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BARRIERS TO WORKING WITH AFRICAN AMERICANS
AS PERCEIVED BY
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

Donald L. McLellan, B.S., M.S.,

****

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1998

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ABSTRACT

The major purpose of the study was to describe the perceived barriers that prevent Ohio State University (OSU) Extension Professionals from working with African Americans. The specific objectives included: (1) To identify barriers perceived by OSU Extension professionals regarding working with African American clientele; (2) To describe the personal characteristic of OSU Extension professionals and the communities where they live; and (3) To determine the relationship between the personal characteristics of the Extension professionals and perceived barrier to working with African American clientele.

The population for this descriptive and correlational study consisted of 19 Ohio counties with an African American population of 5 percent or greater as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990. A census of Extension professionals in the 19 identified counties was conducted (N=70). Usable data were collected from 55 Ohio State Extension professionals during June-August of 1998.
The results indicated that Ohio State University Extension professionals either agreed or strongly agreed that the following items were barriers to working with African Americans clientele: Feeling uncomfortable around; Failure to communicate with; Having racist views about; Not understanding issues that are important to African Americans. Lacking work experiences in impoverished community; Not having worked in a racially diverse community; Having no urban programming experiences; Being unfamiliar with ethnically diverse community needs.

Ohio Extension professionals also agreed that the following were barriers to working with African Americans: Having no African American friends; Not attending school with African American students; Not worshiping with African Americans families; Lacking an awareness of cultures other than one’s own; Having no formal education on African American related subject matter; Seeing negative portrayals of African Americans communities in the media; Not reading novels/books by African American authors; and Infrequent discussions on race related issues.
There was a moderate negative association between gender and community barriers. There was also a low negative association between gender and the cultural barriers as well as the educational barriers.

There was a low positive correlation between marital status and the educational barriers. There was also a low positive correlation between where the Extension professional resided and the racial barriers.
Dedicated in loving memory of my sister,

Deborah Marie McLellan
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The Cooperative Extension Service was first established as the result of the Morrill Act of 1862. In writing about the Morrill Act, Swanson (1991) stated:

The Morrill Act of 1862 (also known as the Land-Grant Act) was legislation passed by Congress during the nation's most serious social crisis. The legislation became the nation's most significant educational reform; it created an entirely new system of public colleges and universities. Such an action was a courageous act of faith in a country whose resources had been severely drained by war, whose unity was threatened by 18 states having already seceded from the union and in a country that already had
an abundance of public colleges and universities. The legislation was thought to be warranted by the severity of the social crisis and by the determination of Congress to create new types of institutions intended to be an escape from elitism, institutions designed to serve the previously unserved--the "sons and daughters of farmers and mechanics." This was soft legal language for what, in those years, would have been better understood had they been called schools for the working classes or the poor . . . It [the Act] said almost nothing about what to teach, how to teach or where to teach. It had a singular focus, namely, on whom to teach [italics added](p. 4).

Prior to the establishment of land-grant colleges, education was relegated to only the privileged classes whom were to be trained presumably for "leadership" roles. The land-grant universities opened many doors for the children of working class families. However, African Americans were yet to be considered equal under the constitutional laws which governed the country during this particular period in U.S. history and were excluded from the land-grant system.
Three years after the signing of the Morrill Act, President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation of 1865 that freed African Americans from slavery. A generation later, in 1890, the second Morrill Act was passed, which established "separate but equal" technical and agricultural colleges specifically for African Americans. According to the law, "separate but equal" was used to maintain segregated schools. "Separate was taken far more seriously than equal", (Berman, 1966, p.5) as cited from the Louisiana statute upheld in the Plessy v. Ferguson case 1896.

African Americans were not introduced to Extension work until the late 1890s with the help of Dr. George Washington Carver at Tuskegee and Hampton Schools of Agriculture and Technology. On the recommendation by Carver, Thomas M. Campbell, one of the most promising students at Tuskegee, was hired by the U.S. government on November 12, 1906 as the first African American federal Extension agent in the United States. Yet, Campbell worked under the supervision of the 1890 programs and was never publicly linked to the Federal government programs. Campbell became not only the first African American
Extension agent, but also the first college-based agent in the South, and one of the first three county agents in the entire country (Schor, 1982). Schor reported that Campbell brought knowledge to approximately 2,000 people per month, both white and black, in the year 1906 alone.

Although the 1890 colleges received only minimal support from the U.S. government for the operation of an African American Extension service, conditions of separatism were maintained. Schor (1982) reported that special agent Seaman Knapp, who was in charge of the Farmers' Co-operative Demonstration Work for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, insisted on a segregated relationship with the 1890 agricultural schools and their agents.

The Cooperative Extension Service (CES) has focused much of its attention on serving the needs of predominately Euro-American male agricultural audiences and has excluded African Americans and other minority groups from its services. According to Houle (1959), CES Extension programs usually attract a homogeneous group of clientele. He also indicated that people with certain nationalities and certain kinds of religious backgrounds were more active.
in Extension activities than those with different nationalities and religious beliefs.

Today, unfortunately, little has changed in the kind of audiences that the CES has traditionally served. As supported by Warner and Christenson (1984), who argued that clearly Euro-Americans use Extension more than non-Euro-Americans and that out of all the racial/ethnic groups studied, African Americans were the most under-represented group among users of Extension programs. Ninety-four percent of Extension clients were Euro-Americans and 4% were African Americans; the remaining two percent consisted of Hispanics and Native Americans (Warner & Christenson, 1984). Osborne (1993) reported that the percentage of minorities remains extremely low in secondary agricultural education programs in public schools. He insisted that a higher percentage of minority educators must be brought into the profession, especially in leadership roles, if the Extension service is to reach a more representative portion of U.S. society.

Cano and Bankston (1991) reported that barriers, such as a limited knowledge of Extension programs, the images that Extension portrays, the absence of minority role
models involved in the programs, and the limited amount of advertising targeted at minority populations, determined the amount of minority participation in Extension programs. Warner and Christenson (1984) contended that, in general, Extension has not been guilty of treating participants differently based on such factors as race, age, and gender. However, some individuals and groups may be excluded from participation indirectly because Extension programs do not relate to their needs (Warner & Christenson, 1984).

Recent demographic projections indicated that the racial minority population in the U.S. will increase from 21% to 40% soon after the turn of the 21st century (Ziegler & White, 1990). These projections warrant attention since a low number of African Americans are presently being served by the CES.

Approximately one in three Americans will be classified, according to the Census Bureau, as a Minority by the year 2000. "By the end of the next century there will be a new majority population in America - a majority of minorities" (United Way of America, 1989, p. 19). Allen and Turner (1990) indicated that in 1980, African Americans represented 11.7% of the U.S. population. Today, African
Americans comprise an estimated 12.4% of the U.S. population. Futurists project that in the 21st century, one-quarter to one-third of the U.S. population will belong to a racial or ethnic minority group (Allen & Turner, 1990).

Some areas in the U.S. are racially diverse, however many areas and communities are very much homogeneous in its make-up. Examining individual states' African American population percentages is important to ensure accurate reporting related to racial concerns. In Ohio, the estimated African American population will increase from 11% in 1990 to 12% in the year 2000 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1989). Recent demographic projections indicated that Ohio's African American population is 10.6% (U.S. Bureau Census, 1991).

Out of Ohio's 88 counties, 19 have an African American population of five percent and greater. More importantly, 39% of the total minority population in Ohio comes from one county (Bankston, 1992). Bankston also reported that Ohio's minority youth population would provide a significant pool of potential members for inclusion in the Cooperative Extension programs. The number of young people
belonging to a racial minority group has increased at a much faster rate than that of Euro-American youth. The 1990 Census Bureau predictions indicted that an estimated 17.8% of U.S. youth between the age of 5-17 years were Euro-Americans while an estimated 23.6% were African Americans (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1989).

The original mission of the CES was to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes (Morrill, 1960). Mincy (1990) reported that today's industrial classes are plagued by persistent and concentrated poverty, and dysfunctional behaviors. This small, but growing population living in poverty is disproportionately composed of African Americans and Hispanics (Mincy). Today, more than a third (37%) of African American children under 18 years of age live in poverty stricken, female-headed households.

. . . these children suffer health, nutritional, developmental, and academic deficits compared with other children (Mincy p.3).

Dyson (1992) agreed with Mincys' findings. He said that:

One-third of African Americans continue to live in poverty, and the poor ghettos continue to be victims
of modern progress, faring only slightly better with the ostensibly objective categories of social science and cultural criticism than with the vicious economic conditions that make their lives hell (p. 147).

Despite reports of poverty-stricken communities with large minority populations in need of assistance in the areas of food/nutrition, community development, and youth development, Extension's core audiences have remained the same. Extension clients have been predominately middle class. The clients have included middle to upper income, high school and college educated, white, married, employed homeowners. The study of use patterns has indicated an under-representation among Extension clientele of:

- the poor, single, divorced, separated/widowed persons;
- those with less educational attainment; the unemployed, retired, or students; and renters. The under-representation of nonwhites has already been noted. In short, Extension seems to reach the vast white, stable, middle segment of Americans (Warner & Christenson, 1984, p.66).
Problem Statement

The Strategic Task Force on Diversity (1991) indicated that barriers to achieving diversity throughout the CES still exist, especially in the midst of an ever changing populace. The investigators indicated that subtle "isms" and inequities were some of the issues that are often overlooked within the CES organization. As Warner and Christenson (1984) explained:

Agricultural advisories have tended to have pro-commercial farmer bias, home economics programs have emphasized the needs of families, 4-H activities and projects generally require at least a minimum level of monetary resources, and community development stresses the community self-help approach. All of these assumptions cause Extensions programs to be less useful and appropriate to some people than others. To the small subsistence farmer, the single parent, the low-income youth, and the public housing resident, the programs of Extension may seem discriminatory. Extension needs to be particularly mindful of the biases and assumptions built into programming decisions that lead to covert discrimination (p. 139).
The absence of effective and meaningful dialogue between African Americans and the CES has hindered the process of understanding ethnic and cultural diversity (Strategic Planning Task Force on Diversity, 1991). Because of the way Extension has defined its target population, as reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1980), CES has overlooked the differential effects of educational treatment of sub-groups within its target audiences. The U.S. Department of Agriculture cited this oversight by the CES as being the reason behind the unintentional development of the institutional, economical and racial discrimination patterns that now exist within the Cooperative Extension Organization. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (1980) reported that Extension professionals have not learned how to communicate the most constructive parts of the Extension experience, especially 4-H, to the needs of ethnic minorities and disadvantaged individuals.

Determining how to change the clientele emphasis of the CES organization has continued to be critical. Presently, the CES operates in 50 states and territories in the United States; and yet, client participation patterns
in their programs has continued to be the same. While the CES appears to be conducive to increasing the representation and participation of ethnic minorities in its programs, literature on the subject is limited and little progress has been made in changing the clientele. Past studies have suggested that the racial background and living environment of Extension's clientele are similar to those of the particular agent servicing those clientele (Houle, 1959). What are the perceived barriers which prevent Extension professionals from targeting African Americans as potential audiences for their programs? Does the racial and socioeconomic background of Extension professionals influence the groups they serve?

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the perceived barriers that prevent Ohio State University (OSU) Extension professionals from working with African Americans. Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. identify barriers perceived by OSU Extension professionals regarding working with African American clientele.
2. describe the personal characteristics of OSU Extension professionals and the communities where they reside.

3. determine the relationship between the personal characteristics of the Extension professionals and perceived barriers to working with African American clienteles.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for use in this study:

Perception

Perception is the awareness or consciousness of something or someone; it is knowledge that has been obtained through one's senses (Webster Dictionary, 1984, p. 224). Extension professionals' perceptions of some ethnic groups may act as a barrier to working with individuals whose origins are representative of those particular ethnic groups.

Barriers

Barriers are anything or anyone that prevents or obstructs passage or advancement of something or someone (Webster Dictionary, 1996, p. 48). Barriers may prevent some individuals or groups from gaining access to Extension programs.
Extension Professionals

An individual who is paid to work for the Extension organization in an Extension Agent position. The position might be full-time or part-time, with at least some contact with Extension clientele (Bankston, 1992, p. 11).

Limitation of the Study

1. The scope of this study was limited to Ohio counties with an African American population of five percent or greater. Therefore, the results can only be generalized to the 19 Ohio counties surveyed.

Basic Assumptions

Inherent to this study were three basic assumptions:

1) The Extension Service, like welfare administrations in developed countries, are apt to appear to be "blind to those most in need" (Dandekar, 1967, p. 61). Agent contact ceases before reaching the most needy and those least able to improve upon their conditions, which is due in part to: (a) complex concentrated objectives that are difficult to respond to without adequate assistance; (b) it is more costly to reach the very poor than those that do not fall into this category; and (c) in cases of government supported
services that are poverty-oriented, the programmers tend to treat the categories of disadvantaged instead of the individuals, offering only remedial assistance (Wilson, 1976).

2) The Cooperative Extension System (CES) should be viewed as "a diverse and multi cultural organization". The CES organizational values should be committed to, and embody pluralism as a long-term investment in the future. The CES should serve as a role model for achieving a pluralistic society (The Extension Committee on Organization, 1990).

3) Extension support comes from all taxpayers and not just those who use the service. "The future of the organization may rest as much with the nonusers as users" (Warner & Christenson, 1984, p. 84).

Recognizing that African Americans comprise a sizable portion of the total population and, therefore, should have an influence on the future of Extension is important. African Americans are also cost bearers and will have a stake in the allocation of public funds.
Significance of the Problem

The growth and emergence of ethnic minority groups into U.S. life are challenging society in general (Thomas, 1979), and the CES in particular. Thomas indicated . . . these ethnic minority persons bring with them a wide range of problems, issues and concerns, many of which are distinguishably different from those presented by clientele from the dominant culture.

Unfortunately, many counselors are having to encounter these minority groups without special preparation or training for counseling them (Thomas, 1979, p. v.).

These remarks are cogent in light of the growing polarity between African Americans and Euro-Americans (Slaughter, 1974). Slaughter indicated that it has become increasingly important that effective communication be established between these groups. Accumulated research suggests that equal access to quality integrated education is the most consequential racial issue currently facing the United States.

When communities see, as they most often do, the scarcity of people like themselves serving in authority roles in their respective communities, they become
resistant to someone outside their group, for fear of their concerns not being taken seriously or considered relevant to society at large (Nesbit, 1972).

The low numbers of African American agents could constitute a fundamental barrier to recruiting African Americans into OSU Extension programs and community activities. Nationally African Americans agents represents less than ten percent of the total Extension population. African American agents could help serve as bridges in fostering comfortable environments conducive to learning.

Slaughter (1974) suggested that working with African Americans would be easier if the educational organization's staff were more representative of the ever growing diverse population; however, being an African American should not be a determining factor in deciding whether to assist African Americans or not. All educators should be able to perform the basic human acts of acceptance and understanding (Franklin, 1991). OSU Extension program initiatives must be expanded to reflect the lives, interests, and cultures of all citizens. Equally important, is the ability of an Extension professional to effectively communicate pertinent information to diverse
audiences. This study should assist The Ohio State University Extension in servicing more African Americans.

This chapter addressed the background, problem statement, purpose and objectives, the limitations and basic assumptions, significance of the problem and definition of terms. The subsequent chapters will address the review of literature, research procedures, findings, and summary, conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews and summarizes literature based on what is currently known about perceived barriers to working with African Americans as identified by scholars in the areas of education and counseling. Many articles based upon personal experiences and observations by social theorists have been published that point out possible barriers to working with African Americans. However, few studies have been conducted related to OSU Extension professionals' perceived barriers to working with African Americans.

Understanding why someone would fear the unknown, unfamiliar, and unacquainted, and thus build up barriers to shield themselves from it is not difficult (Ignatiev as cited in the Utne Reader, 1994). Such barriers prevent educators in general, and Extension professionals, in particular, from working with African American clientele.
Evidence suggests (Parker, 1988), that educators lack the knowledge of cultural backgrounds, values, and basic issues that pertain to ethnic minorities. This lack of knowledge of minority cultures often:

. . . hinders rapport building, causes inappropriate problem identification, inaccurate treatment planning, incorrect interpretations, and in general causes erroneous conceptualizations of client issues (Parker, 1988, p. 5).

Improving racial relations in America is one of the greatest challenges facing our country today. Therefore analyzing factors associated with perceived barriers that prevent educators from servicing more African American clientele is important.

The bulk of the literature on barriers to working with African Americans has concerned itself with factors, such as race, communities, educational systems, and cultural awareness. Each of these topics will be addressed in this chapter. This chapter concludes with a conceptual framework for the study.
Race

So ardent is the discussion surrounding the issue of "race" in America, it is easy to forget that the concept of race is so intangible and somewhat inexplicit in its meaning (Utne Reader, 1994). This mostly vague descriptor, race, has made it very difficult for many to understand and for many more to explain.

Paton posited (as cited in Parker, 1988), that the lines that separate blacks and whites are myriad, filled with complexity and abounding with problems. He implied that many members of the majority population group often speak in paradox, "saying one thing" and yet, "doing the complete opposite." He also speculated that many members of the majority population group were unaware of their own perspective views and emotional ideas toward individuals that belonged to ethnic minority groups.

This lack of awareness unfortunately is a "major barrier to change and subsequently to improved racial harmony between African Americans and Euro-Americans" (Parker, 1988, p. 5).

An important key to the problem of race relations that exists between Euro-Americans and African Americans is
embedded in a poem by DuBois (1940) that reads: "The tragedy of the age is that men know so little of men" (Parker, 1988). Several theorists within the critical tradition (McLaren, 1990; Parker, 1988; Thomas, 1979), argued that it is virtually impossible to understand the behaviors and performance of economically disadvantaged and minority individuals without understanding their history as an oppressed group, their cultural frames of reference, and their everyday social practices.

In many situations (Parker, 1988), the rudimentary deficiency of awareness and subsequently the deficiency of positive reactions to specific cultural values and historical frameworks of ethnic minority clients have led to allegations that educators and other service professionals have failed to meet the needs of ethnic minority individuals. Thomas (1979) further added that some minority clients test Euro-Americans counselors to see if these counselors sincerely care about them and respect them as individuals. Such testing of Euro-American counselors by minority clients, Thomas argued, is probably due to the negative experiences that ethnic minorities have encountered with Euro-Americans for several generations.
For instance, Native Americans have not forgotten the many treaties broken by Euro-Americans. Furthermore, many African Americans have not forgotten slavery in the U.S. Therefore, many minorities believe that Euro-American counselors and educators of a "perceived oppressive system, cannot be trusted" (Parker, 1988, p. 29).

Many providers of counseling services also have negative feelings and attitudes toward individuals with ethnic minority origins (Parker, 1988; Thomas, 1979). These negative feelings and perceptions toward ethnic minorities impede the counseling process. The profession of service providers is grounded on mutual respect, acceptance, and belief in the clients' capability to resolve their problems. Thomas (1979) believed that curative conditions are threatened when counselors perceive the client as being inferior or when counselors have depressed expectations of clients capabilities to succeed.

West (1993) indicated that both African Americans and Euro-Americans must understand that racism and race are woven in American history and can never be eradicated without understanding that "race matters" in everything we do; everything we consider "American" (West, 1993).
West's sentiments are echoed by King (1996) who argued:

Race, we must conclude, is inextricably bound up in America. It is an essential thread in this country's demographic quilt. This reality is forever documented by the "three-fifths clause" in Article I, Section 2, Paragraph 3 of the constitution (p.12).

Locke (as cited in Slaughter, 1974) suggested that racism is one of the most prevalent barriers held by educators and counselors alike. The author hypothesized that because of the absence of common experiences between the two groups--phases, words, and gestures simply mean different things--the groups do not understand each other (Slaughter, 1974).

Gear (1992) presented another important barrier to working with African Americans. She said that because of the unique historical experiences, sociocultural values and norms that African Americans and other minorities bring to communities, they now expect to be accepted and respected for their contributions based on who they are, instead of assimilating and becoming what the organization wants them to be.
Most programs and services used in the counseling and education of African Americans communities often are unsuccessful. Beyer (1988) believed that once the agencies have identified the client needs, invariably the service system fails them; due in part by the service providers inability to understand the clients' cultural frames of references. As far back as the early 1900s, researchers believed that the profession of helping people should be guided by certain basic characteristics. These characteristics were: (a) understanding personal prejudice subjectivity, (b) accepting personal imperfection, (c) enjoying the means by which we live and de-emphasizing the end result, and (d) developing interests in people for the sake of the individual (Beyer, 1990).

Stereotypes

Answers to questions regarding barriers to working with African American communities are affected by common misconceptions of certain ethnic minority groups or stereotypes. Sue (1977) reported that stereotypes are the fixed biases held by individuals about other individuals of a particular group without considerations of that individuals' exceptional differences.
Stereotypes pose an intrinsic danger, represent apparent quandary, and are unresponsive to logic or experience. Knowledge that is filled with stereotypic attitudinal structure becomes transformed to fit the preconceived views or ideas of that individual (Sue, 1977). It cannot be said conclusively that stereotyping happens this way in every case, yet, several studies have suggested that many Euro-American educators and professional counselors are likely to inherit the racial and cultural biases of their forebears and consequently react accordingly (Coroin & Wiggins, 1989; White & Parham, 1990). Some of these racial biases are based on the premise that African Americans are lower on the evolutionary scale (more primitive) than are their Euro-American counterparts and thus, are more inherently pathological (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Thomas (1979) stated that barriers between Euro-American female counselors and African American male clients are based on the notion that African American males are dangerous. Emotions of fear, based on misinformation are easily detected by potential clients; fear is a difficult emotion to mask. The perceptions of African
American males as somehow more dangerous than Euro-Americans males are taught during early childhood and reinforced throughout adult life (Vontress, 1969).

These perceptions are in line with Smith's (1977) definition of stereotypes. He defined stereotypes as the conventions of people who use stereotypic reasoning as an excuse to not deal with each other as individuals. "Stereotypic attitudes preclude the identification of problems and needs with a clear and nonpolluted vision of the individuals" (Parker, 1988, p.32).

Bias Literature

Unfortunately, many theories surrounding most stereotypes were developed by Euro-American social scientists who were all prisoners of their own cultural conditioning (Sue, 1992). Sue argued that these social scientists were actually suggesting that racial and ethnic minority individuals did not possess "the right culture." Some evidence (Smith, 1977) suggests that many researchers engage in studies that are inclined to mislead, distort, and oversimplify minority needs and issues with an increased probability of racial labeling. Smith cautioned the service professionals against this kind of research,
insisting that they first examine literature to determine if the aim contributes to a greater cognizance of the minority population or if it continues in condoning stereotypic viewpoints and treatment.

According to Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992), the underlying data and research base regarding racial and ethnic minorities: (a) maintains a view that ethnic minorities are naturally pathological, (b) maintains racist research and counseling practices, and (c) provides an excuse for counseling professionals not to take social measures to correct unfairness in the system.

Although stereotyping is common among all racial groups, Bennett (1984) insisted that Africa Americans appeared to be the victims of stereotypic attitudes and treatments far more often than other groups. To illustrate this point, Bennett examined some of the commonly held beliefs about African American history and countered them with a more researched based rebuttal.

1. AFRICAN AMERICANS ORIGINATED FROM "NAKED SAVAGES". African Americans originated from well-developed and intricate institutions.
2. ORIGINALLY AFRICAN AMERICANS CAME TO AMERICA IN SLAVERY; EURO-AMERICANS CAME IN FREEDOM. The first African Americans came to Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619, and enjoyed many of the same advantages as Euro-Americans.

3. EUROPEAN SETTLERS DISCOVERED THE NEW WORLD. Black explorers (servants, slaves, and free men) were among the first non-native settlers of the land and some evidence exists that African sailors explored the new world before Columbus.

4. BLACKS DID NOT PLAY KEY ROLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN HISTORY. African Americans fought in major wars and played pivotal roles in the westward movement.

5. SAMBO-AFRICAN AMERICANS WERE FAT AND HAPPY WITH THEIR CONDITION OF SLAVERY. African Americans fought against slavery with every weapon available, despite the common myth.

6. AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE LAZY AND SHIFTLESS VAGABONDS WHO WON'T WORK. Contrarily, the wealth of this country was founded on what President
Lincoln called, "The 250 years of unrequited toil of Black men and women" (p.28).

Dyson (1992) concluded that, regardless of the variety that exists among African Americans and their many accomplishments, there still exists an inexhaustible pattern to cast African American culture in a misconstrued light. He also indicated that individuals view African Americans through the prisms of racist stereotypes or racial essentialism.

**Communication**

The accumulated findings provided by communication scholars have suggested that the lack of effective communication between Euro-Americans and African Americans serves as another kind of barrier. One such study was completed by Carkhuff and Banks (1970) who found that Euro-Americans and African Americans very often communicate at extremely low levels with other Euro-Americans and African Americans from lower socioeconomic levels than themselves.

Past studies such as Labov (1967) posit reciprocal ignorance as a key barrier to understanding African Americans. He explained that communication barriers
existed where teachers and students were ignorant of each other's system, and of the rules needed to translate from one system to another.

Some evidence suggested that other barriers existed which were not so easily identifiable such as the infamous "invisible walls." Slaughter (1974) contended that African American individuals employ a protective "communication mask" as a means to prevent "outsiders" from getting too close psychologically (Vontress, 1967). Historically speaking, this communication mask has been a very necessary survival tool. However, today the invisible mask is used more to maintain distance from the "enemy", the white establishment (Slaughter, 1974).

Washington (1968) identified the concept of "self-disclosure" as another communication barrier between Euro-Americans and African Americans. He theorized that because of the African American political structure, there is a reluctance to discuss conflicts outside the family unit. Washington (1968) believed activities of self-disclosure may hinder efforts made by educators and counselors to render services to African American communities.
Communities

Nesbit (1972) asserts that many professional educators within service oriented agencies design programs aimed at the theoretical needs of "poor illiterate adults". He argued that:

... the programs they design are based on the middle class American concepts of education, their world of work, and religious and political indoctrinations which do not fit the urban Black adult population. (P. 1)

Income Disparity

Economic factors have been identified by scientists as a possible reason for the separation of communities of blacks and whites for decades, yet policy makers fail to do anything about the disparity of economics among the various communities (Yzaguirre, 1989). Pettigrew stated (as cited in Smith, 1973) that:

... even if discrimination were totally abolished tomorrow, the impoverished economic and social resources of many African American communities would act to maintain these racial disparities (p. 159).
Kvaraceus, Gibson and Curtin (1967) insisted that the poor, almost by definition, were entitled to but one commodity and that was self-respect. The investigators concluded that society's attempts at providing services to the poor, stripped the poor of their dignity in the process. All too often the poor are viewed as "inconspicuous, inarticulate and unorganized." Their voices are seldom heard at public forums in communities where traditionally only the most influential men put forth their opinions. As Jiggins (1977) explains:

... it is rare to find a body or institution that adequately represents the poor in a certain community arena. Outsiders and government officials invariably find it more profitable and congenial to converse with local influential than with the uncommunicative poor (p. 23).

Genres

Researchers suggest that there is an inequitable distribution of opportunities for learning with respect to geographic areas, social class, and learning activities. Kvaraceus, Gibson and Curtin (1967) examined possible roots that may be responsible for such community inequities.
Their investigation indicated that the outward migration of middle and upper income families into upper-scale suburban neighborhoods has left inner cities with heavy concentration of low and middle income class families. They also reported that low and middle income families are hostile to lower class African Americans and attempt to obstruct those who may aspire to a higher status of living.

**Educational Systems**

It has long been demonstrated that the American educational system has been a major contributor to some of the barriers that exist in relation to racial differences. Sue (1992) insisted that in general, most educators and counselors do not have sufficient practical experience in their training nor in their daily lives with African Americans which constitutes a substantial barrier to effective education.

The legacy of our educational system, unfortunately, is one of educational mislabeling and differentiated curriculums for minority and economically disadvantaged students. According to Oakes (1985), these students are judged to be different from the rest of the student
population and are "separated into different classes and then provided knowledge, opportunity to learn, and classroom environments that are vastly different" (p. 17).

Oakes (1986) believed that the problems of educating diverse groups evolved from deeply rooted beliefs about racial and ethnic differences. These problems, according to Oakes, were met with resolutions that relied on a novel perspective of democracy and the emerging role that educational institutions played as the accepted preparation for differing adult populations. This solution defined student differences and appropriate educational treatments in social as well as educational terms. Oakes insisted that educational guise, such as differentiated curriculum, were designed to help institutionalize beliefs about race and class differences within ones' intellectual abilities.

As a consequence of these practices, structural obstacles were erected that prohibited the future social, political, and economic opportunities of those who were not born a native Euro-American. As Oakes (1986) explained:

... everywhere we turn we find that differentiated structure of schools throws up barriers to achievement for poor and minority students (p. 17).
As long as race and class inequities exist in our society, it is unlikely that educational opportunities and its value for minority individuals will ever equal that of the more privileged Euro-Americans (Oakes, 1986).

Cultural Identity

Castaneda (1974) argued that barriers exist because the American public education system has seriously jeopardized one of the three major features of American democracy--the principle of cultural identity. Castaneda believed that cultural identity was the right of every American individual to remain identified with his or her own ethnic, racial, or social group, while simultaneously exploring mainstream American culture with respect to language, heritage, values, cognition and motivation.

Cultural Insensitivity

Lee (1982) pointed out another often overlooked barrier to the education of African American families. He argued that the cultural insensitivities inherent in the educational system do not tend to validate the experience of African American homes and community life. Lee indicated that more importantly, the system, in many cases,
considers such life to have a detrimental effect on its children.

Stoddort (1993) argued that most of the candidates for new teaching positions expected to teach as they were taught and expected students to learn as they learned; that is, they expected their students to be like themselves. Law and Lowe (as cited by Stoddort, 1987) indicated that many of these Euro-American pre-service teachers have negative attitudes toward individuals who are from cultures different from their own.

Cultural Awareness

Asante (1993) argued that, for many Americans, any emphasis on definite viewpoints and experiences from a cultural perspective, suggests separatism and separatism suggests hostility. He contended that this commonly held belief is a misconception, because neither separatism nor difference suggests hostility except in the minds of those who fear human wholeness.

Kazewck (1988) examined Asante's views on a somewhat different level. He felt that nonconformity should be a integral part of the educational system as well as the
rules that governs it in an open society. Kazewck argued:

... how else are the readily accepted ideas and
easy generalizations of past generations to be tested,
perhaps rejected, perhaps transformed, but in a real
sense made new and incorporated into the minds and
hearts of present and future generations (p.124)

Backner (1966) concluded that when African American
students and Euro-American counselors become engrossed with
each others culture, their own evaluation of that
association still hinges much more upon the "intrinsically
human qualities that they each possess than upon the fact
of their skin colors and pigments" ( p. 637).

Cultural Bias

Cummings (1977) suggested that cultural deprivation
might represent another barrier in the U. S. educational
system. Wax argued (as cited in Cummings, 1985) that
groups are labeled as culturally deprived because
educational agencies appear unwilling or unable to
recognize the uniqueness of different cultures and the
realities of different social worlds.

Chang (1993) offered an alternate view to Sue's (1992)
line of thought. Chang suggested that one of the key
reasons counselors and educational providers are not sensitive to issues of diversity is due to the fact that current methods of analyzing the needs of families and communities do not differentiate between the conditions of different ethnic populations. Understanding the language and culture of children and families is key to the effective provision of service. Becoming culturally aware is also part of discovering who individuals are as professional helpers (McDavis, 1981).

Hirsch (as cited by Arviau and Saravia-Shore, 1990) contended that content knowledge is essential to being culturally literate. However, his approach assumed that all cultures are monolithic and fixed; in doing so, he ignored the historical contribution of many ethnic communities in the United States. Arviau (1990) argued that changing demographics imply the need for greater understanding of diversity in the United States.

Recent studies by McCarthy and Rodriguez (1994) yielded findings central to the barriers of working with African Americans and other ethnically diverse groups. The investigators cited a rise of the cultural politics of "resentment." The German philosopher Nietzsche developed a
theory that defined resentment as the specific practice of defining one's identity through the negation of the other. The world has changed its color and with this change also has come the change of different values, beliefs, and traditions.

Professional in-service training programs need to develop healthy cultural identities, in a cross cultural manner that develops understanding and respect for others (Arvizu, 1990). As Arvizu indicated:

To build respect for a common culture in our nation, we must show respect for its various people and respect their heritages and inalienable rights (p.366).

Multiculturalism

The classification of people into groups or categories has been an useful tool to America in organizing its social structure; however, in its quest for order, America has built an insurmountable wall of racial separation. Many contemporary scholars believed that the category of multiculturalism is one such barrier (Sue, 1992). Sue argued that the practice of grouping all those who represent some form of diversity under one heading,
prevents efforts to a clearer understanding of African Americans' culture.

Researchers say that since multiculturalism has been so broadly defined to include characteristics such as race, class, ethnicities, sexual orientation, religion, gender, and age that the term has diluted the focus on racial and ethnic concerns; a primary one being racism (Sue, 1992). This practice of grouping everyone into one category has allowed educators and counselors to avoid and omit dealing specifically with African Americans in our society (Sue, Arredendo, & McDavis, 1992).

Accumulated research (Baratz & Shuy, 1969) suggested that the middle class teacher, in pursuit of middle class norms, has no real sense of the frustrations that comes with exploitation, deprivation and sometimes violence experienced by many lower class urban African American communities. Abraham and Troike (1972) posited that there was a real need for America to proceed away from a single culture view--Euro-centric, western, with predominant Protestant views of previous years--and toward a multi-cultural view of education. Educators must work
within the context of our society; they must give all people a vision of whom they can become (McCracken, 1993).
Summary and Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is shown in Figure 3.1. It was based on the review of literature as interpreted by the researcher. The literature has revealed that race, community, educational systems, and cultural awareness are barriers which effectuate circumstances under which decisions are made to provide assistance to African American clientele by educational professionals. The investigator for this research project formulated the following theoretical paradigm depicting the relationship between these selected variables, as found in the literature, and the perceived barriers to working with African Americans.

As Figure 3.1 illustrates, perceived barriers to working with African Americans are dependent upon county characteristics which include: county size, county type (rural vs urban), total percentage of the minority population for the county, and percentage of African Americans residing in that particular county. The second variable identified in the model was the Extension organization which included: the number of Extension professionals and the number of African American Extension
Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework for Examining Factors Related to Perceived Barriers to working with African Americans by Extension Professionals.
professionals. Personal characteristics were included to determine how they might influence the perceived barriers to working with African Americans by Extension professionals.

The personal characteristics variable included: race, gender, highest educational level, income, marital status, number of children, and place of residence. In addition, the program areas (Agriculture, 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences and Community Development) of the Extension professionals was examined to determine if any relationships existed in regards to perceived barriers to working with African Americans.
CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES

This chapter describes the procedures that were used to implement this research. The procedures are presented in the following sections: (a) research design, (b) population and subject selection, (c) instrumentation, (d) data collection, and (e) data analysis.

Research Design

The primary purpose of the study was to describe the factors which act as perceived barriers that prevent OSU Extension professionals from working with African Americans. The research was descriptive and correlational in nature as defined by Campbell and Stanley (1963). Employing the survey research method can involve some errors which may affect the internal and external validity of the study (Miller, 1990). Frame error, sampling error,
selection error, and non-response error are four major threats to external validity. Measurement error is a threat to the internal validity of a study. Controlling sources of error is essential to a valid study. Procedures, as suggested by Campbell and Stanley (1963), were employed to avoid these potential errors. These procedures are explained in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Population

The population for this study consisted of the 70 Extension agents in 19 Ohio counties that had an African American population of 5 percent or more as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990. Counties with less than 5 percent of African Americans were not selected because they would be expected to offer scant information on barrier perception given the low number of African Americans enrolled in those Ohio State University Extension programs.

A census of Extension professionals in these 19 counties was conducted (N=70). The census approach eliminated sampling error because it involved the use of the entire targeted population, not a sample (Miller, 1990). Extension professionals were the focus of the study
because they are ultimately responsible for the delivery and designation of services and information provided by the Ohio State University Extension programs. The counties having an African American population of 5 percent or more as determined by the U.S. Bureau of Census, City and County Data Book, 1990, are presented in Table 3.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of County</th>
<th>% African American Population</th>
<th># of Agents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JEFFERSON</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PICKAWAY</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROSS</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRUMBULL</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARK</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREENE</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MADISON</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LORAIN</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RICHLAND</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERIE</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLARK</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLEN</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMIT</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>combined with Stark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUCAS</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAHONING</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANKLIN</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONTGOMERY</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAMILTON</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUYAHOGA</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Ohio Counties Involved in the Study

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census (1990), Ohio, County pop.
Subject Selection

The frame for the study was secured from the Ohio State University Extension state office. The Assistant Director for Ohio State University Extension was consulted to determine the accuracy of the frame that was to be used before the surveys were mailed. County Extension Agents were identified in all the cases as Extension professionals.

Frame error can exist when there is discrepancy between the target population and the list containing the names of the population. Problems associated with frame error such as duplication of names or missing names did not occur since the frame was small and the Ohio State University Extension personnel office was able to provide an accurate, composite list of Extension professionals that was verified by the Assistant Director.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation procedures included the process of instrument design and the necessary steps involved in its final construction. The following items were addressed to ensure the soundness of the instrument: type of instrument,
measurement, levels of measurement as well as the kind of information that the researcher desired to obtain.

Description of the Design Process

An instrument (Appendix B) was developed by the researcher to collect data from Extension professionals. The instrument was designed to measure the Extension professionals' perceptions of barriers as well as collect demographic information. A Likert scale was used to determine respondents' perceptions of barriers that prevent them from effectively working with an African American clientele. Levels were:

4 = strongly agree
3 = agree
2 = disagree
1 = strongly disagree

The instrument consisted of five sections. The first four sections addressed barriers. Section one was concerned with racial barriers; section two addressed community barriers; section three dealt with educational barriers; and section four related to cultural awareness barriers. The final section solicited demographic information.
The identification and operationalization of barriers included in the instrument were adapted from the literature. However, open-ended questions were also provided to allow respondents to identify, define, and rate additional barriers that they perceived as contributing to why Extension professionals do not work with more African Americans clientele.

Section I

Section I involved racial barriers. The literature operationalized racial barriers as stereotypes, bias literature, and communication (Gear, 1992; Labov, 1967 McLaren, 1990; Parker, 1988; Smith, 1977; Sue, 1992; Thomas, 1988; and West, 1993).

Stereotypes: The fixed biases held by individuals, (i.e., Extension professionals), about other individuals of a particular group, African Americans, without consideration of their individual differences.

Bias literature: The consideration of literature concerning African American needs and issues without concomitantly examining
the methodology responsible for the
literature. Critically analyzing
literature that poses a racial bias is
of import because often times
literature based on unsound methodology
is oversimplified, misleading, and
distorted, resulting in racial
labeling.

Communication: When the educational provider,
(Extension professional), and the
client, (African American) are ignorant
of each other's system, and of the
rules needed to translate from one
system to another.

Section II

Section II involved community barriers. The
literature operationalizes community barriers as income
disparity and genres (Kraraceus, Gibson & Curtin, 1967; and
Yzaguirre, 1989).

Income Disparity: The Extension professionals have access
to census data that report income
information for their counties.
Percentages for populations residing below the poverty level are of specific interest because African Americans are disproportionately represented among this population.

Genres: Communities that are either Rural, on a farm; Rural, but not on a farm; Urban, within a city; or Suburban, less than 50 miles from a major metropolitan area. The genres of communities pose a significant problem. Traditionally, Extension professionals have only served rural farm families whom are predominately non-African American. Urban settings appears to be where the largest percentages of African Americans reside. Outward migration of middle and upper income families into upper-scale suburban neighborhoods has left behind large concentration of low-income people among which African Americans represents a sizable portion.
Section III

Section III involved educational barriers. The literature operationalizes educational barriers as racial exposure and cultural insensitivity (Castaneda, 1974; Lee, 1982; Stoddort, 1993; and Sue, 1992).

Racial exposure: Insufficient practical experience in one's educational training and in one's daily life with African Americans.

Cultural Insensitivity: Exclusion of African American experiences in the educational systems. This practice poses a serious problem because it does not validate the experiences of African American life.

Section IV

Section IV involved cultural awareness. The literature operationalizes cultural awareness as cultural bias and Multiculturalism (Arviau, 1990; Asante, 1993; Backner, 1970; Chang, 1993; Cummings, 1985; Goddard, 1993; and McCarthy & Rodriguez, 1994).

Cultural bias: The unwillingness to recognize the uniqueness of different cultures and
the realities of different social worlds.

Multiculturalism: The practice of grouping African Americans under the multi-cultural umbrella which also includes race, class, ethnicities, sexual orientation, religion, gender, age, etc. This is problematic because the practice of grouping all those who represent some form of diversity under one heading dilutes the focus of concerns unique to African Americans.

Validity and Reliability of the Survey Instrument

The major threat to the internal validity of the study was measurement error. Measurement error was controlled through the use of a panel of experts who agreed to assess items for content and face validity of the survey instrument. Nine persons made up the panel of experts (see appendix C). The panel of experts represented individuals from: Extension administrators, Extension research professors, and Extension graduate students at the Ohio State University. Modifications were made upon suggestions
given by members of the panel and incorporated into the final version of the survey.

A field test was administered to 10 randomly selected Extension professionals from the Ohio State University Extension services. The agents involved in the field test were from Ohio counties that were not included in the study.

A pilot test for reliability was administered to Extension professionals at the University of Kentucky that were working in counties with an African American population of five percent and greater. Precautions were taken by the researcher to ensure similarity between Ohio and Kentucky population percentages. The researcher only used Kentucky counties whose African American population were between 5 and 25 percent of the total population according to 1990 Census reports.

Forty instruments were mailed out and 30 instruments were returned representing a 76% response rate. No analysis was made for non-response rate.

Cronbach's alpha/KR21 was established to determine the reliability which also represents the internal consistency
of the instrument (Norland, 1991). The following results were obtained:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section I</td>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Cronback's Alpha coef. = .82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section II</td>
<td>Communities</td>
<td>Cronback's Alpha coef. = .84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section III</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Cronback's Alpha coef. = .81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section IV</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Cronback's Alpha coef. = .83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Reliability Table

Results of Reliability N = 30; Reliability Coefficients = 27 Items; Standardized alpha = .87

Data Collection

Ohio State University Extension professionals received a mail questionnaire with a personalized cover letter describing the study and a stamped, return envelope enclosed in the packet. In addition to the survey, an attachment with the definition of barriers listed was also mailed along with the instrument.
The cover letter was approved by the Director of Ohio State University Extension. To ensure respondent integrity, respondents were not asked to reveal their identity or their county, instead the researcher numerically coded each survey by county. Instructions were given to the Extension professionals to return their survey within 10 days of receiving the instrument. The number of responses varied from county to county depending on how many Extension professionals worked in that particular county (N=70).

Raffle tickets entries for the football game between Ohio State University and the University of Michigan were included in the mailing as an incentive to complete the survey. Questionnaires were sent out on June 30, 1998. By July 30, 1998 a total of 45 had been returned. A second mailing resulted in an additional 10 surveys by August 20, 1998, representing a 79 percent response rate. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to collect information by telephone.

Non-response error was controlled by following Dillman's procedure for mail questionnaires. The following steps were followed: (a) the questionnaire was mailed with a cover letter co-signed by the researcher and the
Chairperson of the Department of Human and Community 
Resource Development in the College of Food, Agricultural, 
Environmental Sciences on June 30, 1998. (b) a follow up 
phone call was made one week after mailing the initial 
cover letter and questionnaire. (c) those not responding 
to the second request were either contacted by e-mail or 
surveyed over the phone. Surveys were sent out on June 

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for 
the Social Science, Personal Computer version (SPSS/PC+). 
Descriptive statistics were used to organize and summarize 
the data. Frequencies of responses to each barrier were 
presented. Additional information was obtain examining the 
mean, range, standard deviations and percentages. A rank 
bi-serial was used when comparisons of data consisted of a 
nominal and ordinal level of data. Spearman’s rank order 
or Kendall’s tau coefficient was used when comparing 
ordinal level of data. When the data were interval or ratio 
and the other was either nominal or ordinal, a point-
biserial, and Spearman rank order or Kendall's tau were used, respectively.

Cramer's V correlation coefficients were computed to assess the magnitude and the direction of nominal levels of selected pairs of variables. The researcher was specifically interested in examining the relationship between the Extension professional demographics and perceived barriers.

Davis (1971) descriptions were used to interpret the values of correlation coefficients. These are presented in Figure 4.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.70 or higher</td>
<td>Very Strong Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.50 to .69</td>
<td>Substantial Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.30 to .49</td>
<td>Moderate Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.10 to .29</td>
<td>Low Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.01 to .09</td>
<td>Negligible Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1: Source: Davis, 1971
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of the study was to describe the perceived barriers that prevent Ohio State University (OSU) Extension professionals from working with African Americans. This chapter presents the findings of the research organized according to the objectives for the study.

To Identify Barriers Perceived by OSU Extension Professional Regarding Working with African Americans

Data were collected related to perceived barriers to working with African American clientele. The 27 barriers were identified through a review of literature. For each type of barrier (racial, community, educational, and cultural) the modal extent of agreement was identified.

Racial Barriers

The respondents' perceptions of racial barriers to working with African Americans are presented in Table 4.1.
Extension professionals strongly agreed that, in developing programs for African Americans, the following items posed racial barriers: (3) Feeling uncomfortable around African Americans; (8) Failure to communicate with African Americans; (9) Not understanding issues important to African Americans; and (10) Having racist views about African Americans. The respondents agreed or strongly agreed with items (2) possessing negative stereotypes about African Americans and (7) Possessing personal biases against African Americans. The respondents agreed with the remaining items.

Community Barriers

The perceived community barriers identified by Extension professionals are recorded in Table 4.2. Extension professionals agreed that, in developing Extension programs for African Americans, all of the following items were barriers: (11) Lacking work experiences in impoverished communities; (12) Having not worked in a racially diverse communities; (13) Feeling uncomfortable working in inner...
In developing Extension programs for African Americans:

1. Having negative working relations with African Americans presents a barrier.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Possessing negative stereotypes about African Americans presents a barrier.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Feeling comfortable around African Americans does not impede programming.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Being similar to African Americans promotes working with them.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Knowing an African American increases the likelihood of working with them.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Feeling unsafe around African Americans is a barrier to working with them.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Possessing personal biases against African Americans presents a barrier.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Communicating with African Americans increases programming possibilities.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Understanding issues important to African Americans promotes programming.  
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Having racist views about African Americans is a barrier to working with them.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summated Scores:**

Mean = 24.16; Std. Dev. = 4.48; Range: Min = 11.0; Max = 37.0

---

Table 4.1: Perceived Racial Barriers N=10

Note: Bold print = Mode scores. Scores that are within two digits of each other are bi-modal. Mode scores are based on a likert-type scale with 1=Strongly Disagree(SD); 2=Disagree(D); 3=Agree(A); and 4=Strongly Agree.
city neighborhoods; (14) Having no urban programming experiences; and (15) Being unfamiliar with ethnically diverse community needs.

**Table 4.2: Perceived Community Barriers N=5**

Note: Mode scores are in bold print. Scores that are within two digits of each other are bi-modal. Mode scores are based on a likert-type scale with 1=Strongly Disagree(SD); 2=Disagree(D); 3=Agree(A); and 4=Strongly Agree.
Cultural Barriers

Table 4.3 displays the cultural barriers perceived by Extension professionals. In developing programming for African Americans, Extension professionals agreed that the following items were barriers: (16) Having no African American friends; (18) not attending school with African American students; and (19) not worshiping with African American families. It should be noted that the respondents disagreed with the following items as being barriers to working with African Americans: (16) Lacking African American families in the neighborhood in which one grew up; (20) Having not grown up in a racially mixed environment; and (21) Not having any research related experiences with African Americans.

Educational Barriers

Educational barriers to working with African Americans, that were perceived by Extension professionals are presented in Table 4.4. Extension professionals agreed that, in developing programming for African Americans, the following items were identified as barriers: (22) Lacking an awareness of cultures other than one’s own; (23) Having no formal education on African Americans related subject
### Table 4.3: Perceived Cultural Barriers N=6

Note: Mode scores are in bold print. Scores within 2 digits are Bi-modal. Mode scores are based on 1-4 Likert-type scale with 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Agree (A) and 4 = Strongly Agree (SA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURAL BARRIERS</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Having African American friends increases the chances of working with them.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Lacking African American families in the neighborhood in which one grew up presents a barrier to working with them.</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Worshiping with African American families enhances working relations with them.</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Attending school with African American students does not impede programming.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Having not grown up in a racially mixed environment is a barrier to working with them.</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Lacking research related experiences with African Americans is a barrier to working in one.</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summated Scores:
Mean = 15; Std. Dev. = 1.59; Range: Min. = 13; Max. = 21

matters; (24) Seeing negative portrayals of African American communities in the media; (25) Not reading novels/books by African American authors; and (26) Infrequent discussions on race related issues.
In developing Extension programs for African Americans:

22. Lacking an awareness of cultures other than one's own may impede programming.  
   SD  D   A  SA  
   1   7   39  8

23. Having formal education on African Americans related subject matter encourages programming.  
   3   20  30  2

24. Seeing negative portrayals of African American communities in the media increases barriers.  
   2   19  28  6

25. Reading novels by African American authors increases understanding.  
   2   21  27  5

26. Frequently discussing race related issues broaden working relations.  
   2   15  37  1

27. Not having socialized with many African Americans is a barrier.  
   2   26  24  3

Summated Scores:
Mean = 12.7; Std. Dev. = 1.82; Range: Min. = 9, Max = 17

Table 4.4.: Perceived Educational Barriers N = 6

Note: Modal scores are in bold print. Scores that are within two digits of each other are bi-modal. Modal scores were based on a likert-type scale with 1=Strongly Disagree (SD); 2=Disagree (D); 3=Agree (A); and 4=Strongly Agree. Disagree=Agree; Agree=Disagree and Strongly Agree=Strongly Disagree to

It should be noted that the respondents were unable to decide if not having socialized with many African Americans was a barrier or not. The response was bimodal (disagree and agree).
To Describe the Personal Characteristic of OSU Extension Professionals and the Communities that they Serve

Extension professionals who participated in the study were asked to provide demographic information about their: race, gender, educational attainment, income level, marital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro-Americans</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>82.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: Characteristics of Extension Professionals N=55
status, number of children, type of community in which they resided, and the program area that comprised the majority of their time.

Race, Gender and Marital Status

Table 4.5 presents the characteristics of the Extension professionals that returned the questionnaire. The characteristics included race, gender, and marital status. Nine percent of the 55 Extension professionals were African Americans. The remainder (91%) were Euro-Americans. More than half (58 percent) of the Extension professionals were females. Forty-two percent were males. There were 45 (82%) of the professionals who reported that they were married. Ten (18%) of the respondents surveyed were single.

Educational Levels

The educational levels of the Extension professionals are reported in Table 4.6. Forty-nine percent (n=27) had earned an Masters's degree. Twenty-seven percent had earned at least a bachelor's degree. There were 12 extension professionals (22%) who had graduate credits beyond the Masters. One extension professional (2%) had earned a Doctorate.
Higher Educational Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate studies</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyond Masters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6: Educational Levels of Extension Professional N=55

Income Levels

The income levels of the Extension professional are reported in Table 4.7. Sixty-four percent of the professionals earned at least $40,000 or more. The next largest group (32 percent) fell between the income range of $30,000 and $39,000. There was one Extension professional who earned between $20,000 and $29,000, and one who earned less than $20,000.
Table 4.7: Income Levels of Extension Professionals N=55

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Levels</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $20,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 - $29,999</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 - $39,999</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 or greater</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Number of Children

The number of children that the Extension professionals reported are presented in Table 4.8. Thirty-three respondents (60.0%) reported having one to three children. Fifteen respondents (27.0%) reported not having children. The remaining seven respondents (13%) reported having four to six children.
## Table 4.8: The Number of Children by Extension Professional N=55

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55 Mean = 1.85 Std. Dev. = .62

**Type of Community**

The type of community where Extension professionals resided are reported in Table 4.9. Forty-nine percent of the Extension professionals reported living in a suburban area that was near a city or town with a population of 2,500 to 49,999. Another 20% of the respondents reported living in a rural area, but not on a farm. The next largest group of respondents (18%) was those who reported living in an urban area. The smallest group of respondents was those who lived on a farm (13%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Community</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural/Live on Farm</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/do not live on farm</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9.: Type of Community where Extension Professionals Resides
N=55

Program Area That Comprised the Majority of Their Time

The type of program area where the Extension professionals spent the majority of their time are reported in Table 4.10. Nineteen (34.0%) of the respondents reported that they devoted the majority of their time to Family and Consumer Sciences programs. Sixteen (29.0%) spent most of their time in Agricultural programming. Another 16 (29.0%) devoted most of their time to 4-H/Youth Development programs. Three (5.0%) Extension professionals spent the majority of their time in Community Development. There was one (2.0%) Extension professional who spent the
majority of her time in an area other than one of the four program areas in Extension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-H/Youth Development</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family &amp; Consumer Science</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10: Extension Professional most worked program area

To determine the relationship between the personal characteristics of the Extension Professionals and perceived barriers to working with African Americans

Four types of perceived barriers were identified:

Racial; Community; Cultural; and Educational. The personal characteristics were identified as race, gender, educational levels, income levels, marital status, number of children, type of community in which one resides, and program area to which the majority of their time was devoted.
Table 4.11 presents the correlations between types of barriers and personal characteristics. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to describe the relationships. Point bi-serial correlations were used to describe relationships between types of barriers and race, gender, marital status, type of community and program. Spearman Rank was computed between type of barrier and educational attainment, income levels and number of children.

The data indicated a moderate association (Davis, 1971) between the gender and community barrier variable (r=-.45). There was a tendency for male Extension professionals to rate community barriers to working with African Americans higher than females Extension professionals.

It should also be noted that gender had a low negative association with the cultural barrier variable (r=-.23) and the educational barrier variable (r=-.25). Male Extension professionals tended to rate cultural and educational barriers to working with African Americans higher than females.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Characteristics</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Racial</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Educational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race (a)</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (a)</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.45</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (b)</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income (b)</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status (a)</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (b)</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (a)</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program (a)</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11: Relationship Between Personal Characteristics and Perceived Barrier

Note: Coefficients represents Pearson's r if not designated; a=Point Bi-serial; b=Spearman Rank. Coding were in ascending order: Gender: 0=male, 1=Female; Race: 0=Euro-American, 1=African American

A low positive association was found between marital status and educational barrier (r=.25). Single Extension professionals tended to rate educational barrier to working with African Americans higher than married Extension professionals.

A positive low association was found between type of community between the in which the Extension professionals...
lived and racial barriers (-.24). Extension professionals who lived in urban settings within a city tend to rate racial barriers to working with African American higher than those who lived in rural farm settings.

Additional Comments on Perceived Barriers

Respondents were asked to respond to a list of open ended questions regarding perceived barriers to working with African Americans. A complete listing of their responses is presented in Appendix (A). Each of these questions will be discussed separately.

1. How many African American clients are you presently working with and what percentage of total clientele base is African Americans?
2. How many programs have you designed with African American clientele in mind?
3. To what extent do you believe that African Americans are not interested in the services that Extension has to offer?
4. How could the Extension program best serve African Americans?
5. To what extent do you believe that present
Extension programs address African American needs
and concerns?

6. To what extent do present Extension programs
primarily serve Euro-Americans (white) clientele.

Extension professionals reported that their current
African American clientele base ranged from a high of 500
to a low of zero. The average number of African Americans
that Extension professionals reported currently working
with was seven. Over 50% reported that they were not
currently working with any African American clientele. The
average percentage of African Americans that Extension
professionals reported having worked with was less than
five percent.

Extension professionals reported that they design
programs with everyone in mind without consideration of
race or ethnic background.

Twenty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that
they believed African American were not interested in
Extension programs. However, 67% believed that African
Americans would be interested if they knew what Extension
offered. The majority of Extension professionals involved in the study reported that Extension in general has programs and services that African Americans may be interested in, however, getting the information to them was a major problem. According to one Extension professional: "I believe African Americans, like many urban citizens, are not very aware of educational services and programs that are relevant to them through Extension."

Extension professionals reported in general, that Extension could best serve African American clientele by including them on advisory boards, planning committees, focus groups for program development and by increasing the numbers of African Americans Extension professionals at all levels of the University Extension program.

Extension professionals who responded reported that, in general, Extension services have a great deal to offer African Americans. However, they did believed that the rural farm image of Extension keeps them from participating in Extension programs.

All of the Extension professionals who responded to the question agreed that it did primarily serve Euro-Americans. However, they also reported that Extension
programs have traditionally been rural and agricultural in nature and the audiences that it attracted were from those kinds of backgrounds. As explained by one Extension professional:

"I feel that our programs are geared toward all races and cultures. However, our traditional clientele and users of Extension are Euro-Americans. But our programming is useful to anyone that has that need."
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes this study. It provides a summary to the study; conclusions drawn and recommendations for theory, practice, and future study.

SUMMARY

As the demographic trends change our communities, barriers to working with African Americans will become an increasing concern as the minority populations continue to grow. Extension professionals will have to search for ways to overcome barriers to working with ethnically diverse groups.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceived barriers that prevent Ohio state University (OSU) Extension professionals from working with African
Americans. The following specific objectives guided this study:

1. To identify barriers perceived by OSU Extension professionals regarding working with African American clientele.

2. To describe the personal characteristic of OSU Extension professionals and the communities that they serve.

3. To determine the relationship between the personal characteristics of the Extension professionals and perceived barriers to working with African American clientele.

Research Design

The study was a descriptive and correlational study. The study was designed to collect information on barriers to working with African American as perceived by the Ohio State University Extension professionals.

Population

The population for this study consisted of Extension professionals in 19 Ohio counties that had an African American population of 5 percent or more as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990. A census of the Extension
professionals in the 19 counties was conducted. Data were collected from all of the selected county's Extension professionals.

**Instrumentation**

A mail questionnaire was developed to collect data from the Extension professionals included in the study. The instrument was divided into five sections: racial barriers, community barriers, cultural barriers, educational barriers, and demographics.

Section I of the questionnaire asked Extension professional to determined the degree of agreement with the items that were identified as racial barriers. Likert-type scales were used to determined the degree of agreement with the identified barriers.

Section II of the questionnaire asked Extension professional to determined the degree of agreement with the items that were identified as community barriers. Likert-type scale were used to determine the degree of agreement with the identified barriers.

Section III of the questionnaire asked Extension professionals to determined the degree of agreement with the items that were identified as educational barriers.
Likert-type scales were used to determine the degree of agreement with the identified barriers.

Section IV of the questionnaire asked Extension professionals to determine the degree of agreement with the items that were identified as cultural awareness barriers. Likert-type scales were used to determine the degree of agreement with the identified barriers.

In Section V, Extension professionals who participated in the study were asked to provide demographic information about themselves. Respondents were asked to provide information about their race; gender; educational levels; income levels; marital status; number of children; type of community where they resided; program area that the majority of their time was devoted to.

The respondents were also asked to give the number of African American clients that they were serving; what percentage of their clientele base were African Americans; how many programs were designed with African Americans in mind. Respondents were also asked to respond to other open-ended questions that included: to what extent they believed that African Americans were not interested in the services that Extension provides; how could the Extension program
best serve African Americans; To what extent they believed that present Extension programs addressed African Americans needs and concerns; and finally, To what extent present Extension programs primarily serve Euro-Americans (White) clientele?

To control for measurement error, a panel of experts was asked to review the instrument for content and face validity. Content experts, population experts, experts on minority recruitment and retention were also consulted. A field test was administered to randomly selected Extension professional from Ohio counties that were not included in the study. A pilot test for reliability was administered to Extension professional at the University of Kentucky that were working in counties with similar population percentages and other demographic information.

Data Collections

Ohio Extension professionals received a mail questionnaire with a personalized cover letter describing the study. The packet included a stamped, self-addressed envelope. A cover letter was approved and sign by the researcher and the Chairperson of the Department of Human, Community and Resource Development in the College of Food,
Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences requesting return of the survey.

Raffle tickets entries for the football game between Ohio State University and the University of Michigan were included in the mailing as an incentive to complete the survey. Questionnaires were sent out on June 30, 1998. By July 30, 1998 a total of 45 had been returned. A second mailing resulted in an additional 10 surveys by August 20, 1998, representing a 79% response rate. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to collect information by telephone.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Personal Computer version (SPSS/PC+). Descriptive statistics (means, modes, ranges, standard deviations, frequencies, percentages) were used to organize and summarize the data. Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were computed to assess the magnitude and the direction of interval and ratio variables. Davis (1971) specifications were used to interpret the values of correlation coefficients. A rank bi-serial was used when comparisons of data consisted of a nominal and ordinal
level of data. Spearman's rank order coefficient were used when comparing ordinal level of data. When the data was interval or ratio and the other was either nominal or ordinal, a point-biserial, and Spearman rank order or were used, respectively.

Findings

Ohio Extension professionals strongly agreed that the following items were racial barriers to working with African Americans: Feeling uncomfortable around African Americans; Failure to communicate with African Americans; Not understanding issues important to African Americans and Having racist views about African Americans.

Ohio Extension professionals also agreed that the following items were community barriers: Lacking work experiences in impoverished community; Having not worked in a racially diverse community; Having no urban programming experiences; and Being unfamiliar with ethnically diverse community needs.

Ohio Extension professionals agreed that the following items were cultural barriers: Having no African American friends; Not attending school with African American
Students; and not worshiping with African Americans families.

Ohio Extension professionals agreed that the following items were educational barriers: Lacking an awareness of cultures other than one’s own; Having no formal education on African Americans related subject matters; Seeing negative portrayals of African American communities in the media; Not reading novels/books by African American authors; and Infrequent discussions on race-related issues.

Demographic Information

The largest percentage (91%) of Extension professionals working in counties with a African American population of 5 percent or greater were Euro-Americans/Caucasian. The remaining 9 percent were African Americans or Bi-racial.

Over half (58%) of the Extension professionals were females and 42% were males. Eighty-two percent were married and 18 percent were single.

Forty-nine percent of the Extension professionals surveyed had earned a master’s degree. The second largest groups (29%) had earned a bachelor’s degree. Twenty-two percent had earned graduate credits beyond the masters
levels and only one of the Extension professional surveyed had earned a Doctoral degree.

The largest earning group (64%) had an income at or above $40,000. Thirty-three percent of the respondent had incomes between $30,000 and $39,999. Only one Extension professional had an income between $20,000 and $29,999. There was also one Extension professional whose income fell below $20,000.

The largest number (60%) of Extension professional reported having one to three children. Seven percent reported having four to six children. There were fifteen Extension professional (27%) who reported having no children.

The type of community that the largest number (49%) of Extension professional reported living in a Suburban area near a town or city. The second largest group (11%) reported living in a rural community and the next largest group (10%) lived in urban area within a city District and the smallest group (7%) reported living on a farm in a rural area.

Over one third of the Extension professionals reported devoting the majority of their programming time to Family
and consumer sciences programs. Twenty-nine percent spent
most of their time in agricultural programming. Another
29% devoted most of their time to 4-H/Youth development.
Only 3 Extension professionals devoted the majority of
their time to community development.

**Associations**

The was a moderate negative association between gender
and the community barrier variable ( -.45). Male Extension
professionals tended to rate community barriers higher than
females Extension professionals.

Gender had a low negative association with the
cultural barrier variable ( -.23). Male Extension
professionals tended to rate cultural barriers higher than
their female counter parts.

The educational barrier variable also had a low
negative association with gender ( -.25). Male Extension
professionals tended to rate educational barriers to
working with African Americans higher than females.

A positive low correlation existed between marital
status and the educational barriers ( .25). Extension
professionals that were single had a tendency to rate
educational barrier to working with African Americans higher than married Extension professionals.

A positive low association was found between the type of community in which Extension professionals live and the racial barriers (.25). Extension professionals who live in urban settings within a city tended to rate racial barriers higher than those who live in other types of communities.

**Conclusions**

Demographic trends, including the growth of middle class African American families, reflect the need to serve this clientele. As one of the largest educational outreach organization in the United States, with a $800 million dollar budget that rivals many federal agencies and has professional staff in more than 3000 United States counties (Warner and Christenson 1984), the Cooperative Extension Services can provide valuable education opportunities and experiences to many African Americans.

The review of the related literature and previous studies on race and the Cooperative Extension services indicated that race, community, cultural background and
educational systems were perceived as barriers to working with African Americans.

Racial Barriers

Findings of the study were supportive of those found in earlier studies related to perceived racial barriers to working with African Americans. Dyson (1992), Parker (1988), McLaren (1990) and Thomas (1979) found that the lack of awareness of perspective views toward individual from ethnic minority groups and the lack of understanding of their cultural frame of references contributed to barrier formations.

Parker (1988) indicated that negative feeling and perceptions toward ethnic minorities severely hindered the counseling process. Locke (as cited in Slaughter, 1974) indicated that racism was one of the most prevalent barriers held by educators. He believed that the absence of common experiences between Euro-Americans and ethnic minorities posed as a major barrier to working with African American.

Extension professionals in this study strongly agreed that feeling uncomfortable around, lack of communication with and having racist views about African Americans were
perceived barriers to working with them as Extension clients. They also indicated that they strongly agreed that not understanding issues important to African Americans was a barrier.

Community Barriers

Research findings by Woodson (1990), Yzaguirre (1989), and Kvaraceus, Gibson and Curtin (1967) found that the continual polarization of American communities has contributed to the economic disparities that now divides our society. Many of these impoverished communities are disproportionately made up of African Americans families.

Extension professionals in this study agreed that the lack of experiences in impoverished communities and having no urban programming experiences was perceived as a barrier to working with African American who resided in those communities.

Cultural Awareness Barriers

Asante (1993), Kazewck (1988) and Backner (1970) and Wax (as cited in Cummings, 1985) found that cultural deprivation within many educational systems was a barrier to working with ethnic minorities, specifically African Americans.
Extension professional in this study agreed that having no African American friends and not having attended school with African American students was perceived as a barrier to working with them as Extension clients. Oakes (1986) indicated that as long as race and class inequities exist in our society, the chances of increased values for educational opportunities for African Americans equaling that of Euro-Americans are very slim.

Educational Barriers

The literature showed agreement on the kinds of educational barriers that exist for educational providers to working with ethnic minorities. Sue, Arrendono, and McDavis (1992), Oakes (1985), Castaneda, James and Robbins (1974), and Lee (1982) found that cultural insensitivities and the absence of cultural identity were inherent barriers within many educational system. Many educational systems appear to be unwilling or unable to recognize the uniqueness of different cultures and the realities of different social worlds. Change (1993) contributed this educational barrier to the fact that current educational methods of analyzing the needs of
families and communities do not differentiate between the
conditions of different ethnic populations.

The literature has reported that becoming culturally
aware is central to providing adequate services to many
ethnically diverse communities. Extension professionals
also agreed that lacking an awareness of different ethnic
cultures, having no formal education on African American
subject matter and infrequent discussions on race-related
issues were all perceived barriers to working with African
Americans.

Background Characteristics

Researchers found that the Extensions professional
personal background characteristics have an influence on
the number of African Americans that were involved in
Extension programs. (Slaughter 1974, Warner and
Nationally, African American Extension professionals
represented less than ten percent of the total Extension
Population (Warner and Christenson).

This study found that over 90 percent of the Extension
professionals involved in the study were Euro-Americans,
over half were female, 82 percent were married and at least
70 percent educational levels were at or above the Masters level. Over 60 percent earned at least $40,000 annually and over 70 percent had one to six children. Finally, forty-nine percent of the respondents lived in suburban areas.

These finding are cogent in light of current demographic trends related to Extension users. As reported by Warner and Christenson (1984), the vast majority of extension user are white, married, high school and college educated, middle to upper income, employed, and homeowners.

Bankston (1992) reported that minority Extension professional were very successful in involving large numbers of minority clientele participation in Extension. This study also found that gender had a tendency to be associated with perceived barriers to working with the African American clientele. Males tended to have a higher score on perceived community, cultural and educational barriers to working with African Americans as compared to female Extension professionals.

The findings indicated that race is still an elusive and pervasive barrier that exists among Extension
professional as they attempt to work with African Americans.

It is also clear that discussion must occur, that begins with honest dialog, about "race relations" within the Ohio State University Extension organization. Some educational providers have been predisposed to fear, look down on, separate themselves from, and when possible, discriminate against people who are of different racial and ethnic groups than themselves.

In order to have an effective programmatic impact on the African Americans, Extension professional must be able to overcome racial, community, cultural and educational barriers that may exist between themselves and their clients. Extension professionals have to be aware of personal racial biases, preconceived notions of African Americans, and be open to new techniques and methods of approach when working with diverse individuals or communities. They should caution against overdrawn generalizations about individual character onto entire racial groups (Dyson, 1992).

When working with African Americans clients, it is important to do an assessment of their needs or interests
and to not generalize about the client because of the group to which he/she belongs. Too often, before attempting to assist or counsel African Americans clients, individuals fail to learn how varied African American life really is.

Extension professionals have to be willing to step outside of their comfort zones if they are to become more effective at reaching more African Americans Clients. As people learn to trust each other and get to know each other, stereotypes will be dispelled. Extension professionals will have the opportunity to set aside their preconceived notions or barriers. It is at this junction of the road that people get to know each other as individuals.

**Recommendations**

1. Program components from planning to implementation and evaluation, should be developed for culturally diverse groups as a separate portion of the University Extension programs. The program model should be built around the needs and desires of the targeted group that Extension is trying to reach.

2. To design relevant programs central to the Ohio State University Extension mission for use in African
American communities, the total "African American Experience" should be considered. This should include their participation in social, mental, physical, and educational experiences of African Americans.

3. Extension professional should understand that the African American culture is extremely complex and diverse in nature. They must understand that not all African Americans are poor or live in economically depressed communities. The African American culture is marked by an engaging variety of intellectual thought, artistic creations, and social practices.

4. The Ohio State University Extension services should make an organizational commitment to increasing African American participation. This commitment should be reflected through the allocation of programming resources; recruiting more African Americans; the hiring of more African American staff at all levels of the Extension organization.

5. Ohio State University Extension should develop marketing strategies that target Africans American (print, television, and radio advertisements).
6. Ohio State University Extension should develop in-service training for Extension professional on marketing their programs to African Americans and diverse communities.

7. Further studies should be conducted to determine the level of commitment to increasing African American participation in Extension from upper-level administrators and Extension policy makers.

8. Additional studies should be conducted to determine if African Americans are really interested in the kinds of programs that Extension offers.
APPENDIX A

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM EXTENSION PROFESSIONAL
Following are a list of comments from Extension professionals solicited through open ended questions regarding increased participation of African Americans.

Q.39. To what extent do you believed that African Americans are not interested in the services that Extension has to offer?

A.1. "The underlying assumptions with most programs seems to be that "typical" clients will be white unless it is an EFNEP or Urban gardening program."

A.2. "I'm not sure in my district, for example, that many of the African Americans know what we have to offer. I feel that many would be interested. I think staff/faculty many times use that statement as an excuse or say it without knowing."

A.3. "I believe that they are not interested because of the traditional type of programming that we do. I think that they don't know about us and we don't get the word out very well."
Q.40. How could the Extension program best serve African Americans?

A.1. "I would suggest training African Americans and other neighborhood workers to be program assistants agents in their neighborhoods. Let's get clear what is needed and useful—and how we can grow with this need as needs are met and needs/assets emerges."

A.2. "There are great possibilities, program delivery and development needs to be explored to interest new audiences."

A.3. "Ohio Extension seems to be traditionally based as in the early 1900's. I sense resistance toward non-traditional programs. Tremendous potential in Ohio exists. Challenges of finding, program delivery and methods plus traditional biases of staff and clientele exist."

A.4. "Extension does not necessarily promote itself in urban African American
communities. I believe people of color would be interested, if they knew."

Q.42. To what extent do present Extension programs primarily serve Euro-Americans (white) clientele?

A.1. "Extension seems willing to accept African Americans participation but seemingly not embarrassed by the lack of proportionate or consistent support or representation."

A.2. "I can’t give a valid answer on this, all I know is that I believe I can work with African American people because I care and I have the resources to do so—but they need to want and need our programs".

A.3. "Most of our clientele are Euro-Americans, however, I know that we try to involve all races and not make our materials race-specific."

A.4. "Not the case in all counties, but I do believe to develop credibility, we have to hire more African Americans employees in Extension agent roles."

A.5. "In my 18 years with extension in an urban office, we have largely served more African
Americans than Whites. Unfortunately the African Americans are generally labeled poor. Future programming needs should address the growing middle class of African Americans, not all are poor!"

A.6. "In my opinion, to a great extent, overall metro counties even tend to focus on Euro-White and middle class. Unless we can have the luxury of additional staff."
APPENDIX B

DATA COLLECTION LETTERS AND INSTRUMENT
Dear Extension Professional

Presently, the Cooperative Extension Service operates in 50 states and territories in the United States; and yet, client participation patterns in their programs continue to be homogeneous in make-up. While the Cooperative Extension Service appears to be receptive to increasing the representation and participation of ethnic minorities in its program, literature on the subject is limited and little progress has been made in changing the kinds of clientele that they serve. Out of all the racial/ethnic groups studied, African Americans were the most under-represented group among users of Extension programs.

Donald McLellan, a graduate student in the Department of Human and Community Resource Development, is conducting a study on “Barriers to working with African Americans as perceived by the Ohio State University Extension Professionals.” He is conducting a census of Extension Professionals in counties with an African American population of 5 percent and above. Your county has been included in the study. Participation in this study is voluntary.

The study is designed to secure information on perceived barriers to working with African Americans. The results will be used to help remove barriers and to assist Extension professionals in their efforts to reach African American clientele. More importantly, the study will aid in the design of Extension programs that will be more responsive to the needs of African Americans and thereby increase the number of minorities currently participating in Extension programs. All Extension professionals in your county are receiving the enclosed questionnaire. It is important that everyone returns the questionnaire. This study can not be accomplished without your help.

NOTICE: WIN OHIO STATE VS. MICHIGAN FOOTBALL TICKETS

Because we realize how valuable your time is, Don has decided to offer you a chance to win two Ohio State vs. Michigan football tickets. These tickets are valued at $500.00 a pair. All you have to do is: (1) Fill out the entry slip (2) staple it to the completed questionnaire; (3) place it in the pre-addressed, stamped envelope; and (4) mail. A drawing will be held on Tuesday, June 30, 1998 and the winner will be notified by telephone. Please return the questionnaire by June 26, 1998. If you have questions, please call Don at (614) 292-8781(W) or (614)267-5023(H). I thank you in advance for your time and efforts dedicated toward this project.

P.S. GOOD LUCK!

Sincerely

Don McLellan
Graduate Student

Enc: Questionnaire

N. L. McCaslin
Advisor
Dear Colleague,

I am writing to you again to request your assistance in a study that I am conducting. Several weeks ago you received a questionnaire on “Perceived Barriers to Working with African Americans” Since I have missed your response, I am requesting your assistance once more.

If you still have the instrument in your possession, please complete it along with the raffle ticket for the Michigan Vs Ohio State football game. If you no longer have the instrument, I have enclosed a second copy and a self addressed, stamped envelop for your convenience.

If you have questions regarding the instrument, please call me at 614 292-8781. Please return the completed instrument by August 30th. If you would like to be considered for the football ticket drawing, please return the instrument and raffle ticket by July 31, 1998.

Thanks for your help and good luck on winning the Tickets

Sincerely,

Donald McLellan

Go Buck!!
BARRIERS TO WORKING WITH AFRICAN AMERICANS

AS PERCEIVED BY THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS
### BARRIERS TO WORKING WITH AFRICAN AMERICANS AS PERCEIVED BY
### THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS

**Instructions:**

Listed below are items that can present barriers to working with African American clientele. To complete this survey, please circle the level that describes the degree to which you agree that the item is a barrier for Extension professionals in attempting to work with African American clientele.

The levels of agreement are:

1. Strongly Disagree (SD)
2. Disagree (D)
3. Agree (A)
4. Strongly Agree (SA)

**Example**

In developing Extension programming for African Americans:

Lacking racial exposure promotes barriers to working with African Americans.

In this example the individual agreed that the lack of racial exposure promotes barriers to developing programs for African Americans.

### SECTION I: BARRIERS

In developing Extension Programming for African Americans:

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<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Having negative working relations with African Americans presents a barrier.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Possessing negative stereotypes about African Americans presents a barrier.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Feeling comfortable around African Americans does not impede programming.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Being similar to African Americans promotes working with them.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Knowing an African American increases the likelihood of working with them.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Feeling unsafe around African Americans is a barrier to working with them.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Possessing personal biases against African Americans presents a barrier.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
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112.
IN DEVELOPING EXTENSION PROGRAMMING FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS:

8. Communicating with African Americans increases programming possibilities.

9. Understanding issues important to African Americans promotes programming.

10. Having racist views about African Americans is a barrier to working with them.

11. Lacking work experiences in impoverished communities is a barrier to working with individuals who live in those communities.

12. Having work experiences in racially diverse communities promotes programming in diverse communities.

13. Feeling uncomfortable working in inner city neighborhoods poses barriers to working in those neighborhoods.

14. Having urban programming experiences enhances the possibility of working with African Americans.

15. Being familiar with ethnically diverse community needs enhances programming.

16. Having African American friends increases the chances of working with them.

17. Lacking African American families in the neighborhood in which one grew up presents barriers to working with them.

18. Worshiping with African American families enhances working relations with them.

19. Attending school with African American students does not impede programming efforts.

20. Having not grown up in a racially mixed environment is a barrier to working in one.

21. Lacking research related experiences with African Americans is a barrier to working with them.

22. Lacking an awareness of cultures other than one's own may impede programming efforts.

23. Having formal education on African American related subject matter encourages programming.

24. Seeing negative portrayals of African American communities in the media increases barriers to working in those communities.
IN DEVELOPING EXTENSION PROGRAMMING FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS:

25. Reading novels by African American authors increasing understanding of African American communities.

26. Frequently discussing race related issues encourages broader working relations with African Americans.

27. Not having socialized with many African Americans is a barrier to working with them.

SECTION II: DEMOGRAPHICS

Instructions: Please report the following information about yourself by circling the letter that corresponds to the most appropriate response.

28. Race:
   A. EURO-AMERICAN (WHITE)
   B. AFRICAN AMERICAN (BLACK)
   C. ASIAN
   D. HISPANIC
   E. OTHER _______

29. Gender:
   A. MALE
   B. FEMALE

30. Highest Educational Level:
   A. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
   B. BACHELOR'S DEGREE
   C. MASTER'S DEGREE
   D. GRADUATE STUDIES BEYOND THE MASTER'S
   E. DOCTORAL DEGREE
   F. OTHER _______

31. Income Level:
   A. LESS THAN $20,000
   B. $20,000 TO $29,000
   C. $30,000 TO $39,000
   D. $40,000 OR MORE

32. Marital Status:
   A. MARRIED
   B. SINGLE

33. Number of Children
   A. NO CHILDREN
   B. 1-3
   C. 4-6
   D. 7 OR MORE

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34. Type of Community in which you live
A. RURAL AND LIVE ON A FARM
B. RURAL BUT DO NOT LIVE ON A FARM (populations of less than 2,500)
C. SUBURBAN AND LIVE NEAR A TOWN OR CITY (populations of 2,500 to 49,999)
D. URBAN AND LIVE WITHIN A CITY DISTRICT (populations of 50,000 or more)

35. Program area that the majority of your time is devoted to:
A. 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
B. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
C. AGRICULTURE
D. FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

SECTION III: OTHER COMMENTS
The following questions require that you respond as frank and as honest as you possibly can. Please take a few minutes to think through your answer before you respond. Please write as much or as little as you like.

36. How many African American clients are you presently working with?

37. Approximately what percentage of your clientele base is African American?

38. How many programs have you designed with African American clientele in mind?

39. To what extent do you believe that African Americans are not interested in the services that Extension has to offer?
40. How could the Extension program best serve African Americans?

41. To what extent do you believe that present Extension programs address African American needs and concerns?

42. To what extent do present Extension programs primarily serve Euro-Americans(white) clientele?

Thank you for your cooperation!
APPENDIX C

PANEL OF EXPERTS
PANEL OF EXPERTS

1. Juanita Miller  Specialist, Limited resource (OSUE)
2. Calvin Walker  Specialist, Urban Programming (OSUE)
3. Gloria Walkins  Specialist, Recruitment & Retention (OSU)
4. Tamara Minor  Director of Minority Retention (OSU)
5. Rosemay Gliem(GRA)  Graduate Research Associate (OSUE)
6. Gail Gunderson  Extension Administrator (OSUE)
7. Ruben Nieto  Program development and Evaluation (OSUE)
8. Nikki Conklin  Leader, Program Development (OSUE)
9. Jan Henderson  Associate Professor (OSUE)
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