LEARNING STRATEGIES IN THE

AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

OF ENID, OKLAHOMA

By

BLAYNE EDWARD HINDS

Bachelor of Art
Langston University
Langston, Oklahoma
1973

Masters of Art
Central State University
Edmond, Oklahoma
1988

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
December, 2001

LEARNING STRATEGIES IN THE

AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

OF ENID, OKLAHOMA

Thesis Approved:

_____
Thesis Advisor

_____

_____

_____

_____
Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

## LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The African-American community has a long history in America. This history has been strongly influenced by the "peculiar institution" of slavery (Stamp, 1956). One of the institutions that has played a strong role within this community has been the church. Churches have been the traditional gathering place for those in the African-American community for a variety of activities which includes not only worship but also education and individual learning.

In order to better understand and improve learning, adult educators have focused on the area of individual differences. One way of looking at these differences is through learning strategies. Research in this area has found that demographic variables such as race and sex are not related to learning strategies. However, this research has not focused specifically on learning strategies in the African-American community. A logical organizational unit for research in the African-American community is the church.

Community

Human and societal interaction are directly linked to the concept of community. While sociologists study the

nature of social interaction, the formation of social groups, and how these formations contribute to and impact the evolution of the greater society, much can be said about how sociologists determine or distinguish the existence of the "community". This involves elements of socialization from the levels of individual to communal. As a science, sociology includes a variety of approaches; however at its heart, this science is primarily concerned with the social development of individuals, how individuals socialize together into groups, and the affect of these social groups on the existence of the larger society. "Sociology is a science" with a "focus on human interaction, with the sociological inquiry on people as social beings" (Zander, 1979, p. 12). Sociologist are interested in how "people structure their relationships within their study of families, cliques, religious sects, delinquent gangs, organizations, communities and societies" (p. 12). Researcher's indicate that society consist of a diversity of cultures, religions, and beliefs, which in turn are separated into cultures and subculture of people whose thoughts differ in some format or method. As society develop a culture, subcultures also come into being.

Research in the dynamics of the community encompasses vast areas of study. There are several definitions or

aspects of community. A community is "a true alchemical
process that transforms our differences into golden
harmony....A community represents a domain of safety wherein
inhabitants learn to accept one's differences" (Peck, 1987,
p. 171). A community "is a group of people united by the
common objects of their love that incorporates three
elements: shared values, unity, and intimacy" (Schwartz,
1991, p. 16). A community can be also defined as

> A unified body of individuals; people with common
> interests living in a particular area; an
> interacting population of various kinds of
> individuals in a common location; a group linked
> by common policy; a body of persons or nations
> having a history or social, economic, and
> political interests in common; and a joint
> ownership or participation. (Webster, 1972, p.
> 168)

There are at least three primary uses for the word
community (Schuler, 1996). The word community could mean
(a) a group of people living in a contiguous geographical
area; (b) a group of like-minded people such as those in a
community of librarians, in a self-help community, or in a
"virtual" community; or (c) a state of group communion,
togetherness, and mutual concern (p. 2). In addition, "a
community is a web, a web that is real yet intangible, a web
of social relations. The web of community is a unity, a
cohesive force that is supportive, builds relationships, and
encourages tolerance" (p. 32).

Adult educators often use the term "community" when referring to adult learners or the potential group for adult education activities. One of the fathers of the modern field of adult education, Eduard Lindeman (1921), shared basically the identical definitions and views as the current researchers in sociology. He, however, differentiated between a community and a neighborhood. He contended that a community is an "organized unit with institutions having specific functions and a neighborhood as a group of families living within an acquaintance area" (p. 9). Community is seemingly a state of being together in which people lower their defenses and learn to accept and rejoice in the differences among themselves.

The African American Community

The African-American community has existed in this country from the first day Africans came to North America. Historical evidence exists verifying that Blacks established communities in America as early as 1526 (Asante & Mattson 1991, p. 48). One hundred African slaves brought to America by Lucas Vasquez de Allyon, a Spanish explorer, revolted after his death. In winning their battle, the slaves preceded to immediately set up the first permanent, nonnative settlement in America. The very nature of slavery in America allowed and encouraged considerable intervention

into the lives of African Americans. It is in this respect that slavery played a major role in the destabilization of African-American families and communities. In all, the dehumanizing American institution of slavery served mostly to destabilize the formation of a strong African-American family structure. Also, the psychological damage necessary for slavery to exist was passed down through generations in a manner which affected the future development of a more stable African-American community (Franklin, 1992, p. 402).

The goal of African-Americans was always to keep their families and community tightly guarded against outside intervention, but the design of society was not conducive to such plans. Economic and social factors often drew the African-American male away from the family and community during slavery and afterward. In slavery, escaping to freedom separated many families. Men would escape hoping to establish a better life for their families, but often they returned only to find that their families had been sold in retaliation for their leaving. After emancipation, such things as lynching, the Great Migration of former slaves to the North, World War I, World War II, and severe economic hardship often divided men from their families and communities (Billingsley, 1992, p. 396). Community is seemingly a concept with which African-Americans have long

been familiar (Mullane, 1993, p. 20).

The  Jim Crow era was the period after the Civil War that established laws and social practices severely limiting the rights of African-Americans. As this era became dominate, former slaves established communities and townships to provide a unified front and to create the necessary structure for the survival of African-American communities. The townships were also established for safety and to empower former slaves to pursue the "American dream" less restrictively (Asante & Mattson, 1991, p. 48).

The separation of African-American males from the community is a major contributor of instability within the African-American community. Whether the separation is forced or implied, it is one of the most persistent and difficult obstacle to the strengthening of the African-American family and communities. Many African-American households are headed by single females with little or no male influence (Glenn, 1992, p. 423). These issues are having a devastating affect on the success of African American communities.

Community can be interpreted from an essentialist fashion (Walters & Smith, 1999). "It is self-evident that a black community exists as a historically constructed community of shared history and memory with distinctive cultural, political, and economic interests" (p. 249).

Garvey, who organized a back to African movement in the 1920's, preached "economic self-sufficiency, contending the Negroes should have their own stores and factories" (Quarles, 1987, p. 197). Garvey realized that "a community that is self-reliant and dependent upon itself for its own function, maintenance, and success, is much more in control of its own destiny than one which is not" (p. 197).

Continuous development of the community and its members is necessary in order for a community to prosper. Without a vibrant tradition of resistance passed on to new generations, there can seemingly be no nurturing of a collective and critical consciousness and only professional conscientiousness survives. Where there is no vital community to hold up precious ethical and religious ideals, there can be no coming to a moral commitment, and only personal accomplishment is applauded (West, 1993, p. 56). "A communal consciousness cannot exist unless it is nurtured by the whole community (young and old), and it is also evident that the excellence (or at least parity) in the education of African Americans cannot be achieved without the involvement of the community" (West, 1993, pp. 56-57).

### Adult Education

For as many varied authors defining the constructs of learning, there exist equally as many varied and viable

definitions. According to Lindeman (1926), "the whole of
life is learning, therefore education has no ending" (p. 4).
Sociological research indicates that learning is unique in
the sense that the dominant culture's learning structures
are used as models; however, differing learning structure
exist within each community, primarily generated exclusively
by need.

A real-life learning problem that the African-American
community has is learning a meaningful way to solve problems
and address issues that face both individuals in the
community and the overall community. Adult education is
possibly an approach that can be used to assist the
community in analyzing and making intellectual decisions
about these real-life problems and issues through a process
of educational inquiry and dialogue. Because of the
diversity of the field, a universal definition of adult
education has been the center of discussion by adult
educators for many years and has not yet been resolved
(Apps, 1987). However, a widely accepted view in the field
is that "adult education is a process whereby persons whose
major social roles are characteristic of adult status,
undertake systematic and sustained learning activities for
the purpose of bringing about changes in knowledge,
attitudes, values, or skills" (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982,

p. 9). "Real-life learning requires a problem-centered curriculum based on social realities, shifting from an individualistic, inner-directed focus to a broader concern for community" (Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. viii).

Andragogy is "the art and science of helping adults learn" (Knowles, 1970, p. 39). The term of andragogy can be traced back to the mid 1800's and was popularized in the United State by Malcolm Knowles. Modern andragogy is based on four critical assumptions that are the foundation of adult education and that ties it to real-life learning. First, adults need to know why they need to learn something; the learning must have a purpose that is clearly defined and understood by the adult learner. Second, adults learn experientially. They have a vast reservoir of experiences to draw upon in learning. Adult learners learn best when they are respected as persons with some level of experience or knowledge that is applicable to the learning environment. Third, adults approach learning from a problem-solving perspective; adults learn information in the context that the new information is useful to accomplish some pre-existing goal or objective. Fourth, adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value, and this is usually to gain a skill or new information that has an immediate application to a current situation. Both formal and informal

adult education has always existed in various communities in the United States. The United States has long been viewed as the land of opportunity, and its forefathers quickly realized that education is the foundation of building a productive and flourishing society (Knowles, 1970, p. 4).

## The African-American Learner

America has long struggled with the concept and implementation of education and empowerment for African-Americans. During the Civil War, it was a question of its necessity. Plessy v. Ferguson raised the question of its fundamentality and established the institution of separate-but-equal. However, Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, established "that the segregation of black and white children was unconstitutional and that the separate-but-equal doctrine did not apply to education" (Fishel & Quarles, 1976, p. 341).

Research indicates there are two major forces within the African-American community. One is religion, and the other is education. The church is referenced to as the cornerstone of the African-American community, and the church is the most powerful and self-sufficient organization in the Black community (McRae, Carey, & Anderson-Scott, 1998, p. 781). According to W. E. B. DuBois (1903), a pioneer in the African American cultural and social issues,

"the Negro church is the social center of Negro life" (p. 117).

Training the African-American population by means of the current educational system seemingly leaves much to be desired in terms of helping all members reach their potential. The overall goal of education is to possibly produce individuals who are prepared to compete in today's technologically advancing global community. The goal of a community also presents another dimension: not only must it produce educated individuals capable of being competitive on an international scale, but it must also produce socially compatible individuals capable of harmonious interaction.

<u>Learning Strategies</u>

Learning strategies are the techniques and skills an individual elects to use in order to accomplish a learning task (Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. 8). These are skills and techniques that can be learned. Learning strategies for the adult learner have been defined and conceptualized as consisting of metacognition, metamotivation, memory, critical thinking, and resource management. Metacognition is popularly conceived "as thinking about the process of thinking" (Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. 9) Metamotivation is the "awareness of and control over factors that energize and direct our learning" (p. 7). Memory is the "storage,

retention, and retrieval of knowledge" (p. 10). Critical thinking is the "reflective thinking process utilizing higher order thinking skills in order to improve learning" (p. 11). Resource management is the process of identification, evaluation, and use of resources relevant to the learning task (Conti & Kolody, pp. 9-10).

Learning strategy research has led to the identification of three distinct groups of learners, which have been named Navigators, Problem Solvers, and Engagers (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 18). Navigators are conscientious, result-oriented high achievers who focus on designing a plan for exactly what needs to be learned (p. 9). Problem Solvers rely on reflective thinking processes and identify various solutions for the learning task (pp. 11-12). Engagers internalize the personal value of the learning to themselves before they begin the learning process (pp. 13-15). Based on this research, learning strategies are learned behavior that are independent of various factors generated through individual learning abilities. In the process of social, educational, economical, political, and ethical evolution within society, effective learning strategies must be present to promote growth and continuance of the people the society represents (Brown, 1997; Fellenz & Conti 1989; Uhland, 1995).

Problem Statement

Learning needs are pervasive, but it is not known how learning takes place in various communities such as the African-American community. The African-American community exists with specific needs because of its structure and conditions which are tied closely to its history. Learning strategies offer the opportunity to identify specific approaches to learning because they can be taught and because a knowledge of personal learning strategies can help adult learners become aware of how they learn. However, learning strategies have not been extensively investigated in the African-American community. Indeed, demographic variables have been explored in general relating to learning strategies, but these strategies have not been investigated in depth within the African-American community. While research has found that most demographic variables are not related to learning strategies (Conti & Kolody, 1997), these studies have not represented a large African-American population. Consequently, the factor of race requires further investigation. One city with a prevalent African-American population is Enid, Oklahoma. Historical records indicate that Enid was the fastest growing town following the Cherokee Strip Run of 1893 due to the railroad and easy accessible transportation (Turner & Gailey, 1998).

Enid was recognized as the fourth largest populated city by the state of Oklahoma through the 1960's. To date, Enid is the business and economic hub of North Central and Northwestern Oklahoma. The population of Garfield County is 58,704 with Enid containing 49,887 of the residents of the county. The county's 2,101 African Americans live within the city limits of Enid and represent 3.7% of the population (Bureau Census, 1990). The first recorded presence of people of African descent in the Enid area dates from the Cherokee Strip Run of 1893. During pre-statehood, settlements were formed by people of African-American descent. These African-American residents embarked upon providing the necessities for their families. In addition to facing the many hardships encountered in establishing homes in uncultivated soil, the majority faced obstacles generated by racism and intolerance (Turner & Gailey, 1998).

The current African-American population of Enid indicates that while their forefather numbers were small, many of the early pioneers survived to create a community that is still functioning (Myers, 1997, p. 37). If this community is to prosper and overcome future obstacles, it must develop its members as lifelong learners. In order to do this, a need exists to better understand how learning occurs among the African-Americans in Enid.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe the learning
strategies of those in the African-American community of
Enid, Oklahoma. This was accomplished by measuring the
learning strategy preferences of members of the community
and by identifying factors in the community structure that
either contributed to or hindered this learning.

The study of learning strategies is part of the growing
line of inquiry related to The Assessing The Learning
Strategies of AdultS (ATLAS). ATLAS was used to identify
learning strategies for the study because it is a valid
instrument for measuring learning strategies for the adult
learner (Conti & Kolody, 1998). ATLAS also provided a method
for gathering information to identify learning strategies
that could possibly be significant to the African-American
community.

ATLAS developed out of a line of inquiry related to
learning strategy studies which utilized the Self-Knowledge
Inventory of Lifelong Learning Strategies (Conti & Kolody,
1999; James, 2000). These studies utilized a similar design
so that the results of the studies could be considered
together. This line of inquiry has continued with ATLAS with
studies by Ghost Bear (2001), Goodwin (2001), Lively (2001),
and Turman (2001). In order for the results of this study to

be interpreted with these other studies, this study was patterned after the design used by James, (2000).

## Research Questions

This study addressed several basic questions related to learning strategies within the African-American community of Enid, Oklahoma.

1. What is the learning strategy profile of church members in the African-American community of Enid?

2. How do the learning strategies of African-Americans in Enid, Oklahoma, compare to the norms for ATLAS?

3. What factors in the Enid African-American church community contribute to the learning for each learning strategy preference group?

4. What factors in the Enid African-American community hinder learning for each learning strategy preference group?

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Descriptive data from the ATLAS was used to determine the learning strategy preference profile of the African-American participants. A chi square was used to compare the responses of the participants to the norm for ATLAS. Interviews were conducted to examine factors that contribute to or hinder learning within the African-American community.

## Definitions

Adult Learning--The process of adults gaining knowledge and expertise (Knowles et al., 1998, p. 124).

Andragogy--The art and science of helping adults learn
(Knowles, 1970, p. 39).

ATLAS--Assessing the Learning Strategies of AdultS, an
instrument to distinguish learning strategy profiles
(Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 16).

Community--A community can be operationally defined as a
multigenerational, interactive, interdependent
collectivity of persons who share a common culture, a
common emotional tie, and live within relatively close
proximity to one another (Mazique, 1992, p. 469).

Engager--Passionate learners who love to learn, learn with
feeling, and learn best when they are actively engaged
in a meaningful manner with the learning task (Conti &
Kolody, 1999, p. 13).

Learning--A relatively permanent change in behavior
resulting from experience (McKenzie, 1980, p. 13).

Learning Strategies--Those techniques or specialized skills
that the learner has developed to use in both formal
and informal learning situations. The strategies are
more a preference; they are developed throughout life
and vary by task (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 2).

Navigator--Focused learners who chart a course for learning
and follow it. They are conscientious, results-oriented
high achievers who favor making logical connections,
planning, and organizing activities (Conti & Kolody,
1999, p. 9).

Problem Solvers--Critical thinkers who rely on a reflective
thinking process which utilizes higher order of
thinking skills (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 11).

Real-Life Learning--Learning that is relevant to the living
tasks of the individual in contrast to those tasks
considered more appropriate to formal education

(Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. 3).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An understanding of learning in the African-American community is grounded in two major areas. One area is rooted in sociology and includes the concept of the community and how it applies to various groups. The other area is adult education and consists of the concepts that make up this field of study and involves how these concepts apply to the African-American leaner.

## Community

The concept of community within the three professions of sociology, psychology, and anthropology are directly linked to human and societal interaction. While sociology investigates the nature of social interaction (how values, beliefs and norms are cultivated and established), the formation of social groups (based on shared social characteristics), and how these formations contribute to and impact the evolution of the greater society, much can be said about how sociologists determine or distinguish the existence of a "community". This includes elements of socialization from the levels of individual to communal. As a science, sociology includes a variety of approaches. However, at its heart, this science is primarily concerned with social development of the individual, how individuals

socialize together into groups, and the impact of these social groups on the existence of the larger society. "A society refers to the broadest grouping of people who share a common set of habits, ideas, and attitudes, live in a definite territory, and consider themselves a social unit", and a "society is a number of persons in interaction to the extent that they are aware of one another's existence" (Mark & Young, 1968, p. 33).

During the latter eighteenth and early nineteenth century, social researchers were investigating society and the relationship of individuals to society. Cooley (1977) conducted research on human grouping; he attempted to link man with society and integrated individuals into the social fabric. Primary groups are "those characterized by intimate face-to-face association and cooperation" (p. 306).

Most sociologists concur that every individual in present complex societies is a member of many different social groups which are vitally significant to the person's welfare.

> Sociologists distinguish between groups and aggregates. Groups are classified according to the frequency, intensity, duration and focus of the interaction involved. An aggregate consists of people who do not interact yet have something in common biologically, socially, or both. Race is, at least ostensibly, a biological aggregate. (Mack & Young, 1968, p. 34)

The group structure of society "include everyone from

members of a family, to participants in a mob, to citizens of a national state", and the word "group refers to any collection of persons who are bound together by a distinctive set of relations" (Broom & Selznick, 1963, p. 31).

On the other hand, anthropology is the scientific study of mankind from its creation to the present. While many aspects of human beings are studied, anthropologists strive primarily to understand the entire perplexity of mankind. A list of 160 different definitions of culture was published in 1952 by anthropologists Kluckhohn and Kroeber. This publication is apparent evidence of diversity in the concept of culture within the anthropology profession. Yet, some "writers have suggested that there is no such thing as American culture" (Broom & Selznick, 1963, p. 60). Instead, there "is a conglomeration of subcultures", and these "subcultures are distinguishable from one another and from the dominant culture forms by such manifest characteristics as language, clothing, gesture, and etiquette" (p. 60).

Subcultures are "groups of persons who share the total culture but also have a set of behaviors peculiar to the group" (Mack & Young, 1968, p. 42). Anthropologists use the term subculture when describing variations within the culture of a given society. A subculture is "a group that

possess certain distinctive ways of thinking, feeling and acting that in a number of respects sets its members apart from the larger society" (Zanden, 1979, p. 67).

Subcultures can exist due to individual or groups voluntarily separating themselves for the mainstream. However, subcultures could and in many instances do exist through alienation or isolation.

The concept of "community" varies and includes a broad spectrum of definitions; however, some generalizations can be made. It is commonly accepted that two of the general characteristics of a sociologically defined "community" are commonalities among members of the population and a distinct identification of some geographic frame of reference. A community is "a collectivity of persons of all ages and both sexes who share a common culture and reside in a relatively limited space or locality" (Mack & Young, 1968, p. 34). A community can also be viewed as "a collectivity of interacting people who share a limited territorial area as the base for carrying on the greater part of their activities" (Zanden, 1979, p. 618). Yet there are some areas where the stores, schools, and churches are dispersed rather widely. Although communities are diverse, "they contain neighborhoods of the traditional type, the inhabitants give these areas names and think of them as distinct communities"

(Mark & Young, 1968, p. 269). They are frequently "bound together by a common emotional tie, such as a common religion or a common ethnicity" (p. 269). Because of the complexity of a community, "sociologist have no universally accepted definition of community" (Merz & Furman, 1997, p. 3).

Emile Durkheim, a well known and respected sociologist, used the terms society and "community" in different ways. In spite of the different uses of the terms community and society, there are commonalities of perception in his writings. He felt "that every society or social group [i.e., community] is characterized by a particular set of collective representations that are shared by most, if not all of its members" (Ashley & Orenstein, 1998, p. 118), and "together these representations can be said to form a united collective set of social rules and ways of understanding the world" (p. 118). In Durkheim's words, this is a "collective consciousness" (p. 118).

The American society consists of many different social groups or communities (Krech, Crutchfield, & Ballachey, 1962) that are significant to the individual's welfare. Research suggest that these social groups or communities are usually divided into two categories: psychological groups and social organizations (p. 383). A psychological group may

be defined as a group in which the "relations among the members are interdependent and each member's behavior influences the behavior of each of the others; the members share an ideology--a set of beliefs, values, and norms which regulates their mutual conduct" (p. 383). "The most cursory look at any modern society reminds us that it is composed of many communities and the control of society over the person's attitudes and behavior, is determined primarily in the community" (p. 309).

The definition of community varies based on the researchers economic, social, and political orientation. There is definite variance of scholarship by the mainstream and the minority populations regarding the concept of community. Many minorities associate the term "community" with a cohesive living environment; however, the mainstream scholarly community typically associates the term "community" as a congregation of schools of thought. Of course, "there are varied perceptions of the concept community. The term embrace such factors as territoriality or spatial distribution, and human aggregates distributed within certain ecological boundaries who share common experiences, value systems, and social institutions" (Blackwell, 1991, p. 20). Russell states that the word community "implies an association of people having common

interests and common possessions, bound together by laws and regulations which express these common interests and ideals and define the relation of the individual to the community"(cited in Lindeman, 1921, p. 13). According to Schwartz (1991), "a community is a group of people united by the common objects of their love that incorporates three elements: shared value, unity, and intimacy" (p. 16). Schuler (1996) argues that there are at least three uses for the word community: (a) a group of people living in a contiguous geographical area; (b) a group of like-minded people such as those in a community of educators; or (c) a state of group communion, togetherness, and mutual concern (p. 2). Adult educators often use the term "community" when referring to adult learners or the potential group for adult education activities.

Sociologist Eduard Lindeman (1921), who is considered by many to be the father of Adult Education, shared basically the identical definition and views as current researchers. He differentiates between a community and a neighborhood. He contended that a community is "an organized unit with institutions having specific functions and a neighborhood as a group of families living within an acquaintance area" (p. 9). Lindeman stated that the character of a community is usually determined by economics.

He introduced seven types of communities: (a) urban
communities: industrial, commercial (financial), and
political, (b) suburban, (c) industrial cities or towns, (d)
agricultural cities or towns, (e) educational towns or
villages, (f) villages, and (g) open country communities
(pp. 40-41). The assumptions were prevalent to the societal
demands of the time. Roberts adds, "the community exists
when a group of people perceives common needs and problems,
acquires a sense of identity, and has a common sense of
objective" (cited in Brookfield, 1984, p. 63).

The definition of community has been the center of debate
by sociologist for years. Sociologist tend to look at
"community" as groups of people that may be mobile and
interact in different environments but yet maintain a
particular primary identity. The questions are asked about
what is the definition of a community and about exactly what
is the construct of a community. There was no clear
sociological  definition of community until 1915. At that
time, a number of definitions were introduced mostly
describing community "as a geographical area; some on a
group of people living in a particular place; and others
which looked to community as an area of common life" (Asante
& Mattson, 1991, p. 47). Community could also be described
as a value; it could convey commitment, trust, and safety

(Frazer, 1999). Community can be viewed as descriptive by conveying place, interest, and communion (p. 76).

The boundary maintenance system was one of the major contributors to the establishment of African-American communities throughout the Unites States. This held true in urban as well as rural America. The African-American population were excluded from full liberties enjoyed by other citizens. Therefore, African-American communities emerged. The primary goal was to keep their families and community tightly guarded against outside intervention and to attempt to imitate the lifestyle of the dominate population (Hays III, 1992, p. 396).

The African-American Community

The first recorded presence of Africans in the American colonies was in the early 1600's in the areas of Maryland and Virginia. It is recorded that they were transported from the West Indies. Their entry were not as slaves but as indentured servants, and they were afforded the same gratuities as any indentured person. Their skin tone, hair textures, and facial features were similar to that of Anglos; however, they were distinguishable as persons of color. They were granted freedom when their indentured servitude was completed and/or when they became Christians. The European and African indentured servants on occasion

developed common bonds often resulting in interracial marriages. Africans owned businesses, acquired leadership roles, and established "communities" and living accommodations in an environment that would provide them comfort and safety similar to those of the Anglos during that period.

However, after 1660 with the importing of Africans from the Western and Eastern African regions, slavery was introduced in the southern colonies. The darker skinned Africans were viewed by Southern landowners as a reliable source of labor. Due to their dark skins, hair texture, and facial features, they were easily identifiable, and the total race was dehumanized as inferior justified on their captivity. The institution that was historically recognized as enslavement of the African race became standard and acceptable by Southern standards and within the established colonies (Asante & Mattson, 1991; Broom & Selznick, 1955, 1958, 1963; Kolchin, 1993;).

All Africans arriving in the colonies after 1660 entered as slaves. "The impact of enslavement on Africans was psychological, political, social and economic" (Asante & Mattson, 1991, p. 47). However, there were free Africans in the colonies although the masses were enslaved. Some of the Africans had earned their freedom, and others were granted

freedom by their masters. A small percentage were never slaves. Although they were legally free, they had to continuously defend their right to be free. The institution of slavery, which was cruel and inhuman, was a major factor contributing to impact the African-American family. "The slave system had a crippling effect on the establishment, maintenance, and growth of normal patterns of family life among the Negro" (Hays III, 1992, p. 396). "Families were broken up at the very beginning of the slave trade" (p. 396). Another factor that "characterize the impact of slavery on the Negro family" was the "absence of legal safeguards to regulate a foundation, establish sanction, and provide protection of marriage as an institution among the slaves" (p. 397). There was an "absence of societal support and protection for the Negro family as a physical, psychological, social, or economic unit" {p. 397). The supposed albatross of slavery resulted in 1861 in the Civil War, which was the bloodiest war in which the United States ever was engaged.

The abolitionist opposed slavery and called for its termination. Abolition movements had existed dating back to the colonial period. However, during the height of abolition, Quakers condemned slavery on moral and religious grounds. A number of publications voiced their protest of

slavery in the early 1800's. Slavery was not just a political element, but it was also a strong economic issue within the South. The South viewed slavery as the economic structure necessary for its survival (Fishel & Quarles 1976). Following the Civil War and during the period of reconstruction, there was an influx of African-Americans who migrated to the North. Homeless and jobless, slaves migrated by the thousands to what they believe to be freedom (Asante & Mattson, 1991, p. 51). The 14th Amendment to the Constitution gave citizenship to the Blacks and assured that all federal and state laws would apply equally to both Blacks and Whites (Aldrich, 1973, p. 46). However, within a short period, Jim Crow laws were instituted in the South that greatly restricted rights of Blacks as newly acquired American citizens. African Americans found themselves experiencing "a period of severe discrimination and injustice" (Asante & Mattson, 1991, p. 108).

For a people that had been enslaved for over 200 years to emerge without physical and psychological scars would have been amazing. The Blacks emerged from slavery with many physical, psychological, and social ills. They were catapulted in the role of providing for themselves and of grasping an appreciation of family and maintenance (Hayes III, 1992, p. 375). Much has been written concerning

African-American males, females, teenagers, and children. In many cases, the writings depict a negative image of the African-American family structure. African-Americans have an established family and community structure that has survived under the most horrible conditions. "The road to freedom was often marked by economic, physical, and legal harassment, yet the African-American community continued to produce men and women who defied the odds" (Asante & Mattson, 1991, p. 92). Nevertheless, they persevered the humiliation and derivation of the Jim Crow separate-but-equal era of Plessy v. Ferguson by bonding together in groups that become communities.

Due to the adversities inflicted on African-Americans, communities were cultivated in most cases from the most undesirable partials of land. This resulted in the necessity to establish communities that would be conducive to the African-American interest and safety. Not only was it necessary due to exclusion from the main society to live in close proximity to one another, but Blacks also had to develop a social, educational, recreational, and cultural base.

In this process, "religious institutions have traditionally played central symbolic and functional roles within the black community" (Ellison, 1997, p. 117). The

African-American church emerged into prominence in the Eighteen Century. Following the Civil War, African-American churches appeared in great numbers. These churches that were "mainly Baptist and Methodist became the leadership training institutions for the community" (Asante & Mattson, 1994, p. 48). In addition, the "early preachers became the interpreters of black social and political agendas, often became the lead-off witness against racism" (pp.48-49). The celebrated scholar and writer, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (1994), wrote that in his early childhood the church provided "a sense of community, moments of intimacy, of belonging to a culture" (p. 116).

## Adult Education

Today's economic and technological advances intensify the problems that confront the adult population. Many adults find that being more proficient and competent in the current job market, achieving more fulfillment in leisure activities, and being more effective and productive within their communities necessitates some form of continuing education. The concept of education, particularly adult education, should be endowed with personal development and individuality whether it is self-directed or teacher-directed. One of the most long-standing efforts in adult education has been to identify what is unique about adult

learning in contrast to youth learning (Deshler & Hagin

cited in Merriam & Cunningham, 1989, p. 155). The United

states is quickly becoming a nation of older adults

(Golladay, 1976, p. 12). With the exception of the World War

II years, younger individuals have numerically dominated the

United States population (Cross, 1988, p. 3). In recent

years, there has been a tremendous increase in adult

education, both formal and informal. Adults today constitute

more than half of all full and part-time college students.

American industries mandate skills enhancement and

retraining programs, and millions of adults are now learning

at their place of employment.

In the past, the majority of society's educational

efforts were focused on children and adolescents. In today's

complex and fast-paced world, one's education will simply

not last a lifetime (Willis, 1985). Researchers now view

education as a process that helps maximize the development

of individuals across the entire human life-span. It is

difficult to think of any social change, which is presently

occurring, that would not require increased attention to

lifelong learning.

The discovery of information that provides insight into

effective learning has great importance for adults. This

information can be used to develop curricula that maximize

the strengths of the adult. It could provide validation or direction in terms of strategies for teaching critical thinking skills (Smith, 1982). "Sharing the information with the learner can empower them to improve lifelong learning" and thus "to encourage lifelong learning and lifelong self-directed learning" (p. 19). Education assists people who want to break ties with formal education and develop their own strategies for learning (Apps, 1987, p. 246).

The term andragogy was popularized in the United States by Malcolm Knowles in the 1960's. Utilizing learning theories from European educators, he developed his assumptions of andragogy. He defined the concept of andragogy as the "art and science of adult learning" (Knowles, 1970, p. 39). Andragogy is based on the assumption that adults learn differently than children. Based upon the pedagogy model, children are generally receptive to the process of elite transmittal of knowledge as the principle purpose of education. The theoretical orientation of education under the pedagogical model is generally related more to the characteristics of educational subject matter rather than to the characteristics of the students receiving educational information.

According to Knowles, (1970), educators must consider the characteristics of the learner and the context in which

learning takes place in order to effectively facilitate the learning of adults. The adult instructional process should be more conducive to the adult learner's needs and requirements. Traditionally, both children and adults were subjected exclusively to pedagogical instructional methods. The andragogical model regarding adult learners distinguished adult education from childhood schooling by recognizing the process of education for adults as lifelong and continuous. Therefore, an instructor should adopt the role of facilitator or resource rather than lecturer or grader. "One major function of adult education is to sell the people the idea of continuing to learn" (p. 190). In his critical assumptions on adult learners, Knowles introduced an andragogical model with four major characteristics that are different from those of pedagogy:

1. Adults are self-directed learners. Through maturation, a person's self-concept moves from dependency toward self-directing.

2. Adults enter into educational experience with more and better quality experiences than youth.

3. Adults become ready to learn when they experience a need to know something in order to perform more effectively in their lives.

4. Adults enter educational activities with a problem-centered orientation to learning. (p. 39)

Knowles' (1980) assumptions regarding the characteristics of adult learners have significant implications for the design, the implementation of planning, and the evaluation of adult learning activities. Knowles recognized that as individuals mature they began to see themselves differently. They become more self-directed and move from the dependency of being told when and how the learning process should begin and what they should be taught. Their experiences provide a resource for learning; therefore, learning becomes organized around practical individual problem situations and their individual rate of maturation rather than around academic subjects. Therefore, in the andragogical model, the focus is placed more on the educational process and less on the educational content being taught.

Based on these factors, Knowles developed a seven step educational program planning model. Within this planning model he expanded his andragogical principles to include pedagogical strategies but

> only up to the point at which the learner has acquired sufficient knowledge of the content to be able to start engaging in self-directed inquiry about it....The andragogical theory has become a general theory about learning, not subsuming the pedagogical assumptions but placing them in the initial stages of totally new learning. (Knowles, 1989, p. 113)

The seven step process to the andragogical or learning-

centered model consists of:

1.  The establishment of a climate conducive to adult learning.

2.  The creation of an organizational structure for participative planning.

3.  The diagnosis of needs for learning.

4.  The formulation of directions for learning (objectives).

5.  The development of a design of activities.

6.  The operation of the activities.

7.  The rediagnosis of needs for learning (evaluation). (Knowles, 1970, p. 54).

Knowles (1980) viewed instructors as the facilitators of educational planning by suggesting procedures and coordinating the process with the learner. The learner is viewed as a mutual partner in each of the steps of diagnosing the learner needs, formulating the learning process, designing patterns of learning experiences, and evaluating results (p. 39). Strategies such as case studies, self-evaluation, role playing, and stimulations are beneficial in implementing andragogical assumptions.

Before adults undertake learning something on their own, they will invest considerable energy in probing into the benefits they will gain from learning as well as the negative consequences of not learning it (Tough, 1979).

Assessing the needs and interests means uncovering the learners' perceptions for what they want to become, what they want to achieve, and at what level they want to perform. According to the principles of andragogy, learners will enhance the capacity to make responsible judgements regarding their level of competency development if they are provided adequate resources and tools for obtaining data (Knowles, 1990). The concept of the andragogical model is universal in that for adults of any race or culture, learning should be a continuous, lifelong process. Understanding learning characteristics and utilizing andragogical principles could possibly inspire creating more continuing educational outlets and programs for African-American adults in Enid.

<div align="center">Self-Directed Learning</div>

Between 1960 and 1980, more knowledge was gained about adult learners and their characteristics than in all previous history of adult education (Knowles, 1984, p. 6). One of these areas of insight relates to self-directed learning. Self-directed learning has been defined by researchers in many different ways. Self-directed learning could be described as a process in which individuals take the initiative for learning with or without the help of others inside or outside of the formal educational setting

(Merriam & Caffarella, 1991, p. 41). The trend has been for the methodology of adult education to move away from traditional classroom methods in favor of methods that would make greater use of the experience of the adult learner (Knowles, 1977, p. 255). This has contributed to the theory of self-directed learning as a form of study. The works of Tough (1967) and Brookfield (1984) provide legitimacy to self-directed learning as a form of study. Additionally, as a form of study, self-directed learning considers the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning to be the primary responsibility of the learner.

Tough (1967) defines self-directed learning projects as deliberate acts by adult learners to acquire specific knowledge or skill within a specific time frame of at least seven hours. Tough's (1971) inquiry was not only concerned with the what and why of adult learning but also with how adults learn and the benefits they obtain from learning. After performing extensive research with adult learners, he further concluded that at least 90% of adults are involved in at least one self-directed learning project per year and that 70% of the learning projects were negotiated by the learners themselves (p. 1). Tough further contended that adult learners vary in their learning abilities and their approach to self-direct learning activities. Due to these

variances, the role of educators should be as helper or facilitator to enable the learners to be self-directed in their learning activities (p. 183). In comparison with Tough's research, Knowles (1975) stated that self-directed learning is not an isolated process. Instead, it is most beneficial to adults if a collaborated effort between learners, peers, resource people, and educators exists (p. 18).

Knowles was also instrumental in incorporating learning contracts within his merged andragogical and self-directed learning principles. Learning contracts take the individual learners attributes into account and focus on the goals or objectives the learner wants to accomplish rather than just on the goals or objectives of what the instructor wants to accomplish. This process allows the learning to be structured by the individual learner. The learning contract identifies five categories:

1. Learning objectives
2. Learning resources and strategies
3. Target date for completion
4. Evidence of accomplishment of objectives
5. Criteria and means for validating evidence

Utilizing learning contracts can enhance the educative environment by encouraging mutual trust, open communication, collaboration and cooperation, and responsibility. In

addition, learners are responsible for not only demonstrating the achievement of their objectives but also for evaluating the level of achievement.

Considerable research have been conducted requiring participation in adult learning activities particularly by Knowles (1975), Tough (1978), and Brookfield (1987). Brookfield (1986) contends that some adults are not capable of engaging in self-directed learning and that many lack the independence, the confidence, and the resources to be self-directed. He believes "that learning is being effectively facilitated when the educator is prompting in learners a sense of the culturally constructed nature of knowledge, beliefs, values, and behavior" (p. 17). Brookfield views self-directed learning as "a matter of learning how to change our perspectives, shift our paradigms, and place one way of interpreting the world by another" (p. 19).

Andragogy and the validity of self-directed learning have been debated by several adult educational professionals for years (Brookfield, 1986). The critics appear to be skeptical of the educators role in the andragogy model. They contend that the andragogy model is too liberal and does not provide an effective method for monitoring and evaluating learning activity. Nevertheless, self-directed learning is a very effective approach to providing adults the opportunity

to analyze learning needs, establish learning goals,

identify learning resources, elect and execute learning

methods, and examine learning results.

<u>Transformative Learning</u>

The theory of transformation learning, which was

introduced by Mezirow (1991),

> Grows out of the cognitive revolution in
> developmental and cognitive psychology, sociology,
> philosophy and psychotherapy. Initiated by scores
> of studies that have found that it is not so much
> what happens to people, but how they interpret and
> explain what happens to them that determines their
> actions, their hopes, their contentment and
> emotional well being, and their performance" (p.
> xiii).

Mezirow's theory of reflective thinking was influenced by

the works of John Dewey and Jurgen Habermas on communicative

action which provided the context for the transformation

theory of learning (p. 7). Mezirow explains the hypothesis

that underlies his theory as "a conviction that meaning

exist within ourselves rather than in external forms such as

books and that personal meaning that we attribute to our

experience are acquired and validated through human

interactions and communication" (p. xiv). Mezirow has

focused on how adults learn through critical self-

reflection.

According to Mezirow's theory, all learning is

predicated on interpretation, and learning is defined as

"the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience in order to guide future action" (Mezirow, 1995, p. 49). The foundation of people's meaning structures is their beliefs, behaviors, life experiences, and societal conceptions.

Mezirow also focuses on how adults learn through critical self-reflection. According to his theory, this process results in the reformation of a meaning perspective. Meaning perspectives are "sets of habitual expectations" attained by previous experiences that allow more inclusion, integration, and discrimination of the understanding of the world (Mezirow, 1991, p. 4). Because of the assumptions adults bring to the learning environment, critical reflection transpires when new concepts cause an adult to re-examine the validity of these assumptions. Transformation occurs when this process results in a new way of viewing the world and interpreting individual experiences.

The concept of transformative learning has three types of "domain of meaning perspectives": (1) psychological, how individuals see themselves; (2) sociolinguistic, based on social norms; and (3) epistemic, based on knowledge, how it is learned, and the way an individual uses it (Cranton, 1994, p. 28). Education ceases to foster democratic change

because significant social goals have been abandoned. "As adult educators, we have a special responsibility to actively work toward a participative social democracy in which the conditions impeding free full participation in learning through rational discourse are changed to meet the needs of all adult learners" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 4).

Instruction for adult learning must be viewed as a matter of humanistic and critical social theory (Cranton, 1994, p. 22). While skill acquisitions and learning materials must be considered, the mastering of these cannot exist unless there is interaction between the instructor and the adult learner. Because of the varied experiences each learner brings to the learning environment, the function of instructors cannot be limited to formal instruction processes. Rather, courses and materials should allow for the adult learner's interpretations, and forums of discussion should be created to facilitate expanding each adults current views or beliefs. Expansion, identification, and evaluation of current adult learning processes are necessary to promote transformative and self-directed learning in assisting today's adult interact in this technically global world.

## Empowerment

"In a time of drastic change, it is the learners who

inherit the future. The learner find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists" (Bennis, Benne, & Chin, 1989, p. 189). Empowerment can be defined as the ability to induce individuals to exhibit the best that is within them by allowing them to utilize their talents, abilities, and knowledge more effectively. Horton (1990) and Freire (1970) used the concept of empowerment within a learner-centered approach to incorporate adult educational processes for social change and social justice. Both Horton and Freire placed emphasis on the existence of inequities in terms of access to educational opportunities, political power, and income of an identified disadvantaged or disenfranchised group. "Education is seen as the handmaiden of collective political action and the fully educated person is held to be one who realizes that an educative society can only be achieved through social change" (Brookfield, 1983, pp. 69-70).

Myles Horton, an educator and founder of Highlander Folk School, dedicated many years of his life advocating for social change (Adams, 1975, p. 20). He viewed the learning processes as self-acquired and believed that people will learn and put to effective use only those things which they themselves find necessary.

> Highlander is an idea and a process. It is the
> idea that people have within themselves the

> potential to solve their own problems. It is the
> process by which individuals come to realize that
> their problems are shared by others, that problems
> can be solved collectively, that their individual
> problems are not solved until the common problem
> is eradicated for all. (Conti, 1977, pp. 38-39)

Horton stresses that:

> Highlander served as a catalyst for bring together
> people, ideas, and resources in the fight for
> social, political, and economic equality....
> Highlanders entire history has been a series of
> episodes of educating poor people to help empower
> them to alter the economic and political power
> relationship in which they find themselves. (Conti
> & Fellenz, 1986, p. 1)

According to the Folk Education Association of America,

folk education is "learning that happens when individuals

and communities come together to celebrate culture and life,

to critically analyze challenging, especially oppressive

situations, to build a knowledge base and apply that

knowledge to reframe and create alternative possibilities

for the institutions in which we live and work" (Martin,

1997). The American folk schools are prototypes of the

Danish and Scandinavian folk schools (Adams, 1975). The

Danish folk schools "were free of government controls, a

place having nothing to do with grades, test or diplomas,

but having everything to do with emotionally-charged issues

directly relevant to the lives of the participants" (p. 20).

The design of folk school was to "allow the participants to

analyze their own life experiences" (p. 20).

> Through their stories, learners share with others
> their problems and come to understand how those
> problems are related and how they as activists can
> learn about possible solutions from each other.
> Each person has a piece of the knowledge pie; each
> can tribute to the whole, and the whole becomes
> the basis for working toward a solution.
> Highlander then helps activists motivate
> themselves by asking, "who better to do the
> leading in solving this problem than you? You know
> the problem best, and you can lead others in
> creating the solution." (Haugen, 1977, p. 77)

Folk school core focus is designed to allow individual learners the opportunity to take an active role in their learning process.

Paulo Freire was an Brazilian educator and a world leader in the struggle for the liberation of the poor. He stated that education can liberate or enslave. His concept of a truly "educated person is one that places political awareness and personal liberation at its core, such a person is fully conscientized and will express this in praxis; that is, some form of social or political action" (Freire, 1973, p. 81).

Myles Horton and Paulo Freire both sought similar "objectives of helping people better the quality of their lives" (Conti, 1977, pp. 37-38). They both believed that people want to be responsible for their lives and resent being dependent. While both focused their concerns from a larger perspective, their ideas are directly relevant to African-Americans who suffer from the burdens and legacy of

slavery. Learning more about the way one learns may spark the initiative to examine one's life and situations that determines one's destiny. While education can be the key to liberation, it can only be given such a title in that it informs its possessors of what it is they are missing by being oppressed. The attainment and the pursuit of education has been the liberator and savior of countless lives, especially during the period of slavery.

## The African-American Learner

African-Americans have been impressive in every human endeavor that has been demanded of them. In their quest to "take a stand to participate in the American arena, African-Americans have fought in all the wars, made contributions in every sphere, and sought to make the dream of equality a reality within the American society" (Asante & Mattson, 1991, p. 107). Learning emphasizes the acquisition of some quality such as knowledge, understanding, ability, or awareness as a function of some experience such as study, instruction, practice, or exercise.

According to McKenzie (1980), learning is an internal process resulting from external influences. McKenzie's theory on learning indicates that his definition of learning is adequate for use in most situations. McKenzie further indicates that for the purposes of research and

psychological investigation, learning must be defined in

terms of some performance criteria that can be used as a

basis for inference regarding internal cognitive changes.

Since learning cannot be observed directly, scientific

inquiry demands the presence of some observable feature upon

which statements regarding learning may be founded. With

this in mind, McKenzie introduced the following definition

of learning for the purpose of discussion.

> Learning refers to the change in a subject's
> behavior to a given situation brought about by his
> (or her) repeated experiences in that situation.
> Provided that the behavior change cannot be
> explained on the basis of native response
> tendencies, maturation, or temporary states of the
> subject. (Hilgard & Bower, 1975, p. 17)

Jacobson (1996) argues that even though adults have

faced the experience of learning to function in new cultural

contexts for a long time, very little is understood about

the processes of cognitive learning. His paper approaches

learning culture from the position that cultural knowledge

is best understood in terms of situated cognition. He

further indicates that contexts do not simply provide useful

information in support of thinking and learning, but they

are inseparable from cognitive processes (pp. 15-28).

However, as African-Americans seemingly yearn to engage in

formal and advanced education, they were viciously denied

access to the learning institutions of their choice. The

Supreme Court case of Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896 "sanctioned segregation as the law of the land. The Supreme Court ruled that Plessy action came under the provision of the Fourteenth Amendment" (p. 96). This case instituted the "separate but equal" doctrine. A speech delivered by Booker T. Washington in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1895 presented the platform for the separate but equal doctrine. In his speech, he declared that "in all things that are pure and social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress". Many contemplated this speech as the Atlanta Compromise. Washington embraced segregation for Blacks in exchange for economic advancement. Du Bois, a historian and sociologist, presented opposition to Washington's Atlanta Compromise. Du Bois (1903) supported higher education for the "talented Blacks". While he also supported the need for industrial training, he believed that Blacks should also experience the opportunity for a college education (Cashman, 1991, pp. 6-18).

African-American pursuit for formal education emerged in the Indian territory before statehood of Oklahoma. Here slaves and former slaves were allowed to attend Indian schools (Aldrich, 1973). Upon the opening of the "Unassigned Land", the Organic Act set aside particles of land for schools. The First Territorial Legislature provided

provisions for each county to determine if their schools were to be segregated. Following the attainment of statehood on May 5, 1908, House Bill No. 365 legalized segregation in education. The law stated that the children of Blacks were to be educated in separate schools, and the faculty were to be of the same ethnic origin as the students they taught. Violators of this law were charged with misdemeanors and punished by fines. This orchestrated the orientation for full segregation in the State of Oklahoma. Oklahoma educational system functioned under the separate but equal doctrine for 46 years until the Supreme Court reversal in 1954 (pp. 33-47). According to Brown v. Board of Education, the institutions which were constructed to exclude African-American and other minorities from full participation in the American dream were required to become inclusive and equitable.

## Learning Strategies

Learning strategies are the techniques or skills that an individual elects to use in order to accomplish a learning task (Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. 7). Learning strategies differ from learning styles in that learning styles represent an individual's distinctive style of processing information, their feelings, and actions in certain learning situations (Smith, 1982, p. 24). Generally,

learning styles are established throughout an individuals
learning experience (Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. 8). According
to Keefe (1979), learning styles are stable cognitive,
affective, and physiological traits that serve as indicators
of how the learner perceives the learning situation (p. 4).
Smith (1982) associated learning styles as one of the
ingredients in the process of learning how to learn. Style
is described as "a person's highly individualized
preferences and tendencies that influence his or her
learning" (p. 17). However, "learning strategies are
techniques or skills that an individuals elects to use in
order to accomplish an learning task. They differ from
learning styles in that they are techniques rather than
stable traits and they are selected for a specific task"
(Fellenz & Conti, 1989, pp. 7-8). Learning strategies
developed from "tradition of study skills but differ
significantly from the tradition" (p. 8). Learning
strategies tend to promote metacognitive, memory, and
motivational strategies in opposition to the traditional
"skills in note taking, outlining, and test passing"
(Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. 8).

One line of inquiry in Adult Education has focused on
the role of learning strategies used in real-life learning
situations by adults (Fellenz & Conti, 1989), and the Self-

Knowledge Inventory of Lifelong Learning Strategies (SKILLS) was developed to measure learning strategies (Conti & Kolody, 1999). This is a valid and reliable instrument that consists of real-life learning scenarios with responses drawn from the areas of metacognition, metamotivation, memory, critical thinking, and resource management. Each of the five constructs consists of three learning strategies (Conti & Fellenz, 1991). Metacognition is "popularly conceived of as thinking about the process of thinking" (Fellenz & Conti, 1993, p. 9). Metacognition "is a conscious, reflective endeavor; it is one that requires the learner to analyze, assess, and manage learning activities" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 3). The learners understanding of their academic success can become evident through the concept of metacognition (p. 3).

The three learning strategies involved in metacognition are Planning, Monitoring, and Adjusting. "Planning a learning activity assumes that learners have accepted responsibility and have taken control over their learning experience" (p. 4). In planning a learning activity, the learner "builds in flexibility so strategies can be chosen to meet precisely the right conditions on the least effort criterion" (p. 4). Since several things can happen during a learning activity to interfere with attention or

understanding, monitoring is necessary (p. 4). "By monitoring, learners assess their progress through a learning project" (p. 4), and through "this process they are cognizant of their learning progress and closely monitor their learning by checking to see if they are on task and by comparing their progress to accepted standards or models" (p. 4). Adjusting "involves the learner modifying and revising learning plans in relationship to the evaluation of the learning progress" (p. 4). The "strategies used to adjust learning activities include revising one's learning plan, changing learning strategies, restructuring learning to satisfy one's knowledge level, and developing techniques to help match the learning task to one's own personal learning characteristics" (p. 4).

Metamotivation "is the awareness of and control over factors that energize and direct one's learning" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 4). Motivation is an important aspect of adult learning, and metamotivation focuses on the interval processes that motivate adults in a learning situation (pp. 4-5).

There are three learning strategies associated with motivation. These are Attention, Reward/Enjoyment, and Confidence. "Attention involves the arousal of interest in learners, the stimulation of an attitude or inquiry, and the

maintenance of attention" (p. 5). Reward/Enjoyment "is anticipating or recognizing the value to one's self of learning specific material, having fun, or experiencing satisfaction with the learning activity" (p. 5). "The reward for learning can result from very specific, goal-oriented activities or from a feeling of increased competence or control over an environment" (p. 5). Enjoyment is more important in real-life learning than in formal learning situations because here internal processes are more influential than external motivators such as grades or certificates which dominate formal learning situations (pp. 5-6). Confidence refers to a belief that one can successfully complete the learning task once a decision is made to undertake it (p. 6).

Memory is what individuals know and how they retain the learned information (Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. 10). According to Wingfield and Byrnes, memory is "the capacity of humans to retain information, to recall it when needed and recognize its familiarity when they later see it or hear it again" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 6). Memory is generally recognized as the storing, retention, and retrieval of knowledge. The three strategies associated with memory are Organization, Use of External Aids, and Memory Application.

Organization refers to the process by which the learner

restructures information and applies various strategies "to process information so that the material will be better stored, retained, and retrieved" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 7). Use of External Aids is when the learner integrates "several external aids that involve the learner controlling the environment in some manner to enhance recall" (p. 7); such aids include "the use of appointment books, making list of things to do, placing visual items on display, and asking others to provide reminders at relevant times" (p. 7). Memory Application is the use of "internal strategies involved in Memory Organization for the purpose of planning, completing, and evaluating learning" (p. 7). Memory Application can be used for self-improvement, problem solving, and critical thinking (p. 7).

Critical thinking "is a reflective thinking process utilizing higher order thinking skills in order to improve learning" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 7). This concept is based on Brookfield's approach to critical thinking. Brookfield outlined four components that apply to real-life situations. These were consolidated into three strategies. The three Critical Thinking strategies include Testing Assumptions, Generating Alternatives, and Conditional Acceptance (Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p. 11). Testing Assumptions is the process of examining and challenging

assumptions that have often been taken for granted over a long period of time because their limitations are not readily noticed (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 8). Testing assumptions can involve examining the accuracy or the acceptance uncritically given to an assumption or identifying relationships, spotting inconsistencies, or questioning value sets (p. 8). Generating Alternatives is essential while participating in critical thinking or problem solving situations sufficient to real life. Generating Alternatives involves entertaining and seeking alternate approaches to gathering reliable information. In this process learners "hypothesize while grounding options within a given situation and include strategies such as brainstorming or envisioning the future, ranking the order of alternatives, and identifying alternate solutions" (p. 8).

Conditional acceptance involves "advocating reflective skepticism to avoid absolutes or over simplifications" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 8). The learner is generally "accepting of a learning outcome until a better one is discovered" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 8). Conditional Acceptance involves questioning simplistic answers, monitoring or evaluating results, predicting consequences, and testing various approaches (p. 8).

Resource Management involves the identification and evaluation of resources that are pertinent to the learning process (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 8). The three learning strategies related to resource management are Identification of Resources, Critical Use of Resources, and Use of Human Resources. Identification of resources "involves the identification and location of the best possible source of information" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 9). Critical Use of Resources involves the selection of the most appropriate material as opposed to material based on its availability. This can involve "contacting an expert or an outsider, checking the information with a second source, and observing or asking questions to check for bias" (p. 9). Use of Human Resources involves others in the process of learning. Human resources encourage dialogue from learners with differing opinions and stimulate the learner to be an active listener.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Design

This was a descriptive research study of the learning strategies preferences of African-Americans in Enid, Oklahoma. A descriptive study involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. A descriptive study determines and reports the way thing are (Gay, 1992, p. 217). "A common type of descriptive research involves assessing attitudes or opinions toward individuals, organizations, events, or procedures" (p. 13), and characteristically descriptive data is "collected through a questionnaire survey, an interview, or observation" (p. 13). Typical descriptive studies are concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, demographic information, conditions, and procedures (p. 218).

This study investigated the learning strategy preferences of African Americans that are members of three Christian denominations of the African-American community in Enid, Oklahoma. Both qualitative and quantitative data collecting methods were employed. Assessing the Learning Strategies of AdultS (ATLAS) was used to gather quantitative data, and interviews were used to collect qualitative data.

Participants were asked to complete the ATLAS and were asked to voluntarily participate in personal interviews. ATLAS was selected because it can be easily administered and has been proven to be a reliable and valid instrument when utilized to measure the learning strategy preferences of adults in real-life learning situations (Conti & Kolody, 1998, p. 16). The ATLAS results were compared to the expected distribution based on the instrument norms and differences were explored among the various church denomination. Interview data were analyzed and categorized by means of the constant comparative method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, pp. 68-70). This method was formulated by Glasser and Strauss and involves comparing incidents from the various interviews in order to form categories (Merriam, 1998, p. 159).

### Sample

This study was predicated upon the belief that the heart of the African-American community is centered around the church. In order to gain an understanding of the variables researched in this study, it was necessary to select an appropriate population. Therefore, the membership of the seven predominantly African-American churches in Enid, Oklahoma, was selected as the target population from which the representative sample was drawn. "The population is the group of interest to the researcher and is the group

to which the researcher would like the results of the study to be generalizable. The target population has at least one characteristic that differentiates it from other groups" (Gay, 1992, p. 124).

A sample is a group within the population. There are several ways to gather a sample. Regardless of the specific techniques used, the steps in sampling are essentially the same: identification of the population, determination of required sample size, and selection of the sample. There are four basic sampling techniques or procedures. Random sampling is "the process of selecting a sample in such a way that all individuals in the defined population have an equal and independent chance of being selected for the sample" (Gay, 1992, p. 126). Stratified sampling is the "process of selecting a sample in such a way that identified subgroups in the population are represented in the sample in the same proportion that they exist in the population" (p. 126). Cluster sampling is "sampling in which groups, not individuals, are randomly selected" (p. 126). Systematic sampling is "sampling in which individuals are selected from a list" (p. 126) such as by taking every 10th name or number or every 15th name or number in a specific order. This study utilized cluster sampling based upon the churches.

The churches in the African-American community in Enid,

Oklahoma, are generally fundamentalist in orientation. There are seven major historical African-American denominations: African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, National Baptist Convention, Church of God in Christ, National Baptist Convention of America, and Progressive National Baptist Convention. Approximately 80% of all African-American Christians are members of these seven denominations (Kunjufu, 1994, p. 13). This study includes three of these denominations: African Methodist Episcopal, Church of God in Christ, and National Baptist Convention.

This study had a small population which consisted of the African-American population that attend African-American churches in Enid, Oklahoma. Samples of small populations should consist of at least 20% of that population for the study to be acceptable (Gay, 1992, p. 137). The sample of 141 for this study contained 43% of the population of 327.

<u>ATLAS</u>

Assessing the Learning Strategies of AdultS (ATLAS) is an easy instrument to administer and is designed to distinguish learning strategy profiles (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 16). The instrument can be administered promptly and completed in the relatively short period of time of approximately two minutes. The ATLAS instrument utilizes a

flow-chart design consisting of color coded booklets on one-half sheets of standard sized 8.5"x 11" paper in a bound format. Each page has explicit instructions to assist the respondent in completing the process (Conti & Kolody, 1999). ATLAS was used for this study because it measures the learning strategy of adult learners. The ATLAS profile identifies three groups of learners: Navigators, Problem Solvers, and Engagers. Each group processes unique and distinct learning strategy characteristics.

ATLAS is a valid and reliable instrument for measuring learning strategies. "The most simplistic definition of validity is that it is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure" (Gay, 1992, p. 155). The validity of an instrument is established if it measures what it is designed to measure (Guy, 1987, p. 553). There are several types of validity; however, in educational research, the three most commonly recognized types are construct, content, and criterion-related validity.

Construct validity is the degree to which a test measures an intended hypothetical construct. "A construct is a nonobservable trait, such as intelligence, which explains behavior. You cannot see a construct; you can only observe its effect" (Gay, 1992, p. 157). Construct validity for ATLAS was established by synthesizing the results of the

numerous research studies using the Self-Knowledge Inventory of Lifelong Learning Strategies (SKILLS) instrument and consolidating these results (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 16). Cluster analysis was used with this data to identify the three learning strategy groups of Navigators, Problem Solvers, and Engagers (p. 18).

Content validity "is the degree to which a test measures an intended content area (Gay, 1992, p. 156) and "refers to the sampling adequacy of the content of the instrument" (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 458). The ATLAS instrument was derived from SKILLS, and the "content validity for ATLAS is concerned with the degree to which the items are representative of learning strategy characteristics of the three groups identified in the SKILLS research" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 18). The differences between each group was determined by administering a sequence of discriminant analyses. This statistical procedure revealed that the "major process that separated the groups related to how each group sought to accomplish the learning task" (p. 18). It was observed that the "Navigators and Problem Solvers initiate a learning task by looking externally to themselves at the utilization of resources that will help them accomplish the learning" (p. 18). However, Engagers "involve themselves in the reflective process of determining

internally that they will enjoy the learning task enough to finish it" (p. 18).

Criterion-related validity is "validity which is determined by relating performance on a test to performance on another criterion" (Gay, 1987, p. 543). It examines how well the measuring instrument correlates with measures of performance (Kerlinger, 1986, p. 419). Criterion-related validity was established by asking respondents to compare their ATLAS results to the real-life criterion of how accurate this description was of how they actually learn. At least 90% of those taking ATLAS confirmed that it accurately described them (Ghost Bear, 2001). In interviews, almost all participants confirmed that the characteristics of the learning strategy category identified by ATLAS accurately applied to them (James, 2000; Lively, 2001; Willyard, 2000).

Reliability is "the accuracy or precision of a measuring instrument" (Kerlinger, 1986, p. 405). The reliability of the instrument is determined by its ability to produce the same or significantly similar results when utilized to measure the same variables. Reliability is "the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures....Reliability is expressed numerically, usually as a coefficient; a high coefficient indicates high

reliability" (p. 162). "In test-retest examinations covering periods of time from one-week to three-weeks, ATLAS has a reliability of .87" (Ghost Bear, 2001, p. 82).

<center>Procedures</center>

ATLAS was used to determine learning strategies. Interview questions were designed for the three ATLAS characteristic grouping: Navigator, Problem Solver, and Engager. The data for the study were collected from seven African-American churches in Enid, Oklahoma. The focus of the study was to identify learning strategies present within Enid's African-American community. Adult church members representing the African-American community population of Enid, Oklahoma, were the focus of the study. The seven churches from which the representative group of this study were drawn included: (a) First Church of God in Christ (b) First Missionary Baptist Church, (c) Grayson Missionary Baptist Church, (d) New Light Missionary Baptist Church, (e) Progressive Missionary Baptist Church, (f) St. Stephens African Methodist Episcopal Church, and (g) Westside Church of God in Christ.

The ministers were the appropriate channels of communication through which respect for the structure of the church and the relationships that exist within the community were observed. The first step, therefore, was to personally

visit the pastor of each of the African-American churches in Enid to articulate the intent of the study. Their support was solicited as community and religious leaders. Information was then compiled from the membership list of their congregations. Secondly, permission was obtained to be placed on the Southern Heights Ministerial Alliance agenda for the group's impending meeting prior to conducting the primary study. At the meeting, ATLAS was administered to the pastors and others in attendance to demonstrate the ATLAS instrument and discuss the procedures for administering the instrument. Participants were also asked to assist as volunteers in collecting data within their congregational population. A packet was distributed to each pastor consisting of essential information for administering the ATLAS.

The target group for the study was all adult members within the African-American churches in Enid, Oklahoma. Once the data were collected, it was divided into the three learning strategy preference groups for analyzing and categorizing. Following the administration of the ATLAS, interviews were scheduled based on the results of the collected data.

The following are general questions that were asked of participants interviewed:

1.  If you have your choice to live anywhere in
    Enid, where would it be?  Why?

2.  Why do you attend your particular church?

3.  Tell me about a project that you are involved
    with in the church?

4.  Tell me how you went about learning for this
    project?

5.  Tell me about a project outside the church that
    you are involved in?

6.  Tell me how you went about learning for this
    project?

7.  What kind of things help you when you are
    trying to learn something new?

8.  What kind of things hinder you when you are
    trying to learn something new?

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

<u>Participant Profile</u>

Both quantitative and qualitative were collected for this study. Descriptive data from the ATLAS was used to determine the learning strategy preference profile of the participants. Interviews were conducted to examine factors that contribute to or hinder learning in the African-American community.

The population of the African-American church has been predominately female for the last century. Females attend church more than males due to a double standard that existed throughout childhood (Kunjufu, 1994). Females have been required to attend church and demonstrate appropriate behavior while the male, in many instances, was given a choice of attending church. African-American males were encouraged to be involved in outside activities and received less monitoring of their behavior (p. 112). Females represent 75% of the church membership of the historical African-American Christian denominations (p. 20). This has been attributed to the instability of a healthy family structure and the absence of male influences in many homes (Glenn, 1992). The predominance of female church attendees were reflected in this study.

Of the 141 participants in this descriptive study, the gender distribution was 51 males and 90 females. Thus, slightly over one-third (36.2%) were male while nearly two-thirds (63.8%) were female. Due to the fact that this study was designed to investigate the learning strategies of the African-American community, the ethnic distribution of the study was 100% African-American. Each participate in the study had a direct relationship with the Southern Heights/East Park Additions, the geographical parameters of the African-American community of Enid, Oklahoma.

Most of the participants in the study had a high school level education. Nearly two-thirds (63.3%) had a high school education while a small group (10.79%) has less than a high a high school education (see Table 1). The remaining 26% had received some level of college education, but only about 8% of the participants had earned either a baccalaureate or master's degrees.

Table 1: Educational Level of Participants

| Educational Level | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Less High School | 15 | 10.79 |
| High School | 88 | 63.31 |
| Associate Degree | 25 | 17.99 |
| Bachelor Degree | 9 | 6.47 |
| Masters Degree | 2 | 1.44 |
| Total | 139 | 100 |

Participants from a wide variety of age groups were

involved in the study (see Table 2). The participants in this study ranged in age from 18 to 94. The median age of participants was 48; the mean was 48.98 with a standard deviation of 15.78. Two participants did not report their age. The most frequent reported age was 50.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Participants

| Age | Frequency |
|-----|-----------|
| 18-20 | 4 |
| 21-25 | 4 |
| 26-30 | 5 |
| 31-35 | 16 |
| 36-40 | 16 |
| 41-45 | 16 |
| 46-50 | 23 |
| 51-55 | 11 |
| 56-60 | 14 |
| 61-65 | 7 |
| 66-70 | 8 |
| 71-75 | 6 |
| 76-80 | 2 |
| 81-85 | 5 |
| 86-90 | 1 |
| 91-95 | 1 |
| Total | 139 |

The seven churches in this study were from the three denominations of African Methodist Episcopal (AME), Church

of God in Christ (COG), and National Baptist Convention
(NBC) (see Table 3). There were four Missionary Baptist
Churches affiliated with the National Baptist Convention,
two Churches of God in Christ, and one African Methodist
Episcopal Church represented in the study. The Baptist
African-American adult membership of 87 comprised slightly
less than two-thirds (61.70%) of the participants. The
African Methodist Episcopal membership of 21 comprised about
one-fifth (19.15%) of the participants. The Church of God in
Christ African-American membership of 33 comprised about
one-fourth (23.41%) of the participants.

Table 3: Church Affiliations of Participants

| Church | Denom. | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| New Light Missionary Baptist | NBC | 35 | 24.82 |
| Grayson Missionary Baptist | NBC | 28 | 19.86 |
| Westside Church of God in Christ | COG | 27 | 19.15 |
| St. Stephens African Methodist Episcopal Church | AME | 21 | 14.89 |
| First Baptist Missionary Church | NBC | 13 | 9.22 |
| Progressive Missionary Baptist Church | NBC | 11 | 7.8 |
| First Church of God in Christ | COG | 6 | 4.26 |
| Total | | 141 | 100 |

The sample for this study represented 43% of the total
population (see Table 4). The four Missionary Baptist
Churches contain 67.6% (221) of the adult church membership
of the African-American community; the two Churches of God

in Christ contain 23.9% (78) of the community; and the

African Methodist Episcopal Church contain 8.6% (21) of the

community. The sample contained a large representation from

each denomination: the Missionary Baptist Church--39.4%

(87), Churches of God-42.5% (33), and African Methodist

Episcopal Church-75% (21). Thus, the two large denominations

had approximately 40% of the adult members involved in the

study. While the smallest denomination had the least number

of participants, its participation rate was the largest, and

it provided a substantial number of participants.

Table 4: Sample and Population of Churches

| Church | Demon. | Sample | Population | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| St. Stephens African Methodist Episcopal Church | AME | 21 | 28 | 75 |
| New Light Missionary Baptist | NBC | 35 | 49 | 71 |
| Grayson Missionary Baptist | NBC | 28 | 47 | 6 |
| Westside Church of God in Christ | COG | 27 | 49 | 55 |
| Progressive Missionary Baptist Church | NBC | 11 | 48 | 23 |
| First Church God in Christ | COG | 6 | 29 | 21 |
| First Missionary Baptist Church | MBC | 13 | 77 | 17 |
| Total | | 141 | 327 | 43 |

## Learning Strategy Profile

Learning strategy preferences were identified with

ATLAS. The 141 participants were distributed across the

three ATLAS categories as follows: Navigators--51 (36.17%),

Problem Solvers-44 (31.21%), and Engagers-46 (32.62%).

Many of the studies investigating learning strategies have examined the relationship between learning strategy preferences and demographic variable. Overall, these studies have shown that there is no relationship between learning strategy preferences and demographic variable (Conti, 1998). One of the variables is race. While many of these studies have contained minority groups, they have not included a large number of African Americans. Since this study contained a large number of African Americans, their distribution among the three ATLAS categories were compared to the norms for ATLAS.

The data were analyzed to determine if there was a relationship to the norms for ATLAS. The chi-square was used to determine if there were significant differences between the study group's results and the expected norms for ATLAS. The chi-square distribution is a mathematical distribution that is used directly or indirectly in many tests of significance. The most common use of the chi square distribution is to test differences between proportions. The chi-square compares "proportions actually observed in a study with proportions expected, to see if they are significantly different" (Gay, 1992, p. 443). Therefore, the chi-square is appropriate to observe the distribution of the

learning strategy preference groups and the expected

distribution for ATLAS. The ATLAS expected distribution for

the general population is 35.5% for Navigators, 31.7% for

Problem Solvers, and 31.8% for Engagers (Conti & Kolody,

1999, p. 18). There was no significant difference between

the expected norms of ATLAS and the distribution of learning

strategies of the African-American community ($X^2$ = .045, df

= 2, p = .98) (See Table 5). Each group was within

approximately one person of what was expected; there was

less than a 1% difference in the observed as compared to

what was expected.

Table 5:  Expected and Observed Distribution of Learning
          Strategy Groups

| Groups | Observed | Expected | Difference |
|--------|----------|----------|------------|
| Navigator | 51 | 51.5 | -0.5 |
| Problem Solver | 44 | 44.7 | -0.7 |
| Engager | 46 | 44.8 | 1.2 |
| Total | 141 | | |

The data were also analyzed to see if there was a

difference in the learning strategy preference distribution

among the seven churches in the African-American community

in Enid, Oklahoma. The chi-square test for contingency

tables indicated that there was no significant difference in

the distribution of the three learning strategy groups as

identified by ATLAS among the churches ($X^2$ = 12.34, df = 12,

p = .42) (See Table 6). Thus, just as the distribution of

the learning strategies in the African-American community did not differ from the general population, there was no disproportionally large concentration of any of the learning strategy preference groups in any of the churches.

Table 6:   Distribution of Learning Strategy Groups Among Churches

| Church | Nav. | P. S. | Eng. | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Light Missionary Baptist | 13 | 14 | 8 | 35 |
| Grayson Missionary Baptist | 6 | 11 | 11 | 28 |
| Westside Church of God in Christ | 8 | 8 | 11 | 27 |
| St. Stephens African Methodist Episcopal Church | 12 | 3 | 6 | 21 |
| First Missionary Baptist Church | 4 | 3 | 6 | 13 |
| Progressive Missionary Baptist Church | 5 | 3 | 3 | 11 |
| First Church God in Christ | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 51 | 44 | 46 | 141 |

## Community

Qualitative data were collected by interviews. The core of the interviews was to describe how various sociological factors in the African-American community relate to the various learning strategy preference groups. This was accomplished through an in-depth probe of the individual's learning experiences.   The purpose was to gain insight and understanding of their learning preferences. The learners' perception of the African-American community and the learners' relationship to the African-American community provide an appropriate context for interpretation.   Once the ATLAS was administered, the individual learning preference

was identified, and each participant was categorized as a
Navigator, Problem Solver, or Engager. Face-to-face
interviews were administered within all three learning
preference groups. Additionally, members from all three
religious denominations were represented within each
learning preference group. Of the 141 participants surveyed,
21 interviews were conducted: 12 participants represented
the 4 Baptist Churches; 6 participants represented the 2
Churches of God in Christ; and 3 participants represented
the AME Methodist Church.

The interviews were designed and conducted for the
purpose of gathering information to identify the learning
preferences of African Americans in the community of Enid,
Oklahoma. These interviews were face-to-face and informal in
nature. They meet the four characteristics of a structured
interview (Zemke & Kramlinger, 1989, p. 100). First, the
interviewer had the only contact with the interviewee.
Second, the information required could only be accessed from
the interviewee. Third, the interview was a formal, fact-
finding affair that was scheduled and planned. Fourth, the
results were analyzed in some formal fashion. The informal
or conversational interview approach helped "add depth of
understanding to things observed or learned", provided
structure for listening for certain types of verbal

behavior, and used probing or questioning for better clarification (p. 101).

Enid, Oklahoma, is the center of commerce for Northwest Oklahoma. It is both a retail and industrial center, and the "cornerstone for the development of arts and culture" (Enid Chamber of Commerce, 2001) in Northwest Oklahoma.  Enid is a economic, social, medical, political and educational hub; it is also recognized as the largest retail trade center in the northwestern Oklahoma area, serving a customer base of over 200,000 people throughout Northwest Oklahoma and Southwest Kansas (Chamber of Commerce, Guide to Enid 2000). Enid is geographically divided both economically and socially with an affluent westside and an economically distressed eastside. Westside property values are much higher than those on the eastside. The westside is currently experiencing rapid growth in housing development, and the majority of franchise business establishments are located on the westside. Although there are some areas on the eastside of Enid that include "high profile" or moderate to high quality housing, the structures and overall condition of housing does not project the level of economic growth visibility displayed on the westside of Enid.

The Southern Height/East Park community, which has traditionally been associated with Enid's African-American

community, lies to the southeast of the original townsite of Enid. The Southern Heights/East Park community has experienced successive redevelopment intended primarily to improve housing and living conditions (Myers, 1997). Several have replaced their small one-room or two-room frame houses with larger but often older houses that have been moved to the community from other areas of town. Over the past two decades, building activities have been limited primarily due to the city's removal of deteriorated or substandard housing (pp. 32-41).

Historically, East Park has been identified as the African-American community. However, the Southern Heights community, which lies directly west of East Park, was not developed for African-Americans. An example that demonstrates its separation from the African-American community to the east is that the Southern Heights streets to the east did not match East Park streets to the west. Instead, they ended in a T-intersection at Enid Boulevard, which is now named Leona Mitchell Boulevard. The jog in the east-west running street  provided a small but distinct physical boundary between the two communities.

The Southern Height/East Park community was home to three public schools. These were Booker T. Washington High and Carver Elementary for the East Park Community and

Jackson Elementary for Southern Heights. Although a few

African Americans lived in Southern Heights in the 50's,

they were not permitted to attend Jackson Elementary School.

The threat of integrating the public schools began a

migration of whites from the Southern Heights community.

Once the integration of the public schools was fully

implemented in Enid, the Southern Heights community soon

became predominately African-American, and shortly

thereafter all three public schools in the communities were

closed. The abandonment of the three community schools had a

detrimental effect on the personality of the community. The

African-American educators and their families along with the

community educational support services moved from the

community and from Enid. For the African-American educators,

the direct results of integration was unemployment.

Integration of the public schools opened housing

opportunities in a few of Enid's segregated neighborhoods,

and younger families in particular began to move from the

community. As a result, many homes and buildings

deteriorated or were abandoned, and many were finally

demolished either by the owners or by the city. Blocks where

seven or eight houses once stood now may have one or two

houses (Myers, 1997, p. 81). The original community members

had identified strongly with their schools, and as a result

of the closings, the community was in limbo. However, the

community churches remained intact.  Each church seemingly

continues to strive and ignite pride and social change

within the current African-American community.

Many of the interviewed residents commented that over

the years, the African-American community of Enid has come

to be known by many different nicknames and slangs such as

"the Ville", "the Bottom", and "other names that are not

worthy of mentioning".  One long-time resident stated his

disapproval of the nicknames and slangs placed on the

community. He commented,  "I am offended when people use

slang or derogatory identifiers for my community" (70 year

old female Problem Solver).

In discussing the African-American community during the

interviews, it was frequently commented that prior to

integration, the African-American community was more self-

sufficient than it is today.

> I have lived in this community most of my life. I
> plan to stay here, but this community has changed
> over the years. Most of the houses are gone, and
> the kids are different. I don't understand it. (71
> year-old, female Navigator)

> This area is quiet and friendly. I have lived in
> this community for many years. The younger kids
> don't want to say here. You can't really blame
> them. There is not anything here for them. (70
> year-old female Problem Solver}

> At one time we had a couple of small stores and
> eating places. A person could make a living in the

community. But, when the schools left, other
things were lost too. (60 year-old male Engager)

Enid's African-American community existed almost as an
independent township within the larger township of Enid. For
several years, the community encouraged and supported a
number of successful African-American owned and operated
businesses. Many of the interviewees indicated that the
African-American community ceased to be an independent
entity within the city of Enid following integration (58
year-old male Navigator, 70 year-old female Problem Solver,
and 54 year-old female Problem Solver). Prior to integration
African-American "teachers comprised the largest
professional career in the community" (Myers, 1997, p. 79).
The African-American teachers represented the community's
middle class. Teachers, along with the ministers, shared in
the community leadership. The communities educational
systems were responsible for initiating the civic, social
and cultural activities in the African-American community
(pp. 77-82).

The community has certainly changed. The natural
reaction to environmental or cultural change is positive
with favorable expectations. Many participant in this study
spoke of the community in the past tense. When speaking of
the change, there was no excitement, and pain could be
detected in their voice. They are saying, "We had a

community, it was a nice community. The community had the necessary services we needed. It was not only a place to live, but it was also a place where a person could make a living. However, that has all changed, the community is not what it use to be. It's different now, very different and I can tell you exactly when it changed. I am old and remember the past, and it was better than today. We still have a community, but it's not what it once was" (71 year-old female Navigator; 70 year-old female Problem Solver; and 60 year-old male Engager). The question often asked is, "Was school integration worth the compromise?" The African-American teachers and the educational support system was forced to leave the area for employment. This resulted in an immediate decline in the community's economic status. Many residents were so overjoyed with the opportunity to share in the desired American dream of equality that they completely were ambiguous of the potential destruction of their community. Ironically, the individuals that were first to be bused across town some 35 years ago are now the ones that question the value of integration.

The interviews were designed to question and probe participants to collect data on the participant's learning preferences and affiliations within the African-American community. The participants were asked to designate their

preference as to which neighborhood or addition they would prefer to live in Enid. The response was overwhelmingly in favor of living on the eastside in the Southern Heights/East Park community. The eastside is recognized as the "blue collar" area of Enid. It is a working class area with little higher education training and limited job opportunities (58 year-old male Navigator). Yet, the respondents preferred this area for historical or traditional reasons.

> I like it here because I know just about everyone that lives here. (60 year-old male Engager)

> I raised my children here. (53 year-old female Navigator)

> This is home. (50 year-old female Navigator)

> I feel safe here. (54 year-old female Problem Solver)

The respondents had a strong attachment to the community. Many individuals had a desire to want to stay in close proximity of their family and friends. Three individuals implied they are living on inherited property that has been transferred from family members over an extended period of time. In the African-American community, such property is referred to as heir property. Heir property is recognized as property left to the siblings after their parents or guardians are deceased whereby all siblings have an equal shares of the property. Due to the mobility of family members, the lack of communication, family feuds, and

simple misunderstandings, many African-Americans have lost their family property through tax sales (Garfield County Assessors Office, 2001).

The occurrence of residential occupancy of inherited property is more prevalent among eastside African Americans than those who reside on the westside. Inherited property persists within the eastside community because it has experienced the African-American presences for several generations in Enid. As in past decades, the Southern Heights/East Park community are currently experiencing a population decline due to the removal and destruction of many abandoned and structurally unsafe houses. However, the community still strides to exist as a beacon for the African-American population. One participant pointed out that "this was my grandmother's house, my mother's house, and now it's mine" (49 year-old male Problem Solver). In other words, historically, the social and economical status of the African-American community in Enid are long established on the eastside. Housing in the eastern section of Enid, consequently, "is more closely related to who I am" (47 year-old female Problem Solver). These attitudes from occupants serve to affirm the existence of an African American community in Enid, Oklahoma.

In further discussion of reasons for selecting the

eastside, other comments were "convenient", "friendly",
"social interaction", "unity" and "religious affiliations".
Interviewees that responded "convenient" generally made
statements like: "I am close to everything I want" and
"living here everything is easily accessible". Eastside
residents have accrued a degree of comfort and desire to
embrace the solitude associated with the Westside. The
responses of "friendly" suggest desires of belonging and
social acceptance. The interviewees all stated that they
want to live in an environment that is warm and friendly. "I
wanted to live where people would accept me as a man. That
is the main reason I live where I do, but times have changed
some" (58 year-old male Navigator).

An analysis of the 2000 Census by John Logan, a
sociologist at the University of Albany in New York,
indicates that more African Americans are now moving to
white suburbia simply because they have escalated
economically. Other African Americans that have achieved
higher economic status choose to live in predominately
African-American surroundings. In many cases this is
accomplished through relocation or development of new
housing additions within the African-American communities.
However, on rare occasions there are substantial expansions
to living areas within the existing African-American

community. In essence, the stated comment by Logan is "I want to live where people look like me" (The Black Chronicle, July 19, 2001).

It was evident that the African-Americans interviewed in this study were drawn to areas that afford them social interaction and acceptance. Many felt that they have a unique verbal expression, culture, and style of social entertainment such as music and dance that may not be acceptable or understood by other cultures. However, five study participants chose the westside of town due solely to the availability and quality of housing. The majority of the structures in the African-American community were constructed in the 40's and 50' and would now be in violation of the current city codes. The majority of African-Americans that choose to live in the African-American community live in a less affluent area. If they elect to live in an affluent community, they usually find themselves as the only African-American on the block. All participants interviewed who selected the westside or presently live on the westside indicated they would prefer living on the eastside or Southern Heights if the same quality of housing were available to them there (49 year-old male Problem Solver).

Summary

African Americans in Enid, as elsewhere, represent a multigenerational population that is interactive and share a common culture, which is based in common socioeconomic status and social experience. The commonality of experience and status has yielded a group identity that is best exemplified by the religious denominations of the community. Community is "a feeling that members have of belonging and being important to each other, and a shared faith that their needs will be met by their commitment to each other" (Macmillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 12). The community is looked upon "as the unit of social organization in which lies the greatest element of hope for permanent change" (p. 18). Also, "once the community movement produce a philosophy and a technique that is intelligible to the minds of the so-called common people, there will come into being a new relationship between community units and the larger units" (Lindeman, 1926, p. viii).

Navigators

"Navigators are focused learners who chart a course for learning and follow it. They are conscientious, result-oriented high achievers who favor making logical connections" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 9). Planning is of importance to the Navigators, and disruptions in their plans can cause stress. Navigators want to know exactly what to

expect or anticipate. They work well with schedules and deadlines. Navigators commonly have difficulty working with groups; they have "a tendency to take over and dominate the group to ensure that the scheduled plan is adhered to" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 9). Likewise, they are "impatient with inefficiency and have little tolerance for slacker, whiners, and time-wasters" (p. 10). Navigators would take the position that "things are to be done a certain way and in a certain order to keep things running smoothly" (p. 10). Reportedly, "Navigators rely heavily on the Metamotivation learning strategy of Attention which includes the arousal of interest in learners, the simulation of an attitude of inquiry, and the maintenance of attention" (p. 10). They also rely on Organization which refers "to the  manner in which the memory reorders or restructures information from that in which it was originally presented. Chunking is the organization of information into sets, thereby reducing the overall number of categories to remember" (p. 7). "Navigators also rely heavily on the learning strategies of Identification of Resources and Critical Use of Resources, which is knowing how to locate and use the best information" (p. 10).

These comments about community add validity to the assumption that Navigators are focused learners who like

knowing what to expect and like being in control of their surroundings. Additionally, their comments validate the assumption that than rely heavily on planning and that distractions or disruptions of regular orderly routines create a degree of stress.

> I prefer living in Southern Heights. This is where I grew up. My family is here, and it's just where I want to live. (50 year-old female)

> I have been in Enid for 45 years and lived right here and plan to stay here in Southern Heights. (53 year-old female)

> I have lived in the African-American community all my life and have no plans or thoughts of living in any other area of Enid. (58 year-old Male)

> I was raised in this community and have no desire to move or live elsewhere in Enid. I want to raise my son in this community. (37 year-old female)

Problem Solvers

The Problem Solvers are "critical thinkers" and "rely on a reflective thinking process which utilizes higher order thinking skills" (p. 11). Problem Solvers "generate alternatives to create additional learning options", and Problems Solvers "rely heavily on human resources and prefer expert advice rather than referring to the manuals" (p. 12). Problem Solvers also "rely heavily on the learning strategy of Using External Memory Aids such as to do lists, daily planners, and schedulers to reinforce their memory" (Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 12). Problem Solvers "do not usually

respond well to rigidity or didactic orders; they want the
space to be able to do things in a way that makes sense to
them" (p. 13). Problem Solvers use multiple reasoning and
cognitive analysis of the reason. People are involved, but
they are related to a very cognitive, reasoned-out action.
When Problem Solvers were posed with the question of where
they would like to live, their responses indicted cognitive
reasoning. They also demonstrated the Problem Solver's
tendency to generate alternatives by adding details to their
reasons.

> I live in Southern Heights because it is peaceable
> and sociable. (49 year-old male)

> Southern Heights is where I prefer living due to
> the community atmosphere. It is a community of
> people that share each other burdens and just a
> neat place to live. (47 year-old female)

> I live in Southern Heights because I feel at ease
> here. It is a community were there is care and
> love for each other. (54 year-old female)

Engagers

Engagers are "passionate learners who love to learn,
learn with feeling, and learn best when they are actively
engaged in a meaningful manner with the learning task"
(Conti & Kolody, 1999, p. 13). Engagers like using human
resources in their learning activity. They must receive a
personal reward from their learning or they may chose not to
participate (Conti & Kolody, 1999, pp. 14-15). Engagers

prefer learning in an environment that a relationship is created between the learner, the task, and the teacher. Engager are passionate learners who love to learn and who learn with feeling (p. 13). The Engagers comments on where they would live if they had the choose demonstrated this importance on people and their relationships:

> Southern Heights have a natural friendly atmosphere, a group of people working together and I was raised here. (31 year-old female)

> I live here because I like the people they are friendly and I just enjoy were I am. (60 year-old male)

## Religion

Quakers were the first religious group that made the initial attempt to convert new African arrivers to Christianity in America. Prior to the development of the official institution of slavery, many Africans entry into America was as indentured servants. Many adopted Christian doctrines because they could be released from their indentured contract upon converting to Christianity (Asante & Mattson, 1992, p. 37). Over a period of time, the majority of Africans in America abandoned their native religious beliefs and practices and embraced Christian doctrines. After the institution of slavery was implemented, new African arrivals were not only converted by their white

masters but also by established slaves and freed Africans as well.

Because of the harshness of slavery, the use of religion quickly became a form of escape from the degradation of slavery for the slaves (Asante & Mattson, 1992, p. 48). Religion also evolved as a major form of communication from plantation to plantation among the slaves. The application of religion generated a form of unity, joy, love and respect in a visible time of subjugation (p. 51). That unity, joy, love, and respect still exists in the modern African-American church. The African-American church particularly in rural areas may be the only form of ownership that Blacks have. The church affiliation not only symbolizes proprietorship, but it also portrays leadership. The illusion that integration would heal many of the African-American problems was conceived by many. One person stated, "We kind of thought that integration would not only improve us a people, but would give us assess to houses over here that they have over there" (60 year-old male Engager). Many feel that integration essentially stripped the community of it economic, social and educational base. In turn, this caused a ripple effect that left the church in most cases as the only viable institution in the African-American community.

Once again in this area, the comments of the participants reflected their learning strategy preferences. The comments by the Navigators tended to be direct and focused.

> I attend my church because of my roots. I was raised in this church. My parents attends this church, and I feel obligated. (41 year-old Baptist female)

> I was born a Methodist and will die a Methodist, because I just like the structure of the church. (58 year-old Methodist male)

> The Lord sent me to this church. This was my mother's church, and this is where I plan to stay. (53 year-old COG female)

The comments by Problem Solvers tended to have detail in expanding and describing the reasons for their actions.

> I joined this church 40 years age ago. I like the worship service and the fellowship. This church is like a family to me. (70 year-old Baptist female)

> I attend my church because we follow the Bible totally, and what I feel is right. I enjoy praising God, and I enjoy my Pastor. He's knowledgeable in the word of God. He is very strict, but we need it in this day and time. (54 year-old COG female)

The comments of the Engagers tended to focus on the people and the relationships among them in the church.

> I attend the church because we have a good Pastor. He is a good teacher, and we have just good wholesome fellowship. (60 year-old Baptist male)

> I have attended this church since I was 15. It's a small church rich in spirit. Also, I am related to most of its membership. (40 year-old Methodist female)

> I attend because I like my Pastor's style of
> teaching. I like his honesty, and I just like
> everything about the church. (24 year-old COG
> female)

Black churches were established following slavery and
quickly became the shield of safety and the foundation for
social change for the newly emancipated slaves (Blackwell,
1991, pp. 198-199). Through the church many African-
American religious, social, and political leaders have
emerged with leaders such as Robert Allen, Adam Clayton
Powell, Jesse Jackson, and Martin Luther King. Many of the
church members look to their pastors for not only spiritual
guidance but also for guidance in other aspects of their
life.

> I talk to my Pastor regularly on spiritual and
> other issues as well. (60-year-old male Navigator)

> My Pastor has great insight. He counsels me on
> many day-to-day issues. (54-year-old female
> Problem Solver)

> When I have concerns and I am not clear on what to
> do, I consult my Pastor. (40-year-old female
> Engager)

In many African-American communities the church is the
symbol of unification. The church is the only institution
that is controlled by African-Americans and receives little
or no retribution from the dominate population. In the
African-American community, religion is at the core of
belongingness. As in the times of slavery, the church

provided a place of escape and of the hidden expression such

as with the work hymns. It was the place slaves communicated

and bonded in oppression. This is still the case today and

is perhaps the reason why African-Americans turn to religion

and faith in times of strife.

Kunjufu (1994) describes African-American church as

falling into three categories: entertainment, containment,

and liberation. He describe entertainment as:

> A lot of whooping, hollering and singing, to the
> exclusion of teaching and working. It is a church
> that makes you feel good for the moment but does
> not address societal issues. The church
> administrators may have activities during the
> week, but they do not empower their congregation
> culturally, politically or economically.
>    The Containment churches are defined very
> similarly to entertainment churches except that
> they are open only on Sunday and closed the
> remainder of the week.
>    The Liberation churches are where Harriet
> Tubman, Sojourner, Richard Allen and Marcus Garvey
> were members. A church that understand the
> liberation theology that Lord has appointed them
> to preach the Gospel to the poor and heal the
> broken-hearted, where we must feed the hungry and
> clothe the naked and help to understand that the
> cross is both vertical and horizontal: without
> God's Spirit our labor is in vain, and work
> without faith is dead. (p. 22)

There are only a few African-American liberation churches.

In this study, the participants did not talk about these

differences. In fact, one person stated that, "all the Black

churches are about the same" (50 year-old Engager).

<u>How Learning Take Place</u>

How adults learn has been a major topic of inquiry for

adult educators over the last few decades. Knowles (1980),

Houle (1984), and Tough (1978) have extensively studied the concept of adult learning. Knowles (1980) defined adult learning as "a science of helping adults learn (p. 43). He introduced five characteristics of adult learners (p. 12). Houles' inquiry on the motivational orientations of the adult learner have generated a line of inquiry in adult education. Tough outline 13 steps of key decision-making points about choosing what, where, and how to learn. He assumed that "adults have a wide range of abilities for planning and guiding their own learning activities (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991, p. 43). Lindeman (1926) described education (learning) as both passive and active. His perception of adult learning pointed to the evaluation of experiences. "Experience is, first of all, doing something; second, doing something that makes a difference; third, knowing what difference it makes" (p. 87). Lindeman further contended that "every adult person find himself in specific situations with respect to his work, his recreation his family situations which call for adjustments. Adult education begins at this point. (p. 6).

When asked about their learning, those in each learning strategy group tended to use words, phrases, and logic that supported the general description of their category.

> I usually will consult with other professionals
> that have knowledge and experience. Also, I will
> go on-line. (37 year-old female Navigator)

I prefer hands-on learning, and I learn best by watching and asking questions. I feel once I see how its done, I can do it. (43 year-old female Problem Solver)

If I hear it and then do it, I get it. For example, if someone told me to bake a pie and just gave me the directions and I had never baked one, I would be lost. But if they gave it to me and said this is what I want you to start with first, and then add all this other stuff Then I can do it. (31 year-old female Engager)

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>Summary</u>

The African-American experience in America has been
created of many diverse, restrictive, and sometimes tragic
and traumatic elements. Yet, the experiences of African-
Americans also enunciate triumphs, victories, and success.
The elements associated with the African-American experience
have significant psychological, sociological, and
physiological impacts on community development.  After the
abolishment of slavery, a need for the establishment of
functioning, self-sufficient communities developed. These
communities were distinguished as unique because they were
created by a race which was not allowed to participate in
established white communities. The African-American
community of Enid, Oklahoma, was initiated under these
circumstances.

African-American culture and community co-exist
wherever African Americans live, learn, and work. Social
structures necessary to support social life such as
churches, schools, clubs, or lodges and community service
activities existence in many communities.

Learning needs are pervasive, but it is not known how
learning takes place in various communities such as the
African-American community. The African-American community
exists with specific needs because of its structure and

conditions which are tied closely to its history.
Demographic variables have been explored in general relating
to learning strategies, but these strategies have not been
investigated in depth within the African-American community.
While research has found that most demographic variables are
not related to learning strategies (Conti & Kolody, 1997),
these studies have not represented a large African-American
population. Consequently, the factor of race required
further investigation.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to describe
the learning strategies of those in the African-American
community of Enid, Oklahoma. This was accomplished by
measuring the learning strategy preferences of members of
the community and by identifying factors in the community
structure that either contribute to or hinder this learning.

This study used a descriptive design. Both quantitative
and qualitative data were collected. The Assessing The
Learning Strategies of AdultS (ATLAS) was used to collect
the quantitative data, and interviews were used to collect
the qualitative data. ATLAS was used because it is an easy
instrument to administer and is designed to quickly
distinguish learning strategy profiles (Conti & Kolody,
1999, p. 16).

### Summary of Findings

The participants in this study were members of the
African-American churches of Enid, Oklahoma. Learning

preference and demographic variables were collected from 141 church participants, who represented 43% of the total population. Learning strategy preference were identified using the Assessing the Learning Strategies of AdultS (ATLAS). The distribution of learning strategies preferences were similar to the distribution of learning strategies of the general population. The study found that 36.2% were Navigators; 31.2% were Problem Solvers; and 32.6% were Engagers. Chi square was used to compare the frequencies observed with the frequencies developed for the ATLAS. The representation of the various learning strategy groups was as expected in the general population.

Interview were conducted of 21 participants. The interviews were designed to gather general demographic data and learning preference data. The interviews dealt with learning strategies and how they relate to learning in and about the community. Based on the findings from the quantitative data from ATLAS and the qualitative data from the interviews, conclusions and recommendations were organized around the concepts of learning strategies, religion, and the community.

### Learning Strategies

The learning strategy preferences of those in African-American community of Enid, Oklahoma, are similar to those of the general population.

The results of the study of learning strategies in the African-American community in Enid, Oklahoma, resemble the learning strategy findings related to

the demographic variable of race of recent studies
on learning strategy.

Churches attract members in proportion to their
learning strategy preference distribution in the
general population.

This study substantiates the finding of previous

learning strategy studies related to race. "Collectively,

these studies have found that selected demographic variables

are not useful in discriminating among different groups in

their learning strategy usage" (Conti & Kolody, 1998, p.

109). Learning strategy preferences are individual traits

that are independent of the person's demographic

characteristics such as race. Learning strategies are a

matter of individual preference and vary by the tasks (Conti

& Kolody, 1999, p. 2).

ATLAS is an effective tool for measuring learning

strategies in the African-American community. Despite the

unique history of African-Americans, despite the differences

in how the various churches in the community view and

construct knowledge, and despite the distinctive culture

found in the Enid community, learning strategy preferences

were distributed among the participants in almost exactly

the same pattern as in the general population, and no

pattern existed for their distribution among the various

churches. Thus, while cultures and many of the institution

can influence many factors and appeal to many diverse

interests, these factors do not influence the distribution
of learning strategy preferences.

Although the learners in the community and within the
churches approach learning tasks differently from each
other, this does not prevent them from working on common
projects together. "Navigators, Problem Solvers, and
Engagers frequently reported that they accomplished similar
tasks, but the strategies they used to arrive at their
accomplishments were different" (Ghost Bear, 2001, p. 374).
While the verbal expressions of the African-American
participants in this study might have been different from
those in other studies, the characteristics they described
were identical. African-American Navigators were structured
planners, required order, and resisted or were stressed by
change; because of these characteristics, they "may also be
called Strivers" (p. 374). The African-American Problem
Solvers were also "the most descriptive and detailed in
their answers of the three ATLAS groups...[and] can be
viewed as Storytellers" (p. 376). The African-American
Engagers were the most likely to use emotional language and
"were inclined to frequently express excitement and joy in
their learning process....For this reason, they can be
viewed as the Stimulants" (p. 378).

The study identified learning strategy preference
groups distributed in the various churches. Unlike other
learning environments such as the Internet (Ghost Bear,

2001; Spencer, 2000), community colleges (Willyard, 2000),
technical institutes (Massey, 2001), literacy programs
(James, 2000), or businesses (Goodwin, 2001) that attract
learners with learning strategy preferences that are
compatible with the image of the agency or mechanism
associated with the learning, the churches are general in
their appeal and are pulling people into the church that are
not tied to learning in any specific way. Participants
states:

> I was raised as a Baptist, but I married a
> Methodist over 50 years ago, and have been a
> Methodist every since. (71 year-old female
> Navigator)

> This is the church my mother took me to, and I
> have been here every since. (54 year-old Problem
> Solver)

> My grandfather started the church. I just never
> thought about going any place else. (31 year-old
> Engager)

Although all of the learning strategies exist within
the church, all of the participants recognized the existence
of the community and the role of the church in this
community even though they all tended to talk about the
community in different ways. This is consistent with what
other studies have found. For example, Ghost Bear (2001)
found that many of the users on the eBay auction site on the
Internet used a similar strategy for bidding on items but
that each learning strategy preference group arrived at this
strategy in a fashion that was different from the other

groups but which was consistent with the characteristics of their group. Goodwin (2001) found a similar pattern in telephone sales representatives in a business; all groups recognized the absence of functioning teams in the work environment but had characteristically different ways of viewing and addressing the situation. Likewise, in the African-American community, the Navigators had one type of language referring to planning, structure, and identifying and using resources. The Problem Solvers had another type of language referring to testing assumptions, using external learning aids, and generating alternatives. The Engager had yet another type of language that makes the learning process intrinsic. Nevertheless, each participant had a common knowledge of learning and the community, and individuals in each group expressed their views differently based on their learning strategy preference.

## Religion

Religion is the foundation that binds the African-American community in Enid, Oklahoma.

The abolition of slavery confirmed churches as the "institution and symbolic core of the African-American community. Since the slave era, churches have promoted mutual aid, educational uplift, and various other initiatives aimed at advancing the individual and collective welfare of African-Americans" (Taylor, Jackson, & Chatters, 1997, p. 118). In Enid, the religion institutions of the

African-American community are the primary community-based

institution that provide guidance and leadership for

community residents. Programs are developed and designed to

empower individuals spiritually, socially, and culturally.

Many churches have instituted scholarships for local college

students and food and clothing banks and limited financial

incentives for needy community residents.  The churches

likewise, support other community organizations that

provides services to the community.

From a sociological standpoint, the church preforms

many functions. Those include:

1. The church should teach fundamental religion.

2. The church should interpret religious literature
   in terms of modern life and its problems.

3. The church should act as a social unifier in the
   community.

4. The church should apply its ethico-religious
   principles to the prevailing industrial,
   political, recreational, and educational life of
   the community.

5. The church should furnish inspiration for all
   worthy community endeavors.

6. The church should assist in training and
   furnishing the leadership for worthy community
   institutions and movements. (Lindeman, 1921, pp.
   22-23).

To accomplish these, the African-American churches in Enid

refer to themselves as an organized body of believers that

teach the true and unadulterated gospel of Jesus Christ. The

churches play a major role in the providing a learning

involvement for the community. However, most of all, the African-American churches establish the core of unity within the community. Without the church leadership, the community could easily be in complete disarray.

Other institutions once shared this leadership role in the African-American community in Enid, Oklahoma. Most important among those were the schools. However, as many participants pointed out when these community schools were closed, this left only the church. The churches are universal institutions in the community in relationship to the types of learners they attract. Various churches and various denominations do not attract a specific type of learner. Instead, they attract learners with specific learning strategy preferences in proportion to their distribution in the general population. While serval other studies investigating learning strategies (Ghost Bear, 2001; James, 2000; Spencer, 2000; Willyard, 2000) found a relationship between the type of organization and the type of learning strategy preferences drawn to it, the churches in Enid did not draw a specific type learner. Instead, like university programs with a general appeal (Turman, 2001), the churches appealed to all learners in a broad way in proportion to their representation in the general population. As members of the African-American churches come together in fellowship, share interaction regularly, and communicate programs and special events, they form a

oneness. One church is no different than the other based on
the understanding that there is one God and in the appeal to
learning strategy preferences types.

The Southern Heights Ministers Alliance plays an
important roles in the unification of the denominations in
the area. The nature of the church is to spread the "word".
It does this in a common way that has a general appeal among
the community. Consequently, while the ministerial alliance
and people may attend different churches, they have one
common purpose in their religious belief that helps unite
them as a community.

## Community

A distinct and identifiable African-American
community exists in the East Park/Southern Heights
Community of Enid, Oklahoma.

The African-American community of Enid, Oklahoma,
is an endangered community.

The church is a viable institution for using adult
education and adult learning principles to
organize the community for addressing issues.

An African-American community definitely exists within
the African-American population of Enid, Oklahoma. A
community can be operationally defined as a
multigenerational, interactive, interdependent collectivity
of persons who share a common culture, a common emotional
tie, and live within relatively close proximity to one
another (Mazique, 1992, p. 469). This concept can be applied

to the African-American population of Enid, Oklahoma, to sociologically describe the community.

However, the survival of this community is at stake. Since the mid-seventies, there has been a gradual decline in African-Americans in the East Park/Southern Heights community. This has invariably caused a drastic decline in youth and young adult interaction within the community. The participants related the decline in part to a lack of employment opportunities and African-American business development and to unimproved or inferior housing within the community's geographic boundaries.

The survival of a community is based for the most part on education. In America, education has been the liberator and savior of countless communities. Education can lead to a strong desire for individual, social, and cultural improvement. The pursuit of continuing education is the mean by which change is possible in the community. However, the strong tradition of education, which was once embraced by the African-American community of Enid as a means of liberation, has fallen somewhat short in present times. The presence of sports or illegal activities often are a more powerful influence to many of the community's youth (40 year-old female Engager).

Education has become incidental while it once was recognized as the only means of achievement. The liberating and savior-like qualities of education seem to be somewhat

lost. In the African-American community, education once offered hope of deliverance when all else seemed to fail. Today, education is viewed by many differently.

>   Some may argue the motives of the desegregation
>   theoreticians and politicians, but none can
>   dispute results: hundreds of thousands of Blacks
>   have lost hope for the first time since
>   Emancipation. (Mazique, 1992, p. 474)

Though the absence of education, communication eventually dies and valuable contributions by past leaders, concerned individual, and groups are forgotten and ignored. If this happens, the community can die slowly from within.

The African-American community of Enid, Oklahoma is experiencing a drastic decline in residents between the ages of 18-35. This study found that 50 was the average age of participants at the critical community agency of the church. It is indicative that the residents of the community are growing older and that the younger residents are moving from the East Park/Southern Heights or the city of Enid.

The aging of the church membership in Enid, Oklahoma, is ominous because the church is the one remaining strong institution in the community. However, hope for the church and for the community lies in the church vigorously applying its adult education function. The church is the major foundational element of the community and draws into it all types of learners. It is in a position to organize and be the educational vehicle for meaningful social change in the community. By using the ideas and techniques of

reconstructionists such as Horton (1990) and Friere (1970),
the church can mobilize its members both for individual
personal empowerment and for community change.

Two immediate issues that need attention were uncovered
by the findings of this study. One issue relates to the
schools in the community. Many community members realize
that the nature of their community changed dramatically with
the loss of the community-based schools. With this loss,
many of the characteristics and special qualities of a
community began to disappear in the East Park/Southern
Heights area. The second issue is health care. The aging
nature of the church members and their economic status
suggests that there are many health care issues that need to
be addressed. By using its prestige and historical
leadership positions in the community, the church can use
adult education and adult learning principles to rally
community members to issues affecting the entire community.
Such an effort has the potential of vitalizing the church by
attracting the younger members of the community to the
church. Such actions can benefit the community and the
various elements and institutions of which it is composed.

## Recommendations

ATLAS can be used with the African-American community
members as a tool to facilitate their learning. ATLAS was an
accurate tool for identifying the learning strategy
preferences of members of the African-American community of

Enid, Oklahoma, and interviews with community members
supported the categories it identified. Moreover, the
learning strategies were distributed among the community
members just as in the general population. Since learning
strategies are techniques that can be taught and learned,
ATLAS can be used in the African-American community just as
in other communities, and the knowledge individuals gain
once recognizing their learning preference can provide them
with a well-researched approach to learning.

Likewise, ATLAS can be used within the churches to
facilitate the learning of the church members and to help
those working in groups within the churches understand their
fellow learners. ATLAS can also help the religious leaders
gain a greater understanding of the learning characteristics
of their congregation. This knowledge can be utilized in
reviewing teaching within the church programs. Facilitating
the teaching-learning transaction within the church can help
amplify the church leader's effectiveness as servants to the
membership.

The churches should implement educational programs to
address the nature of the African-American community in Enid
and its endangered status. The effectiveness of these
programs could be increased by the religious educators
realizing that the learners in the congregation have three
different approaches to learning. Such programs have the
potential to significantly impact the community because:

> A small group of adults in a single community
> seriously concerned about the values of creative
> living is sufficient to alter the quality of the
> total community process. (Lindeman, 1926, p. 58)

Through such efforts, residents of the community could be organized to seek constructive bonds to restore and seek development of the East Park/Southern height community. Every effort possible should be taken to promote education of the youth and attract people back to the community.

## Summary

A world view exists in the African-American community of Enid, Oklahoma, that is based on its culture. Culture is a set of learned beliefs and behaviors shaping how members view and experience the world. Individuals bring to any social encounter these world views and behaviors, which are learned as children and shaped by the culture of origin. Individuals also bring cultures of affiliation which include in part religious groups, ethnic group, social classes, and voluntary and professional organizations they have come to embrace (Robbins, Fantone, Hermann, Alexander, & Zweifler, 1998, p. 811). The world of those in the study are shaped by their relationship in the African-American community. A major element in this community is religion. Under this community world view, it does not matter that individuals construct knowledge differently. World view is generally shaped by the community culture. Regardless of the denomination or particular church that one attends, the

general world view is equally distributed for the population that attend church.

The sociological perspective of community varies and comprise a comprehensive spectrum of definitions. Sociologist do not have a universally accepted definition of community. It is commonly accepted that two of the general characteristics of a sociologically defined "community" are commonalities among members of the population and a distinct identification of some geographic frame of reference.

Sociologist and father of Adult Education, Eduard Lindeman (1921), distinguished between a community and a neighborhood. While a community is an organized unit with institutions that have specific functions, a neighborhood is merely a group of families living within a acquaintance area (p. 9). Due to legal circumstances, African-Americans were forced to live separate from the majority population and the separate-but-equal doctrine operated in Oklahoma. Under these segregated conditions, the residents in the East Park/Southern Height area of Enid were instrumental in establishing an economic, social, and cultural base. Schools, churches, small stores, rooming houses, cafes and establishments for social entertainment were operational in the boundaries of East Park/Southern Heights. This resulted in the establishment of a community that differs from a neighborhood in that it served as more that a residential area. It provided a culture which is universally recognized

by its members and which is today centered around the churches in the community. In this community and in its churches, the learning strategies of the people match the general population.

REFERENCES

Adams, F., (1975). <u>Seeds of fire: The idea of Highlander.</u>
     Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair.

Aldrick, G. (1973) <u>Black heritage of Oklahoma.</u> Oklahoma:
     Thompson Book and Supply.

Asante, M. K., & Mattson, M. T. (1991). <u>Historical and
     cultural Atlas of African Americans.</u> London: Simon &
     Schuster and Prentice Hall International.

Ashley, D., & Orenstein, D. (1998). <u>Sociological theory:
     Classical statements</u> (4th Ed.). Boston: Allyn and
     Bacon.

Bender, T. (1978). <u>Community and social change in America.</u>
     New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Bennis, W. (1989).  <u>On becomming a leader.</u> New York:
     Addison-Wesley Publishing, Inc.

Billingsley, A. (1992). Historical background of the Negro
     family. In F. W. Hays, III (Ed.), <u>A Turbulent: Readings
     in African American studies.</u> San Diego: Collegiate
     Press.

Blackwell, J. E. (1991). <u>The black community diversity and
     unity.</u> Boston: Harper Collins Publishers.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1982). <u>Qualitative research for
     education.</u> Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Brookfield, S. D. (1983). <u>Adult learners, adult education
     and the community.</u> Milton Keynes, England: Open
     University Press.

Brookfield, S. D. (1984). <u>Adult learners, adult education
     and the community.</u> New York: Teachers College Press.

Broomfield, S. D. (1986). <u>Understanding and facilitating
     adult learning.</u> San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, S. D. (1987). <u>Developing critical thinkers.</u> San
     Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Broom, Leonard, & Selznick (1963). <u>Sociology</u> (3rd ed.) New
     York: Harper & Row Publishers.

Cashman, S. D. (1991). <u>African-Americans and the quest for
     civil rights.</u> New York: New York University Press.

Conti, G. J. (1977). Rebels with a cause: Myles Horton and Paulo Freire. Community College Review, 5(1), 36-43.

Conti, G. J., & Fellenz, R. A. (1986). Myles Horton: Ideas that have withstood the test of time. Adult Literacy and Basic Education, 10(1), 1-18.

Conti, G. J., & Kolody, R. C. (1998). Development of an instrument for identifying groups of learners. Proceedings of the 39th Annual Adult Education Research Conference (pp. 109-114). San Antonio, TX: Sacred Heart University.

Conti, G. J., & Kolody, R. C. (1999). Guide for using ATLAS. Stillwater, OK: Oklahoma State University.

Cranton, P. (1994). Understanding and promoting transformative learning: A guide for educators of adults. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cross, K. P.(1982). Adults as learners. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Darkenwald, G. G., & Merriam, S. B. (1982). Adult education: Foundations of practice. New York: Harper & Row.

Deirdre, M. (1993). Crossing the danger water--Three hundred years of African-American writing. New York: Anchor Books.

Deshler, D., & Hagan, N. (1989). Adult education research: Issues and directions. In S. B. Merriam & P. M. Cunningham (Eds.), Handbook of adult and continuing eduction. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

DuBois, W. E. B. (1903). The soul of black folk. New York: Dover Publication, Inc., (1999).

Elias, J. L., & Merriam, S. B. (1995). Philosophical foundations of adult education. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

Ellison, C. G. (1997). Religious involvement and the subjective quality of family life among African Americans. In R. J. Taylor, J. S. Jackson, & L. M. Chatters (Ed.). Family life in black America. London: Sage Publication.

Fellenz, R. A., & Conti, G. J. (1989). Learning and reality: Reflection on trends in adult learning. Columbus, OH.

The Ohio State University. (ERIC Clearinghouse on
Adult, Career, and Vocational Training, Information
Series No. 336).

Fellenz, R. A. , & Conti, G. J. (1993). Self-knowledge
Inventory of Lifelong Learning Strategies (SKILLS):
Manuel. Bozeman, MT: Center for Adult Learning
Research.

Fishel, Jr., L. H., & Quarles, B. (1976). The black
American (3rd. ed.). Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and
Company.

Franklin, F. E. (1992). The Negro family. In F. W. Hays, III
(Ed.), A turbulent voyage: Reading in African American
Studies. San Diego: Collegiate Press.

Freire, P. (1973). Education for critical consciousness.
New York: Continuum.

Gates, H. L. (1994). Colored people. New York: Alfred A.
Knopf.

Gay, L. R. (1992). Educational research: Competencies for
analysis and application. New York: Macmillan
Publishing Company.

Ghost Bear, A. A. (2001). Adult learning on the Internet:
Engaging the eBay auction process. Unpublished doctoral
dissertation. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University.

Goodwin, S. (2001). Learning strategies in the workplace to
create effective employees. Unpublished doctoral
dissertation. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University.

Hays, T. (1992). Myles Horton: A force for change. Retrieved
January 17, 2001 from the World Wide Web:
http:/hardinhistory.com

Hilgard, E. R., & Bower, G. H. (1975). Theories of
learning. (4th Ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice
Hall.

Houle, C. (1984). Patterns of learning: New
perspectives on life-span education. San Francisco:
Jossey-Bass.

Hunter-Gault, C. (1988). Barriers. Life (Special Issue), p.
43.

Jacobson, W. (1996). Learning, culture, and learning
    culture: <u>Adult Quarterly, 47</u>(1), 15-28.

James, C. B. (2000). <u>Learning strategy preferences of high
    school noncompleters.</u> Unpublished doctoral
    dissertation. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University.

Keefe, J. W. (1979). Leaning style: An overview. In J. W.
    Keefe (Ed.), <u>Student learning styles: Diagnosing and
    prescribing programs.</u> Reston, VA: National Association
    of Secondary School Principals.

Keefe, J. W. (1982). Assessing student learning styles: An
    overview. In J. Keefe (Ed.), <u>Student learning styles
    and brain behavior.</u> Reston, VA: National Association
    of Secondary School Principals. (ERIC Document
    Reproduction Service No. ED 227 565).

Kerlinger, F. N., (1986). <u>Foundations of behavioral
    research.</u> (3$^{rd}$ ed.). Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and
    Wilson, Inc.

Knowles, M. S., (1970). <u>The modern practice of adult
    education: From pedagogy to andragogy.</u> New York:
    Association.

Knowles, M. S. (1975). <u>Self-directed learning</u>. New York:
    Association Press.

Knowles, M. S. (1977). <u>A history of the adult education
    movement in the United States.</u> Malabar, FL: Krieger
    Publishing Company.

Knowles, M. S. (1978). <u>The adult learner: A neglected
    species.</u> Houston: Gulf Publishing Company.

Knowles, M. S. (1984). <u>The adult learner: A neglected
    species</u>. (3$^{rd}$ ed.). Houston: Gulf

Knowles, M. S. (1990). <u>The adult learner: A neglected
    species.</u> Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing Co.

Knowles, M. S. (1980). <u>The modern practices of adult
    education: From pedagogy to andragogy</u> (2$^{nd}$ ed.). New
    York: Cambridge Books.

Kolchin, P. (1993). <u>American slavery.</u> New York: Hill and
    Wang.

Krech, D., Crutchfield, R. S., & Ballachey, E. L. (1962). _Individual in society._ New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

Kunjufu J. (1994). _Adam! Where are you? Why most black men don't go to church_ (1st ed.). USA: African American Images.

Lindeman, E. C. (1921). _The community._ New York: Association Press.

Lindeman, E. C. (1926). _The meaning of adult education._ New York: New Republic, Inc.

Lively, S. A. (2001). _Learning, growing, and aging: Lifelong learning in the Academy of Senior Professionals in Bethany, Oklahoma._ Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University.

Loury, Glenn C.(1992). The black family: A critical challenge. In F. W. Hayes, III (Ed.), _The turbulent voyage: Reading in African-American studies._ San Diego: Collegiate Press.

Mack, R. W., & Young, K. (1968). _Sociology and social life._ New York: American Book Company

Macmillan, D. W., & Chavis, D. M. (1986). Sense of community: a definition and theory. _Journal of Community Psychology, 14,_ 6-23.

Mazique, Jewell R. C. (1992). Betrayal in the schools. In F. W. Hays, III (Ed.), _A turbulent voyage: Readings in African-American studies._ San Diego: Collegiate Press.

McKenzie, S. C. (1980). _Aging and old age._ Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company.

McRea, M. B., Carey, P. M., & Anderson-Scott, R. (1998). Black churches as therapeutic systems: A group process perspective. _Health Education and Behavior, 25_(6), 778-789.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). _Qualitative research and case study applications in education_ (2nd. Ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B., & Caffarella, R. S. (1991). _Learning in adulthood._ San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Merz, C., & Furman, G. (1997). <u>Community and schools:</u>
<u>Promise and paradoc</u>. New York: Teachers College Press.

Merzirow, J., (1991). <u>Transformative dimensions of adult</u>
<u>learning.</u> San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mullane, D. (1993). <u>Crossing the danger water--Three</u>
<u>hundred years of African-American writing.</u> New York:
Anchor Books, 1993.

Myers, T. (1997). <u>Historic resources survey of the Southern</u>
<u>Heights/East Park area Enid, Oklahoma.</u> Austin, Texas:
Hardy-Heck-Moore & Associates, Inc.

Peck, M. S. (1987). <u>The different drum: Community making and</u>
<u>peace.</u> New York: Touchstone.

Quarles, B. (1987). <u>The Negro in the making of America.</u> New
York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Schuler, D. (1996). <u>New community networks.</u> New York:
Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Smith, R. M. (1982). <u>Learning how to learn: Applied</u>
<u>learning theory for adults.</u> Chicago: Follett.

Spencer, R. C. (2000). <u>Self-directed learning on the</u>
<u>information superhighway.</u> Unpublished doctoral
dissertation. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University.

Stampp, K. M. (1956). <u>The peculiar instutition: Slavery in</u>
<u>the ante-bellum South.</u> New York: Vintage Books.

Taylor, J. T., Jackson, J. S., & Chatters, L. M. (1997).
<u>Family life in black America.</u> London: Sage Publications

Tough, A. (1967). <u>Learning without a teacher.</u> Toronto:
Ontario Institute for studies in Education.

Tough, A. (1978). Major learning efforts: Recent research
and future directions. <u>Adult Education,</u> <u>17</u> (1), 31-37.

Tough, A. (1979). <u>The adult's learning projects: A fresh</u>
<u>approach to theory and practice in adult learning</u>. (2<sup>nd</sup>
ed.). Toronto: Ontario

Turman, R. A. (2001). <u>Learning strategy preferences of adult</u>
<u>learners in a non-traditional graduate business</u>
<u>program</u>. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Stillwater:
Oklahoma State University.

Turner, A. O., & Gailey, V. L. (1998, Summer). The best city in the best county. <u>The Chronicles of Oklahoma, 76</u>(2), 116-139.

Walters, R. W., & Smith, R. C. (1999). <u>African American leadership.</u> New York: State University of New York Press.

West, C. (1993). <u>Race matters.</u> New York: Random Publishing.

West, E. H. (1972). <u>The black American and education</u>. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.

Willis, S. L., (1985). Towards an educational psychology of the adult learner. In J. E. Birren & K. W. Schaie (Eds.), <u>Handbook of the psychology of aging</u> (2nd ed.). New York: Van Nostrand Reinbold.

Willyard, P. (2000). <u>Learning strategies of first generation college students.</u> Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University.

Zanden, J. W. V. (1979). <u>Sociology</u>. (4th ed.) New York: John Wiley & Sons

Zemke, R., & Kramlinger, T. (1989). <u>Figuring things out</u>. New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

APPENDIX

# Oklahoma State University
## Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires:   6/26/02

Date:   Wednesday, June 27, 2001                    IRB Application No    ED01139

Proposal Title:    LEARNING STRATEGIES IN THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Principal
Investigator(s):

Blayne Hinds                             Gary Conti
801 W. Oklahoma                          206 Willard
Enid, OK  73701                          Stillwater,  OK  74078

Reviewed and
Processed as:    Exempt

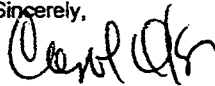Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s):  Approved

---

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 203 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Blayne Edward Hinds

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis:    LEARNING STRATEGIES IN THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN
           COMMUNITY OF ENID, OKLAHOMA

Major Field:    Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

   Education: Graduated from Coyle High School, Coyle,
      Oklahoma in May 1964; received Bachelor of Art
      degree in Sociology from Langston University,
      Langston, Oklahoma, in May 1973; received Masters
      of Art in Criminal Justice from Central State
      University, Edmond, Oklahoma, in May 1988.
      Completed the requirements for the Doctor of
      Education degree with a major in Occupational and
      Adult Education at Oklahoma State University,
      Stillwater, Oklahoma, in December 2001.

   Experience: In the areas of community development,
      employment and training and recruitment.  Have
      worked intensively with the economically
      disadvantaged population to access education and
      employment opportunities.

   Professional Memberships: Oklahoma State Employment and
      Training Association, Oklahoma Association of
      Community Action Agencies,