How do Black male high school students explain and perceive their career aspirations and expectations?

**Methods**

The project was designed through a comparative case study with the focus on analyzing the stakeholder-driven data from the students’ scheduling experiences.

The data were analyzed using qualitative research techniques, including content analysis, thematic analysis, and case study methodology. The research utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to explore the students’ perceptions and experiences.

**Findings**

**Perspectives on the Exposure to Obama’s Presidency**

When an African American youth speaks to his or her future, it is a very personal and specific conversation. Youth living in a political environment are often influenced by their personal experiences and the events that shape their identities. Obama’s presidency is a significant event in this context, as it provides an opportunity for youth to explore the potential for social mobility and empowerment.

**Stakeholders’ Perceptions of Being Black in the United States**

Stakeholders’ perceptions of being Black in the United States are shaped by a variety of factors, including historical context, cultural traditions, and personal experiences. These perceptions are influenced by the media, educational systems, and social interactions that shape youth’s understanding of their racial identity.

**Table 1: Student Profiles and Career Aspirations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Interested in Athletic Track</th>
<th>Interested in Academic Track</th>
<th>Interested in Performing Arts</th>
<th>Interested in Business/Entrepreneurship</th>
<th>Interested in Performing Arts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcus</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrence</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drake</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policy Implications**

- Negative characterization of African American youth continues to be institutionalized by the presence of tracking in the school system, thus promoting for initiatives to make high-status knowledge available to students in non- academic tracks (Oakes, 2005).
- Students need to enact a proactive discourse on race to address the structural and cultural inequalities that may impede the academic performance and career aspirations of students of color, in particular with African American students.

REFERENCES

African American males are typically over-represented at the bottom range of the achievement ladder on most student performance measures, as supported by a greater likelihood to be truant, drop out, and repeat grades compared to their White peers. This over-representation is often explained by structural and cultural factors—such as, racial ideologies, racial tracking in schools, and socialization processes in neighborhoods—helping explain students’ persistent expectations to work in the entertainment and athletic fields. The implications of this study call for a reevaluation of the relevancy of career and social mobility in marking the career expectations of African American males.

**Summary of Findings**

The main findings of this research study indicate that the exposure to Obama’s presidency has been a significant factor in shaping the career aspirations and expectations of African American high school students. The study suggests that Obama’s presidency has provided young people with an opportunity to explore the potential for social mobility and empowerment in the context of racial identity and cultural heritage.

**Strengths / Limitations**

- **Strengths**: The study is based on a global sample (Alfred, 2001). Thus, the collective nature of the African American community plays a critical role in informing students’ perceptions of social mobility within school and outside of school—whether it’s a media and mass media that either supported or hindered their expectations and success.
- **Limitations**: The study is based on a global sample of African American students in a Southern California urban city. The limitations are consistent with the group’s approach that is critical to understanding how youth perceive their career aspirations within the context of structural and cultural factors.

**Policy Implications**

- The study calls for the identification of barriers and potential solutions that may help in removing these disparities. A global study on African American students (Alfred, 2001) is consistent with the group’s approach that is critical to understanding how youth perceive their career aspirations within the context of structural and cultural factors.
- The study is based on a global sample of African American students in a Southern California urban city. The limitations are consistent with the group’s approach that is critical to understanding how youth perceive their career aspirations within the context of structural and cultural factors.

**Directors for Future Research**

- **Research Question**: What are the potential impact of Obama’s presidency on career aspirations and expectations of African American youth? Consequently, the study is consistent with the group’s approach that is critical to understanding how youth perceive their career aspirations within the context of structural and cultural factors.

**References**

- Gordon, T. (2015). Discriminating against African American males: Is it the color of their skin or the content of their character.
- Gordon, T. (2015). Discriminating against African American males: Is it the color of their skin or the content of their character.
- Special thanks to Gilberto Conchas and Leticia Oseguera for collection of the data and guidance in this direction for the study.
- Summary of Findings