus groups are recorded on audiotape and then transcribed (Larson et al., 2004). All of these characteristics were followed in addition to ensuring that invited students were aware that attendance for this focus group was strictly voluntary. Lastly, Morgan (1997) explains focus groups should normally use strangers as participants. However, due to the parameters of this study, all participants of this focus group would obviously know each other because they are in the same class.

The amount of structure in a group is determined by interview standardization and moderator involvement (Krueger, 2002; Morgan, 1997). Standardization has to do with whether or not each participant was asked the same questions. In addition, moderator involvement is indicative of how the moderator manages group dynamics during the focus group. During the focus group session for this study, I asked all members of the focus groups the same question. Each participant was asked to answer the same question, but was not obligated to answer if they had reservations. I chose to have a stronger moderator involvement process for the focus group in order to keep emphasis on the existing agenda for research.

A conversational tone was used during focus group data collection for the purposes of unearthing participant emotions, idiosyncrasies, tone of voice and body language (Larson et al., 2004). My aim was to discover student description of how the teacher exhibited care and built relationships with them. In addition, formats for reporting the data will use selected quotations and also look for an analysis of repeated themes
(Krueger, 2002; Larson et al., 2004). For these reasons, I determined that the Jones’ Relationship Framework Model (Table 1) would be a guide for measuring student’s engagement and level of relationship. The Jones Relationship Model, as previously discussed, informs the learning relationship from the viewpoint of the students in the data. The goal of using this model is to measure the learning relationship of students within this classroom. With a range of isolated to a mutually beneficial relationship for both the student and the teacher, I used this model to gain insight on the learning relationship of students based on care and how it relates to their engagement within the classroom. Since the teacher used a primary method of HHBE in his classroom, this model could be used to help understand how this method affected the classroom.

Strengths of focus groups include detailed, in-depth data, good for studying social processes and allowing researchers to observe nuances, such as body language and group interaction (Morgan, 1997). Weaknesses include expenses, time-consumption, and minority of participants dominating the group conversation (Morgan). I dealt with these weaknesses by allowing ample time for the process and by keeping a structured interview process during the focus group.

**Participant observation.** According to Yin (2009), observational evidence is one of the most useful sources in providing data for a case study. Patton (2002) describes the purpose of observations as sharing information about the setting, the activities that took place in the setting and the people who were involved in the activities. Creswell (2009) further describes the differences in the roles of the observer/researcher. These different roles are complete participant observation (in which I conceal his role), observer as a
participant (observer also participates), participant as observer (participation role is more
dominant) and direct/complete observer role (in which I observe without altering the
environment) (Creswell).

I assumed a complete observer role in order to understand the culture of the
classroom. While the interview concentrated on the teacher’s experiences and the focus
group was designed to exude the student voice, the observation is designed to extract
nuances from all participants in their own environment. Glesne (2006) points out that
while, participants will have full knowledge of the study and will be fully aware of the
researcher’s presence, “The researcher does not teach, offer advice, provide assistance,
speak, answer questions or participate…” (Mertler, 2009, p. 81). As previously
mentioned, over the course of one quarter, during the spring of 2016, I conducted over
twenty observations, with a broad holistic view of the situation, settings and participants
allowing emerging themes to present themselves.

The aims of this study are aligned to the analysis approach of direct observation. I
observed interactions between the teacher and student participants in the classroom to
determine the quality of the relationship. Observations as a form of field research were
used to gain insight on the various theoretical constructs that have shaped the research.
Additionally, in keeping with Petchauer’s (2015) second wave theory, I observed and
noted any aesthetic forms of HHBE used in the classroom used for the purpose of
building relationships and exhibiting care. Some of these forms include sampling &
layering, flow & rupture, and performance. As previously mentioned, this sustainable
pedagogy lends itself to Sidorkin’s (2013) classroom as a novel theory. I was immersed
in this classroom environment in order to gain rich, thick description in order to relay the story of the participants. Observational protocols are included in this study as Appendix C.

Some strengths of observations for case studies include covering occurrences in real time and obtaining contextual evidence for the case study, while weaknesses may include time consumption and reflexivity (Yin, 2009). The time of observing a classroom for three months was accepted in the design of the study. I knew that the observer would need to immerse himself in the study in order to gain insight into the experiences of the participants. Yin (2009) defines reflexivity as the idea that an “event may proceed differently because it is being observed” (p. 102). I was most concerned about this reflexivity and this will be further discussed in the limitations and delimitations section of this chapter.

**Data analysis.** Creswell (2009), describes data analysis and interpretation for a phenomenological study as using “the analysis of significant statements, the generation of meaning units and the development of an essence description” (p. 191). This study followed Yin’s (2009) description of theoretical propositions to analyze case study data. This strategy declares that a case study should follow the theories that led to the formation of the study. These theories shaped data collection, analysis and coding. Yin explains that this format is best for studies stemming from a “how” or “why” question. What follows is a breakdown of how the data collected was analyzed.

Data analysis was an ongoing, non-linear process (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Field notes, transcription, and coding were used during the data analysis phase. Field
notes documented occurrences during the actual direct observation or interview process. According to Glesne (2006), these notes can assist in capturing information regarding the setting, climate and noting cues such as body language and nonverbal communication. While observing, I wrote reflective notes to help clarify understanding during the observation process and aid against researcher bias. The interviews and focus groups were digitally recorded and transcribed as soon as possible following data collection. Using a word document, I transcribed both interview and focus group data verbatim by listening to the recording repeatedly. This allowed me to internalize the notes and to become more immersed in the documentation of the data to facilitate the coding process (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). I also took field notes during the observations as instruction was occurring in the seventh grade classroom. In order to facilitate data analysis, I made note of any nuances that were visible during the lessons. Field notes also include descriptive notes, as well as my reflective notes. My descriptive notes provide a physical description of the site, participants and the overall setting (Patton, 2002). I made every attempt not to disrupt the lesson or the teacher during class time in anyway. Any clarifying questions were held until after class. Reflective notes will also include my reactions, interpretations of what is being observed and initial reactions to these observations (Patton). These notes aid in the use triangulation and peer debriefing during the transcription process.

Given that the interviews were audio taped, I transcribed the Mp3 files from the recorder. The audio files are kept in a locked cabinet in my home office on a flash drive, and will be destroyed 2-3 months after the completion of this study.
Coding. Saldana (2013) defines coding as “a researcher-generated construct that…attributes meaning to datum for later purposes of pattern detection” (p. 4). Analytical coding using Saldana’s system as a guide was a crucial part of this study. According to Saldana, coding is an interpretive practice, and as such, I looked for key words or key topics that appear regularly throughout the observation process and chunk them into groups. In this step, I segmented the data into meaningful components in order to find patterns and emergent themes in the data. As advanced by Glesne (2006), data transcription was performed as soon as possible after collection, so as not to lose insight from the observation. Data collected was kept on a flash drive and backed up on a secure server.

The analytical coding method used for first cycle coding of this study was a combination of methods as described by Saldana (2013). Descriptive coding refers to the summary of language from the participant during data collection. Saldana describes In Vivo coding methods, also known as literal methods, as coding which uses an exact word or short phrase from the actual language of the participant gathered during data collection. According to Saldana, Holistic coding is also appropriate for beginning coders and could also be used for first or second cycle coding. Holistic coding is designed to allow one to lump data into episodes in order to uncover themes (Saldana). As part of first and second cycle coding analysis, both Holistic and Pattern coding were used to help chunk data to find emergent patterns and themes. As the second cycle coding process continued, Pattern coding became the dominant method to uncover basic common themes from the collected data (a more thorough explanation of this follows in subsequent
Saldana (2013) explains that Pattern coding is useful for developing “a statement that describes a major theme, a pattern of action, a network of interrelationships, or a theoretical construct from the data” (p. 212). Miles et al., (2014) discern this as reducing “data into a smaller number of concepts that can be mentally encoded stored and readily retrieved” (p. 69). Coding was performed using an Excel spreadsheet to create a matrix broken into columns for raw data and first cycle codes (Saldana, 2013). I used the spreadsheet to segment data, using the sort function in order to uncover themes and patterns based on the research questions. Scholars theorize that the best way to develop emergent patterns and themes from coded data is to use matrices (Miles et al., 2014; Patton, 2002). I used these matrices to manually chunk data into categories and subcategories for organization, discovery and analysis. Saldana (2013) explains that categorizing data in this manner enables one to find similarities or differences to uncover emerging patterns. A description of how each coding method and the matrices were used specifically for this study is as follows.

According to Saldana (2013), In Vivo coding methods are appropriate for all qualitative studies, for beginning coders and for studies that “prioritize and honor the participant’s voice” (p.91). Since this case study seeks to explore how teachers and students experience relationships and care in an HHBE classroom, this coding method applies. The TRI data collection method was used in anticipation that I would be able to obtain powerful narratives from the teacher about how he builds relationships and uses care in his classroom. Conversely, I used focus groups to hear the voice of the students and explore how they experience relationships and care. For these reasons, the In Vivo
coding method was used for first cycle coding of the TRI and focus groups. In addition, I was interested in exploring the level of engagement of the students based on their relationship with the teacher. Chapter Five will include a discussion of the Jones Relationship model and data results.

I decided the best method for first cycle coding of the observations was the descriptive method. Saldana (2013) clarifies that the descriptive method is a suitable method for all qualitative studies and for beginning qualitative researchers. Moreover, he explains that this method works best with field notes, which is the instrument that was used during the observation process (Saldana, 2013). Descriptive coding is also an efficient method for data collected across a period of time, which is another reason that the descriptive coding method works best for this study.

In order to reach a second cycle coding method, I used a matrix (Appendix E and F) to compare and contrast data from each data collection instrument (TRI, focus groups and observations). The matrix was used to track first cycle codes and move toward a succinct second cycle coding process. Miles et al., (2014) explain that one should not necessarily be concerned with building a “correct” matrix as he should be concerned with building one that helps understand the data better (p. 240). With this in mind, I took all first cycle codes and placed them on an Excel spreadsheet (Appendix E). Within this group of over one hundred codes, I chunked like codes into groups by how they best fit with each research question. However, during this time, I found Holistic coding and Pattern coding to be very similar. As previously stated, Saldana (2013) explains that Holistic coding can be used for first cycle or second cycle methods. He describes Holistic
coding as a “lumper” code and says that it can be used for chunking whole sets of data together to find an emerging theme or pattern (Saldana, 2013, p. 142). Pattern coding is described as a way of “grouping” codes in order to find themes. Pattern coding is also more adept for “examining patterns of human relationships and the formation of theoretical constructs and processes (Saldana, 2013, p. 210). Miles et al., (2014) elaborate that Pattern Coding enables one to gain a more in depth understanding of the data. At this point, I came to the realization that Pattern coding would allow for maximizing the outcome of the data. While chunking seemed appropriate for first cycle coding, the data seemed to be too rich for chunking for second cycle coding and as such, Pattern coding proved to be more conducive for this study.

After second cycle coding, I discovered fifteen Pattern codes. According to Miles et al., (2014), defining codes assists with data retrieval and organization. In addition, Pattern codes were “qualified” rather than “discounted” in order to uncover trends, patterns and relationships in the data (Miles et al., 2014, p. 88). During first and second cycle coding, I used analytic memos to ensure that I remained focused on the research questions of this study. Using analytic memos and the above mentioned analytic approaches, these patterns were clustered into categories. These categories were then analyzed further to discover connections and gain a deeper understanding of the data in order to find themes relating to the research questions.

The above mentioned data collection and coding methods align with the research questions because they offer insight, and record the experiences of the teachers and students during the period of this study. When a researcher uses several methods of data
collection instruments, he is trying to triangulate “by examining evidence from the sources…to build a coherent justification for themes” (Creswell, 2009, p. 196). The purpose of this triangulation is to ensure as much credibility and trustworthiness as possible.

**Credibility and Trustworthiness**

Because it enhances the trustworthiness of a study, any researcher is concerned about the credibility of his design as it can make or break inquiry by discrediting the work based on unsubstantiated research. With this in mind, I understand the importance of ensuring the full story of the participants is shared (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). I am cognizant of building rapport with participants. To this end, Glesne (2006) expounds on the importance of rapport and subjectivity during the data collection process. She further illustrates that attaining this rapport and researcher subjectivity plays a large role in the trustworthiness of a qualitative study because of the personal dimension by which these studies thrive (Glesne, 2006). According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), a qualitative study that is credible can be replicated based on certain criteria. Although there are several valid approaches to ensure credibility in a study, to warrant credibility and trustworthiness, I used triangulation, peer debriefing and member checking of participant experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). A discussion of these three follows.

**Triangulation.** According to Glesne (2006), triangulation involves one using “multiple data-collection methods, multiple sources, multiple investigators, and/or multiple theoretical perspectives” (p. 37). I employed multiple data-collection methods, sources and theoretical perspectives to ensure credibility of the research design. As
previously mentioned, Creswell (2009) suggests that the use of triangulation techniques allow for justification of themes within the study. Triangulation in this study entails the use of multiple data-collection methods, which are as follows: direct observation, focus groups and in-depth interviews (TRI) to collect data.

In addition, field notes, interview and focus group questions in this study utilized thick description to recount narratives from participants as accurately as possible. Glesne (2006) explains that thick description is a narrative that goes beyond the bare minimum of reporting the facts. In addition to the standard questions, I asked probing questions in order to gain a deeper understanding of the participants’ perceptions and experiences. Thick description is the detailed overview that articulates what is seen and will be used to give an in-depth account of teacher and student experiences regarding their experiences in the HHBE classroom. As a qualitative researcher, I used thick description because it allows the reader to gain a clearer understanding of the research question. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) explain the importance of descriptive field notes in terms of representing the “researcher’s best effort to objectively record the details of what has occurred in the field” (p. 121). For this study, using descriptive field notes and thick description for interviews and observations allows one to try to ensure transferability.

**Peer debriefing.** According to Johnson & Christensen (2008), peer review is a theoretical validity strategy that involves “discussing one’s interpretations and conclusions with one’s peers or colleagues” (p. 279). Peer debriefing, is used best when it entails discussing design strategy, results or data analysis with a colleague in the same or different field. By allowing others to review and ask questions about the qualitative
study, peer debriefing improves the accurateness of the participants account (Creswell, 2009). Colleagues in the same field can provide useful insights, while peers from other fields may be able to “play devil’s advocate” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 277). If discrepancies are found during these reviews, I must try to correct them. Oftentimes, I may have to go back to the field and collect additional notes. For this study, I kept consistent dialogue with colleagues in the field of education, as well as in the Hip-Hop community, to gain insights and elicit feedback during the data collection and analysis process. In addition, I used a peer debriefing strategy with colleagues to review the study design, and thought processes of the research. Peer debriefing was also used as a check for any personal biases I may have exhibited, as well and to test my interpretations during the study.

**Member checking.** Creswell (2009) explains that member checking involves allowing participants to revisit the source materials to ensure accuracy. He continues by stating that a researcher has materials relevant to the investigation checked usually by the person who was the source of material (Creswell). Marshall and Rossman (2011) add that member checking is a way for the researcher to see if he “got it right” (p. 221). In this particular case, I asked the teacher to check a short report of the findings to ensure that the participant was not misrepresented in any way. Marshall and Rossman (2011) note that when member checking, a researcher generally gives a summary to the participants, asking for “reactions, corrections and further insights” (p. 221). I created a short summary of my findings for the participant to get feedback. Member checking was done after coding and during the writing process for Chapters Four and Five.
Limitations and Delimitations

I must acknowledge limitations and delimitations of the study. According to Creswell (2009), limitations and delimitations allow me to accept boundaries and exceptions in this study. For example, Marshall and Rossman (2011) explain, “a discussion of the study’s limitations demonstrates that the researcher understands this reality” (p. 76). Any study must be done in a specific context and is, therefore, bound to have limits. The researcher must find and disclose these limits in order to boost credibility to enhance the validity of the study. On the other hand, delimitations allow the researcher to narrow the scope of study and focus on explicit variables that occur in the study (Creswell, 2009).

Limitations. A study of relationships between teachers and students is a broad idea. In order to narrow the scope of this study, I chose a case study approach with a teacher in an HHBE classroom in an area in his immediate surroundings through a convenience sampling technique. Marshall and Rossman (2011) explain that a convenience sample saves time and money, but risks credibility. Limits to a case study include the inability to make inferences or generalizations because there could always be an alternative case. Foreseeable limits in this study include the reliance on convenience sampling, limits of measuring instruments, and any bias that I may have.

Limitations of convenience sampling. Convenience sampling has been chosen due to the feasibility of finding participants. This technique involves choosing participants who are easy to find. A convenience sample is limiting because it can be potentially damaging to credibility. Patton (2002) describes convenience sampling as
saving time and money, yet yielding information-poor cases. These samples do not allow the reader to generalize to a population based on a single study and they receive the lowest credibility (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Patton, 2002). With this in mind, I will rely on the reader’s transferability to determine if the study’s findings will be useful in similar studies (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). To clarify, I understand that one would not be able to assume that all teachers that use Hip-Hop in the classroom would display the same characteristics or have similar experiences.

**Limitations of measuring instruments.** I understand that the TRI as designed and revised by Pianta (1999) has been mostly used in studies with younger age children (Pre-K – 4). However, this study is designed for middle school children. Also, this study involves HHBE and I have added questions to the TRI in order to reflect this fact. This was done to make the questions match with the Hip-Hop based element in the study. Thus, the TRI questions used in this study are a variation of Pianta’s (1999) original interview questions. I recognize the limitations of using a variation of an original instrument.

Blackstone (2012) explains that there are some weaknesses to focus group research. Among those weaknesses include the amount of time a focus group may use. I realize that educational time with students is valuable, and I will only request to speak to students in a focus group setting one time during the research process. While rich data may come out of this focus group, only using a focus group setting one time can be viewed as a disadvantage. In addition, in a focus group setting, sometimes a minority of participants can sway the opinion of the whole group. This can be especially true among
the age group attending the focus group. Also, the fact that these students are all familiar with each other is yet another limitation.

Limits of the observer role include missing out on some group interactions and the observer becoming a part of the classroom dynamic (Blackstone, 2012). Additionally, sitting amongst middle school students can be a distraction in itself, even if I am not participating. I acknowledge that the teacher and students may change normal behaviors with another adult sitting in the classroom. This reflexivity as Yin (2009) described will be acknowledged during discussion of the findings of this study.

**Bias of the researcher.** According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), self-reflection gives the researcher a chance to express what worked and did not work during the design, data collection and data analysis stages of research. Many times, bias can reduce a researcher’s attempt at credibility (Creswell, 2009). This often occurs because researchers can be accused of finding what they want to find and not what is really occurring in the study. I relied on self-reflection to ensure possible biases are brought to light. I expect to uncover personal biases during the research process because I am both a teacher and identify with hip-hop culture. I am also an accomplished hip-hop DJ and producer and have been involved with hip-hop professionally for over fifteen years. Through reflection, I intend to express his perspective regarding possible perceived biases about hip-hop, education, and teacher-student relationships.

**Delimitations.** According to Simon (2011), “delimitations are characteristics that limit scope and define the boundaries of one’s study” (p. 2). I define these delimitations as items that one has control over. I chose participants based on previous knowledge of
educators using HHBE in the classroom in a public school. Student participants were chosen based on prior knowledge of the educators. The area of this case study is restricted to an academic institution in the Midwest area of the United States of America. I understand the choices made for this study will implicitly affect the study. However, acknowledging these delimitations enable me to focus on what is occurring in this specific classroom with this specific teacher and his students.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I explained my methodology by first reiterating the purpose of the research, detailing the study design, data collection and data analyzation method for this study. First, this is a qualitative single-case study based on Yin’s (2009) design. The school site was selected due to my network and convenience. The teacher was selected using a convenience sampling method. The student participants were indirectly selected due to the teacher participant selected. A general summary of the methodology for this case follows.

Three modes of inquiry were then chosen for this study. The modes of inquiry include: in-depth teacher interview, student focus groups and participant observation. The teacher was interviewed in depth two times, using a variation of the Teacher Relationship Interview (Pianta, 1999). Eight students were chosen for a focus group using a purposeful sampling technique to obtain information-rich data for this case study. I observed the classroom two to three times per week over a period of three months. During this time, I used memos and field notes to gather rich-thick data. All interviews, focus groups and observations were audio recorded and later transcribed verbatim to facilitate the coding
process. During the transcription process, I used analytic memos to help me remain focused on the study’s research questions. Coding was done in two cycles. In the first cycle, I used descriptive and In Vivo coding methods to help chunk data into meaningful context. For second cycle coding I used Holistic methods, but found this method to be limiting. Using a method of Pattern coding allowed me to maximize the outcome of the data. After second cycle coding, fifteen patterns emerged from the data. In order to relate these patterns to the research questions, they were chunked into themes using the previously described Excel matrix. After a discussion of this study design, the chapter concluded with an explanation of how credibility and trustworthiness were taken into consideration. Finally, limitations and delimitations of the study were discussed.

Chapter Four leads with a restatement of purpose and continues with a discussion of the demographics of the selected site. Next a discussion of emergent themes follows. These themes are then discussed with relation to the research questions. Finally, a table of the findings at a glance is presented.
Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand how teachers and students describe their experiences with relationship and care in a HHBE classroom. This case study specifically examined how Mr. Wayne worked to build relationships in his classroom using care and HHBE. A secondary focus of the study was to gain insight on student perspectives on care and relationships in the classroom and how their perspectives related to Mr. Wayne’s experience. While most studies on the teacher-student relationship focus on the elementary level, this study focused on the middle school level particularly since much of the research uncovers that this is the age students begin to show signs of low engagement (Eccles, 1999; Marks, 2000; Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Wigfield, Eccles, Iver, Reuman & Midgley, 1991).

In this chapter, I provide a report of the demographics of the school, teacher and student participants. A description of the school and the classroom as well as insights about the classroom climate will also be presented. I also share profiles of Mr. Wayne and insights into the classroom climate. The profile will provide an overview of the characteristics of Mr. Wayne and his background. The highlights on the classroom climate will delineate the overall demographics of the students as well as the characteristics of the classroom. In the second section, findings will be presented that provide an overview of the primary patterns that emerged. Based on each mode of inquiry, an exhaustive look at the data will be presented in order to offer support for each finding. The data from modes of inquiry will be presented in the following order;
interview data, observation data and focus group data. I used this order because I wanted to share the findings from each mode of data collection and, in turn, paint a picture for the reader. Data from the interview will be presented to disclose the teachers’ point of view since he is the focus of the study. Observation data is presented next because it reveals what I saw in the classroom. Additionally, focus group data is shared to give insights into the voice and perspectives of the students.

After a presentation of these findings, I will illustrate how these patterns were condensed to develop overarching themes and categories within the data. Major themes of the study are presented and organized by research question, again with more support data from the chosen modes of inquiry. Finally, a summary table is provided for quick analysis, along with the chapter highlights.

**Demographic Overview**

The school for this study is an urban public middle school in a Mid-Western city in the United States. The school has a liberal arts focus and infuses the arts into its core classes. There are over 500 students in the population with 60/40 female to male ratio. Approximately 70% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch. Last year, approximately 60% of the students scored proficient in math while about 80% scored proficient in reading. The student population included approximately: 80% African-American, 10% White, 5% Hispanic and 5% other or unidentified. Enrollment included approximately: 40% 6th grade, 30% 7th grade and 30% 8th grade.

The room was a typical middle school classroom with a teacher’s desk and student chairs. The teacher’s desk included a phone, a computer, and various paper
organizers. In the front of the room, two four-drawer file cabinets were on the outer most left hand corner, while the teacher’s desk was next to the cabinets facing the students. In the center was a stool next to the only two windows in the classroom. On the right side of the front of the room were two student computers on a five-foot computer table with two computer chairs. In the rear of the room, to the left was the door, and next to the door two more computer stations on the same five-foot table as in the front of the room. The classroom printer was also on this table. Next to this table going from the center to the right side of the room were built in upper and lower cabinets and a sink. The teacher teaches 7th grade English, History and Reading in the Content Area (also called RICA). On the walls in the room were various posters. Along with a whiteboard, the classroom expectations were placed on the wall nearest the teacher desk and file cabinet near the left side of the room. The United States flag was hung near the front of the room. On the right side of the room, the front page of the local newspaper’s reporting of the death of Nelson Mandela was hanging from the wall. Next to this was a poster of famous African-Americans which included pictures of Malcolm X, a prominent leader in the Nation of Islam during the 1960’s, Martin Luther King, a minister and civil rights activist of the 1960’s, Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American on the Supreme Court and “Madam” CJ Walker, inventor of the straightening comb, to name a few.

Teacher profile. The teacher in this case study will be referred to as “Mr. Wayne.” He is single and in his early forties. He is an African-American male who has taught for over 15 years and does not have any children of his own. He has been at this school for approximately 10 years. Mr. Wayne also revealed that both of his parents were
educators. He primarily teaches in the humanities such as English and history. Mr. Wayne also identifies with hip-hop culture and credits Hip-Hop with shaping many of his philosophies. He DJ’s on the weekends and is an avid listener of hip-hop music, both golden age and modern era.

Additionally, he dresses in a “hip-hop” style (a style that is reflective of performers in the Hip-Hop industry. For instance, he can often be seen wearing Nike Air Jordan shoes with a matching Air Jordan sweatshirt and jeans. Further he regularly wears a G Shock watch (a fashionable watch) and has an iPhone 6 mobile phone. He explains that these characteristics help when trying to relate to students, as he recalled a time with one student in particular:

I noticed a time that we clicked when Vanessa noticed …I wore [Air] Jordan shoes, or I also have an iPhone. The kids love that stuff. She saw me pull out my [iPhone] 6 out like the second or third day of school and they were like ‘Mr. Wayne, you like iPhones? You got a [iPhone] 6, and you wear [Air] Jordan’s, and I see you in the mall and you got your hat on backwards’… and I think that kinda made me cool to her (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Based on an interview, evidence that Mr. Wayne identifies with Hip-Hop culture is presented in the quote below. This quote also explains how he attained his love of music and provides some insight into how he views Hip-Hop:

I think I am Hip-Hop every day all day. My sister…was my influence. My parents always had music going. We were listening to old soul. That music was addictive, like James Brown [and] The Delfonics. And…then that addictive music came to
be used in Hip-Hop, through the samples, so that addiction just crossed over. Then my sister…got into Jimi Hendrix, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin…and I’m falling in love with all this music. Then my favorite rappers started sampling this music. I will never forget hearing the song I AINT NO JOKE by Eric B and Rakim [and] another one is AIN’T NO HALF STEPPIN’ [by Big Daddy Kane], that Blind Alley loop. I remember thinking…my dad has these records. I remember what I used to do is I would find these albums and I would have like a tape deck and not let it roll, and record, and bring it back. I could make a beat. I was literally doing this in 4th and 5th grade. I remember hearing RUN-D.M.C. and hearing them rap to…heavy metal. Heavy guitar riff, drums, cow bell. It’s like ‘wow they are playing with a live band.’ I didn’t get turntables but we always had a good stereo system in the house ‘cuz my mom loved music too. So we were just a musical household (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He later drives this point home, detailing how he came to write poetry and later, wrote raps due to a life altering event. This love of Hip-Hop is something that is deeply rooted in his being. He feels that this is also present in many of his students and that he should use this to his advantage in his classroom, explaining:

I feel like just adding music too, not just Hip-Hop but music too. But specifically hip hop there is a comfort level for me. If I can add Hip-Hop to the lesson it’s a very comforting thing for me. My parents divorced when I was 11 years old. I went to a counselor and the counselor used to make me write journals. So in my journals I found it very boring and tedious to talk about myself. And then I wrote
poetry and then raps. And then I would see ok this beat; I would be fiending (see definition of terms) to find an instrumental. to me it’s just so deeply engrained in my I don’t even see it, it doesn’t even register in me. I think the kids are the same way. That’s what makes it difficult for some teachers because they see that love of music as a handicap. I don’t. I think I can use it (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Mr. Wayne provides another episode from his childhood and describes going to his first concert and how it made him feel. He uses this experience to explain his passion for Hip-Hop and how it helps him relate to his students because of the way that he grew up, stating:

It’s the culture that we exhibit that we breathe every day. Me and you are cats that were raised by very soulful parents. Our parents let us pursue our passions. Now did I pursue entertainment or rap? No, but I wanted to go to concerts etc. So my dad would take me to concerts and I would never forget. That was one thing I had to work for to go to the follow the leader tour. I cried when Rakim came out. This was a god to me. I mean Big Daddy Kane, Ice-T, EPMD, Biz Markie was there, Kool Moe Dee. Eric B just rises out of a riser and then a throne comes out and its empty and then it goes out and turns around and then you hear Rakim’s voice just come on and dog...I’m getting goose bumps just thinking about this. My hair is raising (points to his arms). It’s like an emotional moment for me, still. And like my sister and my cousin…took me to that concert and to me that was like...I’ve always been a music fanatic but that was it for me. That’s when I fell in love with
Hip-Hop and this culture. I was married and anyway I could support this music I would do it to keep it going. The Hip-Hop culture to me is the clothing the lingo, you know just kinda relating. How could you not relate to a 13-year-old kid that likes Hip-Hop. When you’re 40 years old and there’s a 13-year-old kid that likes Hip-Hop, he’s in with the headphones, I mean I remember having a Walkman…on the bus (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).

He continues to explain why he feels it’s important for him to remain relevant to his students and why he credits Hip-Hop with helping him continue to remain relevant. Further, he divulges his feelings on teachers who do not try to remain relevant and who do not give Hip-Hop a chance offering a story from his childhood explaining how his father gave his music a chance expressing:

You have to have some sort of relevance. You have to be current and you have to be relevant, or you become the old man. I don’t want to be the old male on staff and I think that’s what happens to a lot of white teachers. I don’t know if they consider it n---a music or not, but their kids and daughters and sons like it. And that’s why you are fighting with them. Sit down and listen to some of the [music]. Yeah sometimes it does suck, sometimes its trash, but a lot of the times [the music has] a feeling to it. I don’t think that all these dudes are putting something on an album just to make money. Some of them are, but I think these dudes, are saying things in their own interpretation, in their own lingo and they are saying something. And maybe your kids [are] feeling it. So maybe you should check it out a little. Fortunately for me, my parents never censored what I listened to. They
were both educators and I remember my dad taking me to [a prominent record store during the 1980’s and 1990’s] and we bought NWA and we listened to it together. He was like that’s alright. I remember my dad loving Compton’s Most Wanted. My dad loved the song Growing Up in the ‘Hood and ‘Hood Took Me Under. (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He described the relationship between him and his father as being the basis for how he bonds with his students, particularly with his male students. Dealing with Hip-Hop music, the quote also speaks to how he feels about cussing:

But I think my dad kinda put me on the same way when I was a kid. I will never forget when I was a kid, when I got tapes he would say ‘you’re not gonna put that in?’ I would say ‘you know dad it has cussing’. ‘I don’t care about that. But I don’t wanna hear the word p---y 4,000 times.’ My dad would hear a song that…had a good point to it. Because you know in 1960 whatever…my mom and dad were young in college. My dad was 17 and my mom was 16 enrolled at Ohio State. They were young but they remember the movement. My dad remembers seeing Jack Tatum on campus you know them dudes....he remembers the riots on campus (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

**Class profile.** The all African-American class used for this case study included 23 seventh grade students. There were 16 girls and 7 boys. While Mr. Wayne often spoke of the classroom expectations and promoted structure, he allowed for occasional joking and laughter in the classroom. The structure of the class was generally as follows: Mr. Wayne gave instruction for the first 10-15 minutes of the period, the next 15-20 minutes of the
period were devoted to a solo or group activity, and the last part of the period varied. Sometimes this time was used as question and answer or free time. During the data collection phase, I observed Mr. Wayne playing music during periods in which students had finished classwork. Mr. Wayne promoted a philosophy of student involvement in the classroom. Observation data suggests students held pivotal roles within the class. On occasion, the students often led classroom lessons and reading. For example, the student identified to lead the class in reading for the day was called the “reader leader”. The responsibility of the reader leader was to ensure that classroom novels were passed out to each student and they also lead students through the reading for the day. Additionally, the reader leader would call on other students to read aloud passages of the novels to the class. This process occurred during days that the students were reading a class novel.

The classroom showed various signs of being a HHBE classroom. Through the school year, the class uses a book entitled *Hip-Hop Poetry and Now the Classics* by Alan Sitomer and Michael Cirelli. Mr. Wayne uses this book as a catalyst to bring Hip-Hop into his classroom, however, he constantly used Hip-Hop to connect learning with the students’ own culture. Hip-Hop was used to facilitate understanding of different situations including academic and life situations. Data revealed that Mr. Wayne used Hip-Hop in the classroom in order to assist students with establishing their own expertise and using that expertise as a starting point for discussion. For instance, Mr. Wayne often used Hip-Hop to begin conversations or to segue to other topics. Asking a question as simple as “Who are you listening to right now?” or “What rappers are you feeling?” was enough to spark a fifteen-minute conversation with students and engage them. During one
observation near the end of class, Mr. Wayne had given his students free time. The observation is as follows:

Mr. Wayne overhears some of his male students talking in the corner in the front of the room by the computers. Mr. Wayne speaks to the group of boys commenting, “Hey Cole, did you get your hair cut last night? That’s a cool part! I like that.” Cole replies, “Thank you very much!” as he is patting his hair in a manner to show off his haircut. As the group of boys laughs and jokes with Cole, Mr. Wayne then asks the boys, “What rappers are you guys feeling right now?” Tommy replies, “I’m feeling Drake right now.” Another student chimes in, “I like Future.” The conversation continues with other students weighing in on who they are listening to at the moment. “Who are you feeling right now Mr. Wayne?” Without hesitation, Mr. Wayne informs the boys of one of his favorites, “I have been listening to a lot of Eric B. and Rakim lately. I am not really listening to any of the new stuff right now. I mean, I like Drake and I like Future, but it’s just something about Rakim.” Tommy asks, “Ain’t Eric B. and Rakim the guys who rapped about consciousness?” Mr. Wayne smiles and says, “Yes. It’s just that Rakim is the rapper and Eric B. is the DJ”

Conversations such as these were a normal occurrence in this teacher’s classroom. The teacher used Hip-Hop sensibilities to spark conversation and promote learning in the classroom.

I also made notes about how my presence affected the classroom environment. Although I attempted to observe in an unobtrusive fashion, within the first week of the
study, students would regularly speak to me. Students became comfortable enough to speak to me at the beginning and end of each class. Several students would eventually give me a “fist bump” at every observation. Within the last month of research, several students began to regularly speak to me seeking more information about the study and the school in which I taught. Observational data describes a situation in which a student acknowledges my presence in an affirming manner only after the second observation:

As class draws to a close, the teacher instructs students to place the Google Chrome Books back into the cart to be charged. Students all begin to jump from their chairs and take the laptops over to the cart. After about four students have placed their laptop in the cart, Vanessa begins to stand at the cart. She has already placed her laptop in the cart and begins to place each individual laptop into the cart. The bell rings. The teacher jokingly says, “OK, get out!” As students are hurriedly scurrying toward the door, there are sounds of some saying “Bye!” and still others starting a conversation to be carried on in the hallway. One student comes over to the back of the room, opposite the door to where I am sitting and gives me a fist bump. She then scurries out the door (observation, March 11, 2016).

By the end of the first month of observations, I was a part of this classroom. Even after I had reiterated that I wanted to stay as unobtrusive as possible, Mr. Wayne still referred to me on several occasions. During an observation, one particular time, he asked me to watch his class while he stepped out to handle a situation:
As students are quietly working in the classroom, Mr. Wayne is sitting at his desk. The room is relatively quiet. The only sound is a buzz of students working, with inside voices, on their projects. Suddenly, a female student bursts into the classroom and with irritation in her voice says to Mr. Wayne, "Can you get Ron? He is getting on my nerves!" Mr. Wayne, looks to the back of the room at me and reluctantly says, "Mr. Rawls, I hate to ask you to do this but can you keep an eye on them? They won't get up." I don’t answer, but give an affirming nod. When he exits, students begin to freely talk, some remain working diligently. But there is clearly more chatting going on as students begin to feel freer and less structured. I continue to take notes as Rudy begins to speak out loud about her project to a student across the room. Soon after, Mr. Wayne steps back in the room, “Ok, let’s get back to working on your projects.” (observation, May 12, 2016).

During my last week of observations, the students were also very comfortable with my presence. One student asked me to stay after my observation and have lunch with them and one student had written a rhyme and wanted to rap it for me. The excerpt from this observation is continued later in the chapter. The content of the rap is the focus for later, whereas the comfort level for the student to rap to me is the focus for this moment:

The girls who have been working on their project about opiates near where I am sitting, at the back right corner of the room, ask me to stay during lunch so they can come eat with me. When asked why, they say that lunch is boring. I explain that I have am not able to stay. Within moments, one of the girls in the group, Gina, asks me if I want to hear her rap. I say yes. As she begins to look for a
rhyme that she said is in her desk, she tells me that she wants to be the new Nikki Minaj or Cardi B or Remy Ma. I ask, “How do you know who Remy Ma is?” She looks at me as if I am clueless, and says “from Love and Hip-Hop (a television reality show). She opens her notebook and can’t find the rap. She then goes through her book bag, which is inside her desk. There she pulls out a single lined crinkled piece of paper. She says "I found it" (observation, May 13, 2016).

**Student profile.** Because this study focuses on the teachers’ perspective, the need to profile each of the twenty-three students in the class was deemed unnecessary. For clarification purposes, the participants named in this study are listed in Table 2.
### Table 2 - Participant List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Characterized By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Wayne</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Student Mr. Wayne feels with whom he has a good relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanessa</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student Mr. Wayne feels with whom his relationship needs improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Student who did a project on police brutality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tommy</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaleesa</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student who does Nae Nae, teacher refers to her as a pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freddie</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student that runs track. Friend of Kimberly and Rudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Westlake</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Teacher having problems with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cole</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Student the teacher helped get out of trouble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Wiggles</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Teacher that students are not fond of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberly</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student - friend of Freddie and Rudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Student - trouble maker in classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudy</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student - friend of Freddie and Kimberly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student that performs a rap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Taylor</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Ingalls</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Teacher that helped break up a fight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Student that likes to keep to herself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Pseudonyms are used for the participants' names.*

However, since Mr. Wayne was asked to provide perspectives on his relationships with two students, a brief profile of these two students is provided in this chapter. In this study, these students will be known as Vanessa (the student with whom Mr. Wayne identified a strong relationship) and Theo (the student with whom Mr. Wayne identified a weaker relationship). As previously mentioned, studying two students was deemed acceptable due to time constraints in Mr. Wayne’s schedule. A brief description of Vanessa and Theo follows.
Interview one focused on Vanessa. Vanessa is an African-American student with whom the data revealed Mr. Wayne had a great relationship. According to Mr. Wayne, Vanessa was a below average student, whom was often a student helper for him and often tried to assist her classmates. Vanessa was chosen to be the subject of Mr. Wayne’s first interview because she was very prominent in the data. He often chose her to be a helper and they appeared to have a positive relationship. During the teacher interview, Mr. Wayne described her as:

…nurturing. Vanessa comes from a home where there [are] two queen bees in the house, dad is not around. I would say nurturing because I kind of have a soft place for her because she does struggle academically. I think she’s a kid that shines if you put a little bit into her, you give her responsibilities. I let her lead class, I let her do attendance for me, [I] give her responsibilities, and some leadership roles. She’s one of those kids I’m hoping can break out of her shell. I have a few students like that, but she’s one of the ones I knew I was getting her last year. Her teachers had told me that she was difficult but she’s the type you work well with. Along the way, I started to like her. In the beginning of the year, she was very disrespectful, but now I look at her and she will be like (makes a face like she is straightening up). We just have a good relationship (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

The teacher also described Vanessa as a student who brings ‘drama’ into the classroom. For example, he said:
She loves drama, so I just let her know we are not doing that. We are not doing that [stuff]. It’s not gonna be a part of my room. And she has been one of the girls that’s been like ‘Ok I get it. You know, maybe next year I will try it, but I got a teacher that’s like if I try all that nonsense, he ignores me.’ I’m always kind of quick to re-affirm with her, that she has brains, she has potential (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Mr. Wayne expresses pride in Vanessa’s growth discussing how she no longer is a starter of fights and even helps stop fights now. He discusses her potential, stating:

My dad always told me, ‘what’s fair for one person, might not be fair for another person’ and sometimes the girls are like ‘that’s not fair because you let Vanessa… or you let Freddie… or you let whoever…’ and I’m like ‘yeah I did, because Vanessa did something great and I’m going to reward her for that. Vanessa is a girl that at the beginning of the year she was starting fights and now she’s breaking up fights or wanting to sit with other girls and solve their issues. So we have come a long way (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Interview two focused on Theo. He is a male student whose grades were below average. During numerous observations, I noticed Theo playing with his pencil in class. I also noticed him playing with his hair during times when he was supposed to be working on an in class assignment. During several days that I came to observe, he was absent. While it is unknown as to why he was absent, also absent for the focus group due to suspension. During the interview, Mr. Wayne described Theo as:
…a kid that is almost raising himself. He has no idea who his dad is. His mom is [in her] late 20's early 30's. He has older siblings and he’s [a young adolescent]. He’s seen a couple of his siblings pass away. He had one of his siblings shot in front of him and one of his siblings died of natural causes. He’s seen a lot for a kid his age. I think he has just been disconnected. He gets kicked out of this class [for lower level readers] a lot. He doesn’t need to be in that class because he can read. So he’s like bored out of his mind. And he [messes] around. One time, he was in the office about to be in trouble again and before the principal could see him, I pulled him out to my class. I said just get on the computer and do you. And while he was sitting there he looked at me and said, ‘I don’t like being in [that reading class].’ and I said, ‘Why not?’ He said, ‘Because I can read!’ I said, ‘You haven’t shown anybody that.’ He said, ‘I don’t care.’ I said, ‘Why don’t you care?’ He said, ‘I don’t know. I would just rather be in jail because they don’t have to do anything in there.’ I said, ‘Who do you know in jail?’ He said, ‘A lot of people. My dad is locked up for life. My mom had a boyfriend I really like, he ended up being killed and then she had another one that ended up in jail.’ So he doesn’t trust men. He doesn’t have that male connection (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).

When speaking about Theo’s academic abilities, Mr. Wayne believes that Theo is more than capable of succeeding in the classroom, stating:

He’s smart. When we take certain tests, there’s things he does that I can’t believe he did. Sometimes I’m like ‘I thought you were in space land for two weeks and
you got an A on this quiz.’ His last standardized test was one of the highest of all the kids in 7th grade in this school. He was supposed to be failed last year, and they were talking about failing him this year because he isn’t passing [any of his classes]. He had one of the highest grades [on our last test]. He just don’t give a f—k (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).

Discussion of Emerging Themes

During the data collection phase, I constantly reviewed data and continued to create analytic memos and reflections in order to become immersed in the datum. I began the data analysis phase with an expansive review of the research data including interviews, observations and the focus groups.

In my original methodology, I had planned to conduct one focus group of nine students. However, due to circumstances beyond my control, I had to conduct three separate focus groups with three students at a time. These sessions were held on the same day with all the same questions asked and answers recorded in the same manner. This was an unforeseen change that occurred due to the only available room to hold the focus groups was a small office.

As stated in Chapter Three, an Excel spreadsheet and matrices were used to code, categorize and find patterns and themes within the data. Data collection continued until data saturation in the data. Once this point of data saturation was reached using In Vivo and Descriptive coding methods, I used Pattern coding to help uncover emerging themes separate from the research questions. These pattern codes were as follows: Comfortable, Commonality, Communal/Community, Emotions/Emotional, Examples/Analogies,
Excerpts/Vignettes, Expressed Care, Family, Genuine Enjoyment, Hip-Hop Mentality, Instructive not Punitive, Student Investment, Toe-to-Toe, Tough Love and Trust. These were all qualities that were discovered during data collection. What follows is a discussion on the meaning of each the organic findings, which emerged during analysis.

**Comfortable.** During the analysis phase I noticed that Mr. Wayne felt it important to provide his students with a safe environment. Through observation and focus groups, it was noted that students held this as important as well. Through the modes of inquiry, it appeared that Mr. Wayne made every effort to ensure that students felt that they could come to him with any situation. He indicated that this comfort level is not necessarily comfort with the class work but it is more of a sense of being in his classroom. Mr. Wayne wants his students to see his classroom as a place of safety and security.

Data from interviews displays Mr. Wayne’s commitment to creating a safe environment for students. When discussing Student 2 during the interview, Mr. Wayne explains:

I think he’s half asleep when he gets here. He says he doesn’t get much sleep. I don’t know. There are occasional doubts but occasional victories too. I think when he gets here he’s comfortable enough to relax. He said he doesn’t sleep at home, which I say leads to that post traumatic disorder. I think he just has a fear based resistance to things. (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).

Mr. Wayne drives home his point of why he feels like he must provide a secure place in his classroom for his students, especially his male students, divulging:
All these other boys around here have dads that mess with them. They all get to do s--t. They go to games - all the boys in this room has somebody to do s--t with them but he doesn’t have that. So he even has a hard time connecting with these dudes. [“mess with” a slang term meaning giving someone attention or cosigning what they do or stand for, this is defined more in depth in the terms in Chapter One] (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).

Mr. Wayne also speaks about how it is important for his female students to feel safe in his classroom as well saying:

I have done conferences with her mom. Vanessa comes from a home where there’s two queen bees in the house, dad is not around. She comes to school to be cute. I don’t feed into that nonsense, what I care about is if you’re safe and secure so that you can be making growth and progress… and sometimes I have to treat them like a parent as well because I’m with them all day (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Observational data reveals Mr. Wayne works with his students in dealing with situations or problems while in his class. He shows them that their problems are important to him, stating:

As students are working, teacher gets a phone call on his desk phone next to his computer. Within 1 minute into phone conversation, he is rubbing the top of his head with his left hand. The phone is in his right hand up to his right ear. His eyes are closed and his face is grimaced as he speaks on the phone. Upon hanging up the phone, he calls up three female students to his desk to tell him what is going
on. The girls explain the situation. Mr. Wayne says "thank you for avoiding the
problem, if you see a girl mean mugging you, don’t look at her. Get over it.
Before you do something you might regret, like fighting or anything, come see
me. It’s about getting a reaction. You gave her a reaction." (observation, April 25,
2016).

He even demonstrates sensitivity to issues that occur outside of his class. As observed
after class one day, Mr. Wayne had a talk with some young men who were not members
of his classroom. On the previous day, the boys were about to get into a fight with two
other boys during school. Instead of fighting, these two chose to inform Mr. Wayne about
the problem. Mr. Wayne praised these students for their good judgment. What follows is
part of my observation of Mr. Wayne’s conversation with the boys:

Now I’m going talk to [the principal] and see if maybe we can keep y’all in
school or if we can do a little in school suspension or something and y’all spend
the day with me and we figure out how we’re going to do this, but I don’t want see
y’all acting like you’re going to fight or...even play fighting. and I don’t want to
see y’all hangin’ with [student] and I told [the principal] that he’s in more trouble
than both of you....I know y’all don’t like telling, I’m cool with that. But what it
gets down to is, you gotta figure out how to coexist in this world with people even
though you don’t like them. Because when you turn 18 and 19 and 20 years old,
when you get my age, and start having disagreements with people, people will
want to shoot your head off. Or people will want to put your butt in jail if you
don’t listen. You’re no longer dealing with teacher, you’re dealing with cops.
You’re dealing with authority. You two are good boys, I like you both. You guys were gentlemen, I like that (as he is dapping them, shaking hands) you came in here and you handled it like real men and I like that (observation, April 25, 2016).

Focus group data supports the students feeling of comfort in Mr. Wayne’s classroom. The data reveals the students feel that they can be vulnerable in Mr. Wayne’s classroom. The data also suggests that they feel like they are allowed to be themselves and also gives students a sense of security. The student explains this with a story about a time the class watched a movie, recalling:

He was crying one time. He started crying while we watched movie about back in the days, slavery, [the movie] Selma, yeah he started crying because [it was like] he actually cares about something. It made me feel like he was comfortable around us, not embarrassed to show who he really is. So I felt like I could be comfortable too (focus group, May 23, 2016).

During the focus group, one student spoke about the comfort they felt during a time when a possible altercation was looming, stating:

I got into an argument with this one girl. She called me a b---- and I wanted to fight her. He helped me stay calm though; he wouldn’t let me out of the class, and wouldn’t let the student in [the classroom] either so he kept me from fighting (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Still, another student recalls a time when they had a family problem outside of school and Mr. Wayne was there to comfort them. The student explains how they felt Mr. Wayne was there for them in a time of need, saying:
I remember one time, recently, I had like this family problem or whatever that happened and I was crying in school, I was just mad that whole day about what had happened and then I was talking about it with my friend and had an attitude…you know how like when you mad but when you in front of somebody you start expressing your feelings, you start crying, so that’s what I did, and he was hugging me and stuff and telling me ‘it’s gonna be all right.’ He was asking me do I want to call my mom. He comforted me and made me feel better. He was there for me (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Even some of the simpler things Mr. Wayne did made the students feel comfort in his classroom. During focus group collection, one student recalls a time when Mr. Wayne protected her from a bug explaining:

I am really afraid of bugs, and I remember when I was crying because I saw a bug, he was the one to calm me down. He let me know that he would make sure he wouldn’t let it come near me (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Commonality. Mr. Wayne spoke about the importance of having something in common with his students. He discussed liking the same music and liking the same style of fashion as many of his students. During the interview process, Mr. Wayne mentioned how he could see himself in some of his students. To him it was important to ensure that students knew that he did have things in common with them. Likewise, students felt it was important as well as evidenced in focus group data. However, more robust information was gleaned during observations as it was noted that Mr. Wayne and his students used and understood each other in terms of vernacular and culture. In his mind,
the fact that he has certain characteristics in common with his students makes it easier for him to relate to his students.

During the interview, Mr. Wayne elaborated on having something in common with his students. He understands what it feels like to be into their lifestyle. He says that he can relate to their style of dress, and vernacular. As previously mentioned, Mr. Wayne stated, “How could you not relate to a 13-year-old kid that likes Hip-Hop.” He equates this understanding to being addicted to music and based on his experiences, feels that is not necessarily a bad thing. He further discusses this commonality explaining:

I think it helps me relate to them a little bit… there has to be a commonality some common ground. If they see I’m with them…it helps. I’m not going to bark at them every time they say [a curse word] or if they have their headphones on, because…I still wear my headphones. If I’m [on the street] I have my phone on and have my [ear] buds in. I’m not going to bark at them, it’s their…lifestyle and that’s what they love. And I see that some of these kids are addicted to their music and you know what, so am I. I still am addicted to my Hip-Hop (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

According to focus group data, students concur adding that Mr. Wayne’s use of Hip-Hop makes them feel as if Mr. Wayne is listening to them. They feel like many teachers don’t listen to their views because they don’t relate to things the students do. They feel Mr. Wayne does relate because Mr. Wayne engages in conversations about issues that interest them. One student explains:
‘Cause like most teachers; they don’t really like talk to us about Hip-Hop, sports or video games. I feel like they don’t want to talk about [things that interest us]. I’m like amazed sometimes [when Mr. Wayne speaks to us about things that interest us] because some teachers just don’t want to deal with some kid or talk about what they care about. They feel like they did [their] years in school, they don’t have to listen to us (focus group, May 23, 2016).

More teacher and student commonalities were evidenced during observations. There were numerous times I witnessed Mr. Wayne speak to the students, not only about Hip-Hop but other areas of interest such as sports or current events. What follows are a few passages from observational field notes:

As students are working in groups, the boys in front of the room by the computers have begun to get a little louder. Mr. Wayne overhears them and tells them to stop riffing declaring, ‘no more riffing for the day’. Mr. Wayne changes the boys’ conversation and asks them about basketball. They begin discussing favorite players and favorite teams. He hears their conversation and chimes in about who he likes on the court right now. Mr. Wayne asks the students their opinion on several professional basketball players (observation, March 21, 2016).

As class is ending, students begin putting away Chrome books [Laptops]. Mr. Wayne asks students if they had heard about Prince [Legendary singer, Prince had just passed away]. Several students chime in that they heard about it. A student asks if anyone has seen the new Beyoncé video. Another student mentions that Drake and Future [two popular rappers] are coming to Columbus for a concert.
Several students say they want to go to the concert. One student says he enjoys Drake. The student mentions that Drake actually says something [of lyrical substance] in his rhymes. Mr. Wayne chimes in and says he’s not a huge Drake fan. There is conversation about [Lil’] Wayne [popular rap artist, who many consider to be a classic rapper] vs some of the new rappers out now. Students discuss Yung Thug [a popular rapper out currently]. A few students express that they do not like this rapper. Mr. Wayne agrees. The whole class is chattering about popular music, and suddenly the bell rings. Students begin to exit (observation, April 25, 2016).

Lastly, on several occasions during observation, I noticed Mr. Wayne and students using similar vernacular in terms of communication. Following are statements from Mr. Wayne heard during observations. These terms derive from Hip-Hop culture:

I see you ‘swagged’ out. (Swag is defined in the terms from Chapter One. It is a slang term meaning to have confidence.) (observation, April 6, 2016).

You guys know that I always try to ‘keep it real’ with you. I’m going to keep it ‘100’ (observation, March 22, 2016).

Tell those boys not to talk to you like that. Tell them you are a young lady not a ‘Thot’ (observation, March 9, 2016).

Communal/community. Mr. Wayne described his class as a community. He spoke about the importance of the students having a sense of belonging in his classroom. In many instances the data displays Mr. Wayne’s effort to build a sense of togetherness within his classroom. During the interviewing process, he particularly spoke about the
importance of having students buy in to this philosophy. The data also uncovers how Mr. Wayne uses his class to introduce and discuss social justice issues and social awareness. He further explains “Hip-Hop is community oriented” and works to set his class up in a similar fashion. As mentioned in Mr. Wayne profile, Mr. Wayne feels that Hip-Hop made him a communal person and thus he feels compelled to bring community issues into his classroom. Communal is used to refer to inside the classroom and how Mr. Wayne uses the class’s sense of community to usher in a sense of togetherness. The community in this instance is meant to refer to the students’ community outside the classroom. The data reveals that teacher often speaks to both ideas and while they can be interchanging, they have distinct meanings for this study.

Mr. Wayne works to ensure that students feel that sense of community in his classroom. As previously stated, Mr. Wayne invites this communal attitude into his classroom to no matter the student’s background. He feels that Hip-Hop is the source of his ideals, stating:

That’s the thing to me; Hip-Hop invites a very communal attitude. Like progressive, very liberal in thinking, very community oriented. I could go back to those days where dudes can just plug in a boom box and it don’t matter what color you are. I think we are losing that aesthetic, that mosaic in life. And I think for me, if I can make the classroom like that or make it a communal thing or a community then yeah (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).
During the interview process, Mr. Wayne says that he thinks it’s important to get student buy-in to his ideas. He mentions that he likens this buy-in to running a small business, insisting:

You just gotta make these kids work. They have to buy into a work ethic. I tell the kids, we run a small company in this room (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Observational data also gives a sense of the social justice themes in and around the classroom. Students were charged to present a project in front of the class based off the reading assignment. The purpose of the project was to connect the life of the character in the book to something current going on in their neighborhoods and in their community today. Students were placed in groups, however, a few students chose to present by themselves. During class presentations, field note description states the following:

The next group was not a group at all, it was Tommy who casually walked up to the front by himself to present his project. He begins his presentation, explaining that had done a project about police shootings. He quietly states, “I feel this is an important topic because I think it’s something that could happen right here in our city.” Tommy then speaks on community issues and the recent police shootings. He presents a white poster board displaying pictures of some of those slain by the police under the words “Police Shootings” which are pasted on the poster board in large red letters. While holding up his poster board, Tommy speaks about recent shootings, reading the names of several of the victims from the poster board. He pauses before he says the name of Tamir Rice and then proceeds to pull out a toy gun and ask the class, “Would you shoot me over this?” A deafening silence
befalls the students in the class. Tamir Rice was the 12 year old black fatally shot by Cleveland police as he held a toy gun. Finally, Tommy discusses the how these issues correlate to the book and after he is done. Mr. Wayne proceeds to talk about the history of police brutality and blacks. He asks students how many have heard of Rodney King. Five of the 22 students in the room raise their hand. The room is quiet as Mr. Wayne leads a discussion of Rodney King and how the outcome of the trial led to the L.A. Riots in 1992 and how these events are still relevant to this day. Many students sit with their eyes facing front. Some are looking down, and some are looking at the wall. Mr. Wayne comments that he loves how Tommy chose a social consciousness piece (observation, March 16, 2016).

Students feel this communal sense as evidenced in the focus group data. One student in particular summed up her feelings of belonging in this classroom and noted that this makes her feel like he is trying to build a relationship with her. The student recalls:

I think he built a relationship with me because in the beginning of the year I did not like him. We just always went at it. I didn’t like him but I don’t know. It’s just something about him. (focus group, May 23, 2016).

**Emotions/emotional.** The data confirms that there are many emotions displayed from Mr. Wayne in a classroom setting such as this. These emotions were perceived during my observations and also identified by the students during focus groups. While one can assume a classroom would be filled with emotions, findings suggest that emotions play a huge role in this teacher’s classroom. Conversely, it is important to note
that during focus groups, students pointed out times when Mr. Wayne showed emotion and how it made them feel. Events such as these seemed to stick out in their minds.

During focus groups, one student recalled a time when the class was watching the movie *Selma*, after reading the book. “[Mr. Wayne] started crying while we watched this movie about back in the days, slavery, what was it? Selma, yeah he started crying because he was like…” I asked the student for more clarification and how it made them feel about Mr. Wayne. I wanted to know if the student saw Mr. Wayne as weak because he cried in front of them. The student replied:

No. That showed me [that] he actually cares about something. It made me feel like he was comfortable around us, not embarrassed to show who he really is. So I felt like I could be myself [in the classroom] too (focus group, May 23, 2016).

The students also recalled a time when Mr. Wayne had to break up a fight in his classroom. They admitted it was a tense ordeal and Mr. Wayne was angry and disappointed with how they acted. A student recalled:

There was a time when these girls fought in the classroom. Mr. Wayne and [another student] broke the fight up. Another teacher came in the room to help and got the situation handled. But after he was talking to our class about what happened. He spent the whole time telling us how much he loved us and how he didn’t want to see us fight like that. I remember him looking like he was tearing up and it started to make me tear up. I mean seeing him angry and then sad and then after that we started joking and he was trying to make the mood better in the
classroom again. It was just an emotional day. But I remember it so well (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Another student added:

I remember that too, it was cool to see him show his feelings to us. A lot of teachers don’t do that I feel. It makes me feel like I can connect with him (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Observational data from field notes includes instances of times like these and also other times of affection, sorrow and frustration. Observable moments of emotion include terms of endearment toward students. One example is a time during class when Mr. Wayne was reviewing imagery:

Mr. Wayne is going over imagery in literature. He points to the light switch at the back of the classroom and speaks, “Gina, turn the light out for me and close the door sweetie.” Mr. Wayne is standing at the front of the class near the front wall which also doubles as a whiteboard. The projector is illuminated showing the senses. The words hearing, touch, smell, sight and taste appear on the wall as Mr. Wayne begins to discuss how imagery appeals to our senses. He asks students to give examples, “Kim, honey, can you give me examples of images that appeal to one’s sight?” (observation, March 9, 2016).

During focus group data, one student commented how this made them feel, adding:

I like when he calls us names like ‘sweetie’ or ‘dear’. It reminds me of how my parents talk to me and makes me feel good (focus group, May 23, 2016).
Even during trying times, Mr. Wayne expressed emotion. During one observation, I noticed that he was frustrated with the behavior of his students, the girls in particular. I observed him the following:

As class is beginning, Mr. Wayne informs me that three students in his class have all been suspended. These three young ladies had gotten into a fight with each other. When the bell rings, students enter so quietly that you can only hear the screech of the chairs on the floor. As students are seated, Mr. Wayne speaks to them about his frustration. He is disappointed that these girls got into this fight. “I told you guys, stop worrying about what someone has to say about you”, he screamed. “This is starting to get on my nerves. I keep telling y’all this stuff. People are always going to have a comment. Let it go!” (observation, March 11, 2016).

Raw emotion such as this was not uncommon. Another instance involved a time when Mr. Wayne kicked Theo out of the classroom for not working. Mr. Wayne had asked Theo to take out a pencil and start working. After the third time asking, Mr. Wayne intervened:

“Theo that’s it, I’m done. You’re going to have to go. Get your stuff and go to [the principal’s] office. Tell him that you don’t want to work today.” As Theo, gathers his back and starts working, his face shows no emotion, and he doesn’t say a word. As he is heading out of the door, Mr. Wayne remarks, “And make sure you go straight to his office, don’t lollygag in the hallways.” After, Theo has left, Mr. Wayne addresses his class, "This ain’t no daycare center; Theo made his
choice he does not want to learn…” Mr. Wayne then proceeds to try to get the
class back on track with the lesson for the day. He gives them an activity to begin
working on. He calls on Vanessa to pass out the papers for students to work on.
While she is doing this, he picks up the phone and I hear him say, “Hello, I just
wanted to check to make sure Theo made it to the office…” (observation, April 6,
2016).

Example/analogies. During data analysis, particularly focus group and
observations, Mr. Wayne’s use of real world examples and simple analogies were
prominent. When Mr. Wayne explained assignments or curriculum, he would often
equate the subject to something the students could relate to. Primarily coming from focus
group and observations, the data disclosed many instances of Mr. Waynes’ use of sports,
television and other aspects of pop culture (mostly Hip-Hop) to assist in student
understanding and engagement of school material. During focus group data, when asked
to describe what Hip-Hop was to them, one student said that “Hip-Hop is life. It started
with 2 Pac, Biggie and Prince. It brings out a message and helps us express our feelings.”
Still another student explained that Hip-Hop was, “was the type of music that most Black
people listen to. It just makes you want to move.” Another student expressed that Hip-
Hop was not necessarily music but “Like music.” In addition, another student divulged
that her favorite Hip-Hop artist was Rhianna. More discussion on this subject will follow.

Mr. Wayne used Hip-Hop analogies and examples to aid in understanding
materials from the lesson, in-class assignment or homework. During the focus group, one
student recalled a time when Mr. Wayne used an analogy to help them understand a
certain topic:

…and he uses these analogies with some of the rappers. He talks about Future
[rapper]. He says Future is trash [laughs] but he gives an analogy of Future and
compares him to some character we are studying and it just helps us figure it out.
I mean [he] make[s] it so we can get it for our age group (focus group, May 23,
2016).

Another student in the focus group shared an appreciation for Mr. Wayne’s knack for
giving them examples to clarify understanding. The student recalled:

He talks a lot so we can get the point. Like he won’t just read it from the book, he
will explain it to us. Sometimes he lets us do it together, but sometimes he
explains it to us and he [makes it] so we can get it in the real world. Like real
world examples. [I appreciate real world examples] because sometimes the book
doesn’t get the point across as good (focus group, May 23, 2016).

An example of this was displayed during observation as Mr. Wayne was explaining a
passage that the class was reading. In order to make the passage more relatable to the
students Mr. Wayne placed the characters in a setting from current times. Mr. Wayne
explains:

Situational irony, let’s think of a situation that could happen in your life. Say for
instance, you go to the mall and you see 20 bucks on the ground, and you knew
ahead of time, they were setting people up to steal stuff. Say for instance they
were trying to catch you on cameras, kinda like the car show, what’s that show
where they catch people in the act stealing cars…?” A student says, “Yeah I know that show, it’s called *Bait Car.*” Mr. Wayne says, “Yes, things like that are situational. Most of the time, people wouldn’t do it if they weren’t in that space. It’s like giving people temptations they can’t resist. So anyway, if let’s say Gina is at the mall and she sees this money on the ground and she just looked at Footlocker and saw those Retro 6’s (Air Jordan VI basketball shoes) and she wanted them but she doesn’t take them money. Situational irony is her not taking the money because she was suspicious of someone setting her up.” (observation, April 6, 2016).

Similar, during an observation, I witnessed Mr. Wayne using the song *Four Women* by Talib Kweli for a lesson. While Mr. Wayne used the song lyrics for a lesson about allusion, he also began to enlighten the students about who Talib Kweli was as an artist and what he felt that Kweli stood for in the music industry and as a social activist. He equated this to issues the students could understand. The interaction is outlined below:

After reading the poem “Ain’t I a Woman?” by Sojourner Truth, Mr. Wayne is playing the song *For Women* by Talib Kweli. Some student’s appear to listen, as some stare at the wall; some are looking around the room, and still others are nodding their heads to the music. After the song ends, Mr. Wayne ask the students what they think of the song. One student’s hand goes up and he is called on by Mr. Wayne. “I feel that he had good lyrics.” Mr. Wayne asked the students a more in depth question. “Do you think Talib Kweli’s poem is similar to Sojourner Truth’s poem and if so, in what ways?” No hands are raised and after a moment, a
student asks why Talib Kweli would write this song. Mr. Wayne responds,

“Kweli is what I would call a conscious rapper, meaning he cares about what is
going on in society. Did you guys know that he went to Ferguson (Missouri) to
protest with the Black Lives Matter movement? Its things like that that set him
apart from many of these rappers out here. You should really check him out. I tell
you guys what, after this lesson, I will play you some of his music. I think you
will like it.” (observation, March 3, 2016).

Still another student recalled a time when Mr. Wayne used Hip-Hop to help him
understand, stating:

…cuz you know I talk about music a lot and he shows me like some of the songs
on like his computer and stuff. And like notes and explaining, he will like look up
a video on YouTube of somebody rapping it. He helps me understand using Hip-
Hop. Its how he approaches the notes that help me understand. He talks to me in a
way I get (focus group, May 23, 2016).

During another observation, Mr. Wayne also uses other examples such as sports to
facilitate understanding of materials with students. In a lesson about hyperboles, Mr.
Wayne equated the lead character of the book Of Beetles and Angels by Selamawi
Asgedom to a student’s favorite athlete, stating:

Mr. Wayne explains, “It’s kinda like comparing Mawi to your favorite player. I
know you are a big fan of Richard Sherman (cornerback for the Seattle
Seahawks). Well so imagine if I said, ‘Richard Sherman got a hundred
interceptions in that game!’ Right? Ok now do you think he actually caught 100
interceptions in one game? Probably not right? But that is the hyperbole. So it’s
the same when Mawi talks about the kids at the school (observation, April 25,
2016).

Excerpts/vignettes. The data revealed how Mr. Wayne often used vignettes or
short stories during his time with his students. The discussion within the classroom often
led to a time Mr. Wayne could share events from his life to help students relate to either
something they were going through in their lives or while explaining a classroom lesson
or activity. They were characterized by Mr. Wayne using stories about his life in order to
help a student or students make a decision. They were not, however, lessons about school
or school work. Many times these vignettes were told at the beginning or end of class. In
most instances they were used to reinforce life lessons.

The observational data displayed several instances of Mr. Wayne sharing some
aspect of his life with his students. One time, near the end of class, Mr. Wayne shared a
story about his ordeal as a student athlete. The story came after reading a section in the
classroom novel, Of Beetles and Angels. The lead character made the cross-country team
in his high school but struggled to balance sports and maintain his grades. Mr. Wayne
spoke about the lead characters hard work and perseverance to succeed and how he
encountered a similar situation when he was in school. Even when the bell rang, the kids
remained in the classroom so that he could finish the story:

This is one of the reasons I decided to coach track this year. I wanted to help you
guys, I wanted to make a difference. The balance to maintain good grades and still
play sports is tough. You guys got to remember it takes hard work to get
anywhere you want to be in life. When I was in high school, I struggled with keepin my grades up so I could play sports. So I know how hard it can be. It was hard for me to do my homework when I came home from school. I was tired and didn’t feel like it. But you have to keep trying guys. No one is saying that you will get all A’s, but I at least expect you guys to give effort. I’m often reminded as I read this book, if this kid can do it; and he came from war torn Africa, if this kid can do things, then why can’t any one of you in this room achieve your dreams of having a career and not even college because some people aren’t college ready. I wasn’t college ready; it took me a while to get my stuff together and realize I even wanted to go to college. What it gets down to is if this kid can do it, there’s no reason you can’t either. (observation, March 21, 2016).

Still another observation involved a teacher-led discussion about a current event involving Bill Cosby (There have been several allegations that Bill Cosby has drugged and raped women over the last few decades) and Afrika Bambaattaa (a pioneer of Hip-Hop who was recently accused of molesting young boys). Students are working on their poster boards for upcoming presentations.

Gina asks teacher if she can use Bill Cosby on her poster board. She is working on a poster board about sexual offenders. Mr. Wayne looks at me and says Mr. Rawls - how do you feel about that? I reply, “I like Bill Cosby, I still see him as Cliff Huxtable.” Mr. Wayne says, “I agree with him.” Mr. Wayne makes a point to tell the students that Cosby hasn't been found guilty but then he tells the student if you did the research and you feel he should be on the board then that is fine
with me. Then Mr. Wayne says "that makes me think about Afrika Bambaattaa" did you hear about him? That really hurt me. Tommy asks, “Who is Afrika Bambaattaa?” Mr. Wayne begins to tell him about Afrika Bambaattaa and the Zulu Nation and the origins of Hip-Hop. Mr. Wayne explains that the students should look him up to see his accomplishments in Hip-Hop. Mr. Wayne then says, “It’s kinda sad that sometimes your heroes can fall from grace like this. Cosby and Afrika Bambaattaa were two of my heroes and I so hope these stories aren’t true. But it teaches you that even your heroes are human. And humans make mistakes (observation, May 13, 2016).

Expressed care. Mr. Wayne voiced his care for the students on an on-going basis. He made it a point to make sure his students knew that he cared about them and thus expressed this care to his students. In interviews, he spoke about not wanting his students to submit to him. Mr. Wayne also emphasized how important it was for him to have a connection with his students. This code did not just represent instances when Mr. Wayne showed his students care, but it is important to note the data revealed that Mr. Wayne made sure the students knew they were cared for. A critical distinction for this code is that Mr. Wayne went to great lengths to ensure that students knew that he cared.

Conversely, the focus group data revealed that students felt cared for. Students were quoted as saying “he cares about me” and “he has done things outside of the class that shows me he cares about me”. Statements like these verify a code of expressed care because they reveal that Mr. Wayne cared for the students and the students knew they were cared for. During one interview, in a conversation about how he feels a teacher
should run a class, Mr. Wayne shared his ideals on classroom management, stating, “A lot of these kids don’t like these teachers that don’t care”. He proclaims to show how he cares and that he does have a discipline plan, however; he admitted that he sometimes slips into an authoritative figure to gain control. He claims he attempts to implement his discipline plan in a way that does not put students down, stating:

And I think [some] teachers…they want these kids to submit. And submitting is breaking someone’s spirit, I want your spirit to come out. Do I want them to follow directions? Do I want them to listen the first time? Do I want them to comply? Absolutely! Sometimes, I may have to yell, I may have to get stern to get their attention. But I don’t want them to submit. I don’t want to break a twelve or thirteen year old’s spirit to the point where they have nothing left because this man beat [me down]. I want them to obviously respect what we do but with respect, I can’t just say you guys better respect me. It’s something that’s earned, even for a teacher, and even throughout life. I have the ultimate respect from my dad because he earned that from me. I think kids need to see that too. This guy is not out to hurt me. He’s not out to just beat me up. Is he going to call me to task when I’m wrong? Absolutely! But when I’m right, he’s going to support me (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He goes into more detail, speaking about giving students chances to succeed. He takes ownership in the students learning and success and students knowing that he wants them to succeed, stating:
When you grade papers and you see….ok we [worked very hard going over this lesson] and she did ok on the pretest but after the actual test you’re like “she tanked it.” That goes with any of them. You’re like ok where do I adjust, where did we go wrong in this lesson. Your pretest was really good and your former stuff was really good, where did we go wrong? So then several times, I’ve had her retake a test with just me or with [a counselor] in her office or with the tutor and she will do much better. And you’re like ok she did get it. I want my students to know that I want them to get it. I think it helps them push harder (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He emphasizes this point stating:

I’m one of those dudes that be like, ok let’s go back. I ask how I can help or if you don’t want me to help, who can I get to help (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Mr. Wayne went on to give an example of how he nurtures all of his students. He encourages each of them to do something nice for someone at their home. He explains:

Every Monday I say to these kids ‘tell me about your weekend.’ And every Friday I tell them I love you and I want you to do something nice over the weekend. Do one thing nice for someone this weekend, your mom or whoever you live with; clean a room, bring in groceries. Make sure you appreciate the people you live with (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He displays signs of caring about the student by paying attention to things that are going on in their lives. He speaks to one student about a trip her family has taken saying, “Gina,
why did you miss yesterday? Did you just want to ditch my class? (laughing). Did you and your mom go to [large Midwestern city] again to see your grandmother? How’s she doing by the way?” (observation, March 22, 2016).

During focus group sessions, students seemed to agree with these points, stating:

I think we got a relationship, he has done things not only inside but outside the class that shows me he cares about me. He shows me that I matter to him. That makes me feel good (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Still another student chimed in saying, “Yeah I feel the same. He just is always there for you. [It] feels like he got my back and makes me feel like I should have his [back also] (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Students also mentioned feeling cared for when Mr. Wayne spoke in terms of items that related to them such as Hip-Hop, sports or pop culture. One student mentioned:

Most teachers, they don’t really like talk about that kinda stuff. So when we talk about it, I feel like Mr. Wayne is trying to understand me and how I think, you know? I’m like amazed sometimes [when a teacher talks about things I know about] because some teachers just don’t want to deal with some kid or talk about what they care about. They feel like they did [their] years in school [so] they don’t have to listen to us. Mr. Wayne isn’t like that at all. He shows us he cares about what we care about. I like that (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Family. Another organic finding included Mr. Wayne building a nurturing, family-like atmosphere within his classroom. During the interviewing process, while speaking about Vanessa, Mr. Wayne is quoted as saying “I treat my girls like I’m a
parent”. This idea was supported with focus group data in which students equated their relationship with Mr. Wayne with some member of family such as uncle, father, or older brother. While family can mean many things to different people, Mr. Wayne described family as his ability to get his students to “buy in” to his classroom family. This is the boundary of family for him. Family deals with the classroom, Mr. Wayne is not speaking about the biological families of the students. He wanted his classroom to feel like a supportive family in which his students reach their potential.

Mr. Wayne makes it a point to treat his students, particularly his girls, like his family. When speaking about Vanessa, he says that he treats her like family and gives her responsibility so that she can grow. During an interview, he explained:

What I care about is if you’re safe and secure so that you can be making growth and progress. I was raised in a house with two sisters and a mom. I try to treat her and all my girls like she’s one of my sisters but sometimes, I have to treat them like a parent…because I’m with them all day. I try to help her by giving her things to take care of. You give her responsibilities, and some leadership roles, she’s one of those kids that will thrive. In the beginning of the year, she was very disrespectful, but now I look at her and she will be like (makes a face like she is straightening up) we just have a good relationship (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Similarly, Mr. Wayne speaks on nurturing his young men in the same fashion, explaining, “Theo is in a position where he is disconnected. He doesn’t know his dad, and
has been through some tough times. I just think that we are supposed to be nurturing to these young dudes particularly dudes....” (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).

During focus groups, students echoed this family sentiment, with several of the girls in the focus group claiming to feel like Mr. Wayne treats them like a daughter. One student struggled to explain but stated:

It’s just something about him. I can’t explain it but it’s something about his personality. Mr. Wayne makes me feel like I belong or kinda like I’m his daughter (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Still another student expressed a familial closeness based on Mr. Wayne’s use of humor in the classroom. Two of the students mentioned that they felt that Mr. Wayne could sometimes be annoying to them, stating:

He’s a good person but yeah he is annoying sometimes. It’s like a family member, probably like a goofy uncle. Yeah like an uncle like he could be just getting on your nerves, like you don’t like him but you love him (focus group, May 23, 2016).

During observations, it was very common to see Mr. Wayne speaking to students in a one-on-one conversation off to the side offering fatherly advice. One instance, he tried to stress the importance of a young lady to demand respect from young boys, telling a young female student:

After class was concluded, Mr. Wayne allowed students some free time. He surveyed the room and called Gina up to his desk. I hear him tell her, "don’t let boys talk to you like that. Tell them ‘I’m a lady not a thot.’ (Thot – slang term for
a promiscuous female). Don’t let him talk to you like that if he claims to be your friend” (observation, March 9, 2016).

**Genuine enjoyment.** Mr. Wayne ensured that there was fun in his classroom. First cycle early coding data revealed that he would often joke, act silly, sing, rap, and jam with his students. The data for this code was primarily attained through observation, as it was often very obvious that Mr. Wayne was having a good time with his students. For example, Mr. Wayne would often sing songs such as the chorus to the hit song “Work” by Rihanna, to help get his students back on task. On many occasions, students were observed laughing along with Mr. Wayne during times like these, even joining in on the song with Mr. Wayne. This code is primarily descriptive of the tone of the classroom. It was not a description of the students, but of Mr. Wayne and the climate of the classroom.

Data revealed that students seem to notice that Mr. Wayne has fun as they refer to this during the focus group. One student recalled a time when Mr. Wayne told the class that he had bars (rhymes). Mr. Wayne said that he would be ‘spittin bars’ (meaning to rap) and the students challenged him. However Mr. Wayne never actually said the raps but used it as an ongoing joke. One student recalled a time the class teased him about not being able to rap, stating:

“We never seen him spit some bars. He will act goofy, he would never be like spittin for real. You can’t take him seriously on that…he just silly” (focus group, May 23, 2016).
Students also claim to enjoy the fact that Mr. Wayne uses humor in his classroom. During focus group, one student mentioned, he’s funny. His sense of humor makes him cool with me. I can relate to that and it’s funny.” (focus group, May 23, 2016). Another student chimes in, stating that Mr. Wayne’s enjoyment actually gets them excited to learn, recalling:

He’s always singing hip hop songs. He’s always trying to rap and … he’s always trying to say ‘I can’t sing’…but he’s always trying to sing or rap, (laughing). It’s so funny. He gets us pumped up and ready to learn. He gets us excited. He makes up his own songs like with *Work, Work, Work* by Rhianna. He kept saying that almost every day and we were cracking up (laughing). He turns a song into something to get us pumped (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Class is generally conversation based off things students do on an everyday basis. Mr. Wayne has conversations about what the students are talking about and tries to draw it into something positive. In one instance, I observed Mr. Wayne speaking to a student about joining an afternoon activity. Mr. Wayne wove a conversation about the student enjoying basketball in gym to joining the school team.

It’s the beginning of class and Mr. Wayne is getting the class settled in. Several conversations are going including one between Martin and Mr. Wayne. Martin is talking about the basketball he and some other students were playing during gym. “I sprayed a three on that dude…I lit him up,” he proclaimed. “Ok”, exclaimed Mr. Wayne, “I think Martin has a few skills huh?” He says while nodding his head in an affirmative manner. “I need you to make sure you go out for the
basketball team though,” he continues. “Show us all what type of skills you
got…” (observation, March 11, 2016).

During observations, while asking a student to pass out the assignment to the class, Mr.
Wayne makes a comment about the student’s new haircut and calls him J Cole (a popular
rapper). For example, I observed:

“Do you want to help? Come on up and help pass out today’s assignment. Ok I
need someone to help collect the books, who can I get, J Cole!” Mr. Wayne
exclaims, as he daps the young man. “Man you got the fly haircut, you look like J
Cole. I’m gonna call you J Cole today cuz you got it together. Y’all like his
haircut”, Mr. Wayne asks the class as he points to Tom. Several students in the
class laugh. Tom smiles and pats his hair and gives thumbs up (observation,
March 9, 2016).

Later, during that same class, Mr. Wayne jokes and teases another student for being quiet
and working at his seat quietly, saying:

After about fifteen minutes have passed, Mr. Wayne announces, “OK, I will begin
to collect the assignments.” The sound of papers shuffling can be heard as
students hurry to write their last minute answers. “Remember, I will be collecting
these for a grade tomorrow.” As Mr. Wayne begins to collect the in-class
assignment, he begins to give out positive praises. “I like how this group is
working, the girls in the back, they always get it done for me.” Mr. Wayne looks
over at Martin and chuckles, "Oh my gosh, I can’t believe it" in a joking manner,
“Martin is working quietly today! I can’t believe he has been quiet for more than
10 minutes.” Martin smiles and laughingly retorts, “C’mon Mr. Wayne, you know I get my work done when I need to.” Mr. Wayne laughs back. Other students smile and laugh. There is a calm, lighthearted feeling in the room (observation, March 9, 2016).

The classroom seemed to have an overall fun nature about it. During this observation, I particularly noticed a time when Mr. Wayne allowed the students to be silly even during a lesson. I observed:

During the lesson on imagery, as students are seated and working, Mr. Wayne says, ‘I’m collecting these sheets tomorrow, so please keep that in mind.’ Students continue working. Jaleesa raises her hand. In the midst of raising her hand, she did the Nae Nae (a popular dance). As he called on her to ask her question, Mr. Wayne did the Nae Nae back to her. Students in the class and Mr. Wayne (including me) burst out in laughter. Several students imitated doing the Nae Nae as they raised their hands. Mr. Wayne allowed the students a moment to laugh and then he settled the class down stating ‘Ok settle down, let’s continue. Remember I am collecting these tomorrow’ (observation, March 9, 2016).

Another example of the fun nature of the classroom presents itself during a lesson on imagery and figurative language. Mr. Wayne uses the lyrics from Notorious B.I.G. to help explain imagery to the students. Before he begins to play the song, Mr. Wayne explains how the song relates to the lesson. In doing so, Mr. Wayne jokes with the students about being able to rap. Students once again challenge Mr. Wayne to “spit some bars”. As Mr. Wayne turns on the LCD projector, the words “Imagery and Figurative
Language” appear in bright red letters on the brick wall that doubles as a white board.

Mr. Wayne starts by saying:

Alright let me get my materials together and we will get going. Ok now I know you guys are hyped up after gym class, but I need you guys to settle down so we can get this done. Ok, what we are going to do today is go over imagery and we are going to listen to a song called Juicy by Notorious BIG, well I call him Biggie. He’s one of my favorite rappers. Remember that imagery is a use of language to develop a picture in one’s mind. When we talk about imagery we also have to talk about the five senses. We also have to talk about figurative language; similes, metaphors and hyperboles. You remember hyperboles are the exaggerations; you know every rapper uses those. Every rapper uses similes and metaphors. Figurative language is a major component of writing lyrics and writing rhymes, and writing poems. It’s all the same thing, rhymes are poetry that is just said to a rhythm or a beat. So before we discuss imagery and figurative language, let’s look at Biggie’s verse to his song Juicy.”

Students begin to react, you can hear several students comments such as “This is my song” or “My mom always be playing this song.” Still another says, “Come on Mr. Wayne, let us hear you rap!” Other students chime in, “Yeah come on, spit some bars.”

Mr. Wayne continues, “Nah I am not gonna rap in here, I might get y’all to hype! You know I’m nice.” Mr. Wayne says jokingly. “No but I am not going to rap, maybe one day” (observation, March 11, 2016).
Another instance of enjoyment in the classroom was already mentioned from focus group data. The students recalled a time when Mr. Wayne used a song which was popular at the time to encourage students to complete their school work. The song is *Work* by Rhianna. During an observation, I experienced first-hand Mr. Wayne use humor to get students back on task:

The room is quiet as students are working on their assignment. Suddenly, there is a knock at the door and then a hush over the room. The principal was at the door and asked Mr. Wayne to step out in the hallway to speak with him. You could feel the quiet take over the room. When Mr. Wayne stepped out and shut the door behind him, students begin to whisper, “I bet it’s about that fight at lunch yesterday,” says one student. “It’s probably about what happened earlier today,” chimed in another. While Mr. Wayne was out the room, students were turned around in their desks, and there was a buzz about the room.

Moments later, the door swings open, Mr. Wayne re-enters the room and students turn around and sit straight in their desk, mouths are shut, like they were sitting this way the whole time. With a smile, Mr. Wayne claps his hands and says, “All right, let’s get back to it.” He smiles and sings, “We gonna do some work work work work work, let’s get back to work work work work work work!” Several students begin laughing and some even chime in on the chorus with Mr. Wayne. He keeps singing the revised chorus as he heads back to the front of the room. As students get back to work some are laughing and making
side comments about Mr. Wayne’s antics. The mood is lighter (observation, March 11, 2016).

**Hip-Hop mentality.** During the interview process, Mr. Wayne mentioned that he identifies with Hip-Hop culture and that Hip-Hop culture is his passion. He described himself as being Hip-Hop and continued to say that Hip-Hop made him communal because through sampling, Hip-Hop opened his eyes to different types of music. It was during this time that he realized Hip-Hop had so much in common with other musical genres and it made him respect those other genres. It also made him aware of the differences in people. He noted that when you see people in Hip-Hop forums, rarely are they only one race of people. Hip-Hop events are filled with people of all cultures and people from all walks of life. Mr. Wayne equated this to the way he educated students in his classroom. He wanted students from all walks of life to be accepted in his classroom. During the interview, he acquiesced that a communal attitude from a teacher with a Hip-Hop mentality could “have a domino effect on how his students treated each other”. In his mind, a Hip-Hop mentality is having a communal attitude. Mr. Wayne was often observed quoting conscious or political rap artists such as Talib Kweli and dead prez. As mentioned previously, during a student presentation about police brutality, Mr. Wayne speaks about how important it is that his students are “aware of social issues that are facing you today.” The data reveals that he thought it important to impart social justice and social awareness to his students.

When asked about his personal philosophy toward teaching and how and why he attempts to make students feel like a part of the class, Mr. Wayne again points to Hip-
Hop as the catalyst for making connections in his classroom. He argues that Hip-Hop has made him open to accepting others as they are and that this is the type of feeling he tries to invite into his classroom, stating:

I think it’s a mentality you have. The Hip-Hop mentality is a basically a very communal type deal. Its very community oriented. That’s what bugs me about Hip-Hop now. You gotta beef to get attention or talk s--t about somebody to get attention. I think Hip-Hop made me a communal person. I mean even going to like raves when I was younger. I mean I saw KRS (One) at a rave. It was all white kids. I would see white kids wearing an Ice Cube shirt, even though he talks about white people, I was like wow...He’s (Ice Cube) a rebel, he rejects the system and so do we. I remember one of the most startling things to me was when I went to [a white suburban school], I never forget there was this kid wearing a Del the Funkee Homosapien shirt, and it had the circle with the three eyes. I was like ‘you like Hiero’, he was like ‘hell yeah.’ That’s the thing to me; Hip-Hop invites a very communal attitude. Like progress, very liberal in thinking, very community oriented. I could go back to those days where dudes can just plug in a boom box and it don’t matter what color you are. I think we are losing that aesthetic, that mosaic in life. And I think for me, if I can make the classroom like that or make it a communal thing or a community then yeah totally (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He continues to explain this philosophy and tie it in to his core values which he credits to growing up in Hip-Hop culture, explaining:
A lot of times I tell my kids, bring me a solution don’t bring me a problem. If you bring me a problem, I’m gonna tell you to come up with some ideas and then we will work it out. Bring me a solution not a problem. It’s kina like when you had B-Boys in the park, they had to make something out of nothing. They didn’t have a club they could go to, to dance, so they had to make their own dance spots. They got cardboard and made it happen. This is how I want my kids to be. Solve the problem (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Mr. Wayne uses this philosophy in his classroom as evidenced during observation. As Mr. Wayne begins the lesson on allusion, he turns on the LCD projector. I notice that there is no screen. Mr. Wayne uses the all-white brick wall as his screen. Later on, he spoke on the inconveniences of making due in his classroom:

There are a lot of things I could use for my classroom, but it’s all good. We make it work. I would love to have a screen for my projector but I have asked for it a few times, never got it, so I keep it moving (observation, March 3, 2016).

Observational data revealed that Mr. Wayne’s philosophy seems to be filtering down to the students. I observed students working together and helping each other on a daily basis. Many times, students would just help another student without being asked to do so by Mr. Wayne. One of those times is described below:

As students are working on their assignment, there is a low chatter in the room. Mr. Wayne is sitting at desk, looking over papers. He looks up to see a hand raised, he then gets up and assists a student. As he is helping the female student, Vanessa comes over to help the student as well. Vanessa eventually takes over
and Mr. Wayne allows it saying, “Ok well the diva is here to help you.” Mr. Wayne then moves on to another student holding up his hand. After about a minute, as he is walking toward the front of the room, Mr. Wayne says to Vanessa "have you two figured it out?" She says "not yet, we are still working."

(observation, April 21, 2016).

**Instructive not punitive.** Mr. Wayne indicated that he focused on instructing students and not punishing them. Although tied to discipline, he made a very important distinction in how he set up his classroom expectations compared to other teachers. He describes it as not setting his expectations to dealing with behavior first. He explains, when the focus of a classroom is behavior, he feels that students tend to have problems with behavior. He believes that an emphasis on instruction can shift the focus from behavior. Equally, Mr. Wayne does discipline students as will be discussed later.

The boundary for this code is an understanding that behavior is not the first care of business for his classroom. The teacher tries to position instruction first in his classroom. For example, Mr. Wayne explained that he would never punish a kid who doesn’t have a pencil:

He explained when dealing with kids who have real problems, a missing pencil is a minor problem that can be solved easily, explaining, “I don’t think my expectation is behavior first. If you don’t have a pencil, I’m not writing your butt up. If you make your whole classroom set up on punitive rather than instructive, then it becomes an issue.”

(Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).
While the data backs up what Mr. Wayne says in his interview, observational data revealed some punitive characteristics. Although these characteristics were not something Mr. Wayne spoke about during interviews, it was most noticeable during observations.

One example from those observations reveals that during independent work time, Mr. Wayne had a confrontation with Theo:

After, the lesson, Mr. Wayne announces that students will have 15 minutes to complete the accompanying worksheet. Mr. Wayne picks the worksheets up from his desk, and walks them over to Vanessa and asks her to pass them out. As she sits her pencil down, she immediately rises and, as if by routine, grabs the papers and begins to pass them out to students. She begins at the first desk closest to Mr. Wayne’s desk and sits them on each student’s desk as she goes up and down each row. As she passes the papers out, Mr. Wayne moves up to the LCD projector at the front of the room to turn it off. The last student to get a worksheet is Theo.

Theo is seated two rows to my left and I see that he has his head down on his desk as Vanessa tries to put his paper on his desk. She slides it under his elbow on his desk. “Here Theo,” she says irritated. He reluctantly grabs the paper quickly before it almost falls off his desk. After Vanessa hands him the paper, he lays his head back down again. By now, every student that I observe appears to be working on the assignment. Mr. Wayne begins to walk around the room and notices Theo. “Are you working today?” Mr. Wayne inquires. Theo does not respond but looks at Mr. Wayne with a blank look. Mr. Wayne asks him again, “Are you working today? Are you just hanging out? What are you doing today?”
Another student chimes in, “He said he didn’t have a pencil.” “Well someone give him a pencil,” Mr. Wayne says. Another student tries to hand Theo a pencil, but he doesn’t want it. “Ok, so you’re not here to work today,” Mr. Wayne says disgustedly. “You know where you need to be, cuz I told you, I’m not running a daycare center.” Theo gets up out of his seat, and without pushing his chair in, heads to the door. While he is walking out, Mr. Wayne continues, “Go to the main office cuz like I said before I’m not wasting good air while I got other people here that want to learn.” As Theo leaves the room and shuts the door behind him, Mr. Wayne addresses the rest of the class, “I told y’all, this ain’t no daycare center. If you come into my classroom, you are getting a Grade A education. Theo has made the choice that he does not feel like learning anymore. So I’m teaching the people that want to learn. He came in this room, I gave him the option to learn and he made his choice. So there we go. The rest of y’all, let’s get busy.” (observation, April 6, 2016).

Students cosigned some of these characteristics during focus group. A student recalled a time when they felt Mr. Wayne made a big deal out of something that had occurred in the classroom. She indicated that she felt Mr. Wayne had yelled at her, stating:

Sometimes we will bump heads because he will say something and then it’s not what I was asking. And he will like he will just start making it bigger than what it is and I get aggravated cuz it was really nothing. I was just asking a question, and then he will turn it into a big deal. I don’t like when people get disrespectful with
me but sometimes I get disrespectful back and I yell back if you yell at me (focus
group, May 23, 2016).

**Student investment.** The data revealed Mr. Wayne’s willingness to put time and
effort into his students. To illustrate this point, he used a slang term that he called
“messing with” his students. Mr. Wayne was quoted as saying, “I mess with all my kids.”
Mr. Wayne felt it important for him to show his students that he has concern for each of
them and is willing to be there for them when they need him. This code specifically
speaks to dealing with students on issues that are not necessarily contained in the
classroom.

In addition, during the interview, Mr. Wayne mentioned that he made concerted
efforts to ensure that his students would not fail. Again, this didn’t necessarily mean that
his students never failed a test or a lesson; this code specifically related to Mr. Wayne’s
concern for students dealing with life lessons.

Mr. Wayne explained why he believes putting in time and effort for his students is
an investment. He feels his emotional displays are one way he displays that investment.
He explains:

I think it’s an investment. If I’m that emotional about you and you’re not my
child, then it’s obvious you are important to me. They know that some kids take
me there. You don’t take time from class for something stupid. But I will take
time out of class if you are not trying to learn. I think of like Jaleesa. She’s the
same way. She’s a pain in my a--. But she’s not dumb. She may be one of my
most underachieving students but she is one that I ended up liking the most
(Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Mr. Wayne was particularly concerned for Theo, who did not have a father figure in his
life. He felt that he should be there for this young man. He should “mess with” him.

During an interview, he described a conversation with the young man’s mother, recalling:

I told [his mom] my door is always open. I told her you need to be concerned
about this young man. He’s 12-13 talking about I don’t give a f--k, I’d rather go to
jail then go to school. He does not fear authority; he doesn’t care about getting
sent home. But she did say, ‘He talks about you cuz he thinks you mess with
him.’ I said well I mess with all these boys. ‘Well he doesn’t have anyone to mess
with him.’ It made me think deeply about that though (Teacher, interview, May
16, 2016).

During focus group, students added a similar sentiment expressing that they felt like Mr.
Wayne had their vested interest in mind, recalling:

I can tell he cares by how he listens to us. Like every Monday morning he will be
like ‘What did you do positive for one person over the weekend?’ I like that
because it feels like he is trying to make sure we did something good. I just feel
like he will listen to us (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Also during focus group, one student also remembered a time that she was not behaving
particularly well during class and Mr. Wayne approached her about it. She recalled:

One time I would get in trouble and then he would help me get out of trouble.
And then one day, I wasn’t feeling it. I just was bein’ rude and I fell asleep in
class and he had woke me up. I had did half of my work then I went to sleep and then after it was supposed to be third period and I was supposed to go to art, he had told me no you have to stay and finish your work. I had an attitude and I was like ‘Why I gotta stay and do my work?’ And he just started yelling at me like ‘No cuz I’m not about to let you fail!’ and ‘No I love you too much!’ and I was like OK, but I was still mad. Later on, I felt him though. I appreciated it (focus group, May 23, 2016).

In addition, during observation, I observed, on two separate occasions, signs of student investment. During the beginning of one class, Mr. Wayne was speaking with Freddie, about getting back into track. He wanted her to get back into track because he thought it was good for her. For example, I observed:

Before class begins, Mr. Wayne called Freddie to his desk. He asked her why she didn’t want to run track. He said that she had done so well last year. Freddie explains that she used to enjoy running, but says she doesn’t want to anymore. She says she doesn’t like the track coach. But Mr. Wayne says ‘It’s OK, still try out for team.’ At this time, the bell rings. Mr. Wayne walks toward the door to scurry kids into the classroom (observation, March 22, 2016).

On my next observation, before class, Mr. Wayne informs me that he has become one of the assistant track coaches:

Before class, Mr. Wayne and I speak and exchange pleasantries. He informs me that he has become an assistant track coach. He told me that he had not planned on making this decision, but did so because of his conversation with Freddie from
last week. He also said during the week, other students were asking him about to
couch and he just gave in. He tells me that he used to coach several years back
and he had also missed coaching as well (observation, April 6, 2016).

**Toe-to-toe.** The data uncovers Mr. Waynes’ disposition about disagreements with
his students. During the interview sessions, he poignantly discusses the work it took for
him to get his students to buy-in to his classroom philosophy. He explains that the
purpose of this buy-in is the long term goal of preparing his students for things that they
may face later in life. The process was particularly painstaking during the first several
weeks of school. He goes into depth about the difficulty of building relationships
explaining that in his opinion, more of his female than male students would bring ‘drama’
to the classroom. He admitted that he and Vanessa “went at it at the beginning of the
year.” But he said as time passed, he felt as if she and other students began to buy-in to
his classroom philosophy because they could tell that he would not “put up with any
nonsense.” This led to student acceptance of his classroom guidelines.

During an interview, Mr. Wayne explains how he maintains structure in the
classroom. He admits to not backing down to student’s wishes and explains that by doing
this, he is showing care and encouraging student buy-in to his classroom philosophy.

When speaking about Vanessa, he explained:

She wants you to try her; she wants you to go toe to toe with her. And I have. We
went at it several times in the beginning of this year. If she sees that you don’t
back down, and you show that you care, you can get her to buy into your program
(Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).
He continues further discussing why he feels it is necessary for him to go toe-to-toe with his students. Explaining that his goal is to teach life lessons to his students that they can take with them after the classroom, Mr. Wayne comments:

I see it with her and I see it with about 95% of my class. I got 23 distinct personalities in here and with that you have to find different ways to do things. Therefore, is she on the level I want her to be on [academically] sometimes? No. But socially, she’s learning to become a young adult that can solve problems. Problem solving isn’t always learning to solve context clues or solving problems or doing algebra. Problem solving skills go beyond a book. It’s life, so in the process of life, you have to learn to solve problems. To me it shows growth. Instead of fighting, she wants to solve problems. To me, it shows maturity (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He continues the conversation with an explanation of how Vanessa began to buy-in to his classroom philosophy. He believes that a critical juncture occurred when she began to feel like she had something in common with him. As previously mentioned in this chapter, Vanessa “clicked” with him over materialistic items. She was particularly impressed by his retro Air Jordan tennis shoes and iPhone 6. He believes this led to a breakthrough, recalling:

It made me made her think, "he gets me"; he’s not just a teacher, there are some things that we can relate to. And that point was like a breakthrough. It was literally the first quarter of school. And she was like, ‘I like him now, he’s not my enemy’ (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).
**Tough love.** In the interview, Mr. Wayne describes his relationship with his students, particularly Theo. When explaining how he disciplines his students, he describes it as “tough love.” Tough love, to Mr. Wayne, meant giving discipline at times when it was necessary and also showing care by listening to them. He explains that he sometimes disciplines a student by pulling them to the side and telling them “the real.” (The term “the real” is a term from Hip-Hop culture meaning to be 100% honest with someone and tell them the truth even if it will hurt their feelings.) To further describe his discipline style, he put it in terms of race, explaining that, “black boys get it, white boys, I don’t think they do.” Mr. Wayne went on to further explain that tough love could be equated to consistently holding students accountable for their actions. Mr. Wayne tells students that he will not discipline them for small things. He says that he understands his students’ lifestyle because it is similar to his lifestyle, explaining:

> I’m not going to bark at them every time they say f--k or if they have their headphones on, because I still wear my headphones. If I’m in the grocery store I have my phone on and have my [ear] buds in. I’m not going to bark at them, that’s their lifestyle and that’s what they love. If they got that on their head, they’re not bothering anybody, they’re not in class yet. When it’s time to start class then yeah they gotta switch up the steez (slang term meaning style)

(Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Mr. Wayne explains what switching up their style means. He explains that he believes in a strict routine to keep students working and he also believes in rewarding his students for a job well done. He feels that students must work but after they complete their work,
he does not mind rewarding them with free time, but work must be completed, explaining:

> You set a routine since the first day of school, you keep a very strict routine, and I keep them on track and I keep them busy. And I give them time to socialize. You seen it. If you get everything done, I’m not going to stop you from talking to your friend; go sit by your girlfriend and do her hair. You know, [for my boys] go spend some time looking up LeBron videos. But we have stuff to get done. In a 50 minute period, I don’t mind giving you five minutes. They are with me for 150 minutes. In that period if I give you ten minutes to get on the computer, that’s no skin off my teeth. But we got to get Reading and Social Studies done. If you do your job I promise to reward you for a job well done (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He further describes his approach to discipline as non-controlling, explaining:

> I’m not really trying to control people. I think many educators think of it as, ‘I need to discipline these [kids] first. I need to discipline them first and teach them second. I need to have control, I need to have this…my philosophy is to get them in the class and get them busy. If they get busy, you don’t need to worry about the discipline issues (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

However, as a follow up, Mr. Wayne further explains that he believes in holding his students accountable for how they act outside of his classroom, stating:

> Last week, she got into trouble in her art teachers class. She didn’t get in trouble with me, but she knew I was mad. I do this with all my kids. They know if they go
to other classes and they get in trouble, I’m going to give them the real. I hold them accountable (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Students agree that Mr. Wayne holds them accountable and admit that he will also write them up. The student explains that most of the time, Mr. Wayne will work with a student, stating:

> He works with you. Other teacher will be quick to write you up. Well, he will write you up but most of the time he will sit down [and talk to us]. Since there are a lot of girls in the room, [we’re going to] have a lot of beef (slang term for problems) and a lot of girls are not [going] to like each other and he finds time to sit down with us and try to settle it (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Contrary to what Mr. Wayne said in his interview, I did observe some strict discipline routines in the classroom. The observation data also brought to light some times when the tone in the classroom was a bit more serious. On one observation, the tone of the class was very different than the usual joyful mood:

> On my way into class, I overheard students in the hallway speaking of a big fight. From what I can tell, the fight had occurred yesterday and students were buzzing about it from the time I had entered the building until I had made it down the main hallway to Mr. Wayne’s classroom. When I arrived at his room, Mr. Wayne was actually in his classroom sitting at his desk alone going over some paperwork. As I came in the classroom and greeted him, we dapped and he told me that there were some issues. He told me that several of his students had been suspended. He said that three of his main students got into a fight with each other.
He told me that it was Freddie, Rudy and Kimberly. He seemed pretty upset but just then the bell rang. I took my place at the back of the classroom as he went to the door to greet students. Students are entering into the room speaking as normal as any other day. Conversations are buzzing. I hear a couple of girls talking about the fight as well. I do notice that Vanessa is absent; Rudy is back and Theo is absent. I also notice that Freddie, Kimberly and Rudy are out. Mr. Wayne closes the door and walks in the room and the students immediately stop talking. There is hardly a sound as students begin to take their seats says, “Ok, we gotta finish everything we need to finish for this week. We got a chapter that we have to read. We have to also go over ‘Juicy’ today. Let’s go, I don’t want to hear any talking. I need you to get done what I need you to get done.” The tone of the classroom is different today (observation, March 22, 2016).

During one observation, I witnessed Mr. Wayne scold students and discuss his disappointment at some news he had received about his students having problems with another teacher and one being suspended. I observed:

As the bell rings, Mr. Wayne settles students down. I notice He takes a serious tone with the students as he begins his discussion. ‘First things first, I have two names on the board. Those two names are losing their privileges for the day. Because I understand Ms. Westlake is having some issues with some of you guys. And I’m just going to tell you guys right now, Theo is getting suspended for the rest of the week. I don’t want any of y’all to go home, but when you don’t follow instruction…Case in point, Tommy, you had a situation, Cole, so did you. I got
you both out of the situation. There are several people in this room that constantly
have no clue of the situations that I get them out of. So, I’m not going to beg you
to do your work, that’s not going to happen. What’s going to happen is, I’m going
to write your name on the board and you are going to lose privileges. And the
Spirit Day stuff, etc. You will miss out on. We are not on Spring Break yet.’ As
Mr. Wayne speaks with an air of condescension, there is complete silence in the
room. ‘We have a few days until break, and we are preparing for a test when we
come back…’ At that moment, the phone rings and Mr. Wayne turns to his desk
to answer the phone. While speaking on the phone Mr. Wayne says, ‘No, no, she
can stay there, in fact, just take her straight to the office. She’s not coming in my
room, she’s getting a write up and she needs to go to the office,’ he says as he
hangs up the phone. ‘Ok,’ he says as he turns back to face the class, ‘As I was
saying, the reason I got so mad at y’all is because I am trying to show you what
you need to prepare for and I got, heads down, I got people not paying attention.
Then I go to the office and I got people that have been in trouble’, bus write ups,
people that are getting suspended; this is ridiculous! It gets old when you keep
hearing about these good kids you like and people are telling you that they are
bad! And you’re like…no they are not! But you guys are proving them right! Like
I said, I have two people’s names on the board. They lost privileges and they are
not getting them back. So if you talk back to me, you’re losing privileges; if you
roll your eyes at me you’re losing privileges. I might have 23 people’s names on
that board by the end of this week. I’m tired of being Mr. Nice guy, I have
probably been a little too flexible. I get sick of having to lecture, trying to get people to buy in. So look here, we are going to finish this lesson and I am checking work as soon as it’s completed’ (observation, March 22, 2016).

**Trust.** The data uncovers Mr. Waynes’ approach to earning the trust of his students. During the interview process, Mr. Wayne explains that students must build a comfort level in order to begin trusting. He even takes it a step further speaking about how trust must be earned by the family as well. Sometimes, earning student buy in is a difficult process, but he works to build trust with the student’s family by having an open door policy and making positive phone calls early in the school year. He explains, “when you earn their trust and you earn their homes’ trust that breaks down barriers right there.”

In terms of building trust, Mr. Wayne explained that he let students come around or figure things out in their own time and in their own terms. Speaking about Theo, he clarified:

> Is he going to college, probably not, but I think he could be career ready. He’s smart enough to do welding or fix cars or do HVAC, but not college because he doesn’t care about college. But can he paint houses or something like that, yes because things like that are on his own time. He could go to someone’s house and paint when he wants (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).

When speaking on Vanessa, he shares the same sentiment, adding:

> I think what it gets down to it has to be on their terms. I’ve learned that with a lot of these kids, it has to be on their terms. You can’t just say go sit with the tutor because that embarrasses them (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).
Mr. Wayne speaks on building trust with students in order to help them gain confidence in their academic ability. Avoiding embarrassment is critical. For this reason, he explains that students do not just come to a teacher to ask for help, stating:

It comes with a comfort level and trust level and it takes a long time for you to build that. They are not just going to come to you on day one and say Mr. Wayne; I need your help. They don’t want the other [students] kids or their teacher to think they are dumb. With regards to her, it took trust (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

While still speaking about Vanessa, Mr. Wayne speaks on his commitment to building trust with his student’s families as well. He explains how he has an open door policy with parents and encourages them to come in and observe, stating:

With all my families, I have an open door policy. Most of the time if you walk by my room, my door is open. I always tell my parents in a conference, I won’t say anything to them that I wouldn’t say to you. If I’m getting [on their case] about something; I’m teaching them a certain way or I’m getting frustrated with them; I would do that with you sitting there. I have an open door policy and her mom was really like surprised. I was like, look, walk up in my room anytime. I will pull up a seat for you. She’s happy because [I’m not] calling her every day. We are telling her the good things about her daughter. That is how you approach the whole idea of a conference or conferring with somebody. You gotta focus on the good, and then you spend 10% of your time like this is what else we have to do. Her mom is very receptive to that approach. She has a daughter that from the time she was 6
years old she was told, she not very smart; she’s bad in class; she gets in trouble
every day; come and pick her up; she did this, Now, [her mom] finally has a
teacher that tells her; ‘she’s doing some pretty good stuff.’ Let’s focus on that
stuff and let’s go from there (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

Mr. Wayne further explains his process with building trust with this particular parent,
stating:

The satisfaction [comes] when her mom comes into conferences and says she’s
having the best year she’s ever had in school or she comes home and wants to do
her work or she’s excited about the book you are reading in class. When you earn
their trust and you earn their homes trust; that breaks down barriers right there
(Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

He also explains that trust can be developed outside the classroom. He details this during
a discussion about Vanessa, recalling:

She came to me and told me that she had a problem and she told me there were
girls that wanted to fight her. I said, ‘well I can go get them now.’ I pulled them
[the girls that wanted to fight] out of the lunchroom, and spoke to them right
there. And she saw that I had her back and I think a lot of kids see it too. I have
their back. I have their back as much as I can have their back. If you put me in a
bad position, then I can’t defend you. But if I can, I have your back. You make a
good decision and I can help, I will help you solve the problem (Teacher,
interview, March 22, 2016).
Finally, he brings it all together with how he ties trust in his classroom to trust outside of his classroom to achieve his ultimate goal, insisting:

[Vanessa] has qualities to take on a leadership role with these girls. She’s shown it. She’s broken up fights and mediated fights. To me that’s worth 10 A's on a test. It’s maturity and showing that she can solve problems. If you can do that I can trust you to get up when the bell rings; I can trust you to not get pregnant before you are 18. You can solve problems. To me the social piece is just as big as the academic piece (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

During focus group data collection, the student’s speak about how they see trust in the classroom. For instance, Vanessa is chosen to help out in the classroom with things such as passing out papers and classroom clean up. She speaks on this adding, “I think he chooses me to help out in class because he knows like I know where everything goes and stuff. And I helped him before and he trusts me.” (focus group, May 23, 2016). Another student adds on, stating:

“My favorite part is when he allows us to help out in class. I feel like we learn more that way and he is showing us he thinks we can handle whatever it is.” (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Vanessa outlines how Mr. Wayne demonstrates trust in her, although she couldn’t quite explain why he trusts her. She explains, “He just tells me to do stuff and then sometimes he [will] be like, ‘Vanessa! Go get my phone off my desk,' but he won’t tell other students to do that.” When asked, why he trusts you like that, she continued, “I don’t know. I don’t lie to him and he knows that so I he lets me do a lot of stuff for him.
But I don’t know how it got like that. We just click I guess.” (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Again, during focus groups, another student described an incident during the final moments of class on a Friday. Mr. Wayne went to lock up the Google Chrome books that they had been using. No one could find the key. The student explained:

I remember when I had the keys to the Google Chrome book laptop cart. But I didn’t know that I had it. Mr. Wayne was very shocked that one of us would have taken it. He said it must be lost. We spent the whole class looking for the key. Even when the bell rung to go to lunch, we still couldn’t find it. So he let us all go but told us to keep looking. Well, when I got home that night, I found them in my jean jacket pocket. And I brought them back and gave them to him. I thought he would be mad, but he wasn’t. He told me he knew that one of us had the key and he knew that we would bring it to him when he found it. That made me feel good (focus group, May 23, 2016).

**Unexpected Outcomes**

The data uncovered some first cycle codes that I felt did not necessarily fit into one of the patterns. As with any phenomenological study, these anomalies are important to include in the emerging findings as they may point to some outlying issues for further understanding. The major outliers that I gleaned from this study include: students that preferred to keep to themselves in Mr. Wayne’s classroom, how students felt about other teachers and lastly, the amount of cussing that was observed.
During focus group data collection, a couple of the students mentioned that they prefer to just keep to themselves. One particular student mentioned not feeling like part of the group sometimes and in certain scenarios. The student also mentioned that they really did not care to feel like they belonged to the classroom community. When specifically asked if the student feels any certain way about how they are treated in the classroom, the student commented that they could work with other students but chooses not to, stating:

It just doesn’t bother me [when other students are not working and I am focusing on work]. I don’t feel like he should make them work, that is their choice. He shows me respect and helps me with my work or if I have issues. I just prefer to keep to myself (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Still another student in the classroom expounds on working on his or her own stating:

I just work quiet because I gotta be focused on one thing. Everything else around me is like second. My friends, they always be trying to be talking to me like, I gotta get this done. I don’t really care (if he supports me or not). It’s all good. I could work with other people, I just choose not to (focus group, May 23, 2016).

During observations, I made note that this student exhibited signs of not caring about getting his work done. Some of these observations included coming to class late, not participating during class on several occasions, and being suspended on multiple visits by I. During one observation, I noticed Theo not paying attention and unfocused in class. Mr. Wayne did not say anything to get him back on track. The following is what I observed:
Mr. Wayne has passed out assignments. Students are quietly working on their assignment. There is a slight buzz of students asking each other questions about the assignment. Theo is sitting at his desk with his chin on his desk top. He is playing with two pencils on the desk. His paper is under his chin but he is not working on it. After a minute, he puts one pencil down and just uses one pencil to seem like he is working. He appears to be writing something but I cannot make it out. He then puts the other pencil down and begins playing with his long black, blond tipped dreadlocks with both of his hands. During all of this, Mr. Wayne does not ask him to get back to work and no students are coming over to him (observation, April 25, 2016).

During focus group sessions, students discussed how they felt about other teachers. Many of the students questioned how some teachers do not express care and feelings. One student commented, “Some teachers just don’t want to deal with some kid or talk about what they care about.” Students explained that some teachers “feel like they did [their] years in school, they don’t have to listen to us.” They described these types of teachers as shady and explained that they felt like these teachers talked down to them. They described one teacher as being “country” and not understanding “who we are”. Students felt as if they weren’t listened to in some classrooms.

During focus groups, the students detailed differences in climate from one teacher’s classroom to Mr. Wayne’s class. They explained:

In Mr. Wiggles’ class, kids be arguing. Some students try to argue with him. Some of them be completely wrong. I was taught that [arguing with a teacher]
was disrespectful, so I don’t think it’s cool. But I do do it sometimes. Not to Mr. Wayne but to Mr. Wiggles because me and Mr. Wiggles get into it. We don’t bump heads all the time, but when we do, sometimes I just feel like I’m right in a situation but I’m posed to not feel that way because I’m a child. And my mom told me even when you think you’re right just say ok (focus group, May 23, 2016).

When asked what the difference was between Mr. Wayne’s class and Mr. Wiggles classroom, the student continued:

In Mr. Wayne’s class, there is really not a lot to disagree about. And when we are arguing with Mr. Wayne like when class is over, he will talk to us and he will be like 'what was going on' and then we will tell him and then like he will be like it’s okay and he will spend time with us and if he is wrong he will tell us 'I’m sorry' and then we say sorry back. And Mr. Wiggles doesn’t do it like that. He doesn’t have those kinds of conversations with us. I don’t ever think I heard him say sorry (focus groups, May 23, 2016).

Also during the focus group session, a student spoke about their feelings when Mr. Wayne talks to them about things they enjoy. In this case the conversation was about the National Basketball Association (NBA) playoffs. Eventually the conversation shifted to the kids playing basketball in the gym. The students were all talking about this when Mr. Wayne joined the conversation discussing how well the students played and teasing and joking with them, the student recalled:
Like that time we were talking about ballin’. I mean, we can have conversations like that with Mr. Wayne. Cuz like most teachers, they don’t really like talk about the kinda stuff we talk about. They just want to say ‘Get back to work.’ So when we talk about it, I feel like it’s just some adult that don’t they don’t talk about this. I’m like amazed sometimes because some teachers just don’t want to deal with some kid or talk about what they care about. They feel like they did [their] years in school they don’t have to listen to us (focus group, May 23, 2016).

Cussing was something that came up during observations, interviews, and focus groups. Mr. Wayne cussed during class but apologized. As shown previously in this chapter, he also cussed during interviews and mentioned that he may let a word slip now and then. Subsequently, he mentioned that he hears it from his students on the playground or in the halls. Students mentioned Mr. Wayne’s slip ups during the focus group. They primarily did not seem to have an issue with it. While walking the halls of the school, I also noticed that cussing seemed to be more prevalent with many students, even with adults in the hallways.

Students seemed to not have a problem with Mr. Wayne cussing. One student spoke on the topic during focus groups, stating:

One time, this girl called me a b---h and I called her [one] back and the he [Mr. Wayne] said it. And I was like, ‘I didn’t know teachers were allowed to cuss.’ (There was laughter amongst the entire focus group) I was shocked. Sometimes he ‘says’ what we say. Like one time, he said the s word. But he does it in a different way. He always be like, ’Oh my bad.’ Sometimes he just says it. I
remember we were reading this book and we were talking about some type of… well, I can’t remember, but talking about the book and he was like ‘if somebody do something like this to you then you better, excuse my language but kick his a-- " (Again, laughter amongst the group) (focus group, May 23, 2016).

During one observation, Mr. Wayne lets a cuss word slip, and there is really a non-reaction from the students in the classroom. While discussing the book, *Of Beetles and Angel*, Mr. Wayne discusses the lead character;

“I think she may have been trying to live her life through her children. A lot of parents feel that way. Have you ever heard your mom or dad say ‘If I had a chance to do that, I would do it differently’, or ‘I wish that someone would have told me this when I was fifteen?’ Well I’ve heard my dad say that, and he’s seventy years old. I’m [in my forties] and sometimes I say, ‘I wish someone would have told me…’’ a student interjects, “But your dad was successful, I thought…” Mr. Wayne chimes right in, “He did. He lived a good life. He did things he wanted to do. He went to college. He worked a good job for [over 30 years] but he still had some regrets. But he put himself in a position where he’s not stressed out. Well anyway, thank you for saying that, that’s a very nice compliment; back to our book. She’s talking about making the wrongs of her life right. But…you don’t want to look back when you’re forty years old and say ‘Damn, I really screwed that up.’ Aw, I just said the “D” word didn’t I? I’m sorry. But you don’t want to look back on your time and say ‘Darn, I really screwed that up.’ You guys know when I cuss, that means I am very emotional about things.”
A student adds, ‘That’s not really a cuss word.’ Mr. Wayne, with a grimaced look on his face retorts, “Yeah, thank you guys for not tripping on that.” He continues on with the class (observation, March 4, 2016).

During another observation, while students were working in groups on their end of the year project, there was another incident of cussing:

With twenty minutes left in the class, Mr. Wayne has given the students time to work on their projects. While students are working in groups on their projects, Vanessa and two other female students approach Mr. Wayne’s desk. The girls ask him a question about their project. There is a buzz in the room of students working in groups. Some are louder than others. Not all groups are talking schoolwork only. Mr. Wayne speaks out past the group of girls by his desk, "Did I just hear someone say the word ass?" he asks the group. Freddie, one of the girls from a group by the computers says ‘it wasn’t me.’ At that point, Mr. Wayne says ‘I don’t want you guys using that language in school. I know you guys cuss, but you have to know when to do that. Be respectful in school.’ Kimberly, another student says ‘Mr. Wayne, you have said that word before.’ Mr. Wayne says, ‘I have used it when we are reading it in a book but not just to be saying it in class.’ (observation, May 13, 2016).

Perhaps one of the most impressionable moments upon me as a researcher came at the time that Gina, a student in the class recited a rap for me. What follows is the continuation of an observation from one of the last classes that I had observed. The students were pretty comfortable with my presence. Gina asked me could she recite a rap
for me (most likely because Mr. Wayne had told the students that I was involved with music). The following is an account of Gina sharing her rap with me:

Gina and Freddie, who was in the group as well says, “You better not say that rap, with all that cussing in it. Gina explains to me that her 11th grade brother helped her write this rhyme. She did the rhyme for me and at first one of the curse words slipped. She apologized and from that moment forward, while reciting the rap, paused every time there was a curse word. It seemed like a lot of cursing but was very on par with much of the Hip-Hop on the radio and videos today. As she finished rapping I complimented her on having the courage to say the rap for me. I then challenged her to try to write a new rhyme over the weekend. I asked her to write one without the cussing. I explained to her that rapping with cussing is essentially easier. It’s easy to rhyme a cuss word. But I explained to her that the real challenge is to rap with no cussing. She said ok and told me she would do a new rhyme. I never heard the new rhyme (observation, May 13, 2016).

Emergence of Major Themes

The above-mentioned patterns were the first snapshots of what emerged from the data. After these patterns were uncovered, I used a matrix in an Excel spreadsheet (Appendix D) to group them into categories to better manage the data. Mr. Wayne’s exhibited care seemed to be a common thread among the data. As such, the patterns Emotions/Emotional, Genuine Enjoyment, Expressed Care, Student Investment, Trust, Tough Love, and Toe-to-Toe seemed to fit under a common theme of Expressed Care. Throughout the observations, I noticed similarities within the patterns Commonality,
Communal/Community, Family and Comfortable. These all seemed to fall under a tone of Mutuality in which Mr. Wayne would strive to keep a mutual feeling of respect within his classroom. Mr. Wayne used many stories to illustrate his points and help guide understanding for his students. Thus, a common theme of Illustrations emerged from the patterns of Excerpts/Vignettes and Examples/Analogies. Therefore, five major themes of this case study began to emerge. They include Expressed Care, Mutuality, Illustrations, Hip-Hop Mentality and Instructive not Punitive.

As the graphic depicts, there is no hierarchy, the themes emerged independent of each other and yet each co-exist in the classroom. Moreover, because Hip-Hop Mentality and Instructive not Punitive seem to anchor Mr. Wayne’s philosophy, they also anchor the graphic. They are displayed at the beginning and at the beginning and end of the graphic. What follows is a breakdown of how these patterns were broken down into categories and eventually themes.
Both Hip-Hop Mentality and Instructive not Punitive do not have pattern codes associated with them as they were deemed prominent during this case study. Although,
Hip-Hop Mentality has to do with a communal attitude, it revealed itself to maintain its own category because it influences every other finding in the study. It defines Mr. Wayne, his philosophy and evolved through his association with Hip-Hop culture, which is why it’s placed at the bottom of the figure. Similarly, Instructive not punitive was reasoned to be characterized in the same manner as it was also an important part of Mr. Wayne’s philosophy. Mr. Wayne routinely looked past small incidents (such as not having a pencil or forgetting a book) in order to focus on instruction. For these reasons, both these categories do not have any patterns attached to them. These major themes will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. In the next section, the major themes found are described with regard to each research question.

**Major Themes Organized by Research Question**

Chapter Four presents results of a case study on how a teacher uses care and builds relationships in his HHBE classroom. The research questions addressed in this study were as follows:

Research Question One: How do teachers and students describe their experience with relationship and care in a Hip-Hop Based Education classroom?

Research Question Two: How does this teacher use care in his teaching to relate to students?

Research Question Three: How does HHBE affect the teacher-student relationship in this case?

Research Question Four: What are students’ feelings toward the teacher who uses HHBE in the studied classroom?
What follows is a comprehensive presentation of findings with regards to the research questions. I will restate the research question and use the sort feature in the matrix to formulate how each coded theme answers the research question. This will be accomplished by listing the themes that align with the research question, and then explaining how these themes align using excerpts from the data as support for these claims.

**Research question one.** How do teachers and students describe their experience with relationship and care in a Hip-Hop Based Education classroom? Question one is the main research question that this case study was intended to research. With this in mind, each of the themes uncovered in this study should align with this question with an exception on how students describe their experiences. This exception will be explained later in this section.

The following themes align with how teacher in this case describes his relationship with the students. These themes are as Expressed Care, Illustrations, Mutuality, Hip-Hop Mentality and Instructive not Punitive. Mr. Wayne sets his classroom up to be based on instruction. He claims that he does not look to write students up as a first response to an issue. He focuses on trying to teach and said that focusing on behaviors first is not how he likes his classroom climate to be. He speaks on this with an example about students and supplies, “if you don’t have a pencil, I’m not writing your butt up…” Mr. Wayne explains that his genuine enjoyment for his job and his willingness to invest in his students demonstrates care. I observed that Mr. Wayne coaches a sport after school in order to work with his students outside the school. Mr. Wayne
commented, “Students know that you care when you give up your personal time.” This leads to his philosophy of ensuring that his actions ensure students actually know that he cares for them. He uses what he claims is a Hip-Hop mentality when cultivating his classroom culture. This mentality is concerned with focusing on the classroom as a community. He wants all of his students to be involved feel a sense of belonging. He accomplishes this sense of belonging using Hip-Hop examples. He is very comfortable using Hip-Hop to facilitate understanding and engagement. He says, “If I can add Hip-Hop to a lesson, it’s a very comfortable thing for me.” This is one of the reason Mr. Wayne regularly uses illustrations during his lessons. He uses vignettes, short stories and analogies to ensure that students can understand classroom material. As evidenced previously, Mr. Wayne regularly tells short stories about his life or different situations that he lived through growing up to facilitate student knowledge. Likewise, Mr. Wayne will often ask students for feedback or give them a chance to speak about things that matter to them. He promotes a mutual effort in his classroom in which students add value to the class as well as him. He looks for opportunities to get students involved in classroom activities such as grading, presenting lessons and “reader leader”.

Students describe their experiences in this classroom with the same major themes presented. Each of the themes can be found in the focus group data. For example, students spoke of feeling a sense of belonging in the focus group. As evidenced previously, they felt that there was a mutual sharing of ideas and they spoke of how Mr. Wayne makes them feel like family. “He makes me feel like I’m his daughter”, was one quote. While still another student acknowledged, “He talks to me in a way I get.” The
focus group data also showed how students expressed how they felt cared about. Comments such as: “He cares about me”, “He has done things outside the classroom that shows me he cares about me”, and “He was hugging me and telling me it’s going to be alright”, depict students that feel cared for. Students also claim to appreciate Mr. Wayne’s illustrations, short stories and analogies. “He helps me understand using Hip-Hop,” a student explained during focus group. Comments like this and the comment, “He will explain it to us, like give us real world examples...” describe students who grasp the importance of the examples Mr. Wayne gives.

Students expressed a sense of appreciation that Mr. Wayne works with them. They described other teachers as “getting them in trouble” while describing Mr. Wayne as one that would “work with you.” As evidenced previously, students also spoke about enjoying the references to Hip-Hop in this classroom. Through humor and Hip-Hop examples they felt it helped them relate to Mr. Wayne. During the focus group session in a statement about how they felt about Mr. Wayne using humor in his class, a student mentioned, “he’s funny” and “I can relate to that” (sense of humor).

Subsequently, an opportunity for impromptu data collection presented itself. After one observation session, as students were leaving the classroom, two young men, who were not in this class, came in to speak with Mr. Wayne. This was a situation in which these two students were asked by Mr. Wayne to report to his classroom at this time. The students came back and came to speak to Mr. Wayne about what had happened the day before. The boys were relatively calm and spoke in a matter of fact tone as Mr. Wayne listened to their story:
He came up to me and he was like ‘Put up $100 that you owe me. I told him I don’t owe you nothing. And he was like OK then put up them Jordan’s. And I told him no. And he was like ‘I’m gonna see you at the lockers.’ [meaning he wanted to fight] I was like....‘whatever’ and he came up and was about to push me and I was gonna fight him. But you know us Mr. Wayne… (observation, May 13, 2016).

The students revealed that they would have possibly been in a fight had Mr. Wayne not intervened. Mr. Wayne spoke to the boys and gave them positive reinforcement about standing down and listening to him, stating:

I know you guys are good boys. You guys make me laugh. I see you playing in the hallway being goofballs and stuff. And I know that boys fight. But I know that Ron can piss you off. He starts a lot of nonsense and he talks a lot of crap. The problem is, I got a problem with you guys in front of adults showing out. If you do that stuff in front of me I might put y’all against the wall like have y’all lost y’alls mind. You do that stuff in front of other adults, first of all Ms. Westlake had to break y’all up. Ms. Westlake and Ms. Ingalls had to break y’all up. You got two women trying to break y’all up. I don’t want my ladies in this building to even think about having to break up boys. Number two, y’all supposed to come tell me. I know that it’s hard. I get it. It’s hard for me to tell people, it’s hard for me to go to Mr. Taylor, my boss. It’s hard for me to go to him and be like ‘look I need your help man.’ But here’s the problem. If that doesn’t happen you got 500
people in this building. You guys put on a show for like 100 people yesterday.

You left me no choice but to address it (observation, May 13, 2016).

I realized that this was an example of some of my emerging themes. Mr. Wayne showed care by being there for these boys even though they were not his students. Mr. Wayne’s demonstrated his philosophy of Instructive not Punitive in this instance and he kept these young men out of trouble, later commenting, “If they hadn’t have done that in front of other adults, that’s how I would have handled it. I handle it like that all the time.”

Research question two. How does this teacher use care in his teaching to relate to students? Themes acknowledged in this sub question included: Expressed Care, Mutuality, Illustrations and Instructive not Punitive. Mr. Wayne used care to build his relationship with students. His comments support how he purposefully tried to show his students he cared. Mr. Wayne expresses his care with emotion. During an interview discussing Theo, Mr. Wayne recalled a time when he was upset at Theo’s lack of effort. He recalled:

I got so mad at him one time. I told him it’s not cool to be dumb in my room. I don’t let students be dumb in my room. I don’t let people fail. You will not be the first person to fail in my room in 20 years. If you think it’s cool to be stupid, then go to a different school. I will call your mom right now. I told the rest of the class y’all better shut it, it was one of those days I just had a tantrum. Kids know I have tantrums. After that I think he realized ‘damn that n----s crazy. I don’t want him to go off on me.’ I think at that point I think he realized, he’s not afraid to call my house and maybe he does care about me (Teacher, interview, May 16, 2016).
Data such as this suggests a posture of caring from Mr. Wayne. In addition, Mr. Wayne exhibited care in the form of admitting to making a mistake. Mr. Wayne apologized to his students for using the term “shut up.” He admittedly discourages the use of that word in his classroom. This incident seemed to have spilled over from the period before I had entered to observe:

Students are quietly working on their assignment of writing hyperboles. Students are in ‘ciphers’ and some are working alone. I notice three girls near where I am sitting, quietly discussing each other’s rhymes and looking at each other’s work. They are working together. Mr. Wayne walks to the front of the room and speaks up, ‘All right, I will be around to check everyone’s progress. I’m proud of everybody’s effort. Remember with this assignment, you need 8 good lines if possible. I understand if some of us don’t necessarily feel the creative vibe so do the best that you can do. And I will grade accordingly.’ Mr. Wayne pauses for a moment, looks at the ground and walks closer to the students. ‘Again, I apologize for saying ‘shut up’. You know that’s a word I don’t typically like to use, but I had to get your attention when people are trying to take the attention [away] from me.’ Mr. Wayne stops speaking and begins to walk around looking at students work (observation, March 21, 2016).

Mr. Wayne also displayed care in order to build relationships with his students. The students in the focus group explained that they felt cared for and appreciated Mr. Wayne’s care for them, stating:
He’s not just like other teachers. He won’t like just give us a paper like a test and be like ‘Do it!’ He will explain it to us and then sometimes before we take the test, he will go over it with us. I got a cousin upstairs in the same grade. She told me that her teachers, they just pass out the work. They don’t explain it in depth, I feel like Mr. Wayne takes the time to go over stuff with us (focus groups, May 23, 2016).

**Research question three.** How does HHBE affect the teacher-student relationship in this case? Expressed Care, Mutuality, Illustrations and Hip-Hop Mentality are themes that match this research question. As mentioned previously, HHBE in the classroom can be looked at to involve form within the classroom and not just content within the classroom. Form can involve sampling, layering, flow, rupture and performance during classroom instruction. Evidence of these in the classroom has been previously revealed throughout this chapter. A few more examples follow.

Mr. Wayne’s view that Hip-Hop is community oriented shines through in all of the data. Specifically, he organizes his students to work in ‘ciphers’ as he calls it. A cipher in Hip-Hop culture involves people gathered in a circle to watch people rap and display their skills. It can also be used to enclose a circle around people B-Boying. Mr. Wayne’s ciphers are used for working on group project. During one observation, I watched how the ciphers were formed and also noticed that some students chose not to be included in these ciphers. For example, I observed:

> When the bell rings to begin class, Mr. Wayne gives the assignment for the day. ‘Ok you guy will be working in your groups to finish your projects. Get into your
ciphers and let’s get it going.’ Students are getting into their ciphers and some are grabbing Chrome books. Mr. Wayne further explains, ‘You will have 20-25 minutes to work on your projects today, then we will continue reading out of our novel.’ Of the 21 students present today, 4 are using Chrome books in a cipher near the windows, 5 are sharing the two computers at the back of the room, and 4 are sharing the two computers in the front of the room. Six students are working in two ciphers at desks. The students working at the desks are working on poster boards. Mr. Wayne has given students an option of completing their projects as poster boards or Power Point presentations. Theo is in school today and he is working by himself. Pam was also working by herself at her desk (observation, April 25, 2016).

He often uses Hip-Hop aesthetics in his classroom to facilitate understanding and engagement, promote mutuality and build relationships in his class. In the interview, the teacher described Hip-Hop as “life” and therefore is very comfortable using it as a relatable context. Likewise, during observations, I noticed that both students and teachers appear to be comfortable with pop culture and Hip-Hop discussions. In focus group data, students expressed that they enjoyed being able to have these kinds of conversations in Mr. Wayne’s classroom. They explained that it made them like him as a teacher. These discussions, easily grow and usually allow for many students to participate in the conversation. For instance in one observation, at the end of class, Mr. Wayne brought up a current event:
Mr. Wayne says, ‘OK, let’s put your computers away.’ Students begin putting Chrome books into the laptop cart as class is wrapping up. Mr. Wayne then asks me if I heard about Prince (pop star Prince had just recently passed away). Tommy chimes in, ‘Oh yeah, I heard about that. How did he die?’ Freddie interjects, ‘I heard it was an overdose.’ Still another students speaks out, ‘My mom said it was a heart attack. And she loves Prince. She was so sad.’ Jaleesa says, ‘They were showing his videos the other day.’ Kimberly busts into the conversation, ‘Has anyone seen the new Beyonce video?’ Cole exclaims, ‘I like Future!’ Another student mentions that Drake and Future are coming to this city for a concert. Several students chime in, expressing interest in going to the concert. Tommy interjects, ‘I really enjoy Drake. He actually says something in his rhymes.’ Mr. Wayne chimes into the conversation saying, ‘I am not a huge Drake fan a huge drake fan.’ There is more conversation as the bell rings for the next class, and students head to the door (observation, April 25, 2016).

Mr. Wayne often allowed flow in his classroom by creating a sense of continuity and rhythmic motion. Meaning, oftentimes, his students were able to freely express themselves and their ideas to him. In the above-mentioned scenario, Mr. Wayne allows his students to freely discuss issues and ideals important to them. He would then take these issues that students often spoke about and turn it into something they could relate to. During an interview, he explains why it’s important to remain current and relevant, stating:
The kids will be like Mr. Wayne, ‘Do you know such and such.’ and I will say, ‘You know I am not crazy about that song.’ But I get it. I had to play this the other night at the bar. To be a good teacher, you have to have some sort of relevance. You have to be current; you have to be relevant, or you become the old man. I don’t want to be the old man on the staff. And that’s why you are fighting with them. Sit down and listen to some [it]. Yeah sometimes it does suck, sometimes its trash. But a lot of the times these cats there is a feeling to it. I don’t think that all these dudes are putting something on an album just to make money. Some of them are, but I think these dudes are saying things in their own interpretation in their own lingo and they are saying something. Maybe your kids is feeling it. So maybe you should check it out a little bit (Teacher, interview, March 22, 2016).

As previously mentioned, there was even some time that dancing in the classroom was observed. This sort of rupture was oftentimes seen with a teachable moment that occurred within the classroom. In other times, Mr. Wayne would use a vignette to capture these moments and build off past stories from his life or another person that students could relate to. For example, Mr. Wayne uses the plight of the lead character of the book, *Of Beetles and Angels*, which the class was reading to help his students understand why they should do the right thing in school. Mr. Wayne explained that the main premise of the book is about a young boy who traveled with his family through war torn Ethiopia and eventually made his way to America. Mr. Wayne explained further that in America, the family had to deal with the stresses of being very poor and making it as immigrants in
this country. The theme of the book was the main characters realization of why his father always stressed the importance of having an awareness of one’s community and always reaching out to help others was the most important thing in life. The following excerpt is from observation data:

At the beginning of class Mr. Wayne is called outside to deal with a situation. When he comes back into the classroom, he appears upset at news he has just received. He instructs students that they will do silent independent work for the first 30 minutes of class. He then calls up a couple of students to his desk. He begins to speak to them as other students begin to pull out their assignments. After a brief moment of speaking with those students, Mr. Wayne begins to speak to the class. He says, “I am disappointed in some of you for all of the drama that is going on these past couple of days. Why am I hearing so many rumors and problems and fights about to break out? Haven’t we talked about this before?” He pauses for a moment, and picks up the book Of Beetles and Angels from his desk and holds it in the air. “What did Mawi’s father try to teach him when he was being bullied in school? Did he tell him to fight? No! He told him that you have to turn away from that foolishness. I need you guys to do the same thing! Don’t get caught up in all this nonsense!” (observation, April 25, 2016).

Mr. Wayne regularly uses old resources and makes them into something new for use in his class. Mr. Wayne often layered (or built from students prior knowledge about the rappers) these stories to facilitate understanding. During one observation, I witnessed
Mr. Wayne explaining themes from old novels by equating them to newer stories in pop culture about current rappers that students could relate to:

Gina is the Reader Leader today. She has chosen Freddie to read the first poem aloud. As Freddie is reading the poem, *Harlem: A Dream Deferred* by Langston Hughes, Mr. Wayne interrupts, ‘Alright, I’m going to take over from here and I want you to underline each word that mentions one of the five senses. But before we get into that, I want to make sure you guys understand why we are reading this poem. I remember reading this poem in high school when I was in an AP English class. I remember this poem caught my attention because I could relate to it. I didn’t like the Shakespearean type poetry because I could not relate. I like more modern poetry. I like poets that were writing more about the struggle. Like when you hear an artists like Kendrick Lamar. He is writing poetry right?’ Several students nod their heads. Mr. Wayne continues, ‘Kendrick Lamar writes about the struggle. That struggle could be something we may all experience every day. So when we read a poem like this, I want you to be able to see it’s very similar to what still goes on today’ (observation, March 9, 2016).

**Research question four.** What are students’ feelings toward Mr. Wayne who uses HHBE in the studied classroom? Data from the interviews, the focus groups and the observations were organized into a matrix. Themes of Expressed Care, Illustrations and Mutuality emerged as the most prominent with regard to this sub question. Students expressed a desire for a sense of empowerment in the classroom. The focus group data discloses that students notice Mr. Wayne’s attempts to make sure they are a part of
classroom decisions. Moreover, they are also very aware of how each teacher is different. Students commented that they approve of teachers making an attempt to reach them at their level. They made comments about Mr. Wayne in this case study that were similar to the following, “He helps me understand using Hip-Hop” and “He gives us an analogy of [a rapper named] Future and compares him to a character we are studying and it just helps us figure it out.” Data from the focus group also show that students enjoy their classroom experience with Mr. Wayne who is using care and working to build relationships in the HHBE classroom. One student commented that, “he gets us pumped and ready to learn.” Observation data found students singing, rhyming, jamming, having fun and joking in this classroom.

Conversely, the focus group data reveals that students also comment about teachers who do not take the time to try to relate to them. Students emphasize the difference in how one teacher interacts more with them than another teacher. As previously mentioned, during the focus group session, one student mentioned, “Some teachers just don’t want to deal with some kid or talk about what they care about.” Still another student divulges, “Mr. Wiggles doesn’t listen to our style of music…he just gives us work to do; but Mr. Wayne is more interactive, he does more.”

In accordance with student feelings toward the teacher, I wanted to gain insight on how the use of HHBE and care in the classroom to build relationships had any effect on these students level of engagement. As previously discussed in Chapter Three, to inform this insight, I used the Jones Relationship Model to gauge the level of engagement based
Table 3 - The Jones Relationship Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Present in the class?</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 0. Isolated</td>
<td>Students feel significant isolation from teachers, peers, or even parents. Students lack any emotional or social connection to peers and teachers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>&quot;I just prefer to keep to myself&quot;; &quot;he's just been disconnected&quot;; &quot;I could work with other people I just choose not to&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1. Known</td>
<td>Students are known by others and are frequently called by name. Teachers know students and their families, interests, aspirations, and challenges. Students are known by their peers; with whom they interact in school.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>&quot;he talks to my mom all the time&quot;; &quot;when you earn their trust, you earn their homes trust&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2. Receptive</td>
<td>Students have contact with peers, parents, and teachers in multiple settings. Teachers exhibit positive behaviors of &quot;being there&quot; that show genuine interest and concern.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>&quot;he has done things outside the class that shows me he cares about me&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3. Reactive</td>
<td>Teachers, parents, and peers provide help to students when requested, but support may be sporadic and inconsistent among support groups.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mr. Wayne recalled a time when he was upset at Theo’s lack of effort; &quot;when he is rude to other teachers, we crackdown&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 4. Proactive</td>
<td>Others take an active interest in a student’s success. Teachers take initiative to show interest and provide support. Students and others express verbal commitment for ongoing support and validate this commitment with their actions.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;he helps me understand using hip-hop&quot;; &quot;he talks to me in a way I get&quot;; &quot;he told me, I’m not about to let you fail&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5. Sustained</td>
<td>There is extensive, ongoing, pervasive, and balanced support from teachers, parents, and peers that is consistent and sustained over time.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;my favorite part is when he allows us to help out in class&quot;; &quot;he makes me feel like I belong&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 6. Mutually Beneficial</td>
<td>Positive relationships are everywhere and commonplace in the way that students, teachers, and parents interact and support the student as learner.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table uses levels to describe the learning relationship of students with a range of isolated to a mutually beneficial relationship for both the student and the teacher.

Evidence of each level except Level 6, mutually beneficial is observed or mentioned in focus group data. These results represent how students felt toward the teacher.

Subsequently, some students in the focus group felt as if they were not a part of this classroom community. They mentioned that they did not care to be a part of this community and that it did not affect them. These students’ feelings were primarily discussed during the unexpected outcomes discussion of data and therefore, more will be discussed on these students’ feelings in Chapter Five.
In order to facilitate understanding of findings, I have provided a summary table of findings to address how the themes align with the evidence from the data.

Table 4 - Findings at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Brief Meaning</th>
<th>Characterized By</th>
<th>Evidence from the Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expressed Care</strong></td>
<td>Represents instances when Mr. Wayne showed his students care and made sure his students knew they were cared for.</td>
<td>Emotions; Trust; Student Investment; Tough Love</td>
<td>&quot;I think [students are] an investment&quot;; &quot;I mess with all these [students]&quot;; &quot;I hold them accountable&quot;; &quot;I don't let people fail&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mutuality</strong></td>
<td>Represents the dependence that Mr. Wayne has for his students and that students have for Mr. Wayne.</td>
<td>Family references; Communal feeling within classroom; having a commonality between Mr. Wayne and students</td>
<td>&quot;[He gets me], he's not just a teacher&quot;; &quot;There has to be a commonality, some common ground&quot;; &quot;[I treat] my [students] like I'm a parent&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Illustrations</strong></td>
<td>Represents the stories and vignettes about his life experiences that Mr. Wayne shared with students. Also encompasses the use of examples and analogies used by Mr. Wayne to explain lessons.</td>
<td>Excerpts; Vignettes; Examples; Analogies;</td>
<td>&quot;[He's] a reflection of what I was as a kid&quot;; &quot;He gives an analogy of Future and compares him to some character we are studying and it just helps us figure it out&quot;; &quot;He helps us understand using Hip-Hop&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: continued

| Hip Hop Mentality | Represents having a communal attitude as evidence by Hip-Hop community. Mr. Wayne equated his philosophy of having a respect for his community to his association of Hip-Hop and endeavored to structure his classroom in this manner. | Community; Social Justice, Consciousness | "Hip-Hop mentality is a very communal type deal"; "I think Hip-Hop made me a very communal person"; "[I am] happy that you chose a project on social issues"; "[I want] you to be aware of social issues facing you today" |
| Instructive Not Punitive | Represents Mr. Wayne's focus on instruction rather than on behavior. While still enforcing consequences, punishment is not the first option of discipline. | Discussions; Pulling students to the side to discuss a problem; Trying to resolve issues first before punishing | “If you don’t have a pencil, I’m not writing your butt up”; “my expectation is not behavior first”; “if you make your whole classroom set up on punitive rather than instructive then [behavior] becomes an issue” |

Summary

In this chapter I discussed findings of the case study. The school demographics, teacher profiles and overview of the classroom climate, were all included with findings in order to facilitate an understanding of the data retrieved through Mr. Wayne interviews, observations and student focus groups. Findings, and patterns, were also extracted from the data. Further, a matrix was used to show how these patterns were condensed into themes. Finally, these themes were constructed to assist with answering the research questions for this case study.
School demographics and profiles of Mr. Wayne and class were given to ensure that all research data was kept in context. I did not profile each student or even a group of students separately because the focus of this study was about Mr. Wayne. The information on Mr. Wayne’s background and style of teaching allowed the reader to gain insights about this teacher.

The findings included: Commonality, Communal/Community, Emotions/Emotional, Examples/Analogies, Excerpts/Vignettes, Expressed Care, Family, Genuine Enjoyment, Hip-Hop Mentality, Instructive not Punitive, Student Investment, Toe-to-Toe, Tough Love and Trust. As these data primarily emerged, they were presented in the form of pattern codes. A concise description of each code was presented and I explained how the meaning of each was manifested in the data. The purpose of these descriptions was to promote an understanding of the boundaries of each of these codes. Within this data, several outliers were unearthed. These outliers included: students keeping to themselves and not caring about the class, other teacher’s philosophies and cussing. The data showed that even though Mr. Wayne works to express care and build relationships, not all students connect with Mr. Wayne or the class content. Further some students exhibit signs of not caring. How other teacher’s run their classrooms was a concern for students with respect to inconsistencies among varying classrooms. Data showed that cussing seemed to occur in the classroom quite often, rather it was from Mr. Wayne or students. This was an unexpected finding and may have implications about the class climate and was deemed to be important enough to mention.
Using the matrix, these codes were condensed into major themes in order to match them with research questions from the case study. The themes for this study are as follows: Expressed Care, Mutuality, Illustrations, Hip-Hop Mentality and Instructive not Punitive. Data from the focus groups, interviews and observations was used to support how these themes aligned with the research questions. During this discussion of findings, the data showed that Mr. Wayne uses care, mutuality and illustrations to build relationships with students. His Hip-Hop Mentality and Instructive not Punitive seemed to be genuine philosophies unique to Mr. Wayne in this case. Mr. Wayne used his comfort level with Hip-Hop to reach his students who also had the same comfort level. This commonality allowed Mr. Wayne to use examples and stories to promote understanding and engagement. The data also revealed Mr. Wayne’s approach to discipline as a focus on instruction and not behavior. In addition, a table for findings at a glance was included to illustrate the relationship for each theme to each research question and to provide evidence from the data. Finally, this chapter shares this information of how data in this study supports each theme and how they connect to the research questions. In Chapter Five, I will show how the data supports and verifies the literature review exhibited from Chapter Two.
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

As previously stated, the purpose of this research was to explore how teachers and students describe their experiences with relationship and care in an HHBE classroom. This study is rooted in theoretical framework of care and pedagogy of relation. Both theories have been significantly discussed and my aims are to uncover if they are intertwined in the observed classroom and how the teacher uses them. I also wanted to explore how students in this type of classroom perceived relation and care. Modes of inquiry for this study included a teacher interview, a focus group with a random selection of six students and classroom observations. As discussed in Chapter Three, the teacher for this study was chosen using a convenience sampling technique. This technique was most appropriate due to my prior knowledge of this teacher’s use of Hip-Hop in the classroom. Similarly, the student participants for the focus group were chosen using a purposeful sampling technique and were chosen based on observations and interviews with the teacher.

An analysis of the narratives from various modes of inquiry for this study revealed several initial findings, which underscored how relationships were formed using care in the classroom. Further analysis of these findings revealed the following five common themes:

- Expressed Care
- Mutuality
- Illustrations
Hip-Hop Mentality

Instructive not Punitive

A discussion of how these findings and themes address each of the research questions and how they coincide with the theoretical framework will follow in the subsequent sections.

In this chapter, I will include a discussion of the initial findings and major themes presented in the previous chapter. First, I will address each research question with respect to these initial findings and how they coincide with the theoretical framework of the study. Next, I will discuss the implications of each theme with regards to the theoretical framework. Finally, I will offer recommendations for teachers, principals, educator preparation and other educator professionals. In conclusion, I will suggest areas for further research.

**Research Question One**

How do teachers and students describe their experience with relationship and care in a Hip-Hop Based Education classroom?

Conclusions from the data collected from three modes of inquiry revealed that both the teacher and students in this case study described their experiences of relationship and care in terms of different emotions. Some of the emotions I observed were trust, joy, fear, anger, and frustration. The descriptions given by Mr. Wayne and his students paint a picture of their experiences during this study. For instance, Mr. Wayne uses terms like “toe-to-toe”, “tough love” and “trust” to describe his experiences of relationships and care with his students. Similarly, his students discuss the emotions that they feel in this classroom dynamic. They express similar emotions and also speak about their comfort
level in his classroom. For example, many of the students felt as if they could be vulnerable within Mr. Wayne’s classroom, and expressed times of sharing occurrences in their personal lives. Additionally, they discuss strong familial bonds with Mr. Wayne. Moreover, students mentioned trust as an important part of their relational experience.

The following is a discussion of Mr. Wayne’s experiences and a subsequent discussion of students’ experiences.

It was Mr. Wayne’s opinion that care was the most essential emotion with which to build relationships with his students. In fact, he attributes a large portion of his ability to forge positive relationships with students by showing them that he cares about them. He explains that the beginning of the year usually starts out rough. He describes his experiences during these first few weeks of school as having to go toe-to-toe with students. He talks about using tough love to begin to form and build these relationships with students in these early days of the school year. Continuing through the first several weeks, he speaks of building trust and finding a commonality with his students, which he uses to build a foundational relationship. Finally, Mr. Wayne wraps all of these together with a philosophy of focusing on instruction rather than behavior in order to build these strong relationships.

Mr. Wayne explained that the reason the beginning of the school year can be challenging is because a teacher must work to build relationships with a brand new set of students. Evidence of frustration is uncovered when Mr. Wayne speaks of the early months of building relationships with his students. He labels these periods as times he has to go toe-to-toe with his students and describes a painstaking process, indicating that
there are some hardships that come with getting student buy-in to his philosophy. Mr.
Wayne states, “I want them to obviously respect what we do, but with respect, I can’t just
say ‘you guys better respect me’. It’s something that’s earned. I think kids need to see
that too.” With this level of respect, he said that implementing structure was something
he felt would help the students later in life. Mr. Wayne further explains that sometimes he
must demonstrate that he is “not backing down” to the students in order to get their
attention and maintain structure.

In accordance with going toe-to-toe with his students, Mr. Wayne also mentions
that he sometimes must use tough love with his students. He professes that this is part of
his philosophy for discipline in his classroom and equates it to holding students
accountable for their actions. Explaining the need for a routine in his classroom, he says
that tough love is how he “keeps it real” with his students. In interviews, Mr. Wayne
spoke about having structure and discipline. However, he labeled his style of discipline as
non-controlling. Contrary to this, I did observe instances when discipline was strict and
this did affect the mood of the classroom. Other times, I observed punitive measures for
students who were not following guidelines.

Mr. Wayne’s method of discipline and structure is something that was
unaccounted for within the theoretical framework of Chapter Two. Implementing these
structured processes is not accounted for within the framework of Noddings (2005) and
Sidorkin (2002). However, it must be noted that some of the critics of Noddings point out
that the unequal relationship dynamic between a teacher and student may be the cause of
some of these early hardships. In fact, Sidorkin (2002) advocates dissolving any
authoritarian hierarchy of power within the classroom, while Noddings (1994) resolves that students must never be spoken to in a condescending manner. While Mr. Wayne was observed during a time of frustration, some could view his frustration as coercion. Sidorkin (2002) suggests that teachers should alleviate the amount of coercion used against their students. During observations, Mr. Wayne did use some authoritarian methods. It would seem highly unlikely that a teacher of a middle school classroom would never use any authoritarian methods, but both Sidorkin (2002) and Noddings (2002) advocate little to no use of authoritarian policies. However, maintaining structure within the classroom is of the utmost importance and no viable amount of learning could take place without some degree of structure. Of course methods differ on how to implement this structure; nonetheless, I believe that structure in the classroom is necessary.

In addition, tough love in this scenario can be construed in different ways. Mr. Wayne used it as a means to “keep it real” with students. During an interview, he also utilized this method in terms of gender and race, stating, “Black boys get it. White boys, I don’t think they do.” This comment suggests that Mr. Wayne feels compelled to be tougher on his black students as compared to white students. It can be interpreted as a black teacher that feels he must attempt to rescue these black boys since he too, is black. It also suggests that he feels that he can be 100% honest with his black students, whereas he may not be able to do the same with his white students. Race and gender are distinctions that are not discussed with respect to Noddings and Sidorkin’s theories. Yet these are everyday issues that teachers face in the classroom. Emdin (2016) suggests that
teachers should approach education for education’s sake and not to “save” a certain subgroup of people.

Trust was also another way that Mr. Wayne described his experience within the classroom. He worked to gain the trust of all his students and he took the additional step to build trust with his students’ families as well. Mr. Wayne speaks about being honest with parents when he says, “I always tell my parents in a conference, I won’t say anything to them that I wouldn’t say to you.” He felt that it was important to have trust with the students as well as their families. Trust is an integral part of Noddings (1994) ethic of care. She argues that trust is part of the moral obligation of caring in which all educators should engage. She also advocates for the building of relationships with the whole student and the student’s families. According to Noddings (2002) trust is also defined by a deeper appreciation of a democratic society. Bingham and Sidorkin (2004) describe this democratic process in the classroom as mutuality and link it as a tenet of the pedagogy of relation.

Students describe their experiences with relationship and care in terms of trust, comfort and familial bonds. Similar to Mr. Wayne’s perceptions about trust, the students believed that Mr. Wayne worked to build trust with them. They felt good about being trusted by their teacher. The incident when the student left the key to the laptop cart in his pocket and brought it back over the weekend is an example of the trust the student felt the teacher had for him. This student felt a sense of pride and he felt that his teacher could trust him. This good feeling was cosigned by other students who felt the same comfort level in this classroom due to purposeful actions by Mr. Wayne to make them
comfortable in various ways within the classroom. Conclusions from focus group data also shined a light on the students’ need to feel safe and secure within the classroom. Students also spoke out about how they felt Mr. Wayne was comfortable enough to show them vulnerability as well. These actions coincide with Noddings’ (2002) care ethic in that Mr. Wayne has built a trusting relationship in which both the carer and cared for are comfortable enough to be themselves around each other. In addition, students feel that they are safe and secure enough in their environment to quite possibly even let their guard down.

Through a dialogic process, Mr. Wayne encouraged open communication with students. As mentioned, he used Hip-Hop to start this dialogical process. Through this dialogue, he treated his students like family, including nicknames and terms of endearment. Oftentimes, during the focus group, the students described their relationship with their teacher as family-like. Students thought of Mr. Wayne as an uncle or even as a father figure. One student commented, “Mr. Wayne makes me feel like I belong…like I’m his daughter.” In this exchange of care between teacher and students, Noddings (2002) materialistic view of care shines through. Although Mr. Wayne is male, students still feel a parent-child bond with him. His views of using HHBE in the classroom strengthen this bond through trust, affirmation, care and relationship building. While Sidorkin & Bingham (2004) suggest that a teacher-student relationship can never be equal, similar to Noddings (2002), they suggest that dialogic process is a possible way to form a strong bond. Mr. Wayne used this family feeling to create an environment of care in which students felt close enough to him to refer to him as a family member.
Mr. Wayne’s philosophy of instructive not punitive was discussed in depth during his interview. Mr. Wayne commented that he did not set his expectations to “behavior first”. He stated that he would not write students up for not bringing a pencil to class. However, during observation, I noticed several times when he did use punitive measures. Although the circumstances were more severe in these cases, it must be acknowledged that punitive measures actually occurred.

In addition, there were some students in this classroom who did not express these same feelings. Some students described their experiences of relationship and care with the teacher as unimportant. Some students felt more comfortable working on their own and working at their own pace. Mr. Wayne allowed these students to do so. Although, I observed him speaking with them at times, there was very little relationship building with these students. He did, however, allow these students to work at their own pace. However, it was almost as if, these students were working on the outskirts of his classroom community. Both Sidorkin (2002) and Noddings (2002) may argue that Mr. Wayne is not dialoguing enough with these students. By allowing them to exist outside of the community, these students are not being cared for. However, based on observation data and interview data, Mr. Wayne may not have a clear-cut solution on how to address students with these type feelings. This will be discussed more in the section on suggestions for further research.

Moreover, the data reveals that some of these students on the outskirts of his classroom community challenge the assumption that all urban youth in these types of classrooms will automatically embrace Hip-Hop culture. As mentioned previously, some
of the students in this case did not embrace Mr. Wayne’s Hip-Hop mentality. A discovery such as this lends itself to the idea that Hip-Hop is a mindset and part of a culture that is not just related to race.

**Research Question Two**

How does this teacher use care in his teaching to relate to students?

Mr. Wayne uses care to establish and sustain relationships with students. During this study, he made it clear that care was a critical part of how he built relationships with his students. He demonstrated this care by showing students that he was invested in them, treating them like family and through his philosophy of instruction first rather than punitive measures. Mr. Wayne used commonality, family and community to infuse care and comfort to build relationships with students. Once this relationship and trust was established, he continued to ensure that his students knew they were cared for.

I call this expressed care because Mr. Wayne made a strong effort to make sure that his students knew that he cared for them. He told them on a consistent basis that he cared about them. Moreover, students mentioned that they understood that they were cared for and appreciated it. Both described how care was an important piece to building relationships within the classroom. This thinking corresponds with Noddings (2005) “cared for” and “cared about” because, as she explains, a teacher should strive to care for the student as an individual. Likewise, students must acknowledge that they are cared about (Noddings, 2005). These students do acknowledge this, as will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs.
Interview data revealed that one of the most important philosophies of Mr. Wayne was that he actually demonstrated to his students that he cared for them and that he wanted to make sure they knew that he cared for them. He clearly states this when speaking about how he assisted students with their schoolwork: “I want my students to know that I want them to get it.” In addition to caring how they perform at school, he reinforces his care for them by reminding them to do something nice for someone in their house and paying attention to what is going on in his students’ lives. Focus group data supports this idea that students feel cared for. Several students voiced that they feel that Mr. Wayne did care for them based on his actions. Comments such as “he’s about me” and “he’s done things outside of class to show he cares about me,” are signs that students acknowledge that they are cared for. In addition, conclusions from the data reveal that he made efforts to invest in his students. Mr. Wayne made every attempt to ensure his students did not fail, not only in the classroom but at life. His effort for students to succeed outside of the classroom is in line with Noddings (2002) fourth key principle of confirmation. She advocates that teachers encouraged the best in their students.

Mr. Wayne’s efforts to maintain a classroom with a communal attitude, family like surroundings, and provide a comfortable space coincide with both Noddings (2002) and Sidorkin (2002) each of whom envision a classroom in which students have mutual authority. Both theorists advocate a fusion of mutuality and a reciprocal authoritative process (Noddings, 1994; Noddings, 2002; Sidorkin, 2002). Sidorkin’s (2002) belief is that students cooperate with a teacher when mutuality is present because they have a
commonality and there is trust in the relationship. Mr. Wayne worked to have both of these in this classroom. He used care to create this mutuality to strengthen relationships.

Mutuality is one of the most important tenants in pedagogy of relation. It states that through the dialogical process teachers and students share in the authority of the classroom (Sidorkin, 2002). In the foreword of Sidorkin and Bingham (2004), Noddings adds that mutuality is both beneficial for teacher and student by enhancing learning and the relationship for both. In this case, both student and teacher seem to benefit from this caring process. Mr. Wayne takes pride in the success of his students not only in the classroom but in life. His students feel this care and try to emulate it. For instance, his encouragement of students to do something good for a family member each weekend is a technique for him to inspire his students to care for others. In this sense, the cared for, are encouraged to care for others, a characteristic of Noddings (2002) ethic of care in which she advocates for the caring for all aspects of the world.

**Research Question Three**

How do teachers and students describe their experience with relationship and care in a Hip-Hop Based Education classroom?

HHBE affects the teacher-student relationship in various ways. Mr. Wayne views Hip-Hop as a catalyst to commonality with his students. Moreover, he uses some of the artists and narratives from Hip-Hop to drive themes of social justice and permeate a communal attitude. He labels this attitude a Hip-Hop Mentality and credits it with having a tremendous effect on his relationship with his students. Similarly, students attribute the commonality of HHBE to creating a sense of belonging in the classroom.
Mr. Wayne spoke at great lengths about the importance of having something in common with his students. He stressed that this commonality provided immeasurable opportunity for him to forge relationships. One of the ways that Mr. Wayne builds trust with his students was by trying to find something in common with them. This is one of the ways he used Hip-Hop as a common ground with his students. He clearly viewed liking the same music as his students as a positive occurrence and used it to his advantage. He called this advantage commonality and believed that it afforded him a steady means to build his relationship with his students. He stressed that there must be some “common ground” between he and his students. This coincides with Sidorkin’s (2002) call for teachers to give students “something else besides learning” (p. 39).

Having characteristics in common with his students allows Mr. Wayne to relate to his students. He believes that teachers should try to find common characteristics with students because this gives them a way to spark conversation when otherwise, there may not have been a clear starting point for conversation. Through observational data, one can see that he uses vernacular and various cultural inferences to facilitate this common ground. For instance, when Mr. Wayne brings up the death of a popular figure in American music such as Prince, it sparks conversation among the whole class. This conversation blossoms into a full-blown conversation about pop culture and music. Mr. Wayne relied on popular culture, but more specifically Hip-Hop culture, to help spur many of these conversations. The data uncovered how conversations about sports, video games and Hip-Hop often laid the groundwork for more personal conversations about school and home life. He uses commonalities not only for education but also as a basis
for relating to his students. This commonality coincides with Noddings (2002) idea of creating a sense of connectedness in order to show students that they are cared for. Mr. Wayne deliberately uses the culture of his students to create this feeling of connectedness and show his students that they are cared for (Noddings, 2002). This also suggests that he believes that Hip-Hop plays a significant role in his relationship building process. Using Hip-Hop as a building block to begin the conversation process allows him to build trust. He expands on why the connection can be made adding, “I see that some of these kids are addicted to their music and you know what, so am I. I still am addicted to my Hip-Hop.” This explains why Mr. Wayne can understand his students’ passion for the music. He has a similar passion to that of the majority of his students. He uses this passion as a tool and does not combat its presence, enabling his students to have an open mind to other concepts, constructs and ideas.

Some of these ideas include different social justice and social capital themes that he weaves in between lessons. Mr. Wayne is very clear that his ultimate goals for his students are life lessons. While their current academic studies are important, he explains, “To me the social piece is just as big as the academic piece.” This implies that he is interested in developing well-rounded students who can function in society. This leads to a greater understanding of Mr. Wayne’s teaching philosophy, which is that of having a communal attitude or a Hip-Hop mentality. Again, this is underscored by Aspelin’s (2011) and in Noddings’ (2002) work as both explain that teachers should work to help students develop care with others, as well as the environment around them. Building this social capital is a crucial piece of Noddings (2002) ethic of care because this is how
caring grows. She explains that caring moves outward and that we learn to care for those we cannot care for directly. She continues by adding that we as human beings learn how to care for others based on how we have been cared for (Noddings, 2002). Noddings (2002) theory on care is manifested in Mr. Wayne’s Hip-Hop mentality and communal attitude.

Mr. Wayne credits Hip-Hop with creating his communal attitude. He acknowledges that Hip-Hop is where he learned the lesson that no matter their differences, people could have one thing in common or one common goal. He stated that he misses the days that kids could “just plug in a boom box and it don’t matter what color you are.” Mr. Wayne uses this aesthetic from the Hip-Hop community and infuses it into his classroom. He likes the idea of students from different backgrounds working together for one common goal. Hip-Hop mentality is the style used to teach his students, using the same Hip-Hop aesthetic that was cultivated on the streets of the South Bronx in the 1970’s. This Hip-Hop mentality is in direct correlation to Petchauer’s (2015) second wave of HHBE because it harnesses “abstract concepts from Hip-Hop expressions,” instilling them into the classroom (p.99). Evidence reveals that Hip-Hop mentality maintains sensibilities from Hip-Hop culture to build relationships and demonstrate care within the classroom; thus, linking HHBE to relationships and care.

During focus groups, students expressed a similar message with relationships and care within this HHBE classroom. Students appreciated having a teacher who had similar interests in not only Hip-Hop, but also other aspects of popular culture. The students felt a stronger relationship with Mr. Wayne who shared things in common with them. One
student commented on how he felt about teachers who he did not have much in common, stating, “Most teachers, they don’t really like talk to us about Hip-Hop, sports or video games. I feel like they don’t want to talk [about things that interest us].” This statement is a testimony that these students want to discuss items pertinent to their areas of interest. Students feel closer to a teacher that is willing to have such conversations.

Conclusions from the focus group data also revealed that students felt a sense of belonging within the classroom. Students spoke of a mutual sharing of ideas in the form of conversations about Hip-Hop culture and aesthetics. Although it must be noted, not all students in the classroom felt that same sense of belonging. Some students within the focus group expressed feelings of not belonging to the teacher’s classroom community. One student expressed, “I don’t really care (if he supports me).” While it may not be possible to reach every student with this teacher’s method, an effort must be made to include all students. More on students feelings will be discussed in the next section.

Research Question Four

What are students’ feelings toward the teacher who uses HHBE in the studied classroom?

Students, for the most part, retained positive feelings for their teacher and his use of HHBE. As previously discussed, students felt and expressed several emotions toward their teacher. One of the most noticeable emotions was signs of enjoyment. In addition, most students also reported appreciating the teacher sharing himself with them in the form of illustrations, particularly, the teacher’s examples and vignettes. Conclusions from the data uncover that for the most part the tone of the classroom is usually enjoyable,
loose and fun. Students appreciate that Mr. Wayne can have fun with them. The fact that he can often be seen as laughing or joking with them makes them feel at ease. As one student recalled, “His sense of humor makes him cool with me. I can relate to that and it’s funny.” Comments like these reinforce how a fun loving attitude can create better relations. Mr. Wayne weaved Hip-Hop into spreading joy into his classroom. Students enjoyed him using Hip-Hop to spread some of the humor and joy into his room. For instance, students loved teasing him about not being able to rap. Other times, in order to maintain students’ attention, he would recite the lyrics for current songs because of the familiarity with the students. For instance, Mr. Wayne would sing the chorus to *Work, Work, Work* by Rhianna. Students commented on this, stating, “He kept saying that almost every day and we were cracking up (laughing). He turns a song into something to get us pumped.”

The joy of the students in the classroom is something that Noddings (2002) terms as joy over relatedness. This genuine enjoyment in the classroom coincides with her key tenant of demonstrating to students they are cared for and the students acknowledging that they are cared for. This receptive joy is seen in both students and teacher and thus fits with Sidorkin’s (2002) call for mutuality in the classroom. Therefore, the genuine enjoyment expressed by students during this study is one way that Mr. Wayne builds a trusting relationship with students.

The data reveals that students also felt an appreciation for Mr. Wayne’s commitment to share through vignettes, examples and life stories. Students appreciated the teacher using examples in the classroom to promote understanding and also sharing
his life stories with them. They commented that it made them feel closer to him and helped them relate to him. One of the key elements to these short stories was that they generally had to do with a life lesson. Rarely did Mr. Wayne share one of these stories to discuss an academic issue. Oftentimes, these vignettes were used as a teachable life lesson for students to take something away and apply outside the classroom. Students also reported approval of Mr. Wayne’s analogies within the classroom to help them understand academics. Students said they liked that he could use examples that helped them relate to the schoolwork they were doing at the time. One student explained, “He gives an analogy of Future and compares him to some character we are studying and it just helps us figure it out.”

Students reported that short excerpts from Mr. Wayne’s life helped them feel closer to him. It made him relatable. Evidence of Noddings (2002) key elements of care is present. Sharing his life stories and using examples to which students can relate are examples of Mr. Wayne demonstrating that he is committed to expressing care for his students. He affirms the care instilled in his students by encouraging them to be caring people. This is an important aspect of Noddings (2002) ideals because she believes the goal of caring teachers is to create caring students who care about the world. Mr. Wayne illustrates that he has a similar viewpoint because he shares these stories to help his students make better life decisions.

However, there were a few exceptions, as some students did not feel like they were a part of the communal classroom. For example, the students who mentioned that they felt more comfortable working by themselves stated in focus groups that they did not
care to feel like they belonged. Mr. Wayne did not mention these students in his interviews. During observations, he did not appear to have much interaction with these students either. It appeared that he gave these students their space as long as they were working. These students’ feelings, while not the feelings of the majority of students in the class must be reported. While much of the evidence reveals that many of the students in the class felt they had a good relationship with the teacher, the evidence also uncovers that some students did not.

As previously discussed, I was also interested in gaining insight on student engagement in this classroom. I used the Jones Relationship Model to assess student engagement in the classroom. Specifically, I was interested in learning about the connection between a teacher using HHBE to exhibit care and build relationships and student engagement (Jones, 2008). Conclusions from the data support the idea that engagement is closely aligned with the relationship between the teacher and the student. The teacher in this study demonstrates several of the characteristics for support of students illustrated in Jones’ model. While there are signs of some students exhibiting Level 0 of the Jones model, the majority of students showed evidence of higher levels of learning relationships.

Jones’ (2008) highest level, mutually beneficial, is the goal of Noddings (2002) because it is the level in which the teacher is modeling, dialoguing, and committing the affirmation of care in his students. It is also the goal of Sidorkin’s (2002) pedagogy of relation because a mutually beneficial classroom preserves polyphonic authority and creates a more democratic classroom. The data supports Jones’ (2008) belief that
achieving a mutually beneficial level with every student in the class may be unattainable. Evidence of a sustained relationship was found with at least two students in this class. The fact that not all students in the classroom exhibit the highest levels of learning relationships attest to the difficulty of building strong relationships with every student in the class. It also raises questions as to whether this goal is attainable in a classroom of so many students.

**Discussion and Implications**

The previously discussed research questions all coincide with the theoretical frameworks of this study. While the findings from this study cannot be considered conclusive, they are worthy of further examination and discussion. A discussion of themes and their implications follows.

**Expressed care.** To reiterate, expressed care in this case study represents the teacher’s willingness to find things in common with his students and subsequently use a communal attitude in his classroom philosophy. Mr. Wayne similarly mentioned that a sign of showing students that he cared was his commitment to assure that his students did the right thing. He commented that finding things in common with his students allowed him to break through barriers and allowed for trust to pour into the relationship. He incorporated care with his Hip-Hop mentality by offering students a chance to be a part of the classroom community. Although, the majority of the students acknowledged they felt cared for, there were some students who did not feel that they were a part of that community. Regardless, Mr. Wayne intently made an effort to make sure that all students understood and acknowledged that he cares for them. Admittedly, even the students in
the focus group who did not feel like they were a part of the community had to confess a sense of feeling cared for.

Mr. Wayne employs Noddings (2002) key care components within his classroom using HHBE as his major approach. First, evidence of Noddings (2002) fundamental tenants of ethic of care, primarily that the students are cared for and that they acknowledge that they are cared for, are present within this classroom. Second, the four key components of her philosophy; modeling care in the classroom, allowing for “open-ended…and genuine dialogue”, a commitment to producing people who care for others, and the affirmation and encouragement of the best in students are also present within the classroom (Noddings, 2002, p. 23). Mr. Wayne uses HHBE to initiate and facilitate dialogue with his students. Students are also encouraged to perpetuate dialogue with the teacher. He also models care for his students in an effort to convince them to use care themselves with others. He hopes for the best in his students, citing views from HHBE to help tie in social justice themes. The intersection of these key elements poses the conclusive viewpoint that the aesthetics of HHBE retain at least a part of care tenants.

**Mutuality.** As aforementioned, mutuality is a concept that Sidorkin (2002) argues should be a goal of educators. However, due to an imbalance of power in the teacher-student relationship, true mutuality may be difficult to attain. A key point from Sidorkin’s research is that “teachers have very little [control] over students until they create [a] personal relationship with the latter” (Sidorkin, 2002, p. 5). He then suggests that a teacher use polyphonic authoritative approach in which the teacher transfers power to the
students in order to give them a voice. Thus, through polyphonic authority, mutuality is created.

Conclusions garnered from this study determine that a polyphonic approach may be difficult to achieve. Through commonality, feelings of family, community and comfort, Mr. Wayne worked to create a feeling of mutuality. I observed Mr. Wayne seeking a common ground with which to create relationships and I observed him making an effort to depict his classroom as a community. It is important to note that this emerging finding speaks to Mr. Waynes’ ideas of what he has in common with students in order to facilitate relation and how his students view this commonality. He worked to create a communal atmosphere for his students in the classroom as well as trying to prepare them to be global citizens. He also worked to achieve a sense of family and give his students a sense of family in the classroom. All of these traits led me to conclude that he was working toward a sense of mutuality. However, as evidenced in the Jones Relational model, Mr. Wayne was not able to realize full mutuality in the classroom. One of the causes may be that he was never able to reach true polyphonic authority in the classroom.

**Illustrations.** Conclusions from the data revealed that Mr. Wayne shared a collective of examples, analogies, excerpts and vignettes from his life with the students in his class. His use of this collective was consistent and purposeful. I called this entire collective “illustrations” because he painted a picture that made his viewpoint clear and relevant for students. Using illustrations is a means to clarify or demonstrate care to students. Additionally, using illustrations can help sustain relationships. As mentioned in
Chapter Two, Sidorkin (2000) theorizes that relationships always involve some aspect of emotion, attitude and past history. Evidence of all of these is recognized in the data evolving from this study.

Mr. Wayne employed a Hip-Hop mentality and enacted pieces of HHBE second wave within his classroom. Illustrations in the classroom are the embodiment of performance for a teacher. When he uses an example or an analogy to help explain an academic concept, Mr. Wayne takes it a step further by connecting the academic concept to something to which the students can relate, thus, creating an avenue for understanding with a thorough explanation. When the students make this connection, it allows them to put their own meaning to his concept and makes the material more relatable to them. In a similar fashion, the excerpts and vignettes connect Mr. Wayne to his students because he is being personal and transparent with his students. This transparency supports authentic and genuine care and his students noticed this and felt cared for.

While some may see these side conversations as disparaging from instructional time, I argue that these illustrations are necessary to build a strong relationship with students. These illustrations and conversations with students eventually facilitate classroom instruction in the forms of discipline and behavior management. Moreover, these precepts align with Noddings’ (2002) ideals of care because of their transparency. Her argument that care is a basic moral tenant coincides with this use of illustrations to provide greater understanding.

**Hip-Hop mentality.** While some have used the term Hip-Hop mentality as a negative precursor to the Hip-Hop nation (Davey D, n.d.), the teacher in this study used it
as a term of strength and resilience. By Hip-Hop mentality, I mean build from what you already have to create something new. In other words, the teacher should use past knowledge of his students and layer this knowledge to form lasting relationships that are based on care. Hip-Hop was born out of a need for inner-city youth in the hardest hit socio-economic area of the South Bronx to be creative. This creative energy burned brighter than their impoverished setting and thus they came up with a way to create music with no instruments. DJ’s created music by taking two turntables and records and repeating the break of a song. Mr. Wayne lived by the same principal in his classroom.

His practice also coincides with Petchauer’s (2015) HHBE second wave theory since Mr. Wayne samples and layers based upon his relationships, and demonstrated care for his students based upon what he already knew about them. He took the time to get pieces of information about his students as he got to know them. He reused this information to help strengthen his relationship with his students.

**Instructive not punitive.** Another approach that Mr. Wayne used to break down these barriers was to have a classroom based on instruction and not behavior. In other words, he thought it important to base his classroom solely on instruction and not base it around the behaviors of his students. This philosophy coincides with Sidorkin’s (2002) idea that education is based on relations and not a function of behaviors. During interview sessions, Mr. Wayne explained that his expectations were not set to deal with behavior first, but rather to focus his efforts on instruction. However, during observations, there were many instances when Mr. Wayne did focus on behaviors. For instance, during Mr. Wayne’s interview, he specifically mentioned that he would not
punish a student who did not have a pencil. On a preceding observation, I witnessed this. However, when the student became antagonistic and refused to accept the pencil, Mr. Wayne, perhaps out of frustration, then punished the student by sending him to the office. While a contradiction from philosophy to one’s actions is not uncommon, it must be noted because it speaks to the difficulties of implementing a philosophy such as this.

As discussed earlier, flow and rupture in Hip-Hop generally have to do with the style of the emcee spitting his rhyme. The rupture refers to some change in this flow that makes the emcee have to change his flow. In Hip-Hop, there can be no rupture unless there is flow. As described in Chapter Two, flow in the classroom can represent natural processes. In Mr. Wayne’s classroom, his ability to use Hip-Hop aesthetics to weave care in and out of his classroom represents the flow. With emotions such as trust, love and joy, frustration on both his and the students’ parts were obvious points of rupture. Progression occurs through the lessons learned and the forging of stronger relationships.

Recommendations

With consideration to the findings of this study, some possible recommendations for teachers, building administrators and educator preparers are outlined. These recommendations are designed to help educators who are interested in building stronger relationships with students and extending a caring hand to students who may be a little more difficult to reach while attempting to build relationships.

For teachers. Conclusions from this study support the idea that a culturally relevant pedagogy such as HHBE can help teachers express care and build relationships. Teachers can use these methods to construct healthy relationships with their students.
This study also supports the idea of finding a commonality with one’s students. The goal is to relate to students. Teachers can cultivate ideas for building relationships by finding something in common with their students and using that to build relationships. Concepts gleaned from the study, including expressed care, illustrations and instructive not punitive measures, could be the subject of possible peer-to-peer mentoring. Caring teachers build caring relationships.

**For building administrators.** The narratives from this study include several possible recommendations for building administrators who are interested in increasing care and teacher-student relations within their building. The most distinct and obvious change is to promote a shift in focus within their buildings from a function of behaviors to a function of relations. While a change in philosophy such as this may seem radical, I believe a radical change is necessary. Administrators would need to promote professional development to facilitate this change. This professional development could involve encouragement of teachers to find some sort of commonality with each student. The use of polyphonic authority would offer students new approaches to learning (Sidorkin, 2002). Shifting focus in buildings away from behavior would take time and commitment, but the results from this study reveal that some students respond better to teachers who focus on relationships rather than on behavior. Teachers could be encouraged to use care to build relationships.

Another recommendation for building administrators is implementation of a care-based outreach program aimed at students who feel like they do not belong. These are the students in this study who did not feel as though they were an integral part of the
classroom community. A platform based on Noddings (2002) four key components of care is one possible approach. Professional development based on modeling and dialoguing with students would be a possible catalyst for this program. To ensure that the entire building is working on one accord, teachers, counselors and other educator professionals who work with students could be trained on modeling care. Staff could be encouraged to try to find some sort of catalyst such as HHBE to build relationships using dialogue. Once these teachers are properly trained in modeling care, they should be encouraged to dialogue with students, allowing them to be central on all decisions in the classroom. Once this process is in place for a while, it should be extended to the entire school through other support staff. The goal of a program like this would be to infuse care throughout the entire building, which would in turn build stronger relationships.

As previously discussed, structure in the classroom is necessary. Building administrators could build from the idea of a care-based program to facilitate new ways to implement discipline and structure policies. One of the biggest challenges for teachers is implementing structure and discipline in the classroom. Using evidence from this study, I would recommend building administrators organizing a team of teachers to assess their student clientele in order to determine the best way to organize discipline using a caring approach. While there are always exceptions to the rule, as evidenced in this study, most students will respond respectfully to attempts at discipline when they are wrapped in care. Efforts should be made to focus on the child with regard to discipline. For instance, students could be placed into mentor groups within the school. Each teacher would have several students to mentor. Mentees could be chosen based on the teacher’s
commonality with students (i.e. Hip-Hop, sports or video games). Throughout the school year, the first line of discipline could be a student’s mentor rather than a building administrator. The logic behind this is having the student speak with someone whom they have a relationship and who may have a better chance at reaching them on their level. An approach such as this follows Noddings (2002) “carer” and “cared for” tenant, focusing structure and discipline on relationships rather than the behavior of the student.

For educator preparation. As mentioned in the last section, professional development would be needed to begin a shift in thought with personnel already teaching in the classroom. At the college level, a change in focus may be easier to implement. Sidorkin (2002) insists that coercive, zero-tolerance policies have been used as the norm for maintaining order in the classroom. Teaching future teachers to focus on building relationships with students as opposed to managing behavior in the classroom could be a radical yet palpable change.

Implanting the idea to use care to build relationships in the mind of a future teacher could allow them to build strong relationships with their future students. Future teachers should be taught Noddings (2002) key concepts of modeling, dialogue, commitment and affirmation. They could be taught to use these simple aspects of care to build strong relationships with their students. Teachers could be given tactics for infusing Sidorkin’s (2002) mutuality into their classroom philosophy to help drive home the idea of allowing students to have voice in the classroom. Scholars agree that using Hip-Hop culture in the classroom can vastly improve student empowerment (Irizarry, 2009; Travis & Deepak, 2011; Travis, 2013). In a study, Irizarry (2009) found that drawing from Hip-
Hop culture can significantly “improve teaching practices [by] positively influencing learning opportunities for urban youth” (p. 489). Further, he suggests that educators “be (come) a member of the community” in which [they] teach in order to build [relationships] with their students (Irizarry, 2009, p. 489). Strategies, such as HHBE can be taught as a possible method to build relationships. The classroom as a novel approach is a possible method of implementation for these teachers (Sidorkin, 2002). They could use these approaches to learn to mitigate coercion once they have become teachers.

**Suggestions for Further Research**

A difficult notion for some teachers may be where to start with building relationships with students. One of the most important aspects to note is that this may be the first generation of young people that enjoys the same genre of music as their parents. For example, in this case, although Hip-Hop music has changed in the last forty years, it is still similar in its basic design. It is still hard drums, rhythm and rhyme. Mr. Wayne loves the same style of music that his students love and he uses that commonality to further his relationships with his students. The possibilities for using this cross collateral cultural phenomenon are endless in that it affords teachers to have a starting point with students. One possible area for further research is the study of other forms of culturally relevant pedagogy such as video game culture, skateboard culture, comic book culture, etc. The idea of teachers discovering a student’s interest and matching it with their own is not a novel idea. However, the notion of actively finding out interests of students to match to the interests of teachers may be a novel idea. Is this a method of sparking and building relationships transferable to other cultural interests? For instance, if a student is
interested in country music instead of Hip-Hop, will the themes revealed in this research still be applicable to that situation? This is a question worth asking because if it is, then another possible question is can teachers at the middle school level be matched to students with similar cultural interests?

It is important to distinguish how the students defined Hip-Hop and what they classified as Hip-Hop. Hip-Hop culture has become blended with what was once traditionally R&B (Rhythm & Blues) or Soul music. For instance, during focus group data collection in this study, one student listed Rhianna as her favorite “Hip-Hop” artist. When I was taking field notes, I thought that odd because I view Rhianna as an R&B singer. This is an important distinction. Students no longer see a difference in what is technically classified as Hip-Hop compared to other genres. The lines are blurred now as Hip-Hop has many variations including aspects from R&B to techno. Hip-Hop has changed over the last forty years. What a forty-year-old teacher considers as Hip-Hop may look very different from what a twelve or thirteen year old student may consider as Hip-Hop. With the current interest in HHBE, it may be important to understand how this shift in thinking affects the diaspora of Hip-Hop culture itself. One suggestion for further study is one which would gain an in depth understanding of the meanings of Hip-Hop to young people. Teachers using HHBE should be aware of what these current meanings are to their students. A study such as this may increase a teacher’s ability to connect and forge relationships with students. This could also provide a means to educate our students on the history of the culture.
As previously mentioned, there were students who did not share the same feelings as the majority of the class. For reasons that are not the scope of this study, they scored at the lowest level of the Jones (2008) model. These students claimed they did not feel any mutually beneficial care from their teacher and in some cases did not appear to be interested in building relationships. These are certainly the students that we want to reach. A question of how to reach them is an issue. However, in order to get to that question, one might study what are the causes for some of these feelings of disinterest. Could self-esteem play a role in their unwillingness to strive to build relationships? Are there socio-economic factors that must be considered? Perhaps these students multiple intelligences have yet to be stirred? One possible technique to approach this study may be the use of a hiphopographic method as outlined by Petchauer (2015). The infusion of a hiphopogrphic method could possibly lend itself to a future study of student isolation. This may be an important step to gain insight on why some students lack social and emotional connections to their peers and even teachers.

One final suggestion for further research comes from the question of achieving true mutuality in the classroom. As previously mentioned, the difficulty to achieve polyphonic authority may be the root cause of being unable to have mutuality with students. Again, Aspelin (2011) defines relational pedagogy as “theoretical discourse based on the [notion] of relationships as the [basic unit] of education” (p. 10). The shift from an emphasis on behavior to an emphasis on relations could make a difference for many students. But what happens once students have finished school? Of interest could be how, or even if, the teacher-student relationship is maintained once a student has
completed school. Has mutuality been achieved in the relationship? Since the student is no longer in the teacher’s classroom, how has the relationship dynamic been affected? A study such as this could give strong insight as to how deeply the foundations of teacher-student relationship lie and the resilience with which they last.

**Conclusion/Final Thoughts**

As previously mentioned, the problem I wanted to study is the issue of relations between teachers and students. I have always suspected that teachers who use students’ prior knowledge (Culturally Responsive Pedagogy) could possibly have a better chance at building and sustaining a relationship (Ladson-Billings, 1994). HHBE in its second wave is certainly more than just playing Hip-Hop songs in the classroom. I wanted to study if relations and care impacted student engagement and if they were embedded inside HHBE. The results of this study imply that relationships and care are deeply rooted within HHBE. I believe that HHBE is a powerful tool that can be used to foster relationships with students. I also believe that care is embedded within HHBE. The very use of Hip-Hop in the classroom implies care because it is the epitome of a teacher working with students’ prior knowledge. Moreover, in keeping with the second wave of HHBE, Hip-Hop could be used as a catalyst for forging healthy relationships with students.

This study suggests that using Hip-Hop in the classroom involves building relationships saturated in care. It has also uncovered the precepts of the communal power of Hip-Hop. The Hip-Hop Mentality is the inclusion of Hip-Hop to be welcoming to all persons, no matter their race, creed, color or religion. Hip-Hop as a culture is universal in
the sense that it has worldwide appeal. Using a Hip-Hop mentality in the classroom means that your classroom has a universal appeal. This equates to a teacher being welcoming to all students, no matter their learning style or socio-economic status. Moreover, this method is aligned with Noddings’ (2002) “four key components; which are modeling, dialogue, practice and confirmation” (Smith, 2004, p. 1). The practice of caring is modeled and discussed at length by the teacher and he encourages the best in his students.

Additionally, Sidorkin’s (2002) theories of relation are accentuated within this concept of Hip-Hop mentality. In Sidorkin’s (2002) ideal classroom, students are an essential part of the learning process. This coincides with Hip-Hop culture, as Hip-Hop is something that is done by its participants. They are actively engaged within the process. The ultimate goal of a Hip-Hop mentality is to be inclusive of all students. As stated before, Mr. Wayne wanted students to learn more than just academics. He tailored his classroom to teaching life lessons as well and often infused social justice themes into his classroom. The social justice piece of Hip-Hop in the classroom also corresponds with both Noddings (2002) and Sidorkin (2002) because both advocate for students to get something more than just academics from the classroom.

The student who approached me instead of the sixty-five other teachers and administrators in the building did so because we had a strong relationship. I cultivated this relationship over time. I showed her that I cared for her and she acknowledged that she was cared for. She would later share with me that she performed at a high level in my classroom because she cared what I thought about her. I did not base our interactions on
her behavior; I focused on building our relationship with trust and respect. We now enjoy
a mutually beneficial relationship since she graduated over five years ago. As I said
before, caring teachers build caring relationships. After this study, I can augment this
position and say that caring teachers sustain caring relationships.
References


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http://curry.virginia.edu/research/centers/castl/castl-measures


questionnaire (SESQ) and the teacher engagement report form-new (TERF-N):


http://www.academia.edu/1041557/Infusing_Culturally_Responsive/Instruction_into_Daily_Teaching_I


Westview Press.


can be done about it. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.


Appendix A1: Teacher Consent

Ohio University Consent Form
Teacher Consent

Title of Research: A Case Study of Teacher-Student Relationship

Researcher: Jason Rawls

You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Explanation of Study

This study is being done because I am studying the teacher-student relationship in the classroom. The purpose of this study is to find out if the teacher in this classroom builds relationships with students and to find out if the students feel that there is a relationship between them and the teacher. I will observe this classroom over the course of a quarter. I will randomly ask 6-8 students to participate in a focus group so that I may ask opinions about events in the classroom.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to interview with the researcher at least three to six times (30-45 minutes each) and you will be asked to let me observe your classroom for one period over the course of one quarter.

You should not participate in this study if you do not wish to do so. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary.

Your participation in the study will last several class periods as part of the observation. You will also be asked to participate in three to six interviews at approximately 30-45 minutes each.

Risks and Discomforts

No risks or discomforts are anticipated

Benefits

This study is important to the teacher education community because it will allow us to see how teachers form relationships with students. The goal is to understand how we can form positive relationships with students to ensure that they are engaged in school and even enjoy learning.

You may personally benefit by participating in this study by gaining insight on different ways that you form relationships with your students.

Confidentiality and Records

Your study information will be kept confidential. A digital audio recorder will be used for audio recordings. All data on recordings will transcribed within two to four weeks of being collected and will be stored on computer under a password in the primary
researcher’s home. No one other than the researcher will have access to the password or to the information. The research team will store the data in a secure location. Any data reported as research will not be linked to your identity. Audio recordings will be erased immediately following transcription. The researcher intends to have all recordings erased by June 1, 2016. Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

* Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;
* Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU;

**Contact Information**

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher, Jason Rawls jr271910@ohio.edu or 614-571-0819 or contact Dr. Dwan V. Robinson at robinsod3@ohio.edu or 740-593-9453

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Dr. Chris Hayhow, Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664 or hayhow@ohio.edu.

By signing below, you are agreeing that:

- you have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered;
- you have been informed of potential risks and they have been explained to your satisfaction;
- you understand Ohio University has no funds set aside for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this study;
- you are 18 years of age or older;
- your participation in this research is completely voluntary;
- you may leave the study at any time; if you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature__________________________________________ Date__________

Printed Name________________________________________
Title of Research: A Case Study of Teacher-Student Relationship

Researcher: Jason Rawls

You are being asked permission for your child to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want your child to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your child’s personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your child’s participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Your child is being asked to participate in this study because he/she will be observed during the regular classroom period. Your child may also be asked to participate in a randomly selected focus group.

**Explanation of Study**

This study is being done because I am studying the teacher-student relationship in the classroom. The purpose of this study is to find out if the teacher in this classroom builds relationships with students and to find out if the students feel that there is a relationship between them and the teacher. I will observe this classroom over the course of a quarter. I will randomly ask 6-8 students to participate in a focus group so that I may ask opinions about events in the classroom.

If you agree to allow your child to participate, your child may be asked to participate in the focus group in which your child will be asked to give his/her opinion about events in the classroom.

Your child should not participate in this study if he or she does not wish to do so or if you do not feel comfortable about this study. Participation in the focus group is strictly voluntary.

Your child’s participation in the study will one quarter as part of the observation. Your child’s participation, if asked to participate in the focus group, will last 30-45 minutes.
Risks and Discomforts

During the focus group process, risks or discomforts may include students being asked to comment on negative experiences in the classroom. The researcher will ensure that students feel absolutely no pressure to participate and students will be made aware that they may stop the focus group process if at any time they feel uncomfortable. In order to ensure this comfort, students will not be asked any negative questions in the presence of the teacher. The focus group will take place in a separate room within the school.

Benefits

Your child’s grade will not be benefitted by participating and it will not be harmed by not participating.

Confidentiality and Records

Your child’s study information will be kept confidential. A digital audio recorder will be used for audio recordings. All data on recordings will transcribed within two to four weeks of being collected and will be stored on computer under a password in the primary researcher’s home. No one other than the researcher will have access to the password or to the information. The research team will store the data in a secure location. Any data reported as research will not be linked to your identity. Audio recordings will be erased immediately following transcription. The researcher intends to have all recordings erased by June 1, 2016. Also, if your child is chosen for the focus group part of the study, other children may not keep your child’s information confidential.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your child’s study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

* Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;
* Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU;

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher, Jason Rawls jr271910@ohio.edu or 614-571-0819 or contact Dr. Dwan V. Robinson at robinsod3@ohio.edu or 740-593-9453

If you have any questions regarding your child’s rights as a research participant, please contact Dr. Chris Hayhow, Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664 or hayhow@ohio.edu.
By signing below, you are agreeing that:

- you have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered;
- you have been informed of potential risks to your child and they have been explained to your satisfaction;
- you understand Ohio University has no funds set aside for any injuries your child might receive as a result of participating in this study;
- you are 18 years of age or older;
- your child’s participation in this research is completely voluntary;
- your child may leave the study at any time; if your child decides to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to your child and he/she will not lose any benefits to which he/she is otherwise entitled.

Parent Signature________________________ Date________

Printed Name________________________

Child’s Name________________________
Appendix A3: Minor Assent

Ohio University Minor Participant Student Assent

My name is Jason Rawls, graduate student from Ohio University. I am trying to learn about teacher and student relationships. I am also interested in learning how students feel about their relationship with their teachers. If you are interested, I would like to watch your classroom over the course of one quarter.

You may be chosen at random to share your feelings about this class in a focus group with some of your classmates. An audio recording device will be used to record our conversation. All data on recordings will be stored on computer under a password in my home. Only I will have access to the password or to the information. I will store the data in a secure location. Audio recordings will be erased immediately following the end of this study. I will have all recordings erased by June 1, 2016.

There may be some risks associated with your participation in this study. It may be difficult for you to share your personal feelings with a person that you do not know. Also some of the questions may make you feel uncomfortable if they bring back memories of negative events. **If at any time you feel uncomfortable during our interview please inform me. You can stop the interview at any time.**

Please understand that other people will not know that you are in my study because names or other identities will not be used. No one will know who is who.

Your parents or guardian will have to say it’s OK for you to be in my study. **If you are chosen to be in our focus group, you do not have to say yes.** If you don’t want to be in the study, no one will be mad at you, it is entirely up to you. If you want to be in the study now and change your mind later, that’s OK also.

**Contact information**

If you have any questions regarding this study please contact Dr. Dwan Robinson, 740-593-9453 or e-mail robinsd3@ohio.edu

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Dr. Christopher Hayhow about your rights as a research subject at 740-593-0664 or hayhow@ohio.edu.

My telephone number is 614-571-0819 and my email is jr271910@ohio.edu. You or your parents can call or email me if you have questions about the study or if you decide you don’t want to be in the study any more.

I will give you a copy of this form in case you want to call me later.
I have decided to be in the study even though I know that I don’t have to. Mr. Rawls has answered all my questions.

___________________________________________  ______________
Signature of Study Participant          Date

___________________________________________  ______________
Signature of Researcher             Date
Appendix B: IRB Approval

The following research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at Ohio University for the project listed below. This review was conducted through an expedited review procedure as defined in the federal regulations as Category(-ies):

Project Title: We Relate Because We Care: A Case Study on Teacher-Student Relations in a Hip-Hop Based Education Classroom

Primary Investigator: Jason Daniel Rawls
Co-Investigator(s):

Faculty Advisor: Dwan Robinson
Department: Educational Studies

Officer of Research Compliance Staff
Rebecca Cale, AAB, CIP
Shelby Bex, BS
Robin Steck, CIP

Approval Date 01/25/16
Expiration Date 01/29/17

This approval is valid until the expiration date listed above. If you wish to continue beyond the expiration you must submit a periodic review application and obtain approval prior to continuation.

The approval remains in effect provided the study is conducted exactly as described in your approved study. Any additions or modifications to the project must be reviewed and approved by the IRB (as an amendment implementation).

IRB approval does not supersede other regulatory requirements, such as HIPAA, FERPA, PPRA, etc. Adverse events/unanticipated problems must be reported to the IRB promptly.
Appendix C: Teacher Interview Questions

Instructions to Teacher:
For the next hour or so, I will be asking you some questions about your relationship with your class and about other relationships in your life. You may find some of the questions to be personal. Just let me know if you don’t want to answer, and we’ll go on to another. We are interested in your story about your relationship with name. As you know, we know a lot about children, but we’d like to know more about teachers’ relationships with children and other significant people in their lives.

Relationship with Child
1. Please choose 3 words that tell about your relationship with name. Now, for each word, please tell me a specific experience or time that describes that word. (Re-ask the question twice to get specific experiences. If needed, say, “like for fun”; tell me about a time when your relationship with name was fun.”) Go through each word separately.
2. Tell me about a specific time you can think of when you and name really “clicked.” (Probe if necessary: tell me more about what happened.) How did you feel? How do you think name felt?
3. Now, tell me about a specific time you can think of when you and name really weren’t “clicking.” (Probe if necessary: tell me more about what happened. How did you feel? How do you think name felt?)
4. What kind of experiences with other people do you feel have been particularly difficult or challenging (hard, tough) for him/her?
5. Teachers wonder about how much to push a child to learn what is difficult (hard) versus how much not to push. Tell me about a time that this happened for you with name. How did you and name handle this situation? How did you feel in this situation?
6. Tell me about a time recently when name misbehaved (probe for a specific situation). What happened? Why? What did you do? Why? How were the two of you feeling? Is this the way things typically work out?
7. Tell me about a time when name was upset and came to you? What happened? Why? What did you do? Why? How were the two of you feeling? Is this the way things typically work out?
8. What gives you the most satisfaction of being name’s teacher? Why?
9. Every teacher has at least occasional doubts about whether they are meeting a child’s needs. What brings this up for you with name? How do you handle these doubts? Do you ever think about name when you are at home? What do you think about?
10. How do you and name communicate about his/her need for independence or for help? What does name do to communicate his/her need? What do you do?
11. What is your relationship like with name’s family?

Adult Relationships
Now, I’d like to ask you about your adult relationships. First, I’ll ask you about your relationships in school.

12. How would you describe your relationships with the adults at (name of school)?

13. Tell me about your relationship with one of your teachers when you were a child.


Why use Hip-Hop?

14. Tell me about your childhood. How did you become involved with hip-hop? What was your introduction to hip-hop?

15. Explain how you were chosen or how you elected to teach this Hip-hop based education class.

16. Describe your style of teaching in this Hip-hop Based Education class.

17. Describe how you introduce a typical lesson in your Hip-hop Based Education classroom. Do you feel that using hip-hop in your class allows you to connect to your students?
Appendix D: Focus Group Questions - Students

Researcher will say the following to the students in the focus group:

“You have been chosen to share your feelings about this class in a focus group with some of your classmates. An audio recording device will be used to record our conversation. If at any time you don’t want to be in this focus group, no one will be mad at you, it is entirely up to you. If you want to be in the study now and change your mind later, that’s OK also. Your grade will not be benefitted by participating but it will not be harmed by not participating either.”

1. What does Hip-Hop mean to you?
2. How would you describe your teachers’ style of teaching in this class?
3. Describe a positive event that occurred in the classroom. What made that experience positive?
4. Describe a negative event that occurred in the classroom. What made that experience negative?
5. Explain, how has your teacher tried to build a relationship with you?
6. Have you tried to build a relationship with your teacher?

Second Set of Questions

1. Do you feel like Mr. Waddell works to build a relationship with you?
   a. If yes, please describe how he does this
   b. If no, explain how you “get along” with your teacher?
2. Tell me a time when you felt that you had earned a Mr. Waddell’s trust. How did you earn this trust? How long did this process take?
3. Do you feel like you have learned the material in this class?
   a. If yes, has the use of hip-hop helped this learning?
   b. If no, why do you think you have not learned as much in this class?
4. Describe a time when you were most engaged in this class.
5. Do you feel like your teacher IS HIP-HOP? Explain

Follow Up Questions

1. During one of my observations over the past few weeks, I observed many things in the classroom. Explain how you felt when…
## Appendix E: Coding Matrix Level 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Cycle Code</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Patterns</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;it's a reflection of what I was as a kid&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>interview</td>
<td>PATT - Excerpts/Vignettes</td>
<td>Illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;bring me a solution not a problem&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>interview</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;has to do things on his own time&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>interview</td>
<td>PATT - Invest in Students</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he cares about me&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he doesn't have anyone to mess with him&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>interview</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he doesn't come off like that to me&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he doesn't have that male connection&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>interview</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he gave me good advice&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Excerpts/Vignettes</td>
<td>Illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he gets us pumped up and ready to learn&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Instructive rather than Punitive</td>
<td>Instructive Not Punitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he gives an analogy of Future and compares him to some character we are studying and it just helps us figure it out&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Examples/Analogies</td>
<td>Illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he has done things outside the class that shows me he cares about me&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he helps me out when I be doing stupid stuff&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he helps me understand using hip-hop&quot; --</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Examples/Analogies</td>
<td>Illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he just don't give a f---&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he just wants to see us smile&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he makes me feel like I belong&quot; --</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Comfortable</td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;he makes me feel like I'm his daughter&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo</td>
<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Family</td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>&quot;he shows me respect and helps me with my work&quot; --</td>
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<td>&quot;he started crying when we watched a movie about back in the days, slavery&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;he will just start making it bigger than what it is and I get aggravated&quot;</td>
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<td>focus groups</td>
<td>Unexpected</td>
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<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<td>Mutuality</td>
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<td>Mutuality</td>
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<td>Hip-Hop Mentality</td>
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<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I can relate to that and he’s funny&quot;</td>
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<td>focus groups</td>
<td>PATT - Commonality</td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I can relate to their style of dress&quot;</td>
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<td>Mutuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I don’t let people fail&quot;</td>
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<td>interview</td>
<td>PATT - Invest in Students</td>
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<td>&quot;I don’t lie to him and he knows that&quot;</td>
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<td>so I do a lot of stuff for him&quot;</td>
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<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<td>&quot;I got 23 distinct personalities with that you have to find different ways of doing things&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<td>&quot;I hold them accountable&quot;</td>
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<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I just prefer to keep to myself&quot;</td>
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<td>Unexpected</td>
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<td>&quot;I mess with all these boys&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;I think it’s an investment&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;I treat my girls like I’m a parent&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Family</td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
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<td>&quot;I try to be nurturing&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Family</td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
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<td>&quot;I was like ok, walk up in my room anytime&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Trust</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;I'm not afraid to hear things about myself, I'm not easily offended&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Trust</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<td>&quot;I've learned that with a lot of these kids, it has to be on their own terms&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Invest in Students</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<td>&quot;if I can add hip-hop to the lesson,&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo interview</td>
<td>PATT - Comfortable</td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>it’s a very comfortable thing to me&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;if you make your whole classroom set up on punitive rather than instructive then it becomes an issue&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I’m not about to let you fail&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;it’s called tough love&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Instructive rather than Punitive</td>
<td>PATT - Invest in Students</td>
<td>PATT - Tough Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;kids don’t like teachers that don’t care&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;my favorite part is when he allows us to help out in class&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;rude to other teachers&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;she wants you to go toe to toe with her&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>in Vivo interview</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>PATT - Communal/Community</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;some teachers just don’t want to deal with some kid or talk about what they care about&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;students need time to socialize&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Teacher Z doesn’t listen to our style of music&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;that music was addictive&quot;</td>
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<td>in Vivo interview</td>
<td>PATT - Expressed Care</td>
<td>PATT - Instructive rather than Punitive</td>
<td>PATT - Hip-Hop Mentality</td>
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<td>&quot;there has to be some commonality,&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Commonality</td>
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<td>some common ground</td>
<td>&quot;they want these kids to submit and submitting is breaking someone's spirit&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;this is my passion&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;treat my girls like I’m a parent&quot;</td>
<td>in Vivo interview</td>
<td>PATT - Family</td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;we never seen him spit some bars, he will act goofy&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Genuine Enjoyment</td>
<td>Expressed Care</td>
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<td>&quot;we went at it at the beginning of the year&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Toe to Toe</td>
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<td>&quot;what it gets down to is some of the people here don’t have a clue what goes on at other schools&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;when you earn their trust and you earn their homes trust, that breaks down barriers right there&quot;</td>
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<td>PATT - Trust</td>
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<td>&quot;where did we go wrong&quot;</td>
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## Appendix F: Coding Matrix Level 2

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<th>Patterns (Codes)</th>
<th>Second Level Categories</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PATT - Toe to Toe</td>
<td>CAT – Expressed Care</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PATT - Communal/Community</td>
<td>CAT - Mutuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PATT - Genuine Enjoyment</td>
<td>CAT - Expressed Care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>