12-2020

The Black Man's Experience as a Teacher in K-12: Examining the Insight, Education, and Challenges to Diversifying the Teaching Population

Natasha A. Oates
noochiee21@gmail.com

The Black Man's Experience as a Teacher in K-12: Examining the Insight, Education, and Challenges to Diversifying the Teaching Population

Abstract

The K-12 teaching profession is dominated by White females, with only 2% of Black male K-12 teachers in the job. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the insight, education, and challenges Black males face to diversify the K-12 classroom. As the vital instrument of the study, using in-depth, semi-structured interviews, the researcher examined five New York State Black male K-12 educators to discover their perspectives and experiences regarding why Black male educators are underrepresented in the K-12 setting. Five formulated meanings emerged, representing the participants' experience that included: (a) career motivation, (b) absence of diversity, (c) differing education experiences, (d) rewards of teaching, and (e) relationships make the experience. Five thematic clusters emerged: (a) motivational influences, (b) challenged in education, (c) different placed creates different experiences, (d) return on investment, and (e) connection through familiarity, and four themes (a) inspirational motivation, (b) individualized consideration, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) idealized influence. In this study, Black males were motivated to teach by teachers, counselors, and past work experiences. They felt supported in their education but felt underrepresented as a Black male, and they felt they had impacted their young Black male students. The recommendations for changes to federal, state, union, and school district practices discussed in this study can improve the diversity of the teaching workforce to include Black males contributing to the overall quality of K-12 education and student success.

Document Type

Dissertation

Degree Name

Doctor of Education (EdD)

Department

Executive Leadership

First Supervisor

Loretta Quigley

Second Supervisor

Amy Mech

Subject Categories

Education

The Black Man's Experience as a Teacher in K-12: Examining the Insight, Education,

and Challenges to Diversifying the Teaching Population

By

Natasha Oates, MSN, RN

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

Loretta Quigley, Ed.D., RN, CNE

Committee Member

Amy Mech, Ed.D.

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education

St. John Fisher College

December 2020

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Mary E. Cole, who always believed that I could accomplish anything but never actually said it. To my children, Diorra, J'Aaron, and Benjamin Jr., who supported me every step of this journey. Their encouragement, monetary gifts, and motivation helped me to complete this journey. My two oldest children, Diorra and J'Aaron, for my deposit to start the program, as a birthday gift 2.5 years ago, I thank you. To my significant other, Sean Thomas, your belief that I would finish and be able to relax after was much appreciated. To my sisters, Regina, Angela, and Sharon who inspired me and assured me of how proud they were of me was more motivation than they will ever know.

I also dedicate this work to the St. John Fisher faculty who impacted my life in different ways. To Dr. Robinson, the person who convinced me to enter the program and who consistently told me how much I had changed him as a person: What he doesn't know is how much he helped me become the woman I am today. And to Dr. VanDerLinden for providing a foundation of trust as my first advisor and for being my personal cheerleader. To my committee chair, Dr. Loretta Quigley, for her ability to not give up on me when I wanted to quit many times, having a crucial part in my eventual success, and for taking over as my advisor. To Dr. Amy Mech for being a great committee member and supporting me until the end, and to Dr. Robert Diflorio for helping me understand qualitative research, and for mentoring me through two field experiences. Your organizational tips got me through.

Finally, I would like to thank my cohort group for their support and encouragement throughout this journey. To Bonnie and Johaun, who hold an exceptional place in my heart, I am happy to say they are now my forever family.

Biographical Sketch

Natasha Oates is currently the Registered Nurse Coordinator of the CNA Program at Syracuse SUNY EOC. Mrs. Oates attended Keuka College from 2006 to 2008 and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing in 2008. She attended Roberts Wesleyan College from 2009 to 2011 and graduated with a Master of Science degree in Nursing Leadership and Administration in 2011. She came to St. John Fisher College in the summer of 2018 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. Mrs. Oates pursued her research in The Black Man's Experience as a Teacher in K-12: Examining the Insight, Education, and Challenges to Diversifying the Teaching Population under the direction of Dr. Loretta Quigley and Dr. Amy Mech and received the Ed.D. degree in 2020.

Abstract

The K-12 teaching profession is dominated by White females, with only 2% of Black male K-12 teachers in the job. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the insight, education, and challenges Black males face to diversify the K-12 classroom. As the vital instrument of the study, using in-depth, semi-structured interviews, the researcher examined five New York State Black male K-12 educators to discover their perspectives and experiences regarding why Black male educators are underrepresented in the K-12 setting. Five formulated meanings emerged, representing the participants' experience that included: (a) career motivation, (b) absence of diversity, (c) differing education experiences, (d) rewards of teaching, and (e) relationships make the experience. Five thematic clusters emerged: (a) motivational influences, (b) challenged in education, (c) different placed creates different experiences, (d) return on investment, and (e) connection through familiarity, and four themes (a) inspirational motivation, (b) individualized consideration, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) idealized influence. In this study, Black males were motivated to teach by teachers, counselors, and past work experiences. They felt supported in their education but felt underrepresented as a Black male, and they felt they had impacted their young Black male students. The recommendations for changes to federal, state, union, and school district practices discussed in this study can improve the diversity of the teaching workforce to include Black males contributing to the overall quality of K-12 education and student success.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

According to the National Education Association (NEA, 2013), there were

3.1 million public school teachers, and men made up less than 25% of all teachers in

public schools in the United States. That rate is much lower for Black male teachers who,

as suggested by Lewis (2006), are averaging on extinction levels in the nation's public

school system. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2016),

the racial/ethnic distribution of public school students across the country has shifted. The

number of Black students is projected to increase from 7.8 million to 7.9 million,

meaning Black students will account for 15% of the total enrollment in the nation's

schools for the year 2026. Black male teachers make up only 2% of the total public

school teacher population (NCES, 2016). Research has consistently shown that the

shortage of Black male teachers is triggered by social, economic, education, and cultural

factors (Cooper, 2000; Gordon, 2002; Gursky, Rose, & Moss, 2004; Lewis, 2006).

The social reasons why there is a shortage of Black male teachers include

institutional racism and lack of encouragement (Lewis, 2006). Stereotypes that Black

males have to act a certain way, referred to as the *Black man's burden*, is another social

factor hindering Black males. This burden for Black men embodies the feelings and

pressure of representing the entire Black race. Black men feel compelled to behave and

interact with individuals from other races and ethnic groups in a particular way, to better

position how others perceive them (Sue, Capodilupo, & Holder, 2009). According to Sue

et al. (2009), this burden hinders the Black male from becoming successful in the

classroom by upholding the pressure of knowing their material and staying on top of their game so as not to ruin the path for other Black males to follow. Economically, teaching may not be as profitable a position as other careers in the marketplace, resulting in few men choosing this career path (Sue et al., 2009). Educational barriers for the Black male population include lack of encouragement to go into the profession because it is seen as a poor career choice for an adequate income to raise a family, for the lack of mentorship in the college setting, and because Black males are viewed as a high-risk population to educate (Bryson, 2017). Culturally, less than 20% of teachers are from racial/ethnic minorities (Mawhinney, Mulero, & Perez, 2012). Bryson (2017) posited that in teaching-preparation programs, there is an inability to recruit males of color, a failure to meet the needs of teacher candidates of color, and a failure to prepare teacher candidates, generally, to meet the educational, social, and cultural needs of students of color in K-12 schools.

The demographic divide between teachers and students is a growing public concern, particularly between minority students versus White teachers (Cherng & Halpin, 2016). The profession of teaching is overly White and middle class—even in urban areas with large minority populations (Rezulli, Parrott, & Beattie, 2011). The U.S. Department of Education (2013) stated that racial/ethnic minority students are the most prevalent group attending public schools in the United States, and racial/ethnic minority students make up the vast majority of urban school students. Still, less than 20% of teachers are racial/ethnic minorities. Mawhinney et al. (2012) stated there is generally a lack of teachers of color within the education profession.

Lynn (2002) and Lynn and Jennings (2009) found that there are several reasons why schools need Black male teachers. Leading among these reasons is that Black male teachers have much to contribute in terms of their personal experiences as being a Black male in the educational setting. Black male teachers are considered salient to meeting the needs of Black male students (Lewis & Toldson, 2013). Specific roles advocated for Black male teachers relate to addressing the educational inequality and lower educational attainment experienced by Black children, but especially Black boys (Bridges, 2011). The imbalance of Black males as teachers leaves students of color with fewer opportunities to interact with positive male role models. *New York State's Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to the Most Effective Educators 2014-15* or "New York State's Equity Plan" (New York State Education Department [NYSED], 2015) was developed to ensure students have equal learning opportunities in the presence of effective teachers and principals. This plan includes having teachers who represent the student demographics for equitable educational opportunities.

Bristol (2014) stated that Black male teachers could bridge the social detachment of Black students, specifically males, and their experience in schools, by enriching their social and academic outcomes. Additionally, Bristol (2014) stated that Black male teachers create socioemotional environments in schools that can shelter Black boys from societal and institutionalized racism. Bristol's (2014) research suggests that Black male teachers are more apt to relate to some of the personal problems faced by their male students of color by having experienced similar challenges of their own in everyday life. The gap of Black male teachers is longstanding and not likely to be closed soon, with the problem more acute in public urban school districts (Rich, 2015). This current study

sought to bring attention to the need to increase the number of Black male teachers in the classroom to help urban school districts create educational environments conducive to positive change in the educational outcomes of Black male students in elementary and high schools.

Problem Statement

There is a significant underrepresentation of Black male teachers in public, elementary, and high schools in the United States. Studies have shown there has been little progress to improve the Black male presence in the classroom as a teacher, and the enrollment of students of color do not match the number of Black male teachers employed in those districts (D'Amico, Pawlewicz, Earley, & McGeehan, 2017). Minorities make up 6-10 % of the teacher pool in the nation (Mawhinney et al., 2012). Black male teachers are in demand in U.S. public schools as a greater focus is on the need to diversify the historically White female-dominated profession (Lewis & Toldson, 2013).

In frequent studies, the barriers to recruitment and retention, introducing teaching as a career choice, and the cultural relevance of the Black male as a teacher have been addressed and defined with few successes to add to the profession (D'Amico et al., 2017; Lewis, 2006; NCES, 2016). Black male teachers make up only 2% of the public school teacher workforce in the United States. Engaging in research while obtaining data from Black male teachers employed in New York State primary and secondary schools will add to the literature retarding the need to diversify the teaching workforce with Black males. Black male teachers can make an impact on young Black scholars using culturally relevant teaching, role modeling, and racial congruence to teach and encourage Black

male students to be successful scholars (Bryson, 2017). The lack of the Black male presence in the classroom teaching decreases the opportunity of the Black students (Young, Winn, & Reedy, 2017). Research has shown it is essential to have a racially diverse workforce when trying to close the achievement gaps between subgroups (NCES, 2016).

Theoretical Rationale

Transformational leadership theory suggests a method of leading followers where leaders work with teams to identify needed change, create a vision to guide the change, and execute the transition with committed members of a group or organization by getting followers to believe and trust in them (Bycio, Allen, & Hackett, 1995). Transformational leadership was the first developed and validated theory to emphasize morals and values in leadership (Burkus, 2010). Transformational leadership can be used by executive leaders to guide followers to change existing thoughts, techniques, and goals for better results for the greater good, using moral frameworks and foundations to lead (Burns, 1978). The moral foundations of transformational leadership include inspirational motivation to help followers grow to new heights, idealized influence to lead followers by example and setting forth expectations, engaging in intellectual stimulation to encourage learning and growth by fostering idealized consideration by coaching followers to success, and empowering those followers (Jyoti & Bhau, 2016).

Transformational leadership theory guided this researcher to identify the persistent challenges to diversifying the teacher workforce as leaders use moral character, ethical values, and morality of the process of social/ethical choice for followers to embrace or reject in order to foster the desired change in recruitment and retention. As

leader's thought processes change in relationship to diversifying the teaching profession and educating followers on the importance of workplace diversity to shape teacher practice, leaders influence a culture of trust. Leaders nurture their followers' moral development to internalize the same values and principles as their leaders. Leadership is an essential part of achieving equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students by offering inclusivity and professional development opportunities for supporting culturally relevant practice (Young et al., 2017).

History of Transformational Leadership Theory

A sociologist, James Downton, first coined the term *transformational leadership* in 1973 while researching charismatic leadership in religious leadership (Luenendonk, 2016). Downton's concept of transformational leadership went unnoticed until 1978, when James McGregor Burns, a presidential biographer, defined the term transformational leadership for political settings as leaders who encourage followers to advance to a higher level of morality and motivation through the strength of the leader's vision. Hartog, Muijen, and Koopman (1977) suggested that a leader can inspire people to make a significant change in lives and organizations. Burns's (1978) thought process was one of the leaders and followers helping each other to advance to a higher level to change the culture (Luenendonk, 2016). Leadership, in the form of models and transactional processes, focuses on exchanges between the leader, subordinates, and the existing organizational culture to change that culture (Luenendonk, 2016). Burns (1978) theorized that transforming leadership tries to change the culture of an organization, and transactional leadership works within the existing culture and that the leaderships are mutually exclusive (Yukl, 1999). Burns (1978) suggested, with these models in place,

this leadership style results in further personal transformation of both the employees and the leaders by creating a workplace in which each person can perform beyond expectations (Ross & Kendall, 2014). The Burns (1978) theory was influenced by Maslow's theory of human needs, suggesting that human behavior is based on needs and finding a way to fulfill them (Luenendonk, 2016). With Burns's (1978) theory in mind, the transformational leader needs good self-esteem and self-actualization to succeed (Luenendonk, 2016).

Bass, in 1985, expanded on Burns's (1978) theory by explaining the psychological mechanisms that underpin transformational leadership theory. He said that transformational leadership could be defined based on the impact it has on its followers (Ross & Kendall, 2014). Bass (1985) stated there are four comprising elements to the theory: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Jacobs et al., 2013).

Idealized influence leaders are role models, and they gain the trust of their employees. Because of this, the employees internalize the leaders' ideals (Cherry & Gans, 2018). An inspirational motivation leader has a clear vision and communicates it to the employees, the employees relate with the leader's vision, and the employees begin to believe in the concept to make a meaningful contribution to the common goal (Jacobs et al., 2013). Intellectual stimulation refers to when a leader inspires employees to advance their original solutions to come up with new ways of doing things and learn new opportunities (Jacobs et al., 2013). Last, individualized consideration leaders recognize the abilities of their employees and attempt to support their strengths, needs, and to give

recognition (Jacobs et al., 2013). According to Bass (1985), with these four components in place, higher levels of employee performance and satisfaction are demonstrated.

Bass (1985), in contrast to Burns (1978), thought of transformational leaders as moving beyond transactions to increase the level of the followers' mindfulness by expanding and elevating their needs and inspiring them to transcend their self-interest. Transactional leaders identify the needs of their followers and exchange rewards for appropriate levels of effort and performance (Bycio et al., 1995). The leader motivates through idealized influence, which he refers to as charisma (Burns, 1978).

The theory provides a framework for this study, as transformational leadership guides the research problem. A leader goes through the thought process of recruiting and retention, educating followers on the importance of diversifying the workforce, and providing equal opportunity for the students of color to have the experience of being taught by someone that is a minority like them. The leader nurtures his followers' moral development so that they internalize the same values and principles as the transformational leader.

The lack of Black male teachers in urban elementary and high schools fails to bring culturally relevant pedagogy to K-12 students of color. Milner (2016) stated the educational system is flawed, dysfunctional, and it was not designed for Black students, in general, to engage in learning, to foster a change in males of color academic successes. In transformational leadership, leaders are looking to motivate their followers to a level of self-development to help those followers feel satisfied with themselves so that they can perform at a higher standard (Jyoti & Bhau, 2015).

School administrators play an essential role in framing a positive perception of teaching. Walker, Goings, and Wilkerson (2019) stated that school administrators have responsibilities that include hiring staff, evaluating teachers, improving student outcomes, and developing relationships with the local community. The most important job they have is to support and recruit teachers from diverse backgrounds and create healthy environments that use data-driven initiatives for preservice teachers. Khalifa, Gooden, and Davis (2016) stated that successful school administrators adopt practices that are consistent with the needs of students, teachers, and the local community. This includes school administrators practicing culturally responsive leadership, developing and supporting the school staff, and promoting a climate that makes the whole school welcoming, inclusive, and accepting of minority students.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the lack of Black males in teaching positions in New York State's K-12 education. The goal was to examine Black male educators' insights through their lived experiences regarding their decision to teach as a career, the barriers they encountered during the completion of their course work to become a teacher, and their experiences within their careers that influenced them to remain in the classroom. The underrepresentation of the Black male as a teacher has severe implications in classroom settings. The gender imbalance in the teacher workforce leaves students with fewer opportunities to interact with positive male role models of color to identify with throughout their schooling experience (NYSED, 2019).

Studies have shown that there has been little progress to improve the Black male presence in the classroom as teachers. In New York State's 2011-2017 school year, in the

Big Five school districts of New York City, Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers, and Buffalo, a Black teacher was available versus a White teacher at a ratio of 1:64. The ratio of Black male teachers in the remainder of the State of New York was 1:129 (Jones, Holton, & Joseph, 2019).

In various studies, the barriers to recruitment and retention, introducing teaching as a career choice, and the cultural relevance of the Black male as a teacher have been addressed and defined with few successes adding to the profession. The lack of the Black male presence in the classroom decreases the opportunity of the Black students seeing someone who looks like them and who serves as a role model. Studies have shown that having a race and gender match between student and teacher can help reverse some of the challenges Black male students face, such as higher dropout rates and suspension rates coupled with a lower likelihood of attending college (Toussaint, 2019).

This study also will contribute to the positive impact Black male teachers can have on Black male students' educational outcomes, using pedagogical practices, by incorporating the same life experiences as a bridge to advance academic achievement in students. The Black male teacher's presence in the classroom may help urban school districts create educational environments conducive to positive change in the educational outcomes of Black male students in elementary and high schools

Research Questions

Based on the research, Black students comprise 17% of the public school student population, and Black male teachers make up only 2% of the total public school teacher population (Lewis, 2006; Mawhinney et al., 2012). Research has consistently shown that the shortage of Black male teachers has been affected by economic, education, social, and

cultural factors (Cooper, 2000; Gordon, 2000; Gursky et al., 2004). The research

questions that guided the discovery of this research follow:

1. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the factors that led

   them to enter the teaching profession?

2. How do Black male teachers describe the barriers they encountered during the

   completion of their preservice certificates or degrees?

3. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the experiences

   they had within their careers that contributed to them remaining in the

   classroom and continuing to teach?

Potential Significance of the Study

The potential significance of this study is to identify the challenges in diversifying

the teaching population. The research conducted, describing the shortage of Black males

in the teaching profession, reveals that few qualitative studies have focused on the

importance of Black make teachers choosing teaching as a profession and the barriers

they face making teaching a career choice in college. The research shows Black male

teachers who teach young Black male students have a positive effect on student

educational outcomes, including dropout rates, decreased absences, higher student social

functioning, fewer behavior problems, and development of academic identities and

achievements (McKinney de Royston et al., 2017). Black male students need to see

people who are like them as role models, and they need teachers who know what they can

do by attending school and achieving their goals (Graham & Irwin, 2011). Little research

has focused on how Black male teachers made their decisions to go into the teaching

profession and stay in urban communities to practice. The increasing number of Black

students in rural and suburban school districts in the United States was reflected in 2013 by NCES, with 71% White students, 10% Black students, 13% Hispanic students, and 2% of the students registered as an Asian/Pacific Islander. These figures highlight the fact that more than one in four students from rural/suburban environments are students of color. This statistical data adds to the importance of encouraging the need for more Black male teachers in the educational workforce, to—at a minimum—mirror the diversity in the American population (NCES, 2013).

Definition of Terms

Black Man's Burden – male individuals of color feeling the pressure to represent their entire race. Black males feel compelled to behave and interact with individuals from other race/ethnic groups in a particular way to position those people's views of all Black males (Sue et al., 2009).

Chapter Summary

Throughout the United States, the scarcity of Black males as educators is prevalent (D'Amico et al., 2017; Bryson, 2017; Graham & Erwin, 2011). This chapter discussed increasing the presence of the Black male in the field of academia at all levels of education. Studies have shown that there has been little progress to improve the Black male presence in the classroom as teachers (Copper, 2000; Graham & Erwin, 2011; Gursky, 2002). In frequent studies, the challenges to diversify the teaching profession have been prevalent in the areas of recruitment and retention, introducing teaching as a career choice to Black males while in the K-12 classes, and the cultural relevance of the Black male as a teacher (Lewis, 2006; Mawhinney et al., 2012).

The lack of the Black male presence in classrooms, teaching decreases the opportunity for Black students to see someone who looks like them, serving in an honorable position and as a role model. Black men make up 2% of public school teachers (NCES, 2016), and this not acceptable in a diverse society. The theoretical framework that guided this study was transformational leadership theory. This theory reinforces the role the leader plays in creating supportive environments for Black male teachers. In transformational leadership, leaders are looking to motivate their followers to a level of self-development to help those followers feel satisfied with themselves to perform at a better standard (Jyoti & Bhau, 2015). This leadership style enhances subordinate satisfaction (Jyoti & Bhau, 2015). As a leader's thought process changes regarding recruitment and retention of Black male teachers, that leader begins to educate his or her followers of the importance of workplace diversity. A leader's influence on teacher practice fosters a culture of trust, providing instructional advice and offering professional development opportunities for teachers who prioritize equity for student learning (Young et al., 2017). The significance of this study is to identify the challenges in diversifying the teaching population. The research conducted describing the shortage of Black males in the teaching profession revealed few qualitative studies focusing on the importance of Black males choosing teaching as a profession and the barriers they face making teaching a career choice in college. The research shows Black male teachers, teaching young Black male students, has a positive effect on the students' educational outcomes. Dropout rates and absences decrease and there are fewer behavior problems, higher student social functioning, and development of academic identities and achievements (McKinney de Royston et al., 2017). The research shows that Black male teachers instructing young

Black male students have a positive effect on student educational outcomes. Black male students need to see people who are like them as role models and teachers to know what can be achieved by attending school and studying hard (Bryson, 2017).

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature and research relevant to the difficulties Black males face choosing teaching as a career, support or lack of support given in teacher education programs, culturally relevant teaching methods, and recruitment and retention of Black male teachers. Chapter 3 discusses the research design, methodology, context, participants, data collection, and analysis processes proposed for the study. In Chapter 4, Colaizzi's (1978) method of data analysis is used by the researcher to demonstrate how the data findings relate to the literature. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the study conducted, the study's limitations, recommendations for current and future practice, future research suggestions, and it provides a conclusion to the research and the findings.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

This chapter provides an overview of the literature relating to Black male teacher-student relationships, the cultural relevance of Black male teachers, the community's need for Black male teachers, recruitment, and retention of Black male teachers, and teacher-educator programs in primary and secondary public education. Nationwide, school districts have struggled to recruit and retain Black males to the teaching profession (Bryan & Williams, 2017). The representation of Black male teachers lacks in public schools, which impacts overall student outcomes, particularly those of Black boys (Brokenbrough, 2012; Bryan & Williams, 2017; Cheng & Halpin, 2016). When Black boys do not see Black male teachers during their academic years in school, they grow up thinking that being a teacher is not a career option, and they go through school, not knowing they, too, can attend college to become a teacher (Stanley, 2017). According to Stanley (2017), low-income Black students who have at least one Black teacher in elementary school are significantly more likely to graduate high school and consider attending college. If students of color experience a Black teacher, the likelihood of their academic success increases, which is why supporting Black males in K-12 education is favored (Walker et al., 2019).

The purpose of the study was to develop an understanding, through the lived experiences of Black male teachers, as to why there is an underrepresentation of Black males in K-12 education. By discovering why the study participants decided to teach as a

career, the barriers the study participants encountered during the completion of their coursework to become a teacher, and the experiences the study participants had within their careers that impacted them to remain in the teaching profession. By discovering, the hope is to inform educational stakeholders and other Black males to choose to teach in K-12 schools.

Role of the Black Male Teacher with Students

In response to the chronic uncertainties of Black youth in American schools, a growing number of educational stakeholders have called for efforts to increase the pool of Black male teachers. Black males, in 2016, made up only 2% of the nation's teaching positions (Lewis, 2006). Black males have been stereotyped as surrogate father figures, disciplinarians, and role models (Lewis, 2006; Woodson & Pabon, 2016). Black male teachers are also often cast as the one to secure, administer, and govern the unruly Black boy in schools (Bryan & Williams, 2017). The development of reciprocal relationships between students and teachers allow teachers to use their professional knowledge and skills to help students academically, socially, and culturally, and to enhance students' communal bonds (McKinney de Royston et al., 2017).

Trust starts in the family, at home, and then it develops elsewhere (Rhoden, 2017). Young Black males have been known to be cautious when it comes to trust, especially in educational institutions (Rhoden, 2017). Black males have confronted negative cultural and academic stereotypes that have painted them as intellectually inferior (Rhoden, 2017). Black male teachers' cultural experiences can motivate student academic success. Maylor (2018) posited that Black male teachers bridge the social distance gap that Black male students experience in school environments. Maylor (2018)

stated that Black male teachers are more apt to relate to the personal problems faced by their Black male students of color than their White male teachers. Rhoden (2017) stated trust impacts a student's behavior and achievement. For Black boys who are perceived as exhibiting the most significant behavioral challenges in school, adding a lack of trust contributes to their problems, and lack of trust is pervasive across urban school districts. The effort to increase the number of Black male teachers to attend to the needs of Black boys as mentors and supporters has been a priority (Duncan, 2010). When Black male students receive consistent messages about positive academic achievement and college attendance, they are more likely to achieve the desired positive results (Noguera, 2008). Lewis, (2006) found that Black male teachers have a strong positive presence for Black male students, and they serve as something different from the media's images that frequently portray Black males as only athletes, entertainers, rappers, actors, and convicted felons.

Studies have shown that a race and gender match between student and teacher can help reverse some of the challenges Black male students face, such as higher dropout and suspension rates, coupled with the lower likelihood of attending college (Toussaint, 2019). The Johns Hopkins University study, published by Will (2018), highlighted the impact of having Black teachers lead in classrooms. They studied 100,000 Black students enrolled in North Carolina's public schools between 2001 and 2005 and found the risk of the students dropping out decreased by 29% for Black students who had at least one Black teacher in the third through the fifth grades. The risk decreased by 39% for low-income Black males, and the Black students' likelihood of pursuing higher education increased (Will, 2018). Bristol (2014) found that Black male teachers can bridge the

social distance that Black boys experience in schools, and Black male teachers can create environments in schools that shield Black boys from institutionalized racism.

Research has demonstrated that having same-race and same-gender teachers can improve student learning (Bristol & Mentor, 2017). The notion of schools positioning Black male teachers to be disciplinarians first, and teachers second is commonly expected (Bristol & Mentor, 2018). This expectation is implicit as most colleagues approach Black male teachers both formally and informally to assist with disciplining children of color, and they are often asked to serve as dean of students (school disciplinarian) as well as to monitor students of color with behavior problems (Woodson & Pabon, 2016).

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Racial disparities encountered by Black male students have been documented in the research, and the research reflects an unresolved crisis in schools (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Noguera, 2003; Toldson, 2008). Positive teacher-student relationships are associated with higher student social functioning, fewer behavioral problems, more engagement in learning, and the development of positive academic identities (McKinney de Royston et al., 2017). Culturally relevant/responsive teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Ladson-Billings,1995).

Black male students have been harmed by the negative interactions they have encountered in school and by the types of attitudes and behaviors they may have adopted in response to those negative interactions (Noguera, 2003). The use of culturally relevant pedagogies exposes students to familiar cultural references. It fosters reciprocal

relationships with students where teachers use their professional knowledge and skills to help students academically, socially, and culturally (McKinney de Royston et al., 2017).

Gay (2010) stated that culturally responsive teaching is transformative instructional practices that are culturally responsive to help students see themselves as community contributors who are capable of helping to improve the philosophy of their experience. The practice of this style of teaching involves the rethinking and reformation of instructional pedagogy with shifts in culturally centered curriculum and learning content, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, and performance assessments that match the realities of the students inside the school (Gay, 2010; Milner, 2016). Culturally responsive teaching is empowering, stated Landson-Billings, 2009. This particular teaching style enables students to boost their full potential and work toward excellence, personally and with the community, pushing the student to excel toward success. Thomas and Warren (2017) found that culturally relevant teachers view themselves and their work as deeply interconnected with and within the communities they teach. Bryson (2017) stated that culturally relevant teachers facilitate collaborative learning in the classroom where they understand that knowledge is co-constructed between the students and the teachers. Milner (2016) posited that teachers can center Black cultural understanding, as part of the formal school learning, and draw from it to support academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical awareness of Black students. Culturally relevant teachers have the responsibility to empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes, disrupting the educational inequities faced by Black males (Bristol, 2014; Bryan & Williams, 2017).

Howard (2014) stated that Black boys rarely have experienced a teacher who understands them and meets their academic, social, and cultural needs in Pre-K-12 classrooms. Black boys become trapped between cultural conflicts, misunderstandings, and mismatches between themselves and their teachers, 85% of whom are White, middle-class, and female (Bryan & Williams, 2017). Scholars have concluded that cultural conflicts and mismatches have led to many issues that adversely impact the overall academic outcomes of Black boys as early as their early childhood education (Wright & Ford, 2016). Bryan and Williams (2017) found that utilizing hip hop, R & B, negotiation, and playful tactics to engage Black male students in the learning process proved to be useful in learning engagement. These tools can be used for academic success while the Black male students develop a healthy, positive relationship in the classroom.

Culturally responsive teachers are aware of the experiences of their students, both in and out of school, and they also are aware of the context shaping these experiences. Teachers making meaningful connections between students' home lives and school enhances the learning experience for young Black male students (Bristol, 2014). Milner (2016) stated that by having the ability to connect with a student, Black teachers can understand the root cause of a student's behavior. It may be that the child is tired due to hunger, or the student has been working at night and on weekends to help support younger siblings. Black male teachers can make valuable connections between students' home lives and school, which enhances the learning experience for young Black male students. Culturally responsive teaching closes the gap for the educational attainment of these students.

Teacher talk can advance what we know about professionally preparing teachers to be more productive with culturally diverse student populations (Thomas & Warren, 2017). Students are already experts in their own prior experiences and lifeworlds. These teachers use what the students already know as a scaffold for learning new material genuinely and honestly, termed style-shifting by Alim, 2004. This type of teaching cultivates power through talk, making connections through off-topic responses, and the section under study by appreciating the conflicts as opportunities for learning (Thomas & Warren, 2017).

A case study was conducted by Milner (2016) of a Black male, middle-school math/science teacher in a Title 1 urban school in the Southeastern Region of the United States. The case study analysis found one intentional participant, and the study was meant not to generalize or compare across content. The purpose of the study was to reveal culturally responsive teaching as validating for students, allowing for the understanding and description of the teacher's practices with examples from his discursive insights and interactions that moved the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy into practice.

Milner (2016) asked two questions: What does it mean for a teacher to talk about validating students and student validation? And how do practices of validation exemplify in real classroom practice? Through observations in the participant's classroom during school-related activities (lunchroom, honor roll assembly, and the library), reviewing lesson plans, and conducting videotaped, semi-structured, and structured interviews with the teacher, the researcher gathered data. The coded data and themes were developed using analytic induction and reasoning. Analytic induction helps to compare the validity of the themes and explanations. With the use of analytic induction to check the themes

against the data to determine if different data was needed, looking for variations or surprises (Marshall & Rossman, 2016) in the data, the coding resulted in triangulation, which is the act of bringing more than one source of data to bear on a single point (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

The triangulation pattern became evident when what the teacher in the Milner (2016) study articulated during the interviews became evident in his actions or his students' actions. The results of the study were that the teacher implemented elements into his pedagogy from the students' worlds in his teaching practices by using rap to solve math problems or by using the school basketball players in math assignments to get the students engaged (Milner, 2016).

The teacher stated he lived in his students' world; that is why he knew what was happening in it. The teacher said he was a local DJ and the father of an 11-year-old and a 14-year-old, experiencing their lives daily, and being a teacher of middle school students. The validations and connections he possessed came from his biological children; he was able to connect to his students in the same fashion. The discursive interactions the teacher had with the students made them comfortable, validating their experiences with him in the classroom. The teacher believed in immersing himself into the world of the students to foster learning by being able to understand their desires and wants, needs, and dislikes (Milner, 2016).

The Milner (2016) study revealed three principles: teachers must remember the importance of identity in education, teachers must understand and remember the social context of their work, and teachers must remember the interrelated nature of the mind and heart in education. The data show that the teacher always played music in the classroom;

he used this to validate the interest of his students because he recognized the art and value of the music the students listened to, which allowed him to build valuable relationships. The teacher added, "when you play soft music, it calms the students down and works as an association to when test-taking" (Milner, 2016, p. 427). When students took a test, the same song was playing in the background as was being played when the teacher was covering the information in class. Therefore, the students could remember something about the assignment or content through sound association. The research question regarding culturally responsive teaching through a culturally responsive pedagogical lens showed how the teacher talked about his practice and what he did to affirm and validate his students. A culturally responsive teacher makes connections with his students, learns from his students, and is with his students to build relationships.

Black Males as Teachers

Black male teachers represent 2% of the teacher workforce (NCES, 2016). There is a need for more diversity in the teaching force, as seen through the research. Often students go from Pre-K through 12th grade without having a diverse group of educators leading their classrooms and schools. Black male teachers relate to addressing educational inequality and lower attainment experienced by Black boys (Bridges, 2011). Being a role model and mentor has been identified as an essential role for Black male teachers (Maylor, 2018). Lewis (2006) stated that the top three reasons for Black males wanting to teach were to help young people, to obtain a job, and to contribute to humanity.

In an empirical article by Milner, Pabon, Woodson, and McGee (2013), four Black male educators (the authors of this research), discussed the challenges they have

faced in classes designed to prepare Black male students. Through an analysis of the commonalities in their experiences, they proposed a means for teacher educators to foster a greater understanding of the heterogeneity found among Black male students, so that teachers can craft more responsive and responsible educational experiences for Black males.

There has been an ongoing struggle to prepare teachers to meet the needs of elementary and secondary students attending public school and living in poverty and for students for whom English is a second language. Milner (2016) stated that the reasons for the ongoing struggle include a growing disconnection between the experiences of the teachers and their students, rapidly changing sociocultural landscapes in public schools and instructional practices, and experiences teachers encounter in their preparation programs to teach.

The first story of Milner (2013) is of him as an assistant professor on a tenure track early in his career and teaching in a predominately White setting, teaching graduate students to do research, and teaching undergraduate students. Milner purposely included the curriculum development course for the students to consider the complexity and centrality of race and racism in curriculum development. Milner also had a direct emphasis on the educational experiences and needs of African American males in public school classrooms. The students voiced concerns about the focus of race, and they stated they did not understand how race and racism related to the course. The students were vocal in their feedback at the end of the course, saying the professor focused too much on race and, particularly, African American male students. The course was supposed to be

about teaching, not about race. The students struggled to understand how central and salient race and teaching were.

As the students began to reflect on their readings and observations in schools as practicing teachers/observers, they came to realize that each of them was learning and developing a greater intercultural competence. Intercultural competence was apparent at the end of the course when the students' evaluations stated they felt forced to think about issues they had never considered in the past. They learned so much was common and consistent from the students. Milner's presence helped to shape and build the students' intercultural competence and interactions in his course (Milner, Pabon, Woodson, & McGee, 2013).

The second experience was that of Pabon (2013), a Black woman who had been teaching for several years at Northeastern universities in English language arts. Pabon's (2013) background was teaching predominately African American students in high-poverty schools in Brooklyn, NY. She took notice of the challenges facing Black male youth and the lack of institutional knowledge to support their needs. Pabon (2013) maintained that teacher education curricula must include the teaching of critical social theory and require teachers to engage in the inquiry of their narratives. During one of her courses, a White male preservice teacher approached her, stating he noticed that he was having difficulty connecting with African American male students in his practicum experience. Pabon (2013) asserted that the beauty of his experience was that his process of developing a philosophy of teaching Black male students began with observation, critical self-reflection, and a call for help. The White preservice teacher stated that the students did not seem to like him; if he tried to act hard, the students challenged him. The

teacher said that if he were not stern enough, they would walk all over him. Pabon (2013) indicated these behaviors challenge new teachers to examine their narratives, and it grounds them in the theoretical knowledge regarding how to reach and teach Black males to improve the educational conditions of this population (Milner et al., 2013).

The third experience was of Woodson (2013), a Black woman assigned to teach a foundations course at a Midwestern university. She stated that no matter what readings or reflections the class worked through; she encountered a handful of White teachers who insisted that racism was an obsolete social variable. They argued that discrimination did not influence their thinking or being in a meaningful way, which was evidenced by their admiration for various Black public figures, referencing Black male artists or athletes, and, more recently, politicians. The students were resistant to Woodson's response that the Black male body has been the object of the White gaze and source of amusement since slavery with auction blocks gracing the public square (Milner et al., 2013).

When Woodson (2013) asked her students what happens when a Black male K-12 student adopts a rap music entertainer's negative connotation, refuses to engage in the history lesson, or a Black male student emerges as a classroom leader, but leads in the direction of negative behaviors? They already knew what would happen—the student would be removed from the classroom, and there would be the continuation of a pernicious achievement gap. She directed the class to explore the thin line between admiration and fear and the Black male student's place within it. She stated that her teaching students needed to see how racism, poverty, and compulsory heterosexuality converge to shape the spaces Black male students inhabit and the difficulty of reaching in and out of those spaces (Milner et al., 2013).

In the ultimate experience was of McGee (2013), a professor who was teaching a course on the social and philosophical dimensions and educational disparities that lead to disparate outcomes for marginalized students. This course accentuated the plight of the Black male students in a class of mostly of White, female, middle- to upper-class teachers. The White female teaching students voiced concerns of fear and perceived inabilities to teach students from different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds effectively. The White female students demanded McGee provide them with a scripted blueprint for teaching Black males. McGee (2013) pressed back, demanding they read and analyze a diverse set of texts for specific gender and racial student populations. McGee (2013) stated the school students frequently challenged her White teaching students. She provided articles that paid close attention to policies, theories, and practices that shape Black male disengagement within the educational system, including the disservice of special education. The teaching students developed the ability to investigate race, ethnicity, and social inequalities, and their contribution to the disparities that confront Black male students (Milner et al., 2013).

In a analysis conducted by Cherng and Halpin (2016), they used the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) database to administer a survey and solicit students' perceptions of their teachers' instructional practices to address the demographic divide from the perspective of the students. The MET has four domains: emotional support, classroom organization, instructional support, and student engagement. Using a convenience sample of participating teachers, students, and schools at each participating school district, the study collected data on 1,680 Grades 6-8 and Grade 9 schoolteachers, who identified as Black, White, or Latino in 317 schools in six U.S. school districts

during the academic years of 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. The study focused on English language arts and mathematics teachers in Grades 4-9, but it included Grade 9 biology teachers. A total of 157,081 students were recruited over the 2 years to evaluate their teachers. The study used a Tripod Student Survey, which is a self-reporting measure containing 36 items that are aggregated into seven domains containing three to eight items intended to describe students' perceptions of their teachers' behavior using a 5-point Likert scale. The seven domains summarized as:

1. How well does the teacher motivate students to high academic standards?

2. How well does the teacher manage the behavior of students in the classroom?

3. How well does the teacher welcome the opinions of the students?

4. How well does the teacher build supportive relationships with the students?

5. How well do the teachers stimulate students' interest in the course material?

6. How well does the teacher use multiple strategies to explain course material to students?

7. How well does the teacher make connections among the concepts taught?

The study used independent variables of teacher race/ethnicity representing White, Black, or Latino, one year's experience, degree level, and gender. The age of the students, student race/ethnicity, gender, and students with free or reduced-fee lunch status were included. The results indicate that on measures 5 and 7 (above), students had a more favorable perception of the Latino and Black teachers than the White teachers. The students reported that the Latino and Black teachers were more explicit in their explanations than the White teachers. For measures of effective teaching, the students had a more favorable perception of the minority teachers than the White teachers. The

students perceived Black teachers, more than their White peers, to hold students to a high academic standard, and they supported their efforts. For the other four outcomes, there were no differences in student perception between Black and White teachers.

Results show that the students had more favorable perceptions of the Black and Latino teachers than the White teachers. The Black students had significantly positive perceptions of the Black teachers as indicated by the interaction terms between the Black students, and that the teachers were statistically significant and positive across all measures. Prior research found that Black students benefit from Black teachers Cherng and Halpin (2016). In the measures of effective teaching students, in the "Other and Asian American groups," Black teachers were statistically positive for being caring. Black students had a favorable perception of Black teachers, but Latino students did not have the same response for the Latino teachers. Asian American students had a favorable perception of Black teachers. In summary, all student groups have positive ratings for minority teachers, including White and Asian American students. Minority teachers can translate their experiences and identities to form a rapport with a student that does not share the same race or ethnicity.

Barriers to Becoming an Educator as a Black Male

Educational barriers. Black male teachers have not been recognized for their content knowledge, pedogeological abilities, and ability to teach all children (Jackson & Knight-Manuel, 2018). Black male teachers can also enter hostile work environments and encounter colleagues who will both covertly and overtly treat them as social outcasts (Goings, 2015). Bristol and Mentor (2018) posited that Black male teachers work in organizational environments where they have to prove their worth as educators.

A study was conducted by Bristol and Goings (2019) using a purposive sampling of 27 Black male teachers across 14 schools in Boston's urban school district. Bristol and Goings (2019) used a phenomenological inquiry to answer the research question regarding what Black male teachers' experiences were with the organizational dynamic of boundary heightening. Boundary heightening is defined as the minority group being aware of the differences when compared to the majority group.

The findings of the Bristol and Goings (2019) study show three responses to boundary heightening. The participants perceived their colleagues viewed them as either incompetent or overqualified, realizing the importance of lowering the boundaries between themselves and colleagues but only attempting to engage with colleagues and proactively responding to colleagues who they believed erected boundaries and created a hostile workplace environment. The participants stated that social interactions with White colleagues were challenging, and they thought their colleagues doubted their content knowledge or fit for the profession. One participant described a scenario in which he felt because he was Black and unable to speak Spanish, his colleagues viewed him as incompetent. The participant stated he felt doubted by the chair of his department, who was a Latina (Hispanic female). He stated he often volunteered to translate to prove himself. Another Black male participant stated he often popped in to say hello and attempted to interact with his colleagues to build relationships and lower boundary heightening. As a result, these perceptions made the Black male teachers feel like *the other* in the organization. One Black participant stated, "I think Black men always have to prove themselves. We are used to it; we do it" (Bristol & Goings, 2019, p. 58). The

participants stated they found themselves often *speaking truth to power*, which is speaking up about racial sentiments they had experienced with the leaders in charge.

Bell (2017) stated that employment discrimination is a reality for Black males. Bell (2017) conducted a study to understand how a Black male experienced an interview while seeking a teaching position when race and gender played a role in the interviewing process. A narrative study, using one participant graduate of a historically Black college and university (HBCU), who received a master's degree from a White institution with both schools located in North Carolina and who had less than 12 months of teaching experience. The participant, an aspiring middle-school English language arts teacher, attended eight job interviews, was declined by six, and offered one job. The interviews attended by the participant were conducted from August 16 to December 15, 2010. The results indicated that being prepared to teach does not always mean that a job to teach is guaranteed (Bell, 2017).

The perception of the participant in the Bell (2017) study was that the absence of the Black male as a teacher could be due to not having enough Black males in the teaching pool, but it may be analogous to biased hiring practices. The participant stated that during an interview, there was a question directed to him regarding where his family was from, and he quoted most interviewers as saying, "a Black male with a master's degree, will get a job quickly" (Bell, 2017, p. 1144). The participant had eight interviews with six White male principals and two Black male principals. In all of the schools where the participant interviews took place, no school had more than one Black male teacher, and some had no Black male teachers on staff. The results indicate, for this participant, that he was part of an interview quota for affirmative action for human resource purposes,

he was the last option, interviewing was harder than graduate school, and he had a sense of failure. The participant of this study ultimately was hired by one of the Black principals—at the school where he did his student teaching. Although this study had one participant, it captured the narrative experience of a Black man interviewing for a teaching position; he previously had no opportunity to get a job (Bell, 2017). Characteristically, Black males are absent as classroom teachers. Thomas-Lester (2010) stated that the teaching profession is brimming with White middle-class females.

Many Black men work in proximity to schools and classrooms, but they do not teach. A large number of Black graduates, especially from HBCUs, are failing to make passing scores on the standardized test for teacher certification (Cooper, 2000). An article written by Gursky (2002) stated that funding has been inadequate to minority-serving institutions, and funding linked to the measures of outcomes of all teacher education programs at colleges and universities with passing rates on teacher licensing exams.

Will (2019) stated that only 38% of Black candidates and 57% of Hispanic candidates ever pass the PRAXIS, compared to 75% of the White candidates. Only 46% of teacher candidates pass the test on their first attempt. The PRAXIS is a test to measure teacher candidates' knowledge and skills, and it is used for licensing and certification. The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ, 2019) estimates that about 8,600 candidates of color, each year, are unable to enter the classroom as teachers because of the licensing test barrier. The teaching profession is about 80% White, while the majority of the student population is nonwhite. NCTQ (2019) studied data from undergraduate elementary teacher-prep programs at 817 institutions in all 50 states and Washington, DC The data initially collected between 2014 and 2016 was part of the NCTQ's teacher-prep

preview, criticized by some institutions of higher education for its methodology. The review heavily relied upon documents, such as course catalogs and syllabi. NCTQ found that three out of every four programs did not cover the mathematics content necessary for elementary teachers to be proficient. Two out of every three programs did not require a single course aligned with any of the science topics found on the licensing tests (biology, chemistry, physics, and earth science); one-third of programs did not require any history or geography courses aligned with the needs of elementary teachers, and 10% of programs did not require any aligned coursework in English language arts (Will, 2019).

This disconnect between what teachers should know and how prepared teachers are could be driving the high failure rates on the PRAXIS. Will (2019) revealed institutions need to do a better job of actively supporting their teachers of color who are more likely to have received poor preparation in their K-12 schooling. Culturally, students of color are aware of the stereotype that African Americans do not do well on standardized tests, which creates test anxiety and can lead to poor performance (Sealy-Ruiz & Lewis, 2011).

Magaldi, Conway, and Trub (2018) stated that minority teachers receive little multicultural preparation or mentorship to meet the demands of teaching diverse student populations when starting in urban schools in low-income communities with significant minority and immigrant student populations. The curriculum, often designed to address the needs of White teachers, results in minority teacher candidates often feeling their needs are unmet and silenced. They feel misunderstood and are appalled by the lack of regard and adequate preparation in teaching courses (Magaldi et al., 2018). Minority teachers rely on their personal experiences to understand students' and families' struggles

without stereotyping or discriminating against students. It is important to note that although minority teachers bring a unique perspective to the classroom, they do not have a repertoire of knowledge to effectively address the needs of minority students due to their backgrounds (Magaldi et al., 2018).

An estimated 40% of all urban teachers leave the profession during their first 3 years of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2003), and attrition is intensified in high poverty urban schools. Generally, the turnover rate is 50 times higher in high poverty schools compared to their nonpoverty counterparts (Frankenberg, Taylor, & Merseth, 2010). Because of their hypervisibility, as well as negative perceptions of their teaching abilities, Black male teachers may enter hostile work environments and encounter colleagues that will overtly treat then as social outcasts (Goings, 2015).

Griffin and Tackie (2016) interviewed educators who spoke of the *invisible tax* on Black educators, including getting less support and being typecast into nonacademic roles. Many spoke of being isolated and only being included to discuss disciplinary enforcement by administrators and colleagues. Black educators were expected to serve as an unofficial case manager for struggling Black male students—even if they did not teach them. The Black male teachers wanted instructional support and opportunities to share their strategies for building relationships with Black children; they did not just want to serve as a disciplinarian, savior, or role model (Bristol & Goings, 2019).

Teacher preparation programs have obstacles that prevent Black males from successfully matriculating and entering the teaching profession. These include faculty/teacher bias about students of color, the feeling of isolation in courses and clinical experiences, and limited to no culturally responsive teaching practices in teacher

preparation programs (Green, 2009). Institutional and systemic racism failures in preservice programs contribute to some Black men blaming themselves for difficulties encountered when trying to complete their preservice teaching successfully (Maylor, 2018).

Minority teacher candidates often feel their needs are unmet, and they feel misunderstood and silenced by the lack of regard and adequate preparation (Amos, 2010). Majoritarian policies and narratives steer teaching curricula, and that curricula exclude minority teachers' experiences, deprive minority teachers of essential opportunities to contend with inequities, do not consider social injustice agendas, and the curricula do not help to develop the necessary support networks for minority teachers (Irizarry & Donaldson, 2012).

A grounded theory study was conducted by Magaldi et al. (2018) to explore the experiences of 108 novice minority teachers (with less than 3 years' experience) who worked in early childhood classes at the secondary level in an urban school district. All participants self-identified as being not the majority to include 22% Puerto Rican, 15% Dominican, 10% Trinidadian, 15% Jamaican, 8% Hattian, 20% Black American, 5% African, and 5% Biracial. Through focus groups, the teachers described a *wink and nod atmosphere* toward multicultural competency training in their teacher training programs and schools. One teacher described it as talking about cross-cultural training here and there but not being immersed in it, and they received little to no training. Others described multi-cultural training as lacking an experiential component or practical application to real-world scenarios (Magaldi et al., 2018).

Minority teachers face challenges because of limited mentorship opportunities to address personal and professional development needs (Magaldi et al., 2018). Minority teachers in the Magaldi et al. (2018) study often saw their teaching as a calling to take action to remedy social injustices that impact students in the school system. The minority teachers also described that families often used ineffective, inconsistent physical discipline with their students, which created significant challenges to the teachers' work. One teacher expressed telling a parent that her child said a curse word, and as soon as her last words were out, the parent slapped the child. Reminding a parent to be mindful of culture, and practicing cultural activities in the classroom may be viewed as abuse at the school (Magaldi et al., 2018). Families may be open about their disciplinary practices, which can put a teacher in an uncomfortable situation when understanding discipline in the context of culture and reporting abuse.

Minority teachers bring a unique perspective to the classroom, and there may be an expectation for the minority teacher to have a vast repertoire of knowledge of effectively addressing the needs of minority students simply because of their background (Green & Martin, 2018). Although cultural and ethnic backgrounds help minority teachers in getting close to students and families, research indicates that students' experiences in higher education can differ significantly according to the students' race (Green & Martin, 2018). Black students report more feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction, and they do not fare well as their White counterparts in terms of academic achievement, persistence, or psychosocial adjustment (Green & Martin, 2018).

Maylor (2018) conducted a study to understand the impact of teacher education programs on the teaching ambitions of preservice teachers attending East England's

University. The participants included 17 preservice teachers from the primary program and 19 preservice teachers from the secondary program, all seeking their postgraduate certificate in education. The voices of four self-identified Black male preservice teachers ranging in age from 25 through 40 stood out in the research data. The question asked of the participants' experiences that they encountered during their teaching placements. None of the Black male preservice teachers' participants reported positive practicum placement experiences.

The findings of the Maylor (2018) study report that the Black male participants had negative practicum experiences that they attributed to insufficient information provided by their university concerning the requirements of the teaching practicum school and the lack of support from their practicum mentor. One Black male participant expressed he would have liked the university to lay out the standards with specifics so that he knew what to expect to be able to formulate a plan regarding how to meet the standards. Instead, the student was being put on a cause-for-concern list because he was not meeting the criteria, but he was not given course standards before the experience. The lack of course standards not being received before the course was cause for concern for these four Black preservice teacher participants because the experience could lead to them failing the course. Another Black male participant voiced that he was a science teacher in another country for 3 years, and he had previous experience working with secondary school students. He thought he would enhance his career by doing the postgraduate certificate in education and follow a teaching career. The participant expressed that he wanted to improve his skills and share with that knowledge with his students so that they could love science like he loved science. Instead, the participant

stated that he found the school mentor constantly interrupting and pointing out his teaching weaknesses—weaknesses he said he never knew he had.

The interruptions made by the mentor during the student teaching experience were viewed as microaggressions. The microaggressions were made evident by the mentor's perception of Black male inadequateness, which was never questioned but accepted as fact. Maylor (2018) stated that the constant interruptions the participant encountered might have been the result of negative perception the UK government holds of overseas-trained teachers not having the same standards and teaching ability as UK-qualified teachers.

A third participant stated that, as a Black man, he was not able to develop in certain areas at the expected level because he was labeled as a cause for concern, regarding behavior management, saying he could not manage his class. All four Black male participants reported experiences of isolation when in teacher common areas and when sitting at a table, while everyone else was seated away from him in their groups. The fourth participant stated that sitting alone did not look good; it appeared as if he did not want to integrate or did not want to be a member of the team. Two participants stated that no one talked to them or included them in conversations. The participants did not feel welcomed in the teacher circles, and they blamed themselves for not feeling successful in their practicums. Maylor's (2018) findings suggest that structural and institutional racism remains entrenched in schools, and structural and institutional racism are barriers for Black male teachers' success.

Green and Martin (2018) conducted a comparative phenomenological study to ascertain the experiences and perceptions of four Black males enrolled in teacher

preparation programs to understand the barriers that prevent Black males from successfully matriculating and entering the teaching profession. Participant one was trained at a predominately Black institution (PBI), and the other three were taught at a predominately White institution (PWI). The interview questions regarding their perceptions and personal experiences in their teacher preparation programs included faculty interactions, peer influences on experiences, and challenges within their teacher-preparation program. The results of the study indicate three themes: faculty and teachers' bias of students of color, feelings of isolation, and limited, culturally responsive teaching practices in teacher preparation programs (Green & Martin, 2018).

The first theme found faculty and teacher bias regarding students of color. One participant from a PWI perceived he encountered prejudice in his methods course due to his being a Black male. He cited that his methods instructor at the institution had misconceptions regarding his academic ability, thinking he plagiarized one of his research papers. The student stated that the instructor approached him, saying his submitted work was under review. When the student asked why, the instructors' response was, "it was only about halfway through when you were applying the techniques to your personal life, that it dawned on me that you could not have stolen this from anybody" (Green & Martin, 2019, p. 31).

Another student at a PWI, when starting at his co-op teaching field-experience, realized there was a misconception as to his academic ability. This participant was an early childhood student teacher. He stated that when he showed up for the field experience, he got a look like he was a student teacher, but when the coop teacher saw him interact with the students, the staff opened up and began to accept him. The

participants expressed preconceptions when, in their methods class, instructors described

inner-city schools with their perceived stereotypes of Black neighborhoods and Black

culture. One participant described feeling as if the instructor was talking about teaching

in Afghanistan somewhere, and one of the schools that were being described to him by

the instructor was four blocks from the student teacher's home. The participants stated

they felt as though the instructors were giving them a negative connotation with

stereotyping the Black neighborhoods and Black culture where they were going to be

student teaching during their methods class, as the instructor negatively spoke of the

schools in those neighborhoods. The participants felt the negativity portrayed by the

instructor would affect the student teachers who were not of color and the way they

related to young Black students.

For the second theme of feelings of isolation, the participants voiced that feeling

isolated was a significant part of their experiences in their teacher-preparation programs.

As Black males, the participants stated that being outnumbered by women with very little

minority makeup made it difficult for women to listen to the Black student teachers when

it came to group work in class.

The participants also stated the women who were not White sat alone, and they

joined them to make a group. One participant said that he sat with a Dominican girl in his

class who always sat by herself, and she stated to him if he had not sat there with her, she

did not feel anyone ever would.

The student of the PBI expressed the opposite feeling. He stated he had feelings

of support from the older Black women in his courses. He thought of them as aunties

because they looked out for him. The participant stated that he felt like they were watching out for him and steering him in the right direction.

The third theme evolved from the research regarding limited, culturally responsive teaching. Three of the four participants described that when it came to classes for their specific area of teaching, the instructors were diverse. The participants stated that the instructors used nontraditional teaching methods to teach concepts, and they were not afraid to challenge themselves or the students. One participant at a PWI felt there was not enough emphasis on culture in his program, which he believed could have helped connect with the content in the students' lives. Although the sample size of this study was small and is not generalizable, the themes provide insight into the experiences of Black males in teacher preparation programs at PBI and PWI.

Cultural barriers. Teachers of color attending certification programs at PWIs feel their cultural experiences have not been demonstrated in the curriculum, and White faculty do not push their White peers to develop a perspective on the environmental factors that influence the outcomes for children of color (Brown, 2014). In a study conducted by Woodson and Pabon (2016), Black male preservice teachers believed their preparation programs intentionally place them in all-Black schools. One participant of the study perceived that the program administrators selected his clinical site because he could identify with the students. He believed his White female mentor teachers also made assumptions about whom he should teach, which was most often the challenging students. The participant stated his feeling was of himself being Black, so she must think I will be able to relate to Black kids. The results of the study were that the Black male preservice teachers had less flexibility in enacting diverse expressions from their racial,

gendered, and sexual identities because of expectations that were self-imposed for them to perform in university and clinical settings. The Black male preservice teachers also believed they had to act in a certain way to fit in at the university and in a clinical setting.

It is a stereotype that Black males have to act a certain way, which is referred to as the Black man's burden. This burden for Black men embodies the feeling and pressure of representing the entire Black race. Black men feel compelled to behave and interact with individuals from other races and ethnic groups in a particular way to better position how others perceive them and the Black race (Sue et al., 2009). Studies have shown that Black males feel that they have to assimilate into the dominant groups' culture, language, behaviors, and norms within the classroom, which results in detaching themselves from their own culture to be academically successful (Green & Martin, 2018; Sue et al., 2009).

Bristol and Goings (2019) used a phenomenological approach to explore the organizational dynamics of boundary heightening for 27 Black males in an urban school district. Boundary heightening was defined by Bristol and Goings (2019), as

A phenomenon which explores a worker's response when working in an organizational environment that: (a) exaggerates the differences in culture between the numerical majority and minority; (b) cultivates actions that continuously reinforce the status of the numerical minorities as "other" in the work-place; (c) carries out important decisions of the organization in private to exclude numerical minority workers from having inside organizational knowledge; and (d) requires numerical minorities to pass informal loyalty tests, whereby the results either make them a member of the dominant group or further exclude them. (p. 51)

The results indicate that the participants exhibited three responses to their boundary-heightening experiences: they perceived that their colleagues viewed them as either incompetent or overqualified, realizing the importance of lowering the boundaries between themselves and colleagues, but only superficially, by attempting to engage with colleagues and proactively respond to colleagues whom they believed erected boundaries and created hostile work environments.

The Bristol and Goings (2019) study explored how Black males' interactions with their colleagues in the school building made them feel like *other*. The Black male teachers expressed how they disengaged in conversations only to feel invisible because their colleagues had limited beliefs in their ability to be effective pedagogues. The feelings expressed by the Black male teachers added a psychological toll on the Black male as a teacher in the work environment and the likelihood of them remaining teachers.

Recruitment and retention. The lack of equality in education is a disadvantage that students should not have to fight alone. El-Mekki (2018) stated that, too often, students from K-12 do not have a diverse group of educators leading their classrooms and schools, which limits their perspective and world view.

The assumption that teaching is a female-dominated profession (Dogan, 2010), along with the prevailing factors of low salary, lack of support from peers/supervisors, inadequate teacher-preparation program practices, and the insistence on a Eurocentric teaching paradigm, devalues the Black culture and hinders Black males' preparation to teach, and if they still want to teach, they are forced to perform in a socially unjust way (Bell, 2017; Brown, 2014; Graham & Erwin, 2011). Researchers have concluded that along with the number of Black males who do not complete high school requirements,

the number of Black males entering the teaching profession is decreasing (Graham &

Erwin, 2011; Green & Martin, 2018; Pabon, Anderson, & Kharem, 2011).

D'Amico et al. (2017) conducted a study to examine the role of race in the teacher

hiring process in one of the largest suburban school districts in the nation, serving more

than 180,000 students for the academic year 2012-2013. The study used teacher applicant

data and hiring decision data for the spring of 2012 of 11,980 applicants for 2,380 open

teaching positions in the district. Black candidates made up 13% of the prospective

applicants. However, Black teachers represented only 6% of those offered positions in the

district. More than a quarter of the students in this district qualified for free or reduced-

fee lunch programs, 15% of students used English as a second language, and 15%

received special education services. Approximately 40% of the district's student

population was White; African Americans made up 10% of participants, and Hispanic

and Asians each made up 20% of the student population. D'Amico et al. (2017) showed

that the Black candidates were less likely than their White counterparts to receive a job

offer as a teacher. The patterns surrounding Black teachers and the salary offer rate for

these teachers, were disproportionately less than the rate at which they applied,

suggesting other contributing factors, such as discrimination. The Black male candidates

in the study rarely declined offers of employment. Still, when taking into consideration if

the Black applicants were as qualified as the White candidates, the Black candidates were

23% more likely to have advanced degrees and 2 years of district school experiences.

Identifying as Black was negatively associated with receiving a job offer from the

district, and the positions were offered at a lower rate than the White candidates' offers.

Black candidates were more likely to be hired by Black principals than White principals.

The Black teachers were also more likely to be employed in schools with large populations of minority children or children in poverty. The D'Amica et al. (2017) study shows a demonstration of inequitable hiring practices and systemic racial biases that inform student learning experiences in the classroom.

Chapter Summary

The review of the literature suggests there is a gap relating to the educational career of Black male teachers in K-12. Black males throughout the research have been continuously depicted as a low commodity as a result of economic, educational, social, and cultural factors. Each factor directly impacts their ability to remain successful, overcome obstacles, and persist toward career growth. Most of the research states that Black male teachers face boundary heightening through not being recognized for their knowledge, pedogeological abilities, and ability to teach all children (Jackson & Knight-Manuel, 2018). Black male teachers may enter hostile work environments and encounter colleagues who will both covertly and overtly treated them as social outcasts (Goings, 2015). Black male teachers work in organizational settings where they have to prove their worth as educators (Bristol & Mentor, 2018). The research also depicts the Black male as receiving little multicultural preparation or mentorship to meet the demands of teaching diverse student populations (Bristol & Mentor, 2018). The research additionally shows that most teaching curricula are often designed to address the needs of White teachers, and minority teacher candidates often feel their needs are unmet, they are silenced, they are misunderstood, and they are appalled by the lack of regard and lack of adequate preparation in teaching courses (Woodson & Pabon, 2016). The research speaks of an *invisible tax* on Black educators, including getting less support and being typecast into

nonacademic roles, along with Black male teachers feeling isolated and only being included to discuss disciplinary enforcement by administrators and colleagues (Griffin & Tackie, 2016). This chapter depicted the leader's role in transformational leadership, the theoretical framework that guided this study in creating supporting environments, developing relationships with the community and students the teachers serve, hiring a diverse staff to serve the student populations, and creating an environment conducive to the success of Black male teachers.

This chapter provided perspectives from Black males who expressed their experiences and feelings relating to their educational achievement, employment experiences, experiences in higher education, and peer experiences as being the minority in the teaching profession as a Black male. Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive explanation of the study's research methodology.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction

There is a lack of male minority teachers in public elementary and high schools in the United States. Studies have shown the continued lack of progress to improve the Black male presence in the classroom as teachers. Black males are in demand in U.S. public schools as a greater focus is placed on the need to diversify the historically White, female-dominated profession (Lewis & Toldson, 2013). There is an underrepresentation of teachers of color in frequent studies. The barriers include recruitment and retention, introducing teaching as a career choice in early education, and cultural barriers. The social and cultural relevance of the Black male as a teacher has been addressed with few successes to integrate the teaching profession. Black male teachers make up only 2% of the public school teacher workforce in the United States. According to the New York State Department of Education Educator Diversity Report (2019), New York State's student population has become increasingly diverse. With the population of students of color at 50%, the racial and ethnic composition of the teacher workforce has remained constant, with 170,000 of New York' State's teachers being White, Latino, or Black combined. The number of Latino teachers increasing from 13,877 in 2011-12 to 16,078 in 2017-18. In New York State, one teacher of color was available for every 129 students of color (NYSED, 2019). In the 2016-17 academic year, more than 200 public school districts did not employ a single teacher of color. Upstate, Central, and Western New York experienced declines in the population of teachers of color for the 2018-19

academic year. Overwhelmingly, 91% of school district leaders outside of New York City identify as White (NYSED, 2019).

Engaging in research, finding the appropriate participant population, and interviewing participants will add to the body of literature informing the underrepresentation of Black male teachers in K-12 employed in New York State school districts. Demonstrating a more diverse educator workforce is a need associated with educational benefits for students of color and for the school environments in which Black male educators are employed (NYSED, 2019). Black male teachers can make an impact on young Black scholars using culturally relevant teaching, role modeling, and racial congruence to teach and encourage Black male students to be successful scholars (NYSED, 2019).

This study used a phenomenological approach. Phillips-Pula, Strunk, and Pickler (2011) detailed the process of phenomenological research as a qualitative research method used to describe how human beings experience a particular phenomenon. Phenomenology was made accessible by Edmund Husserl (1970) who is considered to be the father of modern phenomenology and the most influential philosopher of the 20th century. Husserl's (1970) focus was on meanings and identifying the essence or central theme of experience as a way of furthering knowledge. Phenomenology allows the researcher to move beyond reasonable bounds to identify both the conscious and unconscious perceptions, perspectives, understandings, and feelings of those people who have experienced or lived a phenomenon or situation of interest (Gliner, Morgan, & Leech, 2016, Phillips-Pula et al., 2011). This method of study is descriptive; human experiences are conceptualized to understand the essence of the "how" and the "what" of

an experience (Wertz et al., 2011). Paul Colaizzi, a phenomenologist, largely influenced by Husserl's (1970) descriptive phenomenology, asserted that all research occurs through the eyes of the study participants, through their dialogue, and by asking the right questions to obtain an accurate description of the experience from the study participants (Wirihana et al., 2018).

This study used a descriptive phenomenological methodology to explore Black male teachers' experiences using an intentional analysis by reflecting on and gaining insight into the underrepresentation of Black males in K-12 education. The study sought to find out from Black male teachers, who had at least 1 school year of teaching experience, how they earned their teaching certificates or degrees, and how they described the how and the what of the phenomenon of the underrepresentation of Black males in K-12 education. This approach was used to gain insight into the participants' lived experiences regarding the primary research questions, using the theoretical framework guiding the study of the Black male's experiences and feelings. The following leading research questions guided this study:

1. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the factors that led them to enter the teaching profession?

2. How do Black male teachers describe the barriers they encountered during the completion of their preservice certificates or degrees?

3. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the experiences they had within their careers that contributed to them remaining in the classroom and continuing to teach?

The nature of this study required a descriptive qualitative method because the study aimed to explore Black male teachers' experiences in earning a teaching certificate or degree, in their existing working environment, and in what context they experienced the phenomenon as it occurred (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). The qualitative design allowed for a focus on the wholeness of the experience and its essence or truth, returning to the experience to obtain complete descriptions for accurately depicting the essence of the experience (Phillips-Pula et al., 2011). According to Wertz et al. (2011), engaging phenomenology investigates participants' lived experiences, uses their own words to describe the experience, and uses bracketing to evaluate the experience by the responses given. Husserl (1970) developed phenomenology as a philosophical method to study consciousness. Husserl (1970) used two procedures for the study of lived experience: epoché of the natural sciences, which puts aside other knowledge of the topic under investigation; and epoché of the natural attitude, from which all propositional beliefs are formed, and it is upon what we suspend the assumption of the world's existence. Husserl (1970) used descriptive phenomenology as a philosophical method for investigating consciousness because humans are different from material nature and require methods other than physical sciences to answer scientific questions. The use of the epoché is to inform something: to illuminate the phenomenon as an essential structure (Englander, 2016). The scientific methods of phenomenology include intentional analysis and eidetic analysis. The intentional analysis is the procedure of reflecting on, gaining insight into, and describing the how and the what of an experience. Intentional analysis inspires the quality of the consciousness to go beyond itself, also called phenomenological reflection. Eidetic analysis is a method by which the researcher moves from the consciousness of the

individual and concrete objects to the realm of pure essences (Wertz et al., 2011). In the

eidetic analysis, the researcher collects descriptions from the participants who have lived

experiences relevant to the topic under investigation. The researcher then reflects on the

persons' emotionality, social relations, and language, clarifying processes, meanings, and

general eidetic structures for analysis. To do this, the researcher requires an interview

protocol that allows the researcher to align the interviews with the study's research

questions to strengthen the quality of the data obtained (Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

Marshall and Rossman (2016) stated that phenomenological interviewing is a specific

type of in-depth interviewing grounded in the study of lived experiences and the ways

those experiences are understood to develop a world view. This type of interviewing

allows for the described meaning of a concept or phenomenon that several individuals

share. The interview questions and prompts are spelled out in Appendix A. The

advantage to phenomenological interviewing is that it permits an explicit focus on lived

experiences that have meaning for individuals that guides their actions and interactions.

Colaizzi (1978) developed a seven-step method of data analysis to discover the

fundamental structures of a phenomenon and to provide the researcher with precise,

logical, and sequential steps to increase the reliability and dependability of the results

obtained (Wirihana et al., 2018). Phenomenological research methods collect concrete,

life-word examples of psychological phenomena, and the methods analyze the processes,

meanings, and structures (Wertz, 2010) of phenomena. The goal for the researcher is to

describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given context

but remaining true to the facts. Wertz et al. (2011) stated that researchers bracket out their

own experience, putting aside fundamental scientific knowledge to reflect on the essence

of the phenomenon. This allows the researcher to reflect on the concrete examples of the phenomenon under investigation and not take a position regarding the existence of the researcher's experience, and it allows for all convolutions and intricacies of psychological life to come into view without doubt or disbelief, a natural science. The goal is to accurately describe the phenomena of the data, as seen through the eyes of the participant by asking the right questions to elicit an accurate description of the experience from the study participants (Phillips-Pula et al., 2011).

Research Context

New York State comprised 732 districts and employed 212,296 public school teachers to teach 2.6 million public school students, who were enrolled as of June 2017. NYSED (2019) states that since the 2011-12 school year, over 50% of the students enrolled in New York State schools have been students of color. The student population has become more diverse, but the racial and ethnic composition of the teacher workforce has remained constant, with 80% of New York teachers being White, and with Latino and Black educators being underrepresented. The number of Black teachers, male and female, has remained relatively stable at 18,000. In New York State, the districts with the top10 highest enrollments of students of color are also the districts with the highest number of teachers of color, which are schools mainly concentrated in the Big Five City School Districts. Students of color, for purposes of this diversity survey, are defined as individuals who identify as American Indian, Alaska Natives, Asian, Black, African American, Hispanic, Latino/a, and or Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander. The Big Five Cities are defined as schools in New York State with more than 125,000 students in the school district, the education function is part of the city government, and the school

funding is part of the municipal budget. The Big Five City School Districts are Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers, and New York City. In the 2016-17 academic school year, no region or city in New York State employed a teacher of color majority. New York City had the highest percentage of teachers of color at 42%, Yonkers had 28%, Rochester had 22%, Buffalo had 14%, and Syracuse, despite having the sixth highest enrollment of students of color, is not one of the top employers of teachers of color with 10% teachers of color.

Research Participants

The researcher conducted a convenience sample and utilized snowball sampling to select a total of five participants for the study. According to Gliner et al. (2017), convenience sampling means the participants are chosen based on convenience or availability rather than being selected beforehand. The participants were selected as being representative of New York State Black, male teachers, they had to have graduated from a baccalaureate or master's teaching program, and they had to have been teaching for at least 1 school year. Participant selection was generated by word of mouth and with a solicitation on social media outlets such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher, and snowball sampling is a modification of convenience sampling, asking one participant to recommend others for interviewing. Snowballing is used when the participants of interest are from a population that is rare or at least whose members are unknown to the researcher. Qualitative studies aim for smaller sample sizes to get in-depth answers and to create a relationship with the

participants. Qualitative sample sizes should be large enough to obtain enough data to sufficiently describe the phenomenon of interest and address the research questions. The goal of qualitative researchers should be the attainment of saturation. Saturation occurs when adding more participants to the study does not result in additional perspectives or information. The use of saturation is recommended for achieving an appropriate sample size in qualitative studies (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

The researcher obtained approval from the St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board (IRB, Appendix B). The school districts of participants were kept anonymous. The researcher recruited the participants throughout New York State to conduct the study. Participation was voluntary, and the participants were reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Informed consent (Appendix C) was obtained from the participants before the study began. The rationale for selecting this group of participants was solely based on race, educational background, job title, and gender for the participants to recall their experiences of being Black males with the chosen career path as K-12 teachers.

The selection of participants occurred in two phases. Phase 1 was to identify Black male teachers in the school districts closest to the researcher through the request of the district educators who were identified by St. John Fisher alumni from the Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) program and who were professional colleagues of the researcher. Phase 2 consisted of the researcher contacting the possible candidates through social media and personal contacts to see if they met the criteria of (a) completing a teaching degree, (b) being employed at for at least 1 school year before the study commenced, (c) identifying as a Black male, and (d) being certified to teach. Telephone inquiry was also

used to contact the participants identified by personal contacts and peers to ask for participation in this study and to set up interview times, using the Zoom platform. Confidentiality was explained to all participants to include:

- All interviews were kept confidential, they were not held on worksites, and they were held after work hours.

- The interview information would not be shared with the participants' employers/past alma maters.

- Study codes would be used on the data collection instruments in place of identifying information to protect the participants' responses and data, when data documents were stored, transcribed, or out in the open, and the documents would be electronically password protected.

- Data would be securely stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office for 3 years after the study had been published, and all data would be destroyed and shredded at that time, along with the specific role of the researcher during the entire study.

The researcher explained the purpose of the study as well as the researcher's interest in understanding Black males' lived experiences of becoming a teacher, obtaining a job, the career adversities they encountered, and why they chose to remain in the teaching profession.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

Qualitative studies use various methods to gather data such as interviews, direct observation, focus groups, audiotapes, questionnaires, and written experiences (Gliner et al., 2017). Because there needs to be a relationship between the research questions and

the procedures of data collection, the researcher used phenomenological interviewing techniques to describe the meaning of the questions and to collect data from the participants. All sessions were conducted with audio recordings, and the most traditional method of survey research was used with written documentation of the electronic, semi-structured interviews. The researcher explained the interviews would be conducted when the participants were available and at a mutually acceptable time using Zoom.

The questions were carefully constructed for the interview process using the research question to guide the interview questions. The interview questions were short, open-ended, and focused on the experience of being a Black male choosing the career path as a K-12 teacher. The researcher explained to the participants that all interviews were confidential, and they did not have to answer any questions if they did not want to respond. The participants were also informed that the interview data would be electronically password-protected, and any written data would be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office.

For interviewing, open-ended questions do not provide choices for the participants to select; they must formulate an answer their own words and allow the researcher to probe deeper to encourage the expansion of the responses (Gliner et al., 2017). The researcher constructed questions for the interview process based on past research and the suggestions of researchers of areas to study further. The questions and prompts are shown in Appendix A.

The open-ended questions allowed the participants to answer in their own words and enabled the researcher the flexibility to probe more deeply and encourage the expansion of the participants' responses. Marshall and Rossman (2016) stated that

validity in qualitative research could be checked by a technique known as member checking. This technique involves testing the initial results with the participants to see if they still ring true. After the research was interpreted and condensed, the researcher had the participants review and recognize the results as authentic, and, at this stage, they were able to refine the researcher's understanding of his data interpretation. Once the data reached saturation, which is the point in the research process when no new information is discovered in the data analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2016), this redundancy signaled to the researchers that data collection could be ceased, and validity had been reached. As the responses became more consistent across the participants, the data became more reliable. Qualitative research is about discussion, about delving into topics in-depth and getting beneath the surface (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Reliability is a concept that refers to producing consistent results time after time. The researcher determined the data reliability and validity once the common themes of the participants' responses were determined.

Procedure for Data Collection and Analysis

Analysis of the data was consistent with Colaizzi's (1978) data analysis method. Wirihana et al. (2018) stated that this method provides researchers with precise, logical, and sequential steps that can be used on phenomenological research, and it increases the reliability and dependability of the results obtained. The method requires the participants to validate the findings to ensure they are accurate and credible. The qualitative data analysis process involves writing, coding, and the identification of themes. Groenewald (2004) stated that the researcher should allow for the essence to emerge from the participants' experiences through the interchange of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest.

The data analysis took place using Colaizzi's (1978) method of data analysis. During Step 1, the data was listened to by the researcher and transcribed using a service, DeScript, read, and reread. In Step 2, the transcripts were developed from the interviews to allow the researcher to become intimate with the data. Bracketing was used to visualize and identify the personal experiences using descriptive coding methods to compare the data for similarities and differences. Descriptive coding is intended to be a starting point to provide the researcher with codes or themes for further investigation (Saldaña, 2016). The credibility of the interviews was performed by checking the accuracy of the data with the participants and conducting follow-up interviews, listening to audio recordings multiple times, and making sure the data collected aligned with the research questions. Dependability was determined by documenting the procedures carefully to be sure the data collection procedures were followed closely with every participant. The remaining data was organized, with the researcher keeping notes while in the field to be able to confirm the data collection and the analysis were consistent with the research questions.

Step 3 used pattern coding. Pattern coding, according to Saldaña (2016), is useful as a secondary coding process to help the researcher to identify major themes, examine explanations in the data, and identify patterns of human relationships. Data from Step 1 was extracted to make significant statements about the phenomenon; then the data were developed into patterns and themes. In Step 4, the interviews allowed for the organization of substantial statements into themes that were relevant to the phenomenon. In Step 5, the themes were used to develop a synthesized description, or the essence, of the phenomenon to formulate meanings from significant statements.

Finally, during Step 6, code weaving was used. Saldaña (2016) stated that the most crucial outcomes of qualitative data analysis are to understand how the individual components of the study weave together, aggregating formulated meanings into theme clusters and themes. In this stage, the goal was to identify significant themes in the study and to search for themes that addressed the research questions during the interview process, asking interview questions relating to the participants' thoughts and feelings about the underrepresentation of Black males as teachers in the K-12 educational system, while subsequently generating a description of the fundamental structure of the phenomenon. And, last, Step 7 involved validating the findings of the study through the participants' feedback to complete the analysis (Wirihana et al., 2018).

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of this qualitative phenomenological methodology study to expand on the absence of Black men in K-12 education and to expand on becoming teachers, obtaining jobs in the field of education, and why they remained within the K-12 teaching profession. The qualitative methodology discussed was a practical method of selection to perform an investigation of the lived experiences of Black male teachers in New York. The researcher used an intentional analysis in conducting the interviews in the spring of 2020. Intentional analysis is defined by Wertz et al. (2011) as a procedure of reflecting on, gaining insight into, and describing the how and the what of the experience to help guide the study to gain an understanding of the participants' lived experiences that relates to being one of the few Black men in K-12 education.

Phenomenology investigates a person's ways of being in the real world by descriptively elaborating on the structures of the self or ego and ways of going through the human experience. It aims to clarify all that human beings have lived through in a particular kind of phenomenon, including the embodied, practical, emotional, social, and linguistic aspects of the human experience. The new data obtained will help inform current practice by realizing Black male teachers have a role-model effect, where Black male students will be able to identify with when seeing Black men in professional roles. Black male teachers can also undermine the stereotype of Black male students being underperformers by demonstrating that they are successful, and so can Black male students be equally as capable.

Using the phenomenological analysis steps in the spring of 2020, the researcher bracketed and performed phenomenological reduction, delineated the units of meaning, clustered the units of meaning to form themes, and summarized each interview for a sense of the whole. Systematic sorting of the descriptive data into meaningful units, reflecting on the psychological meaning of each unit, and clarifying the psychological structure of the phenomenon studied were performed. The data monitoring included developing an audit trail that consisted of a visual representation of the process for data interpretations, where significant themes and findings were gathered from the data collected in a reflexive journal that documented each step. The intent was to understand the phenomenon in the participants' terms by describing a human experience as it was acknowledged by the participant, themselves, without added biases or input from others to enhance the knowledge and to help bring forth the unknown of the phenomenon.

The following chapter of this study, Chapter 4, provides the results of this study, and discussion and interpretation of the findings using Colaizzi's (1978) method of data analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

Black males, in particular, are vastly underrepresented, as only 2% of the teacher workforce comprises Black men as public school teachers (NCES, 2016). Therefore, this problem requires this type of study to explore the experiences, insight, education, and challenges to diversifying the teaching population. The scope of this qualitative research examined the opinions of Black male educators relating to the difficulties in expanding the Black male teaching population. According to Walker et al. (2019), if students of color experience a Black male teacher, the likelihood of their academic success increases. That is why supporting Black males in K-12 education is essential.

Research Questions

The purpose of this descriptive phenomenological study was to examine the insight, education, and challenges of Black males in K-12 classrooms by answering the research questions

1. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the factors that led them to enter the teaching profession?

2. How do Black male teachers describe the barriers they encountered during the completion of their preservice certificates or degrees?

3. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the experiences within their careers that contributed to them remaining in the classroom and continuing to teach?

As shown in Table 4.1, qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with five Black male teachers in New York State, who, at the time of their interviews, were teaching in Grades K-12.

Table 4.1

Research Questions Guiding the Study

Research Question	Interview Question	Transformational Leadership Theory
What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the factors that led them to enter the teaching profession?	What attracted you to the teaching profession?	Inspirational Motivation
How do Black male teachers describe the barriers they encountered during the completion of their preservice certificates or degrees?	Describe the challenges you faced in your education program.	Individualized Consideration
	How did you deal with the challenges to finish the program?	Individualized Consideration
What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the experiences they had within their careers that contributed to them remaining in the classroom and continuing to teach?	In your teaching career, can you give an example of a way you have impacted a Black male student in the classroom?	Idealized Influence
	Why do you stay in the teaching profession?	Intellectual Stimulation

This chapter provides an overview of the data analysis and findings and organizes them according to the themes that emerged from the data. The research findings presented in this chapter are guided by transformational leadership theory.

Data Analysis and Findings

For this descriptive study, it was ideal to use a phenomenological design to describe how human beings experience a particular phenomenon. Wertz et al. (2011) stated that humans conceptualize experiences to understand the essence of the how and the what of an experience. This method allowed the researcher to effectively gather, discern, and articulate each participant's experiences, attitudes, and feelings as they

pertained to the challenges, insight, and education of diversifying the teaching workforce by adding more Black males.

The interviews were transcribed using the web-based application Descript. Once the transcriptions were completed, the recorded interviews were listened to while the researcher read each transcription multiple times to check for the accuracy of the transcriptions and to become engrossed in the participants' lived experience of the phenomenon. The researcher listened to each of the participants' experiences and began to identify recurring meaning statements and perceptions. The researcher then sent the participants, via email, their interview transcripts for them to read over, make any corrections, and add more data, as they felt necessary, to answer the interview questions asked. The researcher also, at this step, reinterviewed two of the participants via Zoom to ask follow-up questions because the transcripts revealed the interview question responses required more detail to get to the essence of the phenomenon. An example of the meaning statements listed are shown in Table 4.2.

Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step method of data analysis was employed to discover the underlying structures of a person's experience. Colaizzi (1978) asserted that all research occur through the eyes of the study participants' dialogue, and by the researcher asking the right questions, he or she obtains an accurate description of the experiences from the study participants (Wirihana et al., 2018). Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step method provides the researcher with precise, logical, and sequential steps that can be used to increase the reliability and dependability of the results obtained. It requires the participants to validate the findings and to ensure they are accurate and credible. Colaizzi

(1978) asserted that the pursuit of the meaning and essence of a phenomenon should be through a deep and thorough exploration of the meaning.

Table 4.2

Meaning Statements

Why teach?	Challenges/ Dealing with Challenges	Staying in the Profession/Impact	Step 3 Pattern Coding/Meaning
It was always in me to teach	I didn't face any barriers.	Reaching out to children I know.	It found me.
Team leader at Boys and Girls Club	I noticed I was the only Black male.	Relationships you have with students.	It was always in me to teach.
I was pushed to go into teaching by colleagues.	We had diversity discussions during class.	We were underrepresented.	I was pushed to teach.
It kind of fell into my lap.	Professors were conscious of talks.	Students responding to you.	It fell into my lap.
	The class looked to me for insight.	Knowing students from the community.	I wanted to work with kids.

In the first step of the data analysis, the researcher examined each participants' transcripts, listened to the audio recordings of each interview, read and reread the written transcripts, and extracted meaning statements that pertained to the experiences of the phenomenon. In Step 2, the researcher ensured each statement was contextualized by attaching a participant number (preserving anonymity) and adding it to the column labeled for each research question and correlating interview question. In Step 2 of Colaizzi's (1978) method, to organize the data analysis and coding process, an electronic chart was created where applicable meaning statements were represented in columns that were labeled to identify each interview question that associated with the meaning statements. The participants' 103 meaning statements, which were directly related to an experience, were displayed underneath the columns in a flow chart. In Step 3, to attribute meaning to the significant statements is known as the formulation of meanings. These

meanings resulted in five formulated meanings (a) connection through familiarity,

(b) return on investment, (c) motivational influences, (d) challenges in education, and (e)

different colleges create different experiences. In Step 4, the significant statements with

similar terms and formulated meanings were grouped to form theme clusters. The related

themes were then combined to establish four theme clusters (a) idealized influence,

(b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized

consideration. The related thematic clusters were then aggregated together to establish

themes. No new themes emerged when the data and themes reached saturation, as shown

in Table 4.2. The emerged themes covered what the participants perceived as leading

them into teaching, the barriers they encountered during the completion of their

preservice programs, and their perceptions of the experiences within their careers that

kept them in the teaching profession. The participants discussed how young Black male

students viewed them, what motivated them to become teachers, what their perceptions

were of the challenges they faced during their preservice programs, and why they stayed

in the teaching profession.

Colaizzi (1978) emphasized that it is essential to validate the themes against the

original transcripts. The validation of the themes for this study was achieved by the

researcher rereading the transcripts to ensure the themes' authenticity. The researcher

reflected on the themes and their meanings by asking a second doctoral student to assess

the process and to ensure the themes were authentic. The second doctoral student

reviewed and asked the researcher questions regarding the data method used, the data

analysis procedures, and whether the findings accurately represented the data.

In Step 5, the researcher integrated all the findings to get an exhaustive description of the phenomenon by reexamining the transcripts, the thematic clusters, and the themes. The researcher then reflected on and analyzed the descriptions of the phenomenon being investigated to discover the essential structure of the phenomenon.

Step 6 was the creation of a description of the underlying structure of the phenomenon by removing any unnecessary or misappropriated descriptions. After removing the irrelevant information, the primary structure of the phenomenon was revealed—the revelation linked to the theory used to guide this study of transformational leadership. The resulting themes are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Integrating Thematic Clusters Into Themes

Formulated Meanings	Thematic Clusters	Themes
Career motivation	Motivational influences	Inspirational motivation
Absence of diversity	Challenges in education	Individualized consideration
Differing educational experiences	Different places created different experiences	Individualized consideration
Rewards of teaching	Return on investment	Intellectual stimulation
Relationships make the experience	Connection through familiarity	Idealized influence

The researcher used intentional analysis to gain insight regarding the challenges of the Black male participants being a part of diversifying K-12 education; regarding the barriers to the Black male participants earning a teaching degree, with describing the rewards of their teaching experience or lack thereof; and describing the how and the what of the phenomenon. Using this approach helped the researcher to gain insight into the participants' lived experiences around the primary research questions and the theoretical framework that guided this study.

Reading and rereading each interview response assisted the researcher in identifying the global sense of the phenomenon, while recurring themes and patterns were forming. The researcher engaged in the phenomenological process of bracketing, or epoché, by halting judgments to focus only on the participants' experiences. The use of the epoché was to inform something: to illuminate the phenomenon as an essential structure (Englander, 2016). To accomplish the suspension of judgment, an audio-reflexive journal and a column listing in an Excel spreadsheet were kept by the researcher to record personal reactions and thoughts, yielding intentional separation., while also ensuring the participants' statements remained the focus of the analysis. For example, the researcher's profession as a nursing instructor, teaching the socioeconomically disadvantaged adult student, had an experience of not being supported with curriculum changes. One of the participants mentioned not feeling supported in their educational endeavors with experiences during their curriculum field experiences. During the data analysis, the researcher bracketed out her experiences by writing down critical thoughts on the spreadsheet so as to not influence the participants' responses to the interview questions asked.

Research Question 1

What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the factors that led them to enter the teaching profession?

After analyzing the data, the formulated meaning was *career motivation*, the recurring thematic cluster conveyed *motivational influences*, and the theme expressed *inspirational motivation*. The purpose of this question was to gain a deeper understanding and insight as to why these Black men chose teaching as a career. The findings indicate

that the participants chose education careers for different reasons, which included a combination of the desire to give back to the community, to be positive role models, because high school teachers and counselors had drawn them to the profession, and they had had exposure to teaching in a previous nonteaching job.

Four of the five participants knew they wanted to work with children in some form as a career choice. One participant stated that his mother was a pillar of the local community center, as a recreational aide, where he grew up and where he worked as he had gotten older. The participants expressed experiences in life that led them to choose teaching as a career choice. This theme supports Lewis (2006), who found that the top three reasons for Black males' desire to teach were to help young people, to obtain a job, and to contribute to humanity. This was also true of this study's participants as they expressed their reasons to become a teacher.

Bridges (2011) stated that Black male teachers relate to addressing the educational inequality and lower educational attainment experienced by Black children, but they specifically relate to Black boys. The responses of the participants support the literature, also, that Black boys not seeing any Black male teachers during their academic years in school, grow up thinking that being a teacher is not a career option, and they go through school not knowing they, too, can attend college to become a teacher. The literature that accentuates low-income Black students who have at least one Black teacher in elementary school are significantly more likely to graduate high school and consider attending college (Stanley, 2017). If a student of color experiences a Black teacher, the likelihood of academic success increases (Walker et al., 2019), and this supports why seeing Black males in K-12 education is favored.

The participants had varying reasons for entering the teaching profession: being motivated by high school teachers and counselors, by being motivated by a parent, prior career experiences with children, and the desire to work with children. Each participant, in some way, had previous career experiences working with children, demonstrating different levels of motivation for entering the teaching profession. Two of the five participants eagerly stated they had job experiences before attending college, working with children, that led them to teaching as a career. Toussaint (2019) stated the lack of the Black male presence in the classroom decreases the opportunity for Black students to see someone who looks like them, and who is serving as a role model. Studies have shown that having a race and gender match between student and teacher can help reverse some of the challenges Black male students face, such as higher dropout and suspension rates, coupled with the lower likelihood of attending college (Toussaint, 2019).

Some of the responses to the reasons the participants entered the teaching profession follow. P1 stated: "It kind of found me, but I guess it was always in me . . . . I worked at the Boys and Girls Club as a mentor." P2 reflected: "It kind of fell in my lap. I was stagnant and not really growing. I saw an ad in the paper for Metropolitan College to become a teacher. I said, 'why not.'" P3 remembered that "I think my relationships with the teachers and guidance counselors in high school. Really just knowing I wanted to work with kids all along or young adults." P4 explained that "It started in the classroom in high school where my teacher would pull me and have me teach students within the classroom myself. And then I used to tutor my cousins back home," and P5 pointed out that "I was a daycare provider for 3 years. I have always had a thing for working with

people, mainly children. I want to make a difference in children that may not get that same opportunity of higher education."

Research Question 2

How do Black male teachers describe the barriers they encountered during the completion of their preservice certificates or degrees?

The interview questions generated two formulated meanings: *the absence of diversity* and *different educational experiences*. The interview questions also generated two thematic clusters: *challenges in education* and *different place creates different experiences*, and the theme of *individualized consideration*. The participants had varying experiences. Three of the five felt supported in the education program they were attending. All five participants thought they were underrepresented in the classroom as Black males or as a person of color. Three participants expressed being one of the few Black males in class. The findings yielded that all the participants felt they were supported in their preservice programs and their field experiences. Two participants expressed challenges with the academic rigor of the education curriculum, and they said the tests were difficult to pass. These concerns, as stated by the participants, led to a lack of ease with passing the certification exam. One participant voiced the feeling of not being prepared to teach in an urban setting after completing the preservice programs.

P1 stated, "My field experience was great." Participant 3 stated, "I was supported in my education," and Participant 5 stated, "I felt supported in the classroom." The sentiments of the participants in this study indicate that they enjoyed teaching, and they were supported during their preservice programs.

Diversity in the teaching workforce lacks *idealized consideration* when 2% of the teacher workforce is made up of Black males, and there is a need for more diversity in the teaching workforce, which has been proven by this research question. Three of the five participants indicated seeing very few, not more than one or two, other Black males in their preservice classes. All the participants felt supported in their preservice programs, contrary to the literature findings. However, three participants voiced that in their preservice programs, the testing language was hard for them to understand, and the curriculum was based on White children's learning as opposed to Black children's learning with which they were tasked when teaching during their required field experiences. Two of the participants stated they felt being a Black male in a teaching position brought value to the program curriculum because of their gender and race. The need for Black men in education is in high demand.

Absence of diversity. The literature indicates that Black males are viewed as a high-risk population to educate (Bryson, 2017). Culturally, less than 20% of teachers are racial/ethnic minorities (Mawhinney et al., 2012). Bryson (2017) posited that in teaching-preparation programs, there is an inability to recruit males of color, a failure to meet the needs of teacher candidates of color, and a failure to prepare teacher candidates, generally, to meet the educational, social, and cultural needs of students of color in K-12 schools.

Two of the participants who attended HBCUs felt there were plenty of Black male students in their preservice programs. The reason stated by the participants was that they were recruited into the teaching program. P3 stated, "Extra effort was put into graduating the Black males, we were underrepresented." The literature supports this idea of

recruiting Black males in New York State's Equity Plan (NYSED, 2015), which was developed to ensure students have equal learning opportunities in the presence of effective teachers and principals. This plan includes having teachers who represent the student demographics for equitable educational opportunities. These two participants indicated during their interviews that they were a part of the Call Me MISTER (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role models) Program. Although not listed in the literature, the Call Me MISTER (CMM) program's goal is for the recruitment and retention of Black males as teachers. The CMM program was founded in 2000 at Clemson University. The program strives to increase the pool of available teachers from a more diverse background, particularly among the state's lowest performing elementary schools (NCES, 2016).

The literature shows that it is essential to have a racially diverse workforce when trying to close the achievement gaps between subgroups (NCES, 2016).This finding that is essential to the correlating theme regarding Black males being recruited into the teaching profession and the lack of diversity in the workforce. El-Mekki (2018) stated that, too often, students from K-12 do not have a diverse group of educators leading their classrooms and schools, which limits their perspective and world view.

Different educational experiences. Bell (2017), Brown (2014), and Graham and Erwin (2011) stated that inadequate teacher-preparation program practices and the insistence on a Eurocentric teaching paradigm devalues the Black culture and hinders Black males' preparation to teach; and, if they still want to teach, they are forced to perform in a socially unjust way. Irizarry and Donaldson (2012) stated that majoritarian policies and narratives steer teaching curricula, and the lack of inclusion of minority

teachers' experiences deprive those teachers of essential opportunities to contend with inequities, consider social injustice agendas, and develop critical support networks. The literature was contradicted by the participants because they all felt supported in their preservice programs, and they said they were welcomed in their field experiences, when questioned during the interview process, of any barriers they faced in the education programs they attended. P1 stated, "My field experience was great." P3 stated, "I was supported in my education," and P5 stated, "I felt supported in the classroom." This implies that the Black male participants wanted to teach and enjoyed teaching. The sentiments of the participants in this study also indicate they enjoyed teaching and they were supported during their preservice programs. However, two of the participants stated they were supported in learning, but they did not feel prepared to teach after completion of their degree in education. P2 stated,

> We would have a six-page lesson plan that is not realistic for Raekwon or Tyshena. Where is the curriculum that talks about building relationships or about trauma? Social-emotional kids do not learn from teachers they are not connected with.

P3 stated, "I thought I was ready teach. I started my first year in a seventh grade classroom; like, everything hit me like a brick wall. These kids are individuals with individual problems. I definitely did not feel prepared." P1 recalled,

> I would be the only Black male in class. There were two other Black males. The population was like 80% White. . . . They looked to me for answers, insight being that I worked in an urban setting already. I did not face any barriers in the program.

Participant 2 said about his school,

> There wasn't Asian or Middle Eastern; the class was split between Black and
> White. . . . I was supported by the administrator and the principal during my field
> experience; they gave me full autonomy. I was placed in a mostly disturbed
> classroom.

Participant 3 stated there were

> A few problems with, just like the testing practice, I did have to retake almost
> every part except the PLP. Twice everything else was embraced for the most part.
> . . . I would say being a Black male kind of was a good thing, cause it kind of, I
> would say influenced people's interactions with me like other teachers. . . . I was
> at a historically Black college [HBCU]. My field placements were in
> predominantly Black schools. People were very supportive.

Participant 4 said,

> The most challenge I faced was just to test preparing because I went to an HBCU.
> I did have a lot of support there. . . . I was in a program designed to recruit Black
> men as teachers. We started with a cohort of 15 and only five finished. They made
> sure we were prepared because we were underrepresented. . . . I had good student
> placements. I thought the kids were challenging, but the teachers were supportive.

Participant 5 offered,

> It was very few of us in the class. . . . My college roommate called me a nigger,
> and he could not bear to be in the same room as me. The college was very passive
> in dealing with the situation. . . . I did not have to do the field placement because I
> was active military.

Research Question 3

What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the experiences they had within their careers that contributed to them remaining in the classroom and continuing teaching?

The thematic cluster revealed *connection through familiarity* and *return on investment*. The themes included *idealized influence* and *intellectual stimulation*, and the formulated meanings were *relationships make the experience* and *rewards of teaching*. The objective of this question was to gain deeper insight as to what the Black male participants, as teachers, had to offer to the profession and the impact they felt they had had on Black male students. When the participants were asked this question, the tone in their voices were that of joy or great reward. All five participants strongly felt building relationships with Black male students was essential to their learning and they were able to use their own experiences to connect with the students and create a climate for learning and engagement. Stanley (2017) indicated that low-income Black students who have at least one Black teacher in elementary school are significantly more likely to graduate high school and consider attending college. Walker et al. (2019) suggested that if students of color experience a Black teacher, the likelihood of their academic success increases, which is why supporting Black males in K-12 education is imperative.

Student-teacher relationships are important for academic successes. The participants stated that sharing their own lives' experiences with the young Black male students allowed them to gain the students trust, and it opened the lines of communication to engage in learning. The overwhelming response of the participants for staying in the profession was to help support and to let young Black males see a face that

looks like theirs to influence them and give them hope. All the participants voiced sharing personal experiences with their students, the ability to relate to their students' feelings and being present to just listen helped them to build relationships and connections with the Black male students in their classes. The overwhelming response of the participants being a teacher was to help support and influence young Black males.

The theme, idealized influence, was expounded upon by the participants while expressing their determining factor for staying in the teaching profession, which was relationships. Past experiences helped them build relationships, and they were able to formulate and construct relationships with their young Black male students

The research supports the participants' responses in a positive light. Bristol (2014) asserted that Black male teachers can bridge the social distance Black males experience in schools, and they can create environments in schools that shelter Black boys from institutionalized racism. The development of reciprocal relationships between students and teachers allows the teachers to use their professional knowledge and skills to help students academically, socially, and culturally and to enhance communal bonds (McKinney de Royston et al., 2017). McKinney de Royston et al. (2017) also stated the use of culturally relevant pedagogies expose students to familiar cultural referents and foster reciprocal relationships with students where teachers use their professional knowledge and skills to help students.

Gay (2010) stated that culturally responsive teaching is a transformative instructional practice that is culturally responsive to help students see themselves as community contributors who are capable of helping to improve the philosophy of their experience. Gay (2010) described the transformative instructional practice as creating

relationships between teachers, students, and a shared body of knowledge to promote student learning and personal growth. The practice of this style of teaching involves the rethinking and reformation of instructional pedagogy with shifts in culturally centered curriculum and learning content, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, and performance assessments that match the realities of the students inside the school (Gay, 2010; Milner, 2016).

The theme, intellectual stimulation, emerged as the participants expressed the determining factor for them staying within the teaching profession was the reward of seeing young Black students move up to the next grade. The participants strongly felt that building relationships with the young Black male students was essential to the students' learning, and the teachers were able to use their own experiences to tailor the curriculum to the learning needs of the students while including cultural relevance.

The formulated meanings of relationships make the experience and rewards of teaching, the thematic clusters were created through the connection of familiarity and return on investment, which resulted in the themes intellectual stimulation and idealized influence, which were relevant to the perceptions and lived experiences of the participants as Black male teachers in K-12 education. The participants in this study did not have the same idea or thoughts as that found in the literature. Four of the five participants in this study all stated they stayed in the profession because they were needed and enjoyed their profession. However, P2, at the time of his interview, stated that he was not going to continue teaching after completing the current year. He said he was leaving teaching temporarily to pursue a higher degree in education, stating, "teaching is selfless and you're doing it for the successes; that is why I am not going to teach after this year,

to pursue my doctoral degree in special education with a focus in inclusion." He stated, "I cannot work full time and complete this new degree venture."

The participants' statements regarding experiences they had within their careers that contributed to them staying in the classroom to continue teaching include:

I love what I do. I enjoy what I do. . . . The kids wanted me to meet their parents, I made an impression. . . . Just building relationships, and learning not to write kids off; there is a reason they are acting out. I would try to get to the root of why they're acting out to help them be successful. . . . Them seeing me in the community and knowing their parents impacts them.

P2 stated,

I stay in the teaching profession because, I mean, I am an example of a Black male teacher that some of my students don't see. . . . When they graduated eighth grade into high school, each one of them thanked me for not giving up on them, for always being willing to listen and give them advice. . . . Those boys really viewed me as a father in their life. I still get text messages and emails from former students. . . . I can instill a seed in a student that doesn't bear fruit until later on in their life."

P3 imparted,

I can't see myself doing anything else; I can't see myself starting another job. . . . I believe this was my calling and working with kids in some way, shape, or form. . . . When a student replied to a test question with "never be scared," that was something I told the class in the beginning of the school year. He was a low-performing student.

P4 reflected,

> I stay because I feel like, our students, they love when they have us in front of them, because they feel they can, we can understand them and they know it, and they feel the love. . . . You have that one student who lets you know how much you mean to them. . . . I started a mentoring program for third grade, with permission of parents, I took a young Black male student on trips out of state to see different things, beaches, and he tells me how much he appreciates me.

P5 shared,

> I know sharing my life stories about the military and first responder, two of my students already seem to be very serious about a career in law enforcement and the military. . . . There's another student I had 5 years ago that "salutes" me when we see each other. . . . I never allow them to feel like they're going to be unsafe or unwanted in the classroom. . . . We have dialogue and communication. So that's the impact I have on Black males. . . . Some of my students I had 6 years ago still visit me and some even say they wish they were still in first grade or I am the best teacher they ever had. . . . My comfort zone is truly opening up and giving them what I have (love) because I know, at the end of the day, it is the most important thing you can give anyone and it's free.

Summary of Results

This descriptive phenomenological study investigated the understanding of the five Black participants' specific experiences as a Black male teacher in K-12 education through their insight and the challenges of their educational coursework. The results revealed five formulated meanings: (a) career motivators, (b) absence diversity,

(c) different education experiences, (d) rewards of teaching, and (e) relationships make the experience; four themes: (a) inspirational motivation, (b) individualized consideration, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) idealized influence; and five thematic clusters: (a) motivational influence, (b) challenges in education, (c) different place creates different experiences, (d) return on investment, and (e) connection through familiarity.

Theme 1: Inspirational motivation describes the Black males' experiences and motivation for becoming a teacher. The influence came from their guidance counselors, from their classroom teachers, through experiences working with children, or from their parents.

Theme 2: Idealized consideration. Data collected from all the participants indicate that they felt underrepresented as Black males in education. Two of the participants stated there were 15 Black males at the start of their educational program, and only five completed the program. Three participants said they were the only Black males in their preservice programs, but they were not the only persons of color. All of the participants stated they did not feel, after completing their degree in education, that they were prepared to teach Black children.

Themes 3 and 4: Intellectual stimulation and individualized influence. The participants eagerly voiced the determining factor for staying in the teaching profession was the relationships they were able to build with Black male students. The relationships were constructed by sharing the participants' own life experiences with the young Black male students, which allowed them to gain the students' trust, and it opened up communication. The participants described the feeling of seeing the end product of their teaching as a reward. One participant stated seeing the young Black students move up to

the next grade was joyful, because of their hypervisibility, as well as the negative perceptions of their teaching abilities. All formulated meanings, thematic clusters, and themes were relevant to the perceptions and the lived experiences of the Black male teachers in K-12 education in New York State who participated in this descriptive phenomenological study.

The following and final chapter of this study, Chapter 5, provide a further summary of the findings while also describing the study's implications for the findings of this study, the limitations, and future recommendations for research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this descriptive phenomenological study was to explore and identify the relationship between Black males teachers' consistent and prevalent challenges regarding their underrepresentation in K-12 classrooms by answering the research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding the factors that led them to enter the teaching profession?

2. How do Black male teachers describe the barriers they encountered during the completion of their preservice certificates or degrees?

3. What are the perceptions of Black male teachers regarding experiences they had within their careers that contributed to them remaining in the classroom to continue to teach?

The information gained from this study may address the underrepresentation of the Black male as a teacher in K-12 education and it may help to diversify the educational workforce to keep pace with the increasing diversity of students. All formulated meanings, thematic clusters, and themes from the data analysis were relevant to the perceptions of the lived experiences of the participants as Black male teachers in K-12 education in New York State.

Study Significance

As previously stated in Chapter 1, the potential significance of this study was to identify the challenges in diversifying the teaching population. The research conducted described the shortage of Black males in the teaching profession, revealing that few qualitative studies have focused on the importance of Black make teachers choosing teaching as a profession and the barriers they face when making teaching a career choice in college. The research shows that Black male teachers who teach young Black male students have a positive effect on student educational outcomes, including decreased dropout rates, decreased absences, higher student social functioning, fewer behavioral problems, and the development of academic identities and achievements (McKinney de Royston et al., 2017). The participants of this study expressed their relationships with the students *make the experience*, indicating that the Black males participants were more than just teaching, but they were also forming bonds to connect with their Black male students. Black male students need to see people, as role models, who are like them, and they need teachers who know what they can achieve by attending school and reaching their goals (Graham & Irwin, 2011). The increasing number of Black students in rural and suburban school districts in the United States was reflected in 2013 by NCES, stating the fact that more than one in four students from rural/suburban environments are students of color. Encouraging the need for more Black male teachers in the educational workforce, too—at a minimum—will mirror the diversity reflected in the American population (NCES, 2013).

Transformational leadership theory provided the framework for this study and it guided the research questions. When an individual of color goes through the thought

process of deciding to become a teacher, to educate their followers on the importance of diversifying the workforce, and to provide equal opportunity for students of color, it is helpful for them to have the experience of being taught by someone who is also a minority. Transformational leadership theory was used to develop an understanding, through the lived experiences of Black male teachers, of the challenges they face in their careers, in their preservice programs, and in becoming a teacher that can speak to the underrepresentation of Black males in K-12 education.

The gap in the literature justified the need for this study by showing Black males as teachers who can bridge the diversity divide in education. The participants' expressed their perceptions of being underrepresented during their preservice programs, being motivated by others to enter a teaching career, and having prior work experience with children as their reasons for becoming a teacher. In addition, they expressed the feeling of support they received while going through their preservice program, the rewards of teaching, and the relationships they had built with young Black male students as reasons to stay in the profession of education. The voices and emotions of the participants were heard in this research, which allowed them to share their contributions of teaching young Black males and to share the impact they had by using teaching to direct a change in the teaching workforce.

Implications of Findings

The bridge between the findings of this study and the recommendations are the implications. The implications of this research study were guided by the research questions. Magaldi et al. (2018) indicated that minority teachers receive little multicultural preparation or mentorship to meet the demands of teaching diverse student

populations when starting in urban schools in low-income communities that have significant minority and immigrant student populations. The curriculum is often designed to address the needs of White teachers. Minority teacher candidates often feel their needs are unmet and silenced, they feel misunderstood, and they are appalled by the lack of regard and adequate preparation in teaching courses (Magaldi et al., 2018). P2 stated,

> Lesson plans were taught, and they would have us do them for hours. They are not realistic; this is setting me up. You are setting me up to fail because the lesson plan does not build a relationship to teach our Black kids."

> Participant 2 went on to say during his interview, "socioemotional kids do not learn from teachers they do not feel connected to.

Darling-Hammond (2003) stated that an estimated 40% of all urban teachers leave the profession during their first 3 years of teaching, and this attrition rate is escalated in high poverty urban schools. Generally, the turnover rate is 50 times higher in high poverty schools compared to their nonpoverty counterparts (Frankenberg et al., 2010).

This current study is in direct alignment with the literature in that it used the experiences and perspectives of the participants as a way of gaining in-depth knowledge of the need to diversify the teaching workforce by incorporating Black males. The use of the study participants' perceptions and experiences contribute to the literature by offering a novice voice of Black males as educators to the school districts looking to diversify their teaching workforce and to universities and college education programs who are recruiting Black males. The invested stakeholders, such as state and the federal government, could develop grants to support or mentor Black males who enter the K-12

teaching profession or who need assistance during their education program as they study to become a teacher.

The implications for social justice and leadership of this descriptive phenomenological study are that the experiences and perceptions of the participants expressed the need for more Black males to diversify the profession of teaching. The social justice implication is that the teaching workforce needs to be more diversified by increasing the number of Black males as educators in K-12 classrooms. Black male teachers are viewed as advocates, and they bring cultural relevance to the learning of Black male students. The Black male teacher can also contribute to humanity, helping young Black males and others of color become productive members of society by reaching their educational goals. A teacher, as the leader of the classroom, can create and foster change in an educational system to incorporate culturally relevant teaching, to begin a path toward equity of education, and to promote a commitment to improving the quality and diversity of the workforce. School districts are housing more diverse student populations, and school districts' employment of Black male educators would benefit students learning from teachers that look like them and represent them as a culture. Pabon et al. (2011) stated that Black males with a culturally relevant curriculum could use instructional practices and offer learning that connects with their students' identities to promote self-esteem and insights that empower Black students in urban schools. This is true, especially with the increasing numbers of minorities entering the educational system.

This study yielded an unexpected finding from its participants. Two of the study participants attended HBCUs. The significance of this finding is that their stories offered

a richness to the data. Their responses and experiences were different from the other participants regarding their field experiences, the support they received in and out of the classroom, and they type of student exposures they received. The two participants were very specific when sharing how they were supported during their preservice program. P3 stated "I was at a historically Black college. My field placements were in predominantly Black schools. People were very supportive." P4 stated,

> The most challenge I faced was just to test preparing because I went to an HBCU. I did have a lot of support there. I was in a program designed to recruit Black men as teachers. We started with a cohort of 15 Black boys and only five finished. They made sure we were prepared because we were underrepresented. They tried to put an extra foot forward to help you get this (education), help you get registered, and made sure they helped you to progress. I had good student placements. I thought the kids were challenging, but the teachers were supportive.

These participants expressed their experiences as positive, but they voiced the extra support they received from the faculty.

Limitations

The first limitation is that the research participants were limited to five Black male teachers within New York State, and they were recruited by email invitation using convenience sampling. The study size was small, although appropriate for a phenomenological study of this nature. There may have been more themes and enriched data with more participants. The participants qualifying data of being a Black male with a baccalaureate or master's degree in education proved difficult when trying to obtain participant volunteers because this qualification limited the number of eligible

participants. There were Black males in education, but they did not hold a degree or certification in education. The participants in this study were from one school district. The results may have been different if the study included more school districts.

Second, the researcher is a female Black nursing educator and an employee of the teacher's union in New York State, which services the underprivileged adult population. The researcher had to reduce biases by listening carefully to the participants' responses but, at the same time, the researcher utilized a reflective journal to write down thoughts so as to not offer any connotation to the experience the participant was describing.

Third, the study was designed, the literature review conducted, and the methodology chosen before the coronavirus pandemic of 2020. The pandemic changed the research design of conducting interviews because no face -to-face interviews could be performed. This study's participants were schoolteachers, and the school districts in New York State had closed down for 2 weeks in March of 2020. The schools then closed down completely; ultimately, converting to virtual learning. It was challenging to arrange virtual meeting times and connect with participants as they were still trying to secure electronic devices and the Internet for their students at home. Also, the learning style of the students had changed, and communication with the students during this time was critical and it increased teacher check-ins with students. This limited the time the participants had available for interviews.

Fourth, this study did not include any voices of nonminority teachers or minority females. All of the participants were Black males. Including other participants may have revealed a different perception of the teacher workforce, and other participants may have

added to the understanding of how gender and race have an impact on the lack of Black males in education.

Fifth, the study was conducted during the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM), which is a movement advocating nonviolent protest against incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against Black people. This ongoing movement forced educators to critically reflect and be willing to have honest conversations in school classrooms regarding issues affecting the communities of their students with issues of racial injustice. This movement highlighted the effect of violence against people of color, especially Black men and boys, with police killings and racially motivated attacks. The participants of the study during this time were dealing with a pandemic and a society at war for justice of Black men that had an impact on the students' emotions they served. Black communities were affected by the events involving the BLM that negatively impacted Black communities around the world.

Recommendations

This study revealed significant findings, enabling the researcher to understand better what attracts Black males to the teaching profession, barriers they face entering the teaching profession, and why they stay in the profession. Noguera (2008) spoke to how the lived experiences of Black men are perceived by society as a whole, as a personal problem that rests solely on Backs or *others* to address. The recommendation is that this is not only a problem for the Black male to solve, but this is a problem to be solved by everyone in education. Diversifying the teaching workforce has been recognized as a problem in the state of New York as well as at the federal level. The superintendents of school districts in New York State are the decision makers who can facilitate and initiate

change in diversifying the teacher workforce. This is evidenced by the establishment of the CMM and My Brother's Keeper programs and the recent changes to their recruitment and retention guidelines.

As a transformational leader in education, the recommendation is to help encourage and motivate Black male teachers by using inspirational motivation. Transformational leaders can use the skill of collaboration by connecting with outside resources to obtain assistance for Black male teachers with educational funding to buy books, offset the cost of tuition, and offer professional development classes. Educational leaders need to ensure that their followers know they care about them and their feelings by offering words of encouragement to lift them up, and to convey leaders' past experiences to show Black male teachers that their professional growth as an educator is supported. As the leader in education, modeling the way for followers is practiced by cultural relevancy in everyday practice and habits demonstrate leadership change. To initiate change leadership regarding cultural relevancy, the transformational leader can incorporate the following to their duties: provide professional development for all teachers regarding culturally relevant teaching, encourage the development of individualized lesson plans for students of different cultures to affirm their cultural connections, and create a physically and culturally inviting learning environment in their school (Deem, 2016).

Future research. Suggested future research recommendations by the researcher are to further study Black male teachers to identify if they face any challenges or barriers upon entering the workforce, once completing their teaching education program. Further research could involve teaching education programs regarding how Black males are

supported academically and emotionally to complete the program, especially those attending predominantly White colleges. Their voices can add to the body of knowledge focused on training, recruitment, and retention to preservice education programs. The researcher also recommends a study be conducted of an all-boys school, particularly those of color, and of their Black male teachers of color, to see if the results yield more young Black male graduates who had a Black male teacher influencing the young Black boys' success. A focused study regarding the impact of the relationship between Black male students and Black male teachers would enhance learning and coping strategies when dealing with childhood trauma as a student.

Policy development. Policy development should focus on the social justice piece of education, meaning, educational opportunities for all, including teachers. New York State has Title 1 funding for professional development to support Black male teachers or for other specific needs. The New York State federal government program, My Brother's Keeper, is a grant program that provides mentors for Black boys and young Black adults to complete their secondary training. My Brother's Keeper also has a track specifically to help Black boys get into college. This grant could be restructured to include payment for certification exams for those Black men in school districts who are employed as teaching assistants. This could increase the number of teachers by helping Black males obtain certifications in education who were not certified to teach. My Brother's Keeper, as well as the CMM program, could incorporate developing a policy for professional development on culturally relevant teaching practices to engage students in the classroom. As the participants in this study voiced, they felt they were not ready to teach in urban schools, and the lesson plans did not reflect emotional detachment from learning

for students. Those lesson plans did not include how a teacher could deduce the difference between what seems like a child's poor behavior and if the child was simply hungry or traumatized and acting out due to a family member having been murdered the night before. Diversifying the workforce starts with diversifying teaching practices to accommodate the population of students in the classrooms.

New York State could also employ persons of color to guide new Black male teachers, specifically in urban school settings. In urban environments, the teaching experiences are different than in rural or suburban school districts. The advocation for a policy to develop mentoring new Black males in their teaching careers could continue through the first year that they are educators. The mentors would assist the new teachers with problem-solving strategies, look at lesson plans as individualized for Black students, and be a sounding board for the new Black male teacher. The mentor would not have anything to do with his job performance reviews of the Black male teachers and they would not even have to be employed by the same school as the mentee. This mentor would solely be a support to help new Black male teachers navigate the educational system and students as a new teacher.

Recommendations for practice. Male teachers of color are underrepresented in the educator workforce. The literature recommends, and this study's participants recommended that educational system reform is needed in the areas of teacher certification, furthering the education of males of color in school districts, and increasing the number of leaders of color in school administrations. This will enhance the voice of the underserved groups. One of the limitations of this study was finding Black male participants who were certified to teach or had degrees in education. ESSA was

developed to advocate for a diverse teaching population, which includes recruiting and retaining teachers of color. The recruitment starts when the Black males are in high school, and the career opportunity is presented to them, along with the awareness of the increased need diverse teachers. If the seed is planted when students enter high school, through career exploration classes, students may be filter through to investigating the teaching career further. When Black male students have an undeclared major in college, that is also an opportunity to recruit them into education. Many young men of color defer to what they know. If these opportunities are presented to them early on, this may spark more interest in the career of an educator. The New York State teacher's union could play a significant part in the recruiting and retention of Black males. To become a teacher, one must complete 1 year of student teaching, which is unpaid. The union could help by offsetting student loan debt or supplementing income in return for work for a service contract. With the union supporting this initiative, it would benefit those Black men already in school districts, and it would increase the likelihood of Black males obtaining their teaching certification. The recommendation is to allow a 5-year time frame to achieve accreditation, and in return, the participant gives 5 years of service to the school district. The union would help pay for the certification and support tutoring and on-the-job paid training to foster success.

The last recommendation is to educate all teachers regarding culturally relevant teaching. If the recruiting of Black males is a problem, as the research has demonstrated, and Black males are not available to be role models for Black students, then the problem is not just about the lack of Black male teachers. As a leader, it is important to give everyone culturally relevant teaching methods and training, as the recruitment of Black

94

male teachers may not happen at a rate fast enough to keep up with the increasing diverse student population in school districts.

Conclusion

The lack of racial diversity of Black male teachers in K-12 education has captured the attention of researchers and policymakers with research demonstrating that minority children stand to benefit from same-race models (NYSED, 2019). This study was justified by examining the insight, education, and challenges Black male's face to diversify the K-12 classroom. The reasons have been authenticated with the assistance of this qualitative descriptive study and the themes that emerged from the study using Colaizzi's (year) data analysis method, as shown in Table 4.3.

These findings uncovered how Black males make a connection to, and form a relationship with, the students they teach and how that relationship impacts the young Black male students they teach. The relationship developed is done by the Black male teacher using real-life experiences and by sharing those experiences with their students. The participants were motivated to teach by past role models, with previous work experiences with children, and by high school teachers and counselors. This study revealed the challenges in a variety of college settings with diversity and inclusion of the Black male as a student. Each participant had different educational experiences, but they voiced feeling supported during their educational journey. One of the participants expressed there were 15 Black males in his preservice program, but only five completed their teaching program. The research shows there is needed improvement in recruiting and retaining Black males in teaching programs. Diversifying the teaching workforce through teacher education programs and employers starts with realizing there is a

problem and then addressing the issue with realistic goals and outcomes to benefit all stakeholders.

This study has shown, through the participants, that pairing Black men as teachers with students of color builds relationships that foster learning and improves learning and trust. The race match of students and teachers affects student learning, which has been proven beneficial through the literature (Brockenbrough, 2012; Graham & Irwin, 2011; Pabon et al., 2011). It is critical for Black children to see Black teachers who look like them and to see others of their race as leaders as well as someone they can aspire to become.

References

Alim, H. (2004*). You know my steez: An ethnographic and sociolinguistic study of style shifting in Black American speech community.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Amos, Y. T. (2010). "They don't want to get it"! Interaction between minority and White pre-service teachers in a multicultural education class. *Multicultural Education, 17*(4), 31-37.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance.* New York, NY: New York Free Press.

Bell, E. E. (2017). A narrative inquiry: A Black male looking to teach. *The Qualitative Report, 22*(4), 1137-1150.

Bridges, T. (2011). Towards a pedagogy of hip hop in urban teacher education. *The Journal of Negro Education, 80*(3), 325-338.

Bristol, T. J. (2014). Not strangers: How social distance influences Black male teachers' perceptions of their male students of color. In Y. Sealy-Ruiz, C. Lewis, & I. Toldson (Eds.), *Teacher education and the Black community* (pp. 117-128)*.* Information Age Publishing.

Bristol, T., & Goings, R. B. (2019). Exploring the boundary-heightening experiences of Black male teachers: Lessons for teacher education programs. *Journal of Teacher Education, 70*(1), 51-64.

Bristol, T., & Mentor, M. (2018). Policing and teaching: The positioning of Black male teachers as agents in the Universal Carceral Apparatus. *The Urban Review*, *50*(2), 218-234.

Brokenbrough, E. (2012). "You ain't my daddy!": Black male teachers and the politics of surrogate fatherhood. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 16*(4), 357-372.

Brown, K. (2014). Teaching in color: A critical race theory in education analysis of the literature on preservice teachers of color and teacher education in the U.S. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 17*(3), 326-345.

Bryan, N., & Williams T. M. (2017). We need more than just make bodies in classrooms: Recruiting and retaining culturally relevant Black male teachers in early childhood education. *Journal of Childhood Teacher Education, 38*(3), 209-222.

97

Bryson, B. S. (2017). They were constantly on the losing side of things: The pedagogical power of an African American teacher candidate bearing witness in teacher education. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education, 20*(4), 527-545.

Burkus, D. (2010, March 18). Transformational leadership theory. *David Burkus*. Retrieved from: https://davidburkus.com/2010/03/transformational-leadership-theory/

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership.* Harper & Row.

Bycio, P., Hackett, R. D., & Allen, J. S. (1995). Further assessments of Bass's (1985) conceptualization of transactional and transformational leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 80*(4), 468-478.

Castillo-Montoya, M. (2016). Preparing for interview research: The interview protocol refinement framework. *Qualitative Report, 21*(5), 811-831.

Cherng, H.-Y. S., & Halpin, P. F. (2016). The importance of minority teachers: Student perceptions of minority versus White teachers. *Educational Researcher*, *45*(7), 407-420.

Cherry, K., & Gans, S. (2018, March 5). Transformational leadership: A closer look at the effects of transformational leadership. Retrieved from https://www.verywell.com/what-istranformational-leadership-2795313.

Colaizzi., P. E. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R. S. Vale & M. King (Eds.), *Existential-phenomenological alternatives to psychology* (pp. 48-71)*. Oxford University Press

Cooper, C. (2000). Strategies to assure certification and retention of Black teachers. *Journal of Negro Education, 58*(1), 46-55.

D'Amico, D., Pawlewicz, R. J., Earley, P. M., & McGeehan, A. P. (2017). Where are all the Black teachers? Discrimination in the teacher labor market. *Harvard Educational Review, 87*(1) 26-45.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2003). Keeping good teachers: Why it matters, what leaders can do. *Educational Leadership, 60*(8), 6-13.

Deem, J. (2016). 7 *Principles for culturally responsive teaching.* https://prezi.com/lbllq9f3umum/7-principles-for-culturally-responsive-teaching/

Dogan, R.T. (2010, March 8). Schools need Black male teachers. *MEN TEACH.* http://www.menteach.org/news/schools_need_black_male_teachers

Duncan, A. (2010, June 3). *Changing the HBCU narrative: From corrective action to creative investment—Remarks by Secretary Arne Duncan at the HBCU Symposium at the North Carolina Central University Centennial.* White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. https://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/changing-hbcu-narrative-corrective-action-creative-investmentremarks-secretary-arne-du

El-Mekki, S. (2018). Learning from Black male teachers who thrive. *Educational Leadership, 75*(8), 56-60. http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may18/vol75/num08/Learning-from-Black-Male-Teachers-Who-Thrive.aspx

Englander, M. (2016). The phenomenological method in qualitative psychology and psychiatry. *Qualitative Studies and Health and Well-Being, 11*(1). https://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v11.30682

Essandoh, V., & Suflas, S. (2016). The leader's role in diversity and inclusion: Transformational leadership. *The Practical Lawyer, 64*(4) 35-37.

Frankenberg, E., Taylor, A., & Merseth, K. (2010). Walk the walk: Teacher candidates' professed commitment to urban teaching and their subsequent career decisions. *Urban Education, 45*(3), 312-346.

Gay, G. (2010). Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice. Teachers College Press.

Gliner, J. A., Morgan, G. A., & Leech, N. L. (2017). *Research methods in applied settings: An integrated approach to design and analysis* (3rd ed.). Taylor & Francis Group.

Goings, R. B. (2015). The lion tells his side of the (counter) story: A black male educator's autoethnographic account. *Journal of African American Males in Education, 6*(1), 91-105.

Gordon, J. A. (2002). The color of teaching. *Journal of Teaching Education, 53*(2), 123-126.

Graham, A., & Erwin, K. D. (2011). "I don't think Black men teach because how they get treated as students": High-achieving African American boys' perceptions of teaching as a career option. *The Journal of Negro Education, 80*(3), 398-416.

Green, S. L. (2009). *Motivating African American learners in reading using culturally and linguistically responsive scientifically based reading instruction.* VDM Publishing House.

Green, S. L., & Martin, D. (2018, February 15). Playing the game: Recruiting Black males in teaching. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching, 13*(1), 26-44. https://doi.org/10.1515/mlt-2017-0005

Griffin, A., & Tackie, H. (2016). *Through our eyes: Perspectives and reflections from Black teachers.* Education Trust.

Gregory, A., Skiba, R., & Noguera. P. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational Researcher, 39*(1), 59-68.

Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 3*(1), 42-45.

Gursky, D. (2002). Recruiting minority teachers. *The Educational Digest, 67*(8), 28-34.

Gursky, D., Rose, M., & Moss, D. (2004, May). Gap shrinkers. *NEA Today.*

Hartog, D. N., Van Muijen, J. J., & Koopman, P. L. (1997). Transactional versus transformational leadership: An analysis of the MLQ. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 70*, 19-34.

Howard, T. (2014). Black maled: Perils and promises in the education of African American males. New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

Husserl, E. (1970). *Logical investigations, vol 1*. Routledge. & Kegan Paul, Ltd.

Irizarry, J., & Donaldson, M. L. (2012). "Teach for America: The Latinization of U.S. schools and the critical shortage of Latina/O teachers. *American Educational Research Journal, 49*(1), 155-194.

Jackson, I., & Knight-Manuel, M. (2018). "Color does not equal consciousness": Educators for color learning to enact a sociopolitical consciousness. *Journal of Teacher Education, 70*(1), 65-78. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487118783189

Jacobs, C., Pfaff, H., Lehner, B., Driller, E., Nitzsche, A., Stieler-Lorenz, B., Wasam, J., & Jung, J. (2013). The influence of transformational leadership on employee well-being. *American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 55*(7) 772-778.

Jones, R., Holton, W., & Joseph, M. (2019). A Black male grow your own program. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *46*(1), 55-68.

Jyoti, J., & Bhau, S. (2015). Transformational leadership and job performance: A study of higher education. *Journal of Services Research, 12*(2), 77-103.

Khalifa, M. A., Gooden, M. A., & Davis, J. E. (2016). Culturally responsive school leadership: A synthesis of the literature review. *Review of Educational Research, 88*(4), 1272-1311.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Towards a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465-491.

Lewis, C. (2006). African American male teachers in public schools: An examination of three urban school districts. *Teachers College Board, 108*(2), 224-245.

Lewis, C., & Toldson, I. (2013). *Black male teachers: Diversifying the United States' teacher workforce.* Emerald Group Publishing.

Luenendonk, M. (2016, August 16). Transformational leadership guide: Definition, qualities, pros & cons, examples. *Cleverism.* https://www.cleverism.com/transformational-leadership-guide/

Lynn, M. (2002). Critical race theory and the perspectives of Black men teachers in the Los Angeles public schools. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 35*(2), 119-130.

Lynn, M., & Jennings, M. (2009). Power, politics, and race pedagogy: A critical race analysis of Black male teachers' pedagogy. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 12*(2), 173-196.

Magaldi, D., Conway, T., & Trub, L. (2018). "I am here for a reason": Minority teachers bridging many divides in urban education. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 21*(3), 306-318.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing qualitative research.* SAGE Publications.

Mawhinney, L., Mulero, L., & Perez, C. (2012). African American pre-service teacher's perspectives or urban education: An exploration at an HBCU. *Urban Review, 44*, 612-627.

Maylor, U. (2018). Black male student teachers: Tomorrow's teachers. *Journal of Multicultural Education, 12*(2), 111-125.

McKinney de Royston, M., Vakil, S., Nasir, N. S., Ross, K. M., Givens, J., & Holman, A. (2017). "He's more like a brother than a teacher": Politicized caring in a program from African American males. *Teacher College Board Record, 119*(4), 1-40.

Milner, H. R. (2016). A Black male teacher's culturally responsive practices. *The Journal of Negro Education, 85*(40), 417-432.

Milner, H. R., Pabon, A., Woodson, A., & McGee, E. (2013). Teacher education and Black male students in the United States. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Educational Research, 3*(3) 235-263.

National Center for Educational Statistics. (2016). *Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools.* U.S. Department of Education. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_cge.pdf

National Council on Teacher Quality. (2019). *A Fair Chance: Simple steps to strengthen and diversify the teacher workforce*. https://www.nctq.org/publications/A-Fair-Chance:-Program-Action-Guide

New York State Department of Education. (2019, December). *Educator diversity report.* http://www.nysed.gov//common/nysed/files/programs/educator-quality/educator-diversity-report-december-2019.pdf

New York State Education Department. (2015). *New York State's plan to ensure equitable access to the most effective educators 2014-15.* http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/nys-equity-plan_072015.pdf

New York State Education Department (2019, December). *Educator diversity report.* http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/educator-quality/educator-diversity-report-december-2019.pdf

Noguera, P. (2003). The trouble with Black boys: The role and influence of environmental and cultural factors in the academic performance of African American males. *Urban Education, 38*(4), 431-459.

Noguera. P. (2008). *The trouble with Black boys and other reflections on race, equity and the future of public education.* Jossey-Bass.

Pabon, A. (2016). Waiting for black superman: A look at problematic assumption. *Urban Education, 51*(8), 915-939.

Pabon, A. J., Anderson, N. S., & Kharem. (2011). Minding the gap: Cultivating Black male teachers in a time of crisis in urban schools. *The Journal of Negro Education, 80*(3), 358-367.

Phillips-Pula, L., Strunk, J., & Pickler, R. (2011). Understanding phenomenological approaches to data analysis. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care, 25*(1), 67-71.

Renzulli, L. A., Parrott, H. M., & Beattie, I. R. (2011). Racial mismatch and school type: Teacher satisfaction and retention in charter and traditional public schools. *Sociology of Education, 84*(1), 23-48.

Rhoden, S. (2017). "Trust me, you are going to college": How trust influences academic achievement in Black males. *The Journal of Negro Education, 86*(1), 52-64.

Rich, M. (2015, April 12). Where are the teachers of color? *The New York Times.* http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/12/sunday-review/where-are-the-teachers-of-color.htmld

Ross, J., & Kendall, K. (2014). Transformational leadership. Organization and Administration Recreation, Sport and Leisure Management.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Sealy-Ruiz, Y., & Lewis, C. W. (2011). Transforming the field of education to serve the needs of the black community: Implications for critical stakeholders. *The Journal of Negro Education, 80*(3), 187-190.

Stanley, G. (2017). With just one black teacher, black students more likely to graduate. *Johns Hopkins University*. https://releases.jhu.edu/2017/04/05/with-just-one-black-teacher-black-students-more-likely-to-graduate/

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M. & Holder, A. M. B. (2009). Racial microaggressions in the life experience of Black Americans. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 39*(3), 329-336.

Thomas-Lester, A. (2010). Number of Black male teachers belies their influence. *The Washington Post.* http://www.menteach.org/news/number_of_Black_male_teachers_belies_their_influence

Thomas, E. E., & Warren, C. A. (2017). Making it relevant: How a Black make teacher sustained professional relationships through culturally responsive discourse. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 20*(1), 87-100.

Toldson, L. A. (2008). *Breaking barriers: Plotting the path to academic success for school-age African American boys.* Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Inc.

Toussaint, A. (2019). Ending the shortage of Black male teachers in New York. *Gotham Gazette.* https://www.gothamgazette.com/opinion/8476-ending-the-shortage-of-black-male-teachers-in-new-york

U.S. Department of Education. (2013). *State nonfiscal survey pf public elementary and secondary education*, 2013-2014. Author, NCES, Common Core of Data.

Walker, L. J., Goings, R. B., & Wilkerson, R. D. (2019). The role school administrators play in creating healthy ecosystems for Black male preservice teachers. *The Journal of Educational Foundations, 32*(1,2,3,4) 114-141.

Wertz, F. J. (2010). The method of eidetic analysis for psychology. In T. F. Cloonan & C. Thiboutot (Eds.), *The redirection of psychology: Essays in honor of Amedeo P. Giorgi* (pp. 26l-278). Le Cercle Interdisciplinaire de Recherches Phénoménologiques (CIRP), I'Université du Québec à Montréal et Rimouski.

Wertz, F. J., Charmaz, K., McMullen, L. M., Josselson, R., Anderson, R., & McSpadden, E. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis.* The Guilford Press.

Will, M. (2018, November 27). Achievement and race: "The long-run impacts of same-race teachers." *Education Week, 38*(14), 4. https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/11/28/achievement-and-race.html

Will, M. (2019, February 26). You're more likely to pass the Bar than an elementary teacher licensing exam. *Education Week, 38*(24), 9. https://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/2019/02/aspiring_elementary_teachers_licensing_test_failure.html

Wirihana, L., Welch, A., Williamson, M., Christensen, M. Bakon, S., & Craft, J. (2018). Using Colaizzi's method of data analysis to explore the experiences of nurse academics teaching on satellite campuses. *Nurse Researcher, 25*(4), 30-34.

Woodson, A., & Pabon, A. (2016). "I'm none of the above": Exploring themes of heteropatriarchy in the life histories of Black male educators. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 49*(1), 57-71.

Wright, B., & Ford, D. (2016). "This little light of mine": Creating early childhood classroom experiences for African American boys pre-K-3. *Journal of African American Males in Education, 7*(1), 5-19.

Young, M. D., Winn, K. M., & Reedy, M. A. (2017). The Every Student Succeeds Act: Strengthening the focus on educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 53*(5) 705-726.

Yukl, G. (1999). An evaluation of conceptual weaknesses in transformational and charismatic leadership theories. *Leadership Quarterly, 10*(12), 285-305.

Appendix A

Interview Questions and Prompts

1. What attracted you to the teaching profession?

2. Describe the challenges you faced in your education program.

3. How did you deal with the challenges to finish your program?

4. In your teaching career, can you give an example of a way you have impacted a

   Black male student in the classroom?

5. Why do you stay in the teaching profession?

Appendix B

St. John Fisher College IRB Approval

May 13, 2020

File No: 4094-05212020-02

Natasha Oates

St. John Fisher College

Dear Ms. Oates:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Institutional Review Board.

I am pleased to inform you that the Board has approved your Exempt Review project, "The Black Man's Experience as a teacher in K-12: Examining the insight, education, and challenges to diversifying the teaching population".

Please note, to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and to help mitigate community transmission, St. John Fisher College has temporarily suspended all in-person activities (recruitment and data collection) among researchers and study participants for all IRB approved human subjects research until further notice. Studies that do not involve any direct subject contact, e.g., pre-existing records, electronic surveys, tele-research, and remote interaction via device/app/software are still permissible, along with data analysis from previously collected in-person sessions.

Should you have any questions about this process or your responsibilities, please contact me at irb@sjfc.edu.

Sincerely,

Eileen Lynd-Balta, Ph.D.

Chair, Institutional Review Board

ELB: jdr

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Study: The Black Man's Experience as a teacher in K-12: Examining the insight, education, and challenges to diversifying the teaching population

Name of researcher: Natasha Oates, ___-___-____
Faculty Supervisors: Dissertation Chair: Loretta Quigley, Ed. D, ___-___-____
                         Committee Member: Amy Mech, Ed.D., ___-___-____

Purpose of Study: The purpose of this study is to explore and identify the black male's challenges regarding their underrepresentation in the K-12 classroom, in an effort to gain widespread views of experiences and perceptions of black men as teachers. The results of the study will be used to inform the existing literature of the strategies school leaders can implement in order to create and diversify classroom teachers to represent the student body.

Place of study: Interviews will occur via Skype, DUO, or Zoom. Participation in this study will require participants to consent to being video/audio recorded.

Length of participation: One interview lasting no more than 60 minutes.

Method of data collection: All interviews will be audio-recorded, and some notes will be taken during the interview as a debrief for the researcher. The purpose for the note taking will be to capture any nonverbal or environmental data.

Risks and benefits: The expected risks and benefits of this study are explained below. We believe this study has no more than minimal risk. Minimal risk exists, as the probability of and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during routine tests. Participants will be audio recorded during interviews. There are no

additional anticipated emotional or physical risks associated with participating in this study.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy: All consent is voluntary. Pseudonyms will be assigned to all participants. Participants name and identifying information will remain confidential and will not appear in transcripts, analysis, or the final study. Written transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet accessible only to the researcher for a period of three years after the successful defense of the dissertation and then shredded. As volunteers in the study, any participant can choose to answer any, all or none of the interview questions, and may withdraw consent to participate at any time and for any reason.

Your rights: As a research participant, you have the right to:

> 1.   Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
> 2.   Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
> 3.   Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
> 4.   Be informed of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that may be advantages to you.
> 5.   Be informed of the results of the study.

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the above-named study.

_____   _____
Print Name (Participant)   Signature Date

_____   _____
Name (Investigator)   Signature Date

If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher above. If you experience emotional or physical discomfort due to participation in this study, please contact your health care provider or local crisis provider.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of St. John Fisher College has reviewed this project. For any concerns regarding this study and/or if you experience any physical or emotional discomfort, you can contact ___ _____ by phone at ___-___-____ or by email at irb@sjfc.edu.

All digital audio recordings and transcriptions of interviews will be maintained using a private, locked, and password-protected file and password-protected computer stored securely in the private home of the principal researcher. Electronic files will include assigned identity codes and pseudonyms; they will not include actual names or any information that could personally identify or connect participants to this study. Other

materials, including notes or paper files related to data collection and analysis will be stored securely in unmarked boxes, locked inside a cabinet in the private home of the principal researcher. Only the researcher will have access to electronic or paper records.

This researcher will keep the digitally recorded audio data for a period of three years following publication of the dissertation. Signed informed consent documents will be kept for three years after publication. All paper records will be crosscut shredded and professionally delivered for incineration. Electronic records will be cleared, purged, and destroyed from the hard drive and all devices such that restoring data is not possible.