TEACHER RETENTION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE EXPERIENCES OF WHITE MALE TEACHERS IN AN URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOL

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree

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Abstract

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for White male teachers at an urban secondary school. The focus was on the experiences of the White male teachers at an urban secondary school in Virginia. This research is an examination of the experiences and perceptions of White male teachers. The data included interviews, focus groups, and letter writing to fill the gap in literature for teacher retention in urban schools. The research questions included what are the lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools and why do they choose to work in the urban school setting? In addition, what are the common issues White male teachers share in an urban secondary school and what are the causes for them to stay or leave the teaching profession? The theoretical framework used is social impact theory and self-determination theory. The results of the data provided new literature for teacher retention in the urban school setting. The findings of this study revealed the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia had connections to the school, built relationships, incorporated technology in the classroom, and struggled financially. White male teachers also experienced lack of respect from both students and administration, too much cell phone use, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement. Overall, the motivation and causes of why these teachers stay in the teaching field are seeing students succeed and being a positive influence. The motivation of them leaving the teaching profession were not enough pay and student disengagement.

Keywords: attrition, culture, diversity, high poverty schools, race, retention, teacher retention, urban school district

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List of Abbreviations

Central Research Question (CRQ)

Institution Review Board (IRB)

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Sub-Question (SQ)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for White male teachers experience at an urban secondary school in Virginia. The focus of inquiry was to investigate why White male teachers choose to work in an urban school. Are the influential decisions that revolve around female and Black male teachers' similar to White male teachers as to giving back to the community, the diversity aspect, the location of the urban school, the professional autonomy that is presented, or the teacher preparation programs that encourage and inspire their choice (McKinney et al., 2023)? The common issues that White male teachers share include the cultural barriers that they face, with an analysis of the White male teacher's effectiveness within the location and population where they work in the urban school setting. McKinney et al. explored the tools and common methods that White male teachers use to be successful in the classroom, reduce stress, and avoid fatigue. Lastly, the study provided a review the reasons White male teachers remain in the teaching profession and if they leave it, what would be the causes.

Background

The background of the study includes recent studies pertaining to teacher retention and experiences of teachers in urban school environments (Cuchiara et al., 2015; Evans, 2013; Hughes, 2012). The majority of the literature cited is no more than five years old. The historical context demonstrates that the response to the teacher shortage in its public schools and its teacher turnover rates have displayed concerns within the realm of education in the United States (Hernandez, 2018; Ingersoll, 2001; Luckett, 2013). The social context of the society, community, and the education system has been affected by the problem of teacher retention (Ingersoll, 2003;

Ollison, 2019). There are several theoretical concepts that have developed under the examination and the principles underpinning the research of teacher retention (Macdonald, 1999; Robinson, 2017). The understanding of teacher characteristics, school characteristics, the preferences for working conditions, and student demographics bridges the development of the evidence for teacher retention in urban schools (Conaway & Purdum-Cassidy, 2007; Horng, 2009).

Historical Context

The subject of teacher attrition and retention are widely researched topics within the educational field. Teacher retention percentages have ranged from 83-86% following the first year of teaching to 54-55% following the fifth year of teaching; this results in the rising cost of recruiting new teachers (Pate, 2022). According to Kimberly Porter (2020), racial and gender disparities among teachers in schools have become a concern in recent years, and researchers have projected that within the next three decades, the minority population of public-school students will be substantially higher than the number of minority teachers. The connections between teachers and students who share the same cultural background are an important element to student and teacher success. However, studies of race and teacher retention have had mixed data conclusions (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). The earlier reviews before 2011 of research on teacher retention indicated that teachers of color have higher turnover rates than White teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Other studies have indicated that new teachers of color, including African American, Latina/o, Asian American, and mixed race, may be more motived and committed than new White teachers to choose and continue teaching in high-poverty urban schools (Whipp & Geronime, 2017).

The past three decades have seen an increased focus on studying the predictors of teachers' intentions to quit and the facets of the teachers themselves, their students, and the

school that have been implicated in attrition to some degree (Chambers, et al., 2019). Historical research conveys that seeking help from colleagues, positive school climates, and role stability are principal factors, as well as psychosocial factors, such as teachers' emotional states and stress (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Social Context

The social context of the importance of teacher retention displays a need in urban school settings. Porter (2022) indicated that 70% of teachers are White females. White women make up a majority of teachers in the teaching profession. There are more females entering teaching than males, and the teacher turnover is greater than female teachers (Ward, 2020). With gender and race being factors in teacher retention, is there a need for male teachers, especially in the urban school setting? In terms of male teacher turnover, male teachers have more turnover than female teachers. The American Federation of Teacher Preparation Task Force (2012) revealed that men of color were more likely to leave the teaching profession than women of color. Ingersoll and May (2011) explained that male minority teachers are less stable than White teachers and are more likely to migrate from one school to another, as well as more likely to leaving the teaching profession.

The problem that arises is the understanding of retention in male teachers in urban schools. There have been numerous studies conducted on Black male teachers, women teachers, and other minorities in urban schools but there is a lack of research on White male teachers in urban schools. There needs to be data in this area to have a complete understanding of teacher retention in the urban school setting because the increase in minority students in public schools has created the need for more minority teachers. Within 10 years, between 2004 and 2014, the total number of minority students in public elementary schools, middle school, and secondary

schools increased from 48.8 million to 50.3 million. In 2026, it is projected to increase to 51.7 million (Bradley, 2021). Male teachers serve as accessible positive male role models that many students might not have available to them daily and could help raise young men's negative perceptions of themselves and their educational futures (Bracewell, 2016).

The need for male teachers is essential and, with the current situation, there is an underrepresentation of minority male teachers, including male teachers in general, as well as within minority teachers, male teachers in general. By the projection by 2026, fifty-five percent of the students enrolled in public schools will be non-White (Bradley, 2021). Within all levels of society, males have shown to be constantly bombarded with numerous stereotypes and perceptions of how they should live their own lives (Bracewell, 2016).

Theoretical Context

The theoretical framework and context of this study includes social impact theory by Latané (1981) and self-determination theory by Deci & Ryan (1980). The combination of these theories will bring about the knowledge and understanding of the topic addressed, which will result in an accurate understanding of the study. The importance of the use of these theories will be a proper fit for the transcendental phenomenological design that this study will be using.

Social impact theory (Latané, 1981) within the theoretical context delineates that humans are influenced by the actions of other individuals and can be persuaded, threatened, and supported by others. Social impact theory also clarifies if the experiences of the male teachers are influenced by the actions of others, and if individuals can be the sources or targets of social influence. The likelihood that someone will respond to social influence is thought to increase with the strength of the source. The primary theoretical framework is based off Bibb Latané's social impact theory model, which centers around the idea of influence from other people as

being the result of social forces acting on the individual with four basic rules on how individuals can be sources or targets of social influence. Overall, social impact theory is the result of social forces that include three key variables, the strength of the source of impact, the immediacy of the event, and the number of sources exerting the impact, explaining the influence on individual feelings, thoughts, or behavior that is created from the real, implied, or imagined presence or actions of others. With the variables, the development of three laws through formulas is established: social forces, psychosocial, and multiplication/division of impact. Along with the key variables, the application of social impact varies from diffusion of responsibility to social loafing, stage fright, or persuasive communication.

Self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1980) within the theoretical context expresses the social and cultural factors that facilitate or undermine humans' sense of volition and initiative with the well-being and the quality of the participants' performance. Deci and Ryan explained that there are three essential elements of then self-determination theory, in that humans are inherently proactive with their potential and mastery of their inner forces with the examples of emotions and drives. Humans have a tendency toward growth development and integrated functioning that is inherent. Lastly, optimal development and actions are inherent in humans and do not occur automatically. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are included, with extrinsic motivation differing in externally regulated behavior, introjected regulation of behavior, regulation through identification, and integrated regulation

Problem Statement

The problem in the United States is that there is a shortage of teachers, especially male teachers (Ward, 2020). There have been studies on the severe shortage of Black male teachers and other groups, but there is a missing component in exploring this topic regarding teacher

retention of male teachers (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). With the teacher shortage affecting the United States, and the teacher attrition within the urban school environment, the need for recruitment and retention for male teachers needs to be explored and analyzed for White male teachers in an urban setting.

This study will focus on the lived experiences of White male teachers in an urban secondary school in Virginia regarding the topic of male teacher retention and the investigation of teacher retention of the commonalities and factors that White male teachers in the urban school environment experience. There have been studies on teacher retention of Black males, females, and other groups in urban schools, but a gap in the literature pertains to the teacher retention focusing on White males in urban schools. The design of this transcendental phenomenological study is to identify the lived experiences of 10 White male teachers who have a deep understanding and firsthand knowledge of working in the urban school environment. (McKinney et al, 2023; Porter, 2022; Ward, 2020).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for White male teachers at an urban secondary school in Virginia. At this stage in the research, the commonalities and factors of retention will be generally defined as the shared features and influences that attribute to the results and outcomes of when a teacher remains in the education profession (McKinney et al, 2023; Porter, 2022; Ward, 2020). The theories guiding this study include the theoretical framework of social impact theory (Latané, 1981) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980).

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for White male teachers at an urban secondary school in Virginia. The focus was on the experiences of the teachers at an urban secondary school. This dissertation provided an examination of the experiences and perceptions of White male teachers. The data was analyzed through interviews, focus groups, and a written letter to fill the gap in literature for teacher retention in urban schools with the theoretical framework based on social impact theory (Latané, 1981), with the influence of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980). Overall, the empirical and practical levels of significance of these theories provide the need to build the connection of the factors pertaining to the male teachers in the urban environment.

Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of the study articulates the theoretical underpinnings of teacher retention of White male teachers in urban schools by using the theoretical framework of social impact theory by Latané, (1981) and self-determination theory byDeci and Ryan (1980). The accomplishment of urban teaching and understanding the relationship between school autonomy and teachers' job satisfaction will be the theoretical goal of this study (Abbate-Vaughn & Wright, 2010: Council of the Great City Schools, 2007: Devos & Valcke, 2016). The teacher's perceptions of the work environment in urban schools will assist the professed commitment to urban teaching and the careers of White male teachers (Farinde-Wu, 2018; Glennie, Coble, & Allen, 2004).

Empirical

The empirical significance of the study relates to other studies similar in the undertaking

of the methodological approach that articulates how teacher education can contribute to teacher retention in high-poverty, urban schools (Freedman, 2009; Griffin & Tackie, 2017). The typologies of the characteristics of effective teachers in urban learning environments also relates to this study in comparing the lived experiences of male African American educators in an urban school district (Porter, 2020; Robinson & Lewis, 2017).

Practical

The practical significance of the study articulates the knowledge generated from the experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools to the significance of urban teacher residency models, with the implications for teacher preparation and retention. This study will affect the way burnout, stress, depression, and self-esteem of teachers is viewed within the urban school setting, measuring teacher attrition and retention of the attitudes of male teachers teaching in urban secondary schools (Beer & Beer, 1992; Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2008; Borman, 2008; Bracewell, 2016).

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were grounded in the literature of previous research that included factors that pertain to teacher retention in the areas of Black and White male teachers, female, and other groups in the urban school setting. The research questions focus on the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia?

The justification of the central research question of discovering the lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia is to add to the data in understanding

teacher retention of male teachers. There is an absence of the representation of White male teachers for teacher retention of male teachers. There is excessive data on Black males, women, and general, but the data for White male teachers is almost absent and to have the data for White male teachers should display a detailed and more complete picture of understanding teacher retention in urban schools. The emphasis on social impact in this study is to clarify if the experiences of the male teachers are influenced by the actions of others, and if individuals can be the sources or targets of social influence (Latané, 1981).

Sub-Question One

Why do White male teachers choose to work in the urban secondary school setting?

The purpose of sub-question one sets the foundation for the reason White male teachers choose or end up in the urban secondary school setting. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) supported the teachers' response to this question, showing the motivational factors of their current position in the field of education.

Sub-Question Two

What are the most common issues White male teachers share teaching in an Urban secondary school in Virginia?

The justification of sub-question two surrounds the commonalities and differences of White male teachers in the urban school environment. This question helped clarify and characterize the issues that teachers face in the urban environment by using the empirical significance to other studies similar in the undertaking of the methodological approach that articulates how teacher education can contribute to teacher retention in high-poverty, urban schools (Freedman, 2009; Griffin & Tackie, 2017). The data will provide the similarities and

differences White male teachers experience compared to Black male teachers, women, and other minorities.

Sub-Question Three

What is the motivation for White males to teach in the education profession?

The third and final sub-question provides the justification and backing of sub-questions one and two. The response to this question was in alignment with the responses to the previous questions to establish the central research question while supporting the typologies of effectiveness in the characteristics of effective teachers in urban learning environments in comparing the lived experiences of male African American educators in an urban school district (Porter, 2020; Robinson & Lewis, 2017).

Definitions

- 1. *Attrition* Refers to the reduction in the teaching profession workforce due to teachers' decision to leave the school organization employed by or the profession of education (Harris et al., 2016; Famer, 2020).
- 2. *Culture* The norms of behavior in organizations; a set of beliefs, behaviors, values, food, music, and religious beliefs of a specific group of people (Stauffer & Maxwell, 2020).
- 3. *Diversity* Diversity with teachers means educators who represent different races and cultures (Porter, 2020).
- 4. *High poverty schools* High poverty schools are schools where 75% or more students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

- 5. *Minority* According to the US Census Bureau (2018), the term *minority* refers to several different race categories Black, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, Other, and two or more races. Hispanics are also considered a minority, though Hispanic or Latino.
- 6. *Race* A person's self-identification with one or more social groups (Census Bureau, 2018).
- 7. *Retention* Teacher turnover, staff reduction, and mobility from school districts and the education profession based on factors that may influence teacher's professional development (Harris et al., 2016: Farmer, 2020).
- 8. *Teacher retention* When a teacher remains in the profession. Teacher retention at the school level is when a teacher remains teaching in the same school environment every school year (Ingersoll et al., 2019).
- 9. *Urban School District* Racially and culturally diverse schools within large cities in the United States are urban school districts. The students who are considered minorities:

 African American, Asian, Hispanic, Bi-racial, and Native American. However, even though a significant percentage of students are considered minorities, the majority of faculty and staff are White. These schools also have a high percentage of students who are eligible for reduced rate and free lunch programs (Porter, 2020).

Summary

The representation of White male teachers in the urban schools is almost absent within the studies of education. Male teacher involvement within public education is a need, and the role of male teachers as mentors and positive influences in urban schools is an area that will show representation. The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to discover the common factors of White male teachers in urban schools through the experiences of White

male teachers within the urban school environment. This study supported filling the gap in the literature on teacher retention in urban schools (Harris et al., 2016; Farmer, 2020; Porter, 2020) that includes interviews, focus groups, and a written letter of 10 White male teachers who work in an urban secondary school in Virginia.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

A systematic review of the literature was conducted to discover the factors and commonalities that White male teachers experience at an urban secondary school in Virginia. The focus was on the experiences of the teachers at an urban secondary school. The dissertation work was to examine the experiences and perceptions of White male teachers. The data was analyzed to fill the gap in literature for teacher retention in urban schools, clarifying the factors White male teachers experience in the importance of teacher retention. There has been limited studies on the focus of White male teachers in urban schools; the need is essential and will be an asset, as well as supply new data to the area of teacher retention in education. This chapter will present a review of the current literature related to the topic of study to improve the practice of teacher retention. In the first section, the theories relevant to this transcendental phenomenological study will be provided. Then, the related literature will focus on the characteristics and causes pertaining to teacher retention in urban schools to examine the gap that exists in the literature, followed by the summary.

Theoretical Framework

This research has the theoretical framework based on social impact theory (Latané, 1981), with the influence of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980). Overall, these theories provided the framework needed to build the connection of the factors pertaining to the male teachers in the urban environment. Self-determination theory focuses on intrinsic motivation, while social impact theory describes how it is more difficult to influence a target when other targets that have the same opinion surround them. Social impact theory positions that events and other people that are close to them, in distance or relationship, than those that are far

away (Latané, 1981), impact people more. Social cognitive theory fits into the mix, as it interjects a psychological perspective on human functioning that emphasizes the critical role influenced by the social environments on motivation, learning, and self-regulation (Usher & Schunk, 2018).

The primary theoretical framework is based on Bibb Latané's social impact theory (1981). The model centers around the idea of influence from other people as being the result of social forces acting on the individual with four basic rules on how individuals can be sources or targets of social influence. Overall, social impact theory is the result of social forces that include three key variables (SIN): the strength of the source of impact, the immediacy of the event, and the number of sources exerting the impact. With the variables, there is the development of three laws through formulas that are established: social forces, psychosocial, and multiplication/division of impact. Along with the key variables, the application of social impact varies from diffusion of responsibility to social loafing, stage fright, or persuasive communication.

The focus of the three variables of social theory: strength (S), immediacy (I), and number of sources (N), strength represents the net of all individual factors that make a person influential. Strength supplies stable trans-situational, intrapersonal factors that include size, intellect, wealth, as well as dynamic, situation-specific relational components that belong to the same group (Latané, 1981). Also, immediacy (I) considers how recent the event occurred and whether there were other intervening factors, as the number of sources (N) refers to the number of sources of influence. These factors evolve into the three principles of social impact: the social forces, the psychosocial law, and the multiplication versus division of impact. Latané explained that there are four characteristics of the theory, and these four characteristics play a vital role in this study.

Social impact is first a general theory, which draws on the basic laws, predicting too many domains, and it encompasses a variety of processes. Secondly, social impact is also specific in the sense that it is quantifiable, and it deals with parametric variations, making precise predictions about observable aspects of the real world. The third characteristic of this theory is that it is falsifiable; if relationships turn out to be nonmonotonic, or if exponents are greater than one or have the wrong sign, the theory will be disconfirmed. Lastly, social impact is useful. Latané believed that social impact theory is useful because it can provide a baseline for assessing interesting exceptions to these general laws, but it can also provide a foundation for the development of many areas of social engineering.

Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) represents a broad framework within the realm of the study of human motivation and personality. The importance of the theoretical framework concerning self-determination theory delineates the social and cultural factors that facilitate or undermine humans' sense of volition and initiative with the well-being and the quality of their performance. These elements are important in the framework for this study due to the cultural relevance of the social and cultural climate of the teachers within the context of their teaching environment. The literature also expounds on the conditions of self-determination theory in that it supports the individuals' experience of competence, relatedness, and autonomy of the psychological needs within the social context on the wellness in the setting.

Related Literature

This synthesis review will present the current literature related to the topic of study to examine teacher retention of White male teachers in an urban secondary school by their experience to discover the commonalities and factors they share. The sections will center on the causes and characteristics of teacher retention in urban schools. The literature that is examined is

relevant and relates to the topic by exploring the areas of male teachers, with information which aligns to the problem statement, and the themes centered around teacher retention of male teachers in urban schools.

The literature that was gathered and obtained for this transcendental phenomenological study included government websites that consisted of the United States Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, and the United States Department of Education. The research databases for the research include the following: Google Scholar, EBSCOhost, ProQuest Central, SAGE Journals, School system media services, Emeral Insight, and the Jerry Falwell Library Database provided by Liberty University.

The key terms that relate to the topic in the research are attrition, culture, diversity, high poverty schools, minority, race, retention, teacher retention, and urban school district. The information gathered in this chapter is important to the study and provides the necessary background information for the significance of the purpose of study, research questions, and problem statement. The items and information collected in the literature review analyzes the major themes that address this study.

Causes and Characteristics of Teacher Retention

Several areas focus on understanding the characteristics and causes of teacher retention, especially concentrating around the urban school setting. Many causes and characteristics blend neatly together, while others distinctly stand firm on their own. The causes of teacher retention in the qualitative content analysis within urban schools, according to McKinney et al. (2023), revealed that giving back to the community, location, diversity, autonomy, job satisfaction, effective with population, and perseverance are all the major factors contributing to teacher retention in the urban school environment. These aspects of teacher retention flow into the needs

in other school settings as well, and this study discovered what the White male teachers prioritize compared to other groups within this certain type of school atmosphere.

There are over three million teachers who are employed in the United States (National Center of Education Statistics, 2019), and in the United States, teachers remain overwhelmingly White females; African American males are the most underrepresented demographic in the teaching profession (Wallace & Gagen, 2020: Evans, 2013); data for White male teachers is almost non-existent. African American male teachers often leave the teaching profession at a faster rate than their counterparts (Wiggan et al., 2021). However, there is an absence of research on White male teachers leaving in the urban school settings. Male teachers face various obstacles to entering and remaining in the teaching profession. Sandals (2020) explained that male teachers, specifically African American males, often develop curriculum and instructional practices that align with the needs and interests of African American male students they teach. They should have the opportunities to work with other educators with the same background to discuss challenges, strategies for improving pedagogy, and potential obstacles. It is important for the retaining of male teachers within the teaching profession; the male influence, despite the race, is essential in the success of education.

The literature supports that compensation and benefits are a reason why teachers leave the teaching profession. High compensation can decrease teacher turnover (Ward, 2022). Higher salary linked to higher teacher retention, and teachers' dissatisfaction with their salaries linked to higher teacher turnover (Lynch, 2012). To retain teachers in urban schools, higher salaries need to be offered, or at a minimum, considered, because they are teaching in schools with higher rates of teacher turnover (Ward, 2022: Griffin & Tackie, 2017).

Additional barriers to recruitment and retention consist of a teacher of color's displacement from high-needs schools in which they teach because inadequate teacher preparation results from entering the profession through alternative certification routes (Caver-Thomas, 2018). Reaves and Cozzens (2018) also claimed that studies have focused on the components affecting a teacher's choice to remain or leave, expenses attributed to declining teacher turnover, and the ramifications of teacher retention, which influences the academic outcomes of the learners, schools, and district expenditures. Teachers lend a significant contribution to student learning, so the loss of teachers is problematic to student achievement, despite public policies developed on the federal and state level for the retention of qualified teachers (Hernadez, 2018).

The literature suggested that there are substantial differences in the salaries of teachers in high poverty and low-poverty schools (Ward, 2022). The National Center for Education Statistics' Schools and Staffing Survey (2013) provided data that showed teachers who taught in high poverty schools salaries were less than teachers who taught in low-poverty schools. The survey also identified that the difference in the pay of high-poverty and low-poverty teachers was as much as \$16,000 and that only 37% of African American teachers and 46% of Hispanic teachers were satisfied with their salaries as opposed to 52% of White teachers who were satisfied with their salaries. Ward (2022) stated that even though salary is important to minority teachers, salary alone is not the determining factor in their decision to leave the teaching profession.

The increase of retention levels in urban schools took place based on the instructional staff's decision to no longer educate impoverished, minority students. The current findings identify poor working environments in schools' students who are enrolled for the majority of the

relationship that exists among characteristics contributing to teacher retention (Torres, 2019). The initial strategy to ensure that the United States teaching recruitment mirrors the national student demographics as to teacher recruitment, essentially, the recruitment of diverse ethnic teachers is significant in diversifying the teacher workforce (Farinde-Wu, 2018).

There are several explanations of why teachers leave the teaching profession. Student characteristics/school location is one of the reasons why teachers leave the teaching profession. The location of a school can be an important factor of teacher movement and retention (Ward, 2022). Lynch (2012) claimed that a school's student minority level, poverty-level of minority teachers, or whether the school was located in an urban or suburban area determines teacher retention. They were not the sole factors influencing whether minority teachers would leave or stay in a school. Teacher turnover during the school year and end of year teacher turnover are higher in high-poverty schools, including schools with large minority student populations (Ward, 2022: Dee & Henkin, 2022). There was a heightened awareness to increase the number of males who currently teach in schools. In addition, the research indicated the numerous reasons for males not staying with the profession, such as low pay, low socioeconomic status, fear of pedophilic accusations, as well as many others (Bracewell, 2016).

The Importance of Male Teachers

Literature on fatherhood notes that there are considerably high number of fathers who play no part in the lives of their children (Okeke, 2017). As a recognition of this problem, male teachers would encourage paternal involvement, make schools father-friendly, and would encourage fathers to feel better about participating in a school setting (Rentzou, 2017). Parental involvement in education is an essential element in the success of a child's education. Rolfe, (2005) claimed that the presence of male educators in schools promote more gender balance in

the environment, and males promote an active, physical environment, while female educators foster a nurturing, calm, and positive environment. Male teachers play a vital role in education. When male influences are not present, the young people grow up believing that females only held primary school teacher positions. Therefore, the notion leading to the belief that primary school teacher positions were only held by females was because it appeared to be strange if young men went into teaching, since they were not taught by males as young children and there should be a certain amount of caution used prior to enrolling in a male-taught classroom (Bracewell, 2016). There must be a balance; the importance of male teachers is a treasure. The understanding of what keeps them in the teaching profession through their lived experiences will unlock the key to keeping the balance for the success of students in the educational system. Bracewell shared that by attracting more male teachers, the belief would be that the schools would become more male friendly and contribute to higher achievement amongst boys.

Teacher turnover rates vary by gender. Females dominate the teaching profession (Ward, 2020). In addition, female educators were more likely than males to view unruly play as aggressive and had a negative impression of more masculine behaviors. Male educators may particularly help boys who were lacking in positive male role models at home. This could also prompt an immediate interest in attending school and prioritizing their educational responsibilities (Bracewell, 2016). There have also been some interesting differences in gender by race/ethnicity. The teaching force has become more female, but this differs by race/ethnicity. with more White female and male teachers entering the teaching profession. It is possible that having exposure to more female teachers causes male students to have a distinct disadvantage compared to their female counterparts (Bracewell, 2016). In addition, Bracewell added that if men were more visible in the early childhood setting, carrying out caring roles, this could

potentially help counter stereotypes of both men and women, reduce sexism, and generally advance gender equality.

In addition, in California, 65% of all teachers are White and female. The urban schoolteachers are overwhelmingly female and White/Non-Hispanic, with the research showing that urban students benefit from an ethnically diverse teaching staff (Ollison, 2019). However, if teachers and students are from different ethnic backgrounds, teacher success with their students is possible when teachers are equipped or willing to be equipped with the temperament and beliefs necessary to meet the needs of their students (McGee et al., 2016).

Diversity of Male Teachers

When understanding the commitment to retention in the urban school environment, studies have found that many of the personal characteristics have focused on age, gender, race/ethnicity, years of teaching experience, marital and family status, ability, qualifications, and self- efficacy (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). Overall, there have been mixed results in studies of race and teacher retention, and of teacher ability and qualifications. In earlier reviews when race was researched, studies indicated that teachers of color were less inclined to discontinue teaching than their White counterparts, and recent large-scale studies have indicated the exact opposite. These recent studies concluded that new teachers of color tend to be more motivated and committed than White teachers in choosing and continuing to teach in urban schools (Bryan & Williams, 2017: Kelchtermans, 2017: Whipp & Geronime, 2017:). Having more Black males serve in authority roles would hopefully break some of the Black maleness negative stereotypes, such as athletics, entertainment, and unfortunately, crime (Bracewell, 2016). On the recent large-scale studies, the explanation may revolve around the idea that minority teachers typically work in urban public schools that serve high minority, low-income students, and that students in urban

schools typically have more behavioral problems then students in non-urban schools (Ward, 2020). These minority teachers can relate to the culture and believe they can give back to the community within the location with the diversity it provides. McKinney et al. (2023) claimed that the main reason teachers choose urban schools is that they are giving back to the community. When teachers give back to the community, they offer their expertise, knowledge, and skills to their students and that perception provides the motivation. In addition, Bracewell (2016) claimed that teaching has always offered people with diverse talents the opportunity to help shape the minds of tomorrow with their vast intellect, experiences, and desires to improve society.

In earlier studies, the claim was the belief that minority teachers were less inclined to discontinue teaching (Whipp & Geronime, 2017: McKinney et al., 2023). Ward (2020) determined that teachers of color leave the teaching profession at higher rates than their White counterparts due to the teaching ability and subject areas because of the disadvantaged areas within the urban schools. This resulted in job dissatisfaction that exaserbated the contribution to the mixed studies of teacher ability and qualifications.

Large-scale studies have shown that race, age, credentials, years of teacher experience, and characteristics of school environments can be important predictors of urban retention (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). Teaching experience also plays a role in career advancement opportunities that result in compensation and benefits, providing perseverance and job satisfaction. Male teachers in general are more dissatisfied with their jobs than their female colleagues in the teaching profession (Ward, 2020). The benefits and compensation contribute vastly as a major reason why teachers leave the teaching profession. The higher the compensation can decrease teacher turnover, and higher salary is linked to higher teacher retention. Therefore, to retain

teachers in urban schools, the pay must be higher in urban schools. Ward also stated that salary increase should be based on factors, such as harder-to-staff schools, high poverty areas, and student academic performance. This could imply encouragement to the working conditions that the teachers are faced with and, according to the literature, impact a teacher's decision to stay or leave in the urban school setting. Teachers are influenced by intrinsic factors, such as desire to help students achieve, desire to be effective in society, and the sense of accomplishment felt when they see students learn (McKinney et al., 2023).

The national necessity to increase the number of male teachers in the classrooms needs to promote academic student success (Bryan & Williams, 2017). Bristol and Goings (2019) proposed that increasing the representation of males in the teaching profession has been a topic of numerous reports and empirical studies, especially minority male teachers. The goal of increasing the number of Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers of color is to establish a teaching workforce that represents the rich diversity of perspectives held by the nation's demographic population (Brown et al, 2018). White male teachers fit into the mixture as a minority. Carver-Thomas (2018) concluded that an increased presence of teachers of color benefits students of diverse backgrounds and specifically those of color and gender added on to this increases the influence.

The career advancement opportunities that the literature indicates, identifies that the lack of career advancement opportunities plays a role in why teachers leave the teaching field.

Teacher advancement has an impact on retention. The age and years of teaching experience influence teachers' desired career advancement (Ward, 2022). The working conditions, based on the literature, delineates that high job stress and poor teacher/student relationships have a negative impact on job satisfaction. High job stress attributed to factors based on the teacher, but

common high stress factors include student misbehavior and low student academic performance (Ward, 2022: Johnson & Donaldson, 2005). Teacher satisfaction depends on the amount of autonomy teachers have and their decision-making power in relation to how they educate their students (Evans & Lenoard, 2013). Overall, teachers who constantly deal with student behavior issues, endure disruptions, and experience a lack of engagement from students, halts learning. In addition, teachers, with students who are low performing, must find ways to improve the student's academic performance, or risk performance improvement plans, for the fear of losing their jobs (Leither, 1993; Ward, 2022).

The increase in minority students in public schools has created the need for more minority teachers. Within 10 years, between 2004 and 2014, the total number of minority students in public elementary schools, middle schools, and secondary schools increased from 48.8 million to 50.3 million. In 2026, the number projected to increase to 51.7 million. This increase occurs despite the small number of minority male teachers in the public education sector (Bradley, 2021). Within this group of minority teachers, male teachers in general, despite race, are needed by the projection by 2026, when fifty-five percent of the students enrolled in public schools will be non-White (Bradley, 2021). Within all levels of society, males are constantly bombarded with numerous stereotypes and perceptions of how they should live their own lives (Bracewell, 2016). The need for male teachers is essential and, with the current situation, there is a massive underrepresentation of minority male teachers, including male teachers in general.

In terms of male teacher turnover, male teachers have more turnover than female teachers. The American Federation of Teacher Preparation Task Force (2012) revealed that men of color were more likely to leave the teaching profession than women of color. Ingersoll and May (2011) suggested that male minority teachers are less stable than White teachers, more

likely to migrate from one school to another, and more likely to leave the teaching profession (Ward, 2020). Male teachers served as accessible positive male role models that many students might not have available to them daily. This alone could help raise young men's negative perceptions of themselves and their educational futures (Bracewell, 2016).

How to Define Teacher Retention

When defining teacher retention, studies have indicated differing meanings of the words from the perspectives among principals/administrators and seasonal/current teachers. Kevin D. Frick (2012) shared that retention varied between groups and, to a lesser extent, within the groups. Most principals spoke of retention as keeping teachers in the profession and keeping teachers in the school building for a specified amount of time. In addition, Frink (2012) expressed that retention meant, by not only staying but performing effectively and efficiently. Retention is achieved by addressing issues of dissatisfaction and by keeping teachers in the school building. When you have teachers that buy into the learning community of your environment and they feel a part, then they are not going to want to go, because they will want to see everything come to fruition. This is an important concept to grasp because it triggers the understanding of how to obtain teachers to stay within the teaching profession, enhancing the importance of the tools of motivation and relationship building to keep teachers, regardless of their gender or race. Frink also indicated another point of view in defining the meaning of teacher retention; current teachers defined it differently. Current teachers focus was retention within the classroom or remain within a grade. Frink went further to express that the responses of current teachers ranged from retention in a particular grade or classroom in their school to retention within their school district, and to retention in the teaching profession. In addition, some defined retention in relation to working with children. Lastly, Frink observed that current

teachers appeared less concerned with the time of retention unlike the perspective of the administrator or the principal. Noted, after five years, it is often beneficial for the teacher to seek opportunities for growth elsewhere in the school system or the profession. In Frink's study, it was shown that two teachers who had been teaching for over 20 years felt that retention meant teaching for 30 years or until retirement, and cases where teachers should not be retained due to their incompatibility within the profession were also noted. To clarify the meaning of teacher retention with the information provided within the literature, teacher retention can be described when a teacher remains in the profession. Teacher retention at the school level is when a teacher remains teaching in the same school environment every school year (Ingersoll et al., 2019).

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition within the existing literature presents societal problems in the United States and plays a factor in the results of teacher retention. It is estimated that nearly 50% of new teachers leave the profession within five years (Hunt & Carroll, 2003) and, in addition to the immediate costs of replacing new teachers, teacher attrition has long-term societal costs of compromising the educational outcomes of children, especially in poorer neighborhoods where turnover is more likely to occur (Frink, 2012). There is a lack of in-depth understanding of the underlying factors influencing teacher attrition and mechanisms for promoting teacher retention. Frink conducted a study with the objective of evaluating senior volunteers' potential impact for improving teacher retention. What the findings discovered was that older adult volunteers may enhance teacher retention by improving classroom environments and by positively influencing some factors related to teacher attrition, including effort and satisfaction, as well as reducing absenteeism. The study hypothesized that volunteer programs may impact teacher retention indirectly through factors associated with retention, which included teacher satisfaction and the

effort to leave with precursors of attrition, including absenteeism. Overall, Frink predicted that volunteer programs can improve teacher satisfaction by supporting a more positive work environment, providing mentoring and models for new teachers, sharing of problem-solving strategies, and offering stress coping skills. It would be interesting if the findings of this study of exploring the experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools would support the claims found in the literature, and if it does, it can contribute vastly to the research of teacher retention.

There is an abundance of evidence that illustrates that attrition is a problem in almost all occupations and that teachers may be extreme outliers in this regard, with teachers leaving the profession at alarming rates when compared to other occupations (Borman & Dowling, 2008). When measuring behaviors, the number of teachers who leave requires complex follow-up. The studies can be challenging, time-intensive, and costly, which is a barrier to furthering understanding of teacher attrition. An outcome from this results in researchers with the task of examining current teachers' intention to leave as a proxy measure of attrition (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Madigan and Kim (2021) claimed that one of the main reasons why so many new teachers need to be recruited is because of the high rates of teacher attrition. One of the UNESCOS Sustainable Development Goals is that the world needs to recruit 69 million new teachers by 2030. The issues that arise indicate that almost half of new teachers leave the profession within five years, and replacing teachers not only has huge financial ramifications, but it also has a detrimental impact on students' academic progress.

Madigan and Kim (2021) conducted the first meta-analysis examination of the relationship between burnout and teachers' intentions to quit, the relationship between job

satisfaction and teachers' intentions to quit, and whether burnout or job satisfaction is more important in predicting teachers' intentions to quit. This study acknowledges the literature in the aspects of teacher retention in exploring the multiple regression analyses based on these meta-analytic effects indicated that burnout and job satisfaction together explained 27% of the variance in teachers' intentions to quit. In addition, the relative importance analyses indicated that burnout symptoms accounted for the majority of this explained variance. Overall, the findings suggested that burnout and job satisfaction are important in predicting teachers' intentions to quit, but it appears that, although they are related, burnout may infer a greater risk than job satisfaction, which infers protection, and this risk may be increased over time (Madigan & Kim, 2021: Larkin & Lokey-Vega, 2016).

The additional information discovered from the meta-analysis study showed that there was evidence that the strength of these relationships has increased over time. Job satisfaction showed a significant negative relationship with teachers' intentions to quit. Burnout dimensions also showed significant negative relationships with job satisfaction, depersonalization, and reduced accomplishment (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Teacher's Intentions

Because of the implications of teacher attrition on the national educational system, the students, and the economy, the past three decades have seen an increased focus on studying the predictors of teachers' intentions to quit. The facets of the teachers themselves, their students, and the school implicated attrition to some degree (Chambers, et al., 2019). In addition, research conveyed that seeking help from colleagues, positive school climates, and role stability are principal factors, as well as psychosocial factors, such as teachers' emotional states and stress (Madigan & Kim, 2021: Ollison, 2019).

One of the psychosocial characteristics is job satisfaction. While there is debate regarding the dimensionality of job satisfaction, it is commonly agreed that job satisfaction can reflect an overall sense of satisfaction; it reflects an individual's experiences of pleasurable emotional states derived from their evaluation of their job (Locke, 1969). There are several reasons why job satisfaction is connected to teachers' intentions to quit. Pearson (1995) suggested if teachers are unable to acquire what they perceive as essential in their jobs, they become increasingly dissatisfied and vice versa.

The studies that were conducted between intentions to quit and job satisfaction in the relationship of both in teaching and the general work settings have shown that job satisfaction appears to be relevant in predicting lower turnover intentions across a variety of professions.

There is also a link between job satisfaction and burnout within teacher attrition. Some researchers have supported that burnout leads to decrease in job satisfaction, while others have argued the reverse. It is highly likely that the two are linked in some way (Allensworth & Mazeeio, 2009; Madigan & Kim, 2021; Randall & Scott 1988). They are conceptually distinct according to Randall & Scott (1988). First, while teachers both pertain to teaching and associated practice, burnout also relates to the self. Second, they are distinct in relation to the ways in which teachers will evaluate their teaching. For example, a dissatisfied teacher does not like their job, while a burnt-out teacher feels incapable of performing it adequately. Lastly, within the teacher wellbeing framework, job satisfaction is a psychological dimension, while burnout is a physical dimension of teacher wellbeing.

There are many theoretical reasons that explain why burnout connects to turnover intentions (Chang, 2009). It is important to differentiate between the affective and cognitive symptoms of burnout because the affective symptoms are associated with avoidant coping

mechanisms that will likely lead to behavioral withdrawal and the desire to escape. The emotional exhaustion will cause teachers to feel drained and appear to not have the energy to spend another day in the classroom (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Burnout is conceptualized as a psychosocial syndrome that develops as a reaction to chronic work stress. Given that teachers will face many demands throughout their working day, burnout appears to be a relatively common experience among teachers (Chang, 2009).

Burnout can be comprised of three symptoms, emotional exhaustion, when one experiences feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted because of one's work. The second symptom is cynicism, which includes a cynical and impersonal reaction toward those around you, and lastly, the third symptom would be reduced efficacy. In explaining reduced efficacy, it can be described as the feeling of no longer being competent and successful at work, and the dimensions of this can be contextualized to the teaching domain (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Andrews, 2009).

The abundant studies on the association examining burnout and intentions to quit have collected relations to work contexts in general, and studies have suggested that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization related to turnover intentions, but reduced accomplishment, was only weakly related (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Depersonalization is likely to increase interpersonal conflicts with both members of staff and students, and the reliance on withdrawal to minimize such conflicts (Leiter & Maslach, 1988). While reduced accomplishment is more likely to be tied to performance evaluations, it is possible to be linked to reduced motivation and diminished self-esteem (Beer & Beer, 1992).

Teacher Turnover in Public Urban Schools

The factors that contribute to teacher turnover in public urban schools include lack of administrative support, poor parental involvement, disruptive classroom management that compels a teacher to leave a school, district, or the profession, is a continuing problem (Lytle, 2013). Teacher turnover in public urban schools affects the dynamics and lives of students drastically, and it is important to address and resolve this critical issue. Urban teacher turnover negatively affects student learning and academic success in many ways. Students are more likely to have fewer effective experiences with teachers who may not obtain the required licensure credentials in urban schools with high retention rates, affecting student achievements (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Teacher retention is an issue, especially in high-poverty schools (Grissom & Bartanen, 2019). Research studies showed that, in the 21st century, an estimation of fifty percent of teachers depart the teaching profession after five years, and onethird leave within the initial three years. As a result, teacher turnover shows evidence of increased levels more than other professions (McBrayer & Melton, 2018). The problem of teacher retention is increasingly apparent in high-needs schools, where most students live in lowincome situations (Hirn et al., 2018).

The circumstances affecting students are concerning for the educators who teach and serve urban students. The first reason for concern is compassion fatigue. Anyone repeatedly exposed to details of traumatic events can potentially be traumatized themselves (Ollison, 2019). The literature continues to address that the exposure to disproportionate numbers of violence experiences in urban communities can lead to urban students experiencing traumatic events, with mental and psychological health challenges.

The lack of administrative support plays a vital role in teacher attrition. West (2022) expounded that developing a strong relationship within positive school culture is vital in mentoring male teachers. For strong relationships to be effective, the participants in the study conducted by West aligned to promote relationships and provide professional development that supports and sustains an individual's skills, responsibilities, and needs for growth. The study also identified leadership practices that supported challenges influenced by student achievement, professional growth, and teacher retention. The roles administrators play in establishing mentor programs are essential, creating a strong support network, knowledge of resources, instructional planning, progress monitoring, and data training on assessment platforms. This is important to enhancing professional learning communities within the school and district environment.

When addressing the problem of teacher retention in the prevalent poverty/urban schools, Whipp and Geronime (2017) proposed that districts need to work more closely with teacher preparation programs to identify quality candidates who are more likely to remain teaching in high needs urban schools over time (Bodur, 2012; Kramrath & Bradford 2020). West (2020) also included in his study's findings that the participants who understood mentoring experiences are inequitable within the same school and district environments; therefore, effective mentoring structures can promote teacher retention and that mentoring practices implemented in schools should reflect the needs of the school climate and the teacher. Lastly, mentor programs are an effective approach for school administrators to support teachers' professional growth.

McKinney et al. (2023) created a table that identified the five factors that influenced decisions to select an urban school district. The table shows and supports the literature through the reading of transcribed interviews. This gains a sense of the range of the responses and identifies tentative themes that were refined. Five major factors were provided that influence

teachers' decision to begin their career in an urban school district, being identified as giving back to the community, diversity, location, teacher education program, and autonomy.

Table 1Five Factors That Influenced Decisions to Select an Urban School District

| Factors | Response number | Response Percent |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Giving Back | 5 | 100 |
| Diversity | 5 | 100 |
| Location | 4 | 80 |
| Professional Autonomy | 2 | 40 |
| Teacher Preparation Program | 2 | 40 |

Connection Between Teacher Retention and Attrition

The relationship between teacher attrition and teacher retention is a topic that presents an international, complex, and multilayered issue (Bristol & Goings, 2019; Kelchtermans, 2017). The connection between attrition and retention of teachers closely relates within the literature. They both share definitions within concepts that keep a double-sided coin in the recognition of the realm of educational practice. Teacher attrition refers to qualified teachers leaving the profession for reasons other than having reached the age of retirement, while teacher retention expressed as keeping teachers in teaching. Overall, the definition of teacher retention and attrition will remain insignificant without a simultaneous reference to what constitutes good education or good teaching (Kelchtermans, 2017).

The education issue of teacher retention and attrition refers to the need to prevent good teachers from leaving the job for the wrong reasons. Kelchtermans (2017) acknowledged that by

including the words *good* and *wrong* in the definition, the inherent implications of having to take a normative stance is stressed, as well as the fact that not every teacher who leaves the profession constitutes an educational loss, nor does every teacher who stays in the job is an accurate example of a positive contribution to educational quality. Motivation, experience, and sense making of one's working conditions, sense of expertise, and fulfillment are at stake according to the literature. There are indicators, such as, number of years since graduation, as well as length and legal conditions contracts to identify the population. From an educational perspective, the literature suggests that it is important to understand the actual process that brings teachers to leave the profession to evaluate whether something needs accomplished (Kelchtermans, 2017: Chapman, 1983).

The framework that constructs teacher retention and attrition as an educational issue, according to the literature, reflects on several assumptions. First, teachers' work lives result from ongoing meaningful interactions of the individual with his or her professional context (Lindquist & Nordanger, 2016). Second, sense making and decisions to leave or stay are not strictly rational deliberations, but inevitably involve normative issues and reflect value-laden stances, which express living a teachers' life means enacting one's technical expertise. The issue of teacher retention and attrition constitutes at the same time a problem to be solved or prevented and a challenge to be taken up and answered (Kelchtermans, 2017; Shakman & Gleeson, 2012).

Teacher retention and attrition is a problem, and the literature suggests that the problems are primarily sociological, economical, public health, and, lastly, a human resources issue. This can be described sociologically due to its nature as being institutional within the managerial concerns of governments to warrant a large and qualified teaching force in a society to provide both quantity and quality education that is needed for its citizens (Kelchtermans, 2017). The

literature also demonstrates that the second problematization is economical. The economical aspect in nature implies a loss of investment within the schools, and the administrative hassle it provokes results an additional cost of increased workload, which causes managing paperwork and having to invest again in introducing and socializing teachers in a new working environment. The third and fourth problematizations involve issues that relate to public health and human resources. These issues are connected within the context of teachers who leave after having been on sick leave for both short and lengthy periods of time due to excessive stress and burnout, bringing about cost in the system (Dou et al., 2016; Kelchetemans, 2017).

The literature showed that poor working conditions is a reason for attrition, which was proposed in a longitudinal study of urban schoolteachers over the course of ten years. The study showed that working conditions and school climates that are life-affirming help sustain and retain teachers as they work in urban schools because urban teachers often experience painful consequences of poverty and violence like their students (Ollison, 2019). In other helping professions that cater to trauma victims, there is an awareness that one does not escape that working relationship without some residual, yet potentially volatile, trauma-related mental health stress or compassion fatigue (Figley 1995; Ollison, 2019). The literature revealed that urban schools' circumstances have created a perfect storm in which urban students suffer from trauma, and the urban educators who serve them are leaving urban schools or the teacher profession altogether (Ollison, 2019).

Teacher attrition and retention as a human resource issue represents a mechanism of self-selection that includes weeding out the employees who do not meet the expectations in terms of professional quality (Kelchetemas, 2017). Qualified teachers who decided not to stay in teaching may do so because they do not feel there is enough of a fit between themselves, their personal

goals, and ambitions (Smith & Ulvik, 2017). The educational relevance within these issues of the problematization of teachers' attrition concludes in the educational processes from the students' perspective, staff members, and school development. Teacher retention happens when socioemotional personal life, for example, changes in aspirations, motivation for professional growth, and seeking new challenges (West, 2020)

School Climate and Culture

The literature showed that the circumstances affecting the educators who teach and serve urban students are the potential effects of compassion fatigue on the teacher's perception of their schools' working conditions and climate (Ollison, 2019). The characteristics of school climate and culture pertaining to teacher retention focused on the school factors, including the student demographics, minority status of the school population, the type of school either being a private, charter, or public school, and the working conditions. Overall, the literature expounds that teachers tend to continue teaching in schools. The school districts with higher number of White students who perform well on standardized tests have access to adequate resources, a sense that they have support from administrators and colleagues, with the support of either mentors or effective professional networks/development (Dee &Henkin, 2002; Whipp & Gernomine, 2017).

Marla West (2022) expressed that effective school leadership contributes to the school's climate and culture. The expectation is that school leadership can influence workplace conditions, capacity beliefs, and increase the motivation and commitment of school staff, which can influence retention and attrition. The researcher explained that there is an abundance of studies that have shown that teachers are more likely to remain in schools that have a social culture of collegial relationships, built on a professional culture of respect and trust, and that a collaborative school culture was a determining factor that influenced a teacher's longevity. The

social conditions tend to matter the most regarding teacher retention, and that schools interested in increasing their retention rates need to consider their cooperation levels and practices. Teacher collaboration is a key factor that influences teacher retention (McKinney et al., 2023).

The literature suggests that a combination of school leadership, collegial relationships, and school culture are most important in a teacher's decision to leave a particular school (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). To support this claim, a statewide survey in 2006 conducted in North Carolina, including all teachers, found that school leadership, professional development, and mentoring were highly predictive of teachers' intentions to leave a school. In addition, the study discovered that the higher the teachers perceived the quality of school leadership, the less likely they were to be either planning to or leave their schools. The higher teachers perceive the value and work of the administrative leadership of their school, the less likely they are to leave due to the pivotal role that principals play in the culture and working conditions of their schools. The administrative leadership behaviors and ideology surely impact teacher retention (McKinney et al., 2023).

In a retention study of all first-year teachers in New York City in 2005, the researchers discovered that all working condition factors that might influence a teacher's resignation from a school, dissatisfaction with school administration had by far the greatest influence on these teachers' decisions to stay or leave their schools (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). Effective leadership is fundamental to teacher retention, especially if teachers are given timely support, mentors, and professional networks, including both instructional and transformational leadership. Another study found that teachers who felt their administration team invested in their professional success had a higher predisposition to remain in teaching (McKinney et al., 2023). In a Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS), Ingersoll and May (2012) found that although the quality

of school leadership was an important factor in teachers' choice to leave a school, the degree of classroom autonomy was the most significant factor predicting retention for math teachers, and teacher salary was the greatest predictor of retention for science teachers (Whipp & Geronime, 2017).

The literature delineates some ideas regarding why teachers leave high-poverty urban schools. Ideas include various aspects of job dissatisfaction, such as a lack of resources, support, and recognition from the school administration, a lack of teacher influence over school and classroom decision-making, too many intrusions on classroom teaching time, inadequate time to prepare, poor salaries, and student discipline problems (Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Ollison, 2019). The importance of school leadership is essential, according to the literature. The methods of school leadership vary, but the effectiveness of it plays a leading role in teacher retention. The expectation is that school leadership can influence workplace conditions, capacity beliefs, and increase the motivation and commitment of school staff, which can influence retention and attrition, as school administrators perceived to be approachable, supportive, and nurturing (West, 2022). Lastly, Grissom and Bartanen (2019) explained the pivotal role that principals play in the culture and working conditions of their schools, with their behaviors and ideology influencing teacher retention (Glennie et al., 2004; West 2022).

A study within the literature on teachers' perception of classroom environmental factors in relation to stress discovered that how teachers perceive their environment in relation to the demands of the job versus their feelings about if they have the resources to cope with the demands of the job, directly influenced their perception of their classroom conditions and climate (Ollison, 2019). McCarthy et al. (2016) found that stress level and burnout could influence a teacher's perception of school climate. Given that compassion fatigue is a stress response to

trauma, it is plausible that compassion fatigue can affect a teacher's ability to see their school's climate and working conditions positively. The researcher also argued that these perceptions contribute, in part, to stress levels, emotional exhaustion, burnout, and teacher turnover (Ollison, 2019).

The area of professional development within school culture and climate also plays a role in teacher retention. A finding in a study by West (2022) regarding climate in culture for teacher retention of African American male teachers, West discovered that the workload, required meetings, and time allocated for lesson planning, including lack of leadership support, lead to stressful, inadequate working conditions. The participants' understanding of the need to develop strategies and structures to maintain a positive climate and culture aligns with the attributes for positive school culture. Providing novice teachers with continuing and relevant feedback, including directed professional development are vital to teacher retention. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) found that in-field mentors for novice teachers reduced the attrition rate by 30% and common planning time with experienced, master teachers also reduced the risk of attrition by 43% (McKinney, et al., 2023). A relevant example of the influences of teacher retention and attrition in urban, high-poverty schools versus non-urban, high-poverty schools is shown by McKinney et al.

Table 2

High Poverty Schools, Urban and Non-Urban

| Urban, high poverty schools | Non-Urban, high poverty schools | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Connecting with children | Collegial relationships | |
| Working conditions | Respect and trust | |
| Class size | Professional community | |
| Teacher autonomy | Teacher autonomy | |
| Teacher resources and supplies | Collaboration | |
| Belief they are essential | Cooperation | |

The commonalities found in this table include teacher autonomy, self-efficacy, and mentors/professional development. The data from the literature and from this study of the experience of White male teachers in urban secondary schools may include the commonalities found in the table. It would be interesting if the result concluded in that essence.

West (2022) also discovered that administer leadership support is an essential component that influences teacher retention, in that participants in their study of African American male teachers emphasized the importance of supporting and building the capacity for male teachers. Administrators explained supporting teachers means being a good listener, accessible, celebrating successes, and providing resources and professional development opportunities. Also, participants in that study believed school administrators who allocate the time and initiative to understand the issues teachers face, providing teachers with the essential resources and training to help the teachers develop professionally, demonstrates administrative support for teacher retention (Simon & Johnson, 2013; West, 2022).

Summary

The importance of presenting these values will increase teacher retention in accordance with the literature. Staff motivation, backing from administration, and an understanding of urban schools is instrumental in success. The experiences in the connections with co-workers and administration influences the results of teacher retention. The theoretical framework of social impact theory undergirds that events and other people that are close to them, in distance or relationship, than those that are far away (Latané, 1981). The findings of this study will provide a deeper understanding of what the motivation and backing are in detail. Social impact theory, by

Latané (1981), claimed that human beings are primarily influenced by the actions of other individuals. To be more specific, humans can be inhibited, persuaded, threatened, and supported by others. The emphasis on social impact in this study is to clarify if the experiences of the male teachers are influenced by the actions of others, and if individuals can be the sources or targets of social influence. The likelihood that someone will respond to social influence is thought to increase with the strength of the source. Social impact theory is a model that demonstrates that influence from other people as being the result of social forces acting on the individual.

In addition, the understanding of urban schools is essential in success for a teacher in the urban environment. The theoretical framework of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) delineates the social and cultural factors that facilitate or undermine humans' sense of volition and initiative with the well-being and the quality of their performance. The influence of the selfdetermination theory assists social impact theory. Deci and Ryan (1980) developed the selfdetermination theory that provides the psychological framework for understanding motivation and behavior. Overall, self-determination theory states that people are driven by three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The basic psychological need of autonomy pertains to the desire to be casual agents of one's own life and act in harmony with one's integrated self. It also constitutes a feeling of overall psychological liberty and freedom of internal will. Competence describes the control of an outcome and experience, with relatedness consisting of the will to interact with, be connected to, and experience caring for others. Selfdetermination theory is also widely used in education, behavior change, and game design, which will support the development of the framework. This study will help clarify the insight of what the insight pertains to teacher retention.

The factors of gender and race also play a role in the urban setting; the presence of male teachers affects the school environment, regardless of race. The theoretical framework of selfdetermination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) represents a broad framework within the realm of the study of human motivation and personality. The positive male influence in the urban environment affects the community and will have an influence on the lives of students. Deci and Ryan claimed that there are three essential elements of self-determination theory in that humans are inherently proactive with their potential and mastery of their inner forces with the examples of emotions and drives. Humans have a tendency toward growth development and integrated functioning that is inherent. Lastly, optimal development and actions are inherent in humans, and they do not occur automatically. The motivations both include intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, with extrinsic motivation differing in externally regulated behavior, introjected regulation of behavior, regulation through identification, and integrated regulation. Male teachers, regardless of race, must be included in this field; students come from all diverse backgrounds and cultures, and the focus on the experiences of these male teachers will clarify the insights needed to retain these teachers.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for White male teachers at an urban secondary school in Virginia. The focus was on the experiences of male teachers at an urban secondary school. The research of the dissertation focused on the experiences and perceptions of White male teachers. The data was collected through interviews, focus groups, and letter writing to fill the gap in literature for teacher retention in urban schools.

Research Design

The research design is a phenomenological study used to discover the commonalities and factors of retention that White male teachers in the urban secondary school in Virginia. Studies have been conducted on teacher retention of Black males, females, and other groups in urban schools, but a gap in the literature pertains to the teacher retention focusing on White males in urban schools. The research design of phenomenology is rational for this study because this study was to discover the lived experiences of 10 White male teachers who have a deep understanding and firsthand knowledge of working in the urban school environment.

The qualitative design chosen for this research study is phenomenology. Phenomenology refers to the knowledge at the conscious level and describes how one perceives, senses, and knows an experience (Moustakas, 1994). The selection of phenomenology was chosen for this study due to the ability of giving a voice to the present experiences of White male teachers in the urban school setting using multiple forms of data including interviews, focus groups, and journaling, which will help construct the experiences accurately.

Transcendental phenomenology was the specific type of design that was used within this phenomenological study because it set aside a bias perspective in exploring the data. The data procedures of Van Kaam (1966) and Colaizzi (1978) give the textual and structural descriptions needed to provide the best information for the data of this investigation. The importance of transcendental phenomenology consists of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher is removed from their own experiences regarding the subject to provide the best data that will be examined so that the purest possible outcomes of a nonbiased approach can be observed.

The data collection includes the site and individual, access and rapport, purposeful sampling strategy, forms of data, recording procedures, field issues, and the data storage (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The site was at an urban secondary school, and all the experiences for this phenomenon was explored and articulated through their lived experiences (Van Manen, 2014). In addition, the school district and the high school (Appendix B), as well as the participants being informed of the study procedures, including their rights (Appendix C), approved the access and rapport.

The purposeful sampling strategy includes maximum variation and typical case sampling with the purpose of documenting diverse variations of the individual site based on the specific characteristics of the urban, inner-city environment of the high school. For this study, the process of collecting information would primarily be in-depth interviews, documents, and focus groups. The important point is to describe the meaning of this study from a small number of individuals who have experienced teaching in the urban school setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018: Griffin & Tackie, 2017).

The interview process included one-on-one interviews and focus groups to enhance the interaction amongst the interviewees, which should likely yield the best information according to Creswell & Poth (2018). The procedures for the preparation and conduction of the interviews would first determine the open-ended research questions were answered, and then identified the interviewees based on the purposeful sampling procedures, while collecting data using the adequate recording procedures and transcription logistics. The interview process followed up by a focus group involving six participants from the 10 individuals who were interviewed. Lastly, the final form of data was in the form of letter writing from the participants. In addition, recording procedures for data rationale were kept and used within data storage in a safe lock box for proof of the intended use of data.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are grounded in the literature of previous research established that include factors that pertain to teacher retention in the areas of Black and White male teachers, female, and other teacher groups in the urban school setting. The research questions focus on the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia. The rationalization of the research questions is to add to the data in understanding teacher retention of male teachers because there is an absence of the representation of White male teachers for teacher retention.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia?

Sub-Question One

Why do White male teachers choose to work in the urban secondary school setting?

Sub-Question Two

What are the most common issues White male teachers share teaching in an urban secondary school in Virginia?

Sub-Question Three

What is the motivation for White males to teach in the education profession?

Setting and Participants

The site for the study was conducted at an urban high school in Virginia. The participants included 10 White male teachers who work or have worked at the high school for a minimum of two years. These teachers were a combination of high school social studies, science, math, English, physical education, foreign language, and career technology teachers. This will give multiple perspectives and diverse data in the results, rather than just focusing on one teaching subject.

Site

The organizational and leadership structure of the site was at an urban high school in Virginia. The high school in 2022 had 1,381 students, with 49% female and 51% male. The high school was ranked within the bottom 50% out of the 1,800 Virginia schools. The student to teacher ratio was 14:1, with an 80% graduation rate, and the minority enrollment was 59% of the student body (majority Black), which is higher than the Virginia state average of 54% (majority Black). Lastly, the diversity score of this high school was 0.62, which is less than the diversity score at the state average of 0.70 (Public School Review, 2022). The school's diversity has remained the same over the last five school years. At this particular high school, the administration has gone through leadership changes, including four different head principals within an eight-year span and multiple new and resigned associate principals within that

timeframe of those eight years. The administration team consists of five principals, including a head principal.

Participants

The participants for this phenomenological study consisted of 10 White male teachers who have worked at the high school for at least two years. The teachers selected were from a combination of the subjects that they teach, being from social studies, English, math, foreign languages, and physical education. This diverse group of teachers assisted in giving a more accurate transcendental research design to be able to answer the central question of this study.

Researcher's Positionality

The research positionality for the purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for White male teachers at an urban secondary school in Virginia, including the interpretive framework of social impact theory and self-determination theory. The three philosophical assumptions consist of the ontological assumption of epoché, the epistemological assumption of phenomenological reduction, and the axiological assumption of effective bracketing. The motivation for conducting this study was to collect the data of experiences of the White male teachers at an urban secondary school. In the United States, there is a shortage of teachers, especially male teachers (Ward, 2020). There have been studies on the severe shortage of Black male teachers and other groups, but there is a missing component in exploring this topic regarding teacher retention of male teachers (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). Due to the teacher shortage affecting the United States, and the teacher attrition within the urban school environment, the need for recruitment and retention for male teachers needs to be explored and analyzed for all male teachers, not just minorities. This study focused on the lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in the topic

area of male teacher retention.

Interpretive Framework

The interpretive framework was based on social constructivism. Social constructivism is the view that learning occurs through social interaction and the help of others, often in a group, and is based on the idea that learners construct new knowledge (Vygotsky, 2018). As participants shared their experiences through focus groups and interviews, the opportunity was given to interpret the views of others regarding the challenges of the lived experiences associated with the study. I constructed knowledge by observing the collaboration of ideas amongst the individuals, drawing upon the experiences and prior knowledge of others, and actively involving themselves in conversations to understand different perspectives and experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The open-ended questions during the interviews allowed the participants to expand upon their experiences and triggered the others in the focus group to elaborate upon their experiences regardless of whether the experience was relatable or dissimilar. The social constructivist view allowed the gathering of data by seeking an understanding of the experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia. Through the interactions and collaboration of the participants, the data was collected through the semi-structured interviews and focus groups (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Philosophical Assumptions

The philosophical assumptions are composed of the meanings and essences. These core processes to facilitate derivation of knowledge (Moustakas, 1994) are essential in conducting this transcendental study to its full potential. The positionality on the philosophical assumptions guides the reader in understanding how I approached the study. The three philosophical assumptions that are addressed included the ontological, epistemological, and axiological

assumptions. My ontological assumption allows me to view different perceptions gained by the participants. My epistemological assumption allows me to learn from the participants' feedback that pertains with the participants lived experiences. In addition, my axiological assumption allowed me to describe my values that are known and brought into this study.

Ontological Assumption

Ontology is the study of reality and involves the belief on the nature of reality (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The ontological assumption is characterized on the different beliefs on the nature of reality. My ontological view is the belief in one universal reality and not multiple realities. The view of multiple realities existing are actually mistaken perceptions of what are different perspectives not multiple realities, and those views create an inconstancy and complex belief on the nature of reality. As I conduct my research and analyze the data, I examine the universal reality of the commonalities and factors of teacher retention through the lived experiences of the participants.

Epistemological Assumption

My epistemological assumption is that effective communication between individuals creates knowledge, and that epistemology is defined as the study of knowledge and how knowledge is obtained (Creswell & Poth, 2018). We experience things that exist in the world from the vantage point of self-awareness. I asked the participants questions about their experiences and communication with others because knowledge is obtained through inquiry.

Axiological Assumption

Axiology is the study of values (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The axiological assumption of the study was transcendental; I removed myself from my own personal beliefs and assumptions while conducting the study. Reporting values and biases are equally as important as reporting the

data received from participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My values and experiences as a White male teacher brought a personal understanding to the study. I removed myself from my own personal beliefs and bias while gathering the data to best seek the truth of the information. The value of removing bias opinions, as much as possible, results in accurate data for the purpose of the research and outcomes. When I interpreted the data, my values did not influence the study in anyway. I am fully aware of my own bias and values, and I have trained myself not to allow it to distort the data.

Researcher's Role

As the researcher, I was a human instrument for gathering the data. I personally know the participants, and I am familiar with the site but can disconnect with assumptions and bias that may influence the results of the study. To ensure that I did not influence the perceptions or opinions of the participants' experiences, I had no authority over them. The Synthesis of Meaning and Essences was the final step of the research process and the integration of the textural and structural descriptions as a unified statement of the essence of the experience of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994: Person, 1995) arriving to the Imaginative Variation. After the observations, Imaginative Variation set up proper structural descriptions of the experiences of the participants and exposed the common factors of the purpose for the study. Overall, this process brought about the understanding of the experiences into the phenomenon that was being explored, and it furthered the study of teacher retention in urban schools to help both student and teacher success in the realm of education by providing the best social context for teacher and student contentions within this particular environment and culture.

Procedures

The first step in conducting this research study was to apply and receive permission to conduct the study through the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Once IRB approval was obtained (Appendix A), permission from the site was asked (Appendix B) and approved (Appendix C). Next, participants were asked, through word of mouth and personal contacts, to participate (Appendix D). Once participants were selected, the profiles of each participant were created on their age, subject matter, teaching experience, and background. Then one-on-one interviews took place with each participant (Appendix E) and then a follow up letter was sent to the participants (Appendix F). Once all interviews were accomplished (Appendix G), two focus groups were formed, from (Appendix H) the participants, based on availability and willingness to be a part of the focus group. Lastly, each participant completed a written letter that included the question of if they were able to travel back in time and write a letter to themself before entering teaching, what advice and instructions would they tell themself? (Appendix I). After completing all three tasks, all the information and data were collected and placed with the data collection.

Data Collection Plan

The data collection approaches that were used for this study included one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and a written letter. The key point was to describe the meaning of this study from a small number of individuals who have experienced teaching in the urban school setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first data collection approach was one-on-one interviews (Appendix G). The procedures for the preparation and conveyance of the interviews first determined the open-ended research questions to be answered, and then identify the interviewees

based on the purposeful sampling procedures, while collecting data using the adequate recording procedures, including using transcription logistics (Robinson, 2017).

The second data collection approach were the focus groups. In the focus groups, the participants grouped together in clusters of three to four and were asked open-ended questions, shared experiences, and collaboration on solving problems within the urban school environment (Appendix H). The use of phenomenological reduction and imaginative variation were influential during this stage in the study due to the openness and vulnerability of the participants in this format. Lastly, a written letter was used in this study. The letter writing data collection approach is used as lived experience descriptions (Moustakas, 1994). The written letter took 10 minutes to complete and provided reliable perspective of the participant. The letter writing approach allowed participants time to draft and edit their thoughts (Appendix I).

Individual Interviews

The one-on-on individual interview data approach was essential in this phenomenological study. Personal interviews are the cornerstone of the three data collection methods and personal interviews build rapport and trust (Moustakas, 1994). This data approach provides several advantages in that it provides useful information pertaining to the participants who have experienced the phenomenon. It also allowed the participants in the study an opportunity to describe comprehensive data and explanations. There was a series of 12 open-ended questions, resulting in a major portion of data for this study. The interview questions established the rapport for the participants and an effective and reliable interview to achieve, using what Marshall & Rossman (2012) referred to as a grand tour question. The grand tour question invited the participant to take the reader on their journey of whatever aspect of the social dynamic the reader inquired about, with the question that also sets a tone and direction for subsequent directions.

Marshall and Rossman (2012) expressed one of the side effects of the grand tour question is that it gets the participant comfortable with sharing their story and opens them up to deeper and more valuable responses to subsequent questions. Lastly, only open-ended questions are present in the individual interview questions to provide the data for exploring the participant's experiences in the education field.

Table 3

Individual Interview Questions

- 1. What is your educational background and career in your current position? CRQ
- 2. Why did you choose to work at this high school? SQ1
- 3. What are some of the issues that you face at this high school? SQ2
- 4. What do you believe are the cultural barriers at this school? SQ2
- 5. What are some of the cultural barriers that you personally face at this school? SQ2
- 6. What are a few methods do you use in your classroom to be successful? SQ3
- 7. Are there any tools that you use to help you, and if so, could you describe them? SQ3
- 8. What are the strategies that you use to reduce stress in this environment? SQ3
- 9. How do you battle to avoid fatigue, due to your occupation? SQ3
- 10. What keeps you in the teaching profession? SQ3
- 11. If you were to leave the teaching profession, what would be the reason or reasons? SQ3
- 12. What else would you like to contribute to this study? CRQ

The explanation for the inclusion of the interview protocol includes the relationship to the problem, purpose, and the theoretical framework. The questions are valid and reliable because the questions focus was to explore the gap in literature of White male teachers' experiences in an urban secondary school. The justification of questions one and two emphasized discovering the

lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia and to provide data for the representation of White male teachers pertaining to teacher retention. There is copious data on Black males and females, including general information, but the data for White male teachers is almost absent, and the data for White male teachers should display a detailed and more complete picture of understanding teacher retention in urban schools. Questions three, four, and five focus on the commonalities and differences of White male teachers in the urban school environment. These questions clarified the issues that teachers face in the urban environment, and the data provided the similarities and differences White male teachers experience compared to Black male teachers, women, and other groups. Lastly, question six through the conclusion of the questions provided the justification and backing of SQ1 and SQ2. The response to this question should be in alignment of the response to the previous questions to establish the central research question. The clarification of questions 11 and 12 included factors that pertain to teacher retention in the urban school setting with emphasis on the lived experiences of the participants.

The theoretical framework of Latané's (1981) social impact theory and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) played a major role in the validation of the interview questions. Social impact theory emphasized the construction of the CRQ and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) for SQ1, SQ2, and SQ3. The procedures included the experts in the field to review the questions that included the committee members, who refined the interview questions with a small sample outside the study to ensure clarity of questions, and any wording that was not necessary but permissible. With the reviewed and approved interview questions, and after the IRB approval, the credibility of the interview protocol included the first participant in the study.

Focus Groups

The rationale for the focus group data approach is due to the spontaneity and security of it. There was a collection of three participants in each group, with two groups allowing the individuals to describe and snowball the information of several open-ended questions (Moustakas, 1994). The purpose for only choosing six out of 10 was due to the individual situations of the participants and their personal scheduling conflicts. The culture surrounding the site where the study was being conducted made it impossible for all 10 participants to attend the focus groups, and that is the rationale for having only two focus groups with three participants in each. The focus groups clarified the overall features of the one-on-one interviews of the research questions to lead detailed data with the goal of seeing how the participants respond and behave in groups for the data of the study. The hope was that innovative ideas would emerge from the interactions between the participants, and different perspectives would be exposed in the groups to the responses to the questions given in the one-on-one interviews.

The job of the researcher consisted of asking the group four open-ended questions and facilitating the conversations by the members of the focus groups. In addition, the researcher moderated the discussions, so synergism remained intact throughout the data collection (Moustakas, 1994). There are disadvantages to focus groups that include misjudgments and the possibility of poor moderation, which may be difficult to analyze when not recorded. The focus groups were recorded, so all the information was collected as the sequences of the focus groups took place to ensure the avoidance of the disadvantages of the focus groups.

Table 4

Focus Group Questions

- What would be considered the most memorable experience working at this high school?
 SQ3
- 2. Throughout your experiences, what would you identify as the cultural barriers between the students and the teachers at this school? SQ2
- 3. What are some of the methods and tools do you use to be successful in the classroom?
 CRQ
- 4. What keeps you in the teaching profession, and if you were to quit, would be the main reason or reasons? SQ3

The focus group data approach concentrated on Moustakas (1994). Van Manen's (2014) also adds phenomenological analysis consisting of process coding within the data and providing the elements of invivo coding to label the raw data. The purpose was to identify the patterns from both the individual interviews and the focus groups to categorize them into theme development. The hope was to organize the data to focus narrowly on the description of the phenomenon being studied in conducting observations.

Letter Writing

The letter writing data collection approach was the third means of data collection inspired by Moustakas (1994). In the data collection, a written letter from each participant was used. The rationale for this form of letter writing analysis rests on the ability of the interview conversations and reflection for any miscommunication that may have occurred during the interview or focus groups of the participants. There was one written letter from each participant with the question on what the participant wishes they knew earlier in their educational journey, writing as a letter

to the participant's younger self. The written letter took 10 minutes to complete and provided a reliable perspective of the participant. The letter writing approach allowed participants more time to draft and edit their thoughts. Because many participants were not be able to drop everything in their lives to complete approaches like journal prompts or surveys, for the letter writing, the researcher allowed the participates two weeks to complete their letters.

Table 5

Letter Question

1. If you were able to travel back in time and write a letter to yourself before you entered teaching, what advice and instructions would you tell yourself? CRQ

Letter writing was a complement to interviews and enriched the participants perspectives because there is typically much more time for participants to draft, edit, and submit responses, as well as being an excellent alterative to journal prompts. Participants were asked to type this letter and email it to the researcher within one week of the interview. After completing all three tasks, all the information and data was collected and placed with the data collection.

Data Analysis

The three data collection approaches I used for this study included individual interviews, focus groups, and a written letter. To synthesize the data derived from the data collection, the themes revealed from all three data analysis methods were merged so a single set of themes emerged from all three methods (Creswell & Poth, 2018). First, the epoché component forced the researcher to see a new way of looking at things and what can be distinguished and described (Moustakas, 1994) because it provides a clean perspective of the research being completed. I completed open coding of all data through interviews, focus groups, and the written letters from the participants by categorizing various parts of the data into the appropriate code.

The transcendental-phenomenological reduction component, according to Moustakas (1994), created the reality that each experience is considered in its singularity. The textual descriptions of the meaning of the phenomenon through the one-on-one interviews and focus groups provided a significant source of data for the process and goal of the study in understanding teacher retention through the experiences of the participants. Overall, the purpose of this component, expounded by Moustakas (1994), was that each experience is considered in its singularity, in and for itself. This explains the importance of transcendental-phenomenological reduction entirely in this study. Once I categorized all the data into established codes, I used axial coding to identify the relationships within all categories or codes. The axial coding was used to develop patterns into one category, including subcategories (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Once I coded all the data using axial coding through a second-cycle coding, I used selective coding to finalize themes that produced the categories and subcategories. The goal was to grasp the structural essences of the experience (Frankenberg & Merseth 2010; Moustakas, 1 2994). The structural description of the essences of the experience is derived through this component and shows a picture of the conditions that precipitate an experience, connecting with it (Moustakas, 1994). The purpose of gathering the varieties to unite a complete conclusion is what the imaginative variation will perform in the data analysis and collection of the one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and the written letter.

I combined the data to create themes using NVivo and HyperRESEARCH to assist in coding the data. All the individual interviews and focus groups were transcribed and changed to remove any identifiable information through Microsoft Word. The letters were marginally altered to remove identifiable information. Once, I identified all possible patterns, I developed

the study's themes, subthemes, and outliers. All data was open-coded, and, after multiple rounds of coding, I was able to establish and classify the cases to develop themes and subthemes.

Trustworthiness

The importance of trustworthiness was essential to the foundational value and significance of the study. The standards of validation and evaluation play a significant role in the strategies of validation through the lens of the researcher, participants, readers, and reviewers. The aspects of the perspectives on validation are sectioned in the areas of credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and ethical considerations. The goal to achieve trustworthiness can be found in the authenticity of the research throughout this study.

Credibility

The importance of credibility includes steps of increasing prolonged engagement and persistent observation. Lincoln and Guba (1985) expounded that the confidence in the truth of a study's findings or the extent to which findings accurately describe reality in achieving trustworthiness in credibility. The triangulation of data and peer debriefing also becomes a factor in determining the appropriateness of credibility, with member checking that enables reflexivity throughout the study.

Transferability

Transferability is the ability for findings from the context of the study to be applied to another context or within the same context at another time (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Transferability is thick descriptive data (Creswell & Poth, 2018), with the narrative built about the context. The maximum variation in the site plays a key role in transferability, as transferability shows that the findings may have applicability in other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) so that judgments about the degree may be made by others who may wish to apply all or

part of the findings somewhere else (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study will illustrate transferability in adding to the understanding of teacher retention regarding male teachers in urban school and the overall perspectives.

Dependability

The rationale for dependability was to provide that the findings were consistent and could be repeated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, Creswell & Poth (2018) explained that confirmability contains the aspect of inquiry audit to keep accurate records of data collection and researchers' thought processes, preserving the original data. Another element of dependability consists of peer debriefing and expert review. The expert reviewer who is not directly involved with the analysis gave a reliable perspective of the data.

Confirmability

Confirmability gives comfort in establishing neutrality in which the findings of the study are shaped by the respondents and not the researcher's bias, interest, or motivation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The study's outcome is molded by confirmability due to the audits and auditing the audit trail to confirm the appropriateness in terms. Lastly, the authenticity criteria determine fairness ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, and catalytic authenticity validate confirmability, creating the ethical considerations of trustworthiness.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations and implications must be included in trustworthiness. The need for approvals from the institutional review board approval, such as Liberty University Institutional Review Board, and the sites where the participants were drawn from are essential. The permissions, pseudonyms, security measures to protect the confidentiality of the study site and participants was used for the integrity of the study that pertains to the implications of the

ethical considerations.

Permissions

The permissions included (1) the approval from Liberty University's IRB (Appendix A), (2) approval by the test site (Appendix B), (3) a signed consent form by the participants signed and documented (Appendix C). The approval letter from Liberty University is located in Appendix A. The approval documentation of the test site is located in Appendix B, and a copy of the consent form for the participants is located in Appendix C with all the details and information that pertains to the permissions needed to conduct the study.

Other Participant Protections

Pseudonyms were used to protect the confidentiality of participants and location of the study site; the pseudonyms were realistic and reflective of the culture of the participants, but not in such a way that the participants' anonymity was compromised. The consent and confidentiality of the participants informed and protected the participants throughout the study. The sensitivity of the information was guarded by the security of the data, having a locked cabinet for the paper files and passwords for electronic files. After a three-year period, if the data is not used or added onto, the data will be destroyed to protect all areas of the individuals involved with the study.

Summary

The design choice for this study was a transcendental phenomenological study. The types of data that were gathered included one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and document analysis data that will consist of the method of letter writing. Lastly, this study conducted the data analysis strategies of coding within the data collection with the use of software programs, such as NVivo and *HyperRESEARCH*. After the coding and data were collected, peer debriefing and

expert review was used and then repeated to ensure accurate and trustworthy data.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for the experiences of White male teachers at an urban secondary school in Virginia. The theoretical framework and context of this study included social impact theory by Latané (1981) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980). In this chapter, the participants' lived experiences as a White male teacher working in an urban secondary school will be presented: the chapter includes descriptions of the participants' experiences as a teacher, themes from the data, and responses to the research questions.

Participants

The participants for this phenomenological study consisted of 10 White male teachers who have worked at the high school for at least two years. The teachers selected were from a combination of the subjects that they teach, from social studies, English, math, foreign languages, and physical education. This diverse group of teachers assisted in their disciplines in giving a more accurate transcendental research design that answered the central question of this study. Table 4 shows the participants' data by the following factors: years taught, highest degree earned, and grade level. To meet Liberty University's qualitative requirements, I chose 10 participants for this study. All 10 participants were interviewed and wrote letters to their past self, while six of the 10 participants participated in a focus group. Pseudonyms were used to protect the confidentiality of participants and location of the study site; the pseudonyms were realistic and reflective of the culture of the participants, but not in such a way that the participants' anonymity was compromised.

Harvick

Harvick was in his 10th year in teaching and had earned a master's in special education. He was unhappy in his previous school and with the direction it was heading. Harvick was the baseball coach in 2020. At the end of the 2020 school year, the study site where he worked was looking for a special education (SPED) teacher, and he applied and accepted the position. He was also a volunteer with the local fire department, giving him a sense of accomplishment helping the community.

Gary

Gary's background in education was obtaining a Master of Arts in Teaching in Secondary Science Education, and he had been teaching at the middle and high school level for 8 years. He chose to work at the high school initially because of the administration that was entering the building, However, in addition to that, Gary had a strong drive to influence the community in a positive manner. As a teacher, Gary was overwhelmingly aware of the power he had to influence and mold young people. He did not take this for granted or lightly, carrying out his profession with the utmost respect for the role that he may play in the lives of the students who enter his class.

Doug

Doug held a Bachelor of Arts in History and a Post Baccalaureate Certification in Paralegal Studies. All of his family attended the study site where he worked. Doug and his two older brothers attended the high school while living in a house that was less than 150 yards away from the school. He had a true love for the young people at this high school and had no plans for leaving except for retirement or some serious issues that he was having with his eyesight.

Stan

Stan held a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. He completed his student teaching at the high school and when it came time to apply for jobs, there was an opening, and he was hired. Stan believed that the key to being a successful teacher in any environment was to have respect for your coworkers and students, trying to connect with them at whatever place they were and trying to connect with them at whatever place they were in their lives.

Walter

Walter graduated college with a Bachelor of Arts in English, started at the high school with a provisional license, and had taught all of his 18 years at this high school. He chose to work at this school when he worked with the drumline in the summer of 2003 and 2004. Walter loved the students and the environment, and he was not sure what he wanted to do as a career, so he gave teaching a chance. He liked to lift weights and play music. Walter thought that being a White man in an urban school was great and was passionate about his position as a teacher.

Bob

Bob had a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy and worked in that field as a clinician and skilled nursing executive for 25 years before switching careers. At the time of this study, he had just completed the Career Switcher program through Educate VA, resulting in a full 10-year teaching credential. Bob teaches algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. He chose to work at this high school because his wife worked there, and both of his children attended the study site. Bob knew that the school had a critical shortage of math teachers, and, at that time, he shut down an recreational vehicle (RV) transport company he started, coming onboard as a teacher at the high school.

Gordon

Gordon had a bachelor's degree in social science and had 10 years of teaching experience. He chose to work at this high school because he enjoyed working with diverse populations, as well as coaching basketball. Gordon felt that students at this school that experienced different socioeconomic status did not feel as comfortable with each other and that a small select group of students prejudged you on your race, gender, or beliefs.

Matthew

Matthew had been teaching for 16 years and had obtained a master's degree in special education. He had taught within the school district for 15 years and was in his fourth year teaching a foreign language at the time of this study. Matthew's choice in working at this high school was because he was interested in student transition from school to work. He enjoyed gardening and hiking to destress and was very passionate about teachers working year-round, making at least \$100K.

Josh

Josh had a master's degree in special education. He had been teaching for 24 years and was a football coach. Josh grew up in the area and established himself as a man of influence. He credited his faith being the driving motivation for his decisions and passion for teaching. Josh also had taught social studies, health, physical education, personal finance, sociology, strength and conditioning, and special education.

Barry

Barry had a bachelor's degree and had been teaching for 11 years as a physical education teacher. He chose to work at this high school for a coaching opportunity in 2003 and had been here ever since. Barry believed that being a White male in an inner city had its challenges and

that teachers needed to gain these students' trust, finding ways to relate to them by building a relationship.

Table 6 *Teacher Participants*

| Teacher Participant | Years Taught | Highest Degree Earned | Content Area | Grade Level |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Harvick | 10 | Masters | Special Education – All Content Areas | 9 th - 12 th |
| Gary | 8 | Masters | Science | 9 th - 10 th |
| Doug | 9 | Bachelors | Special Education - All Content Areas | 9 th - 12 th |
| Stan | 10 | Masters | Social Studies | 9 th |
| Walter | 10 | Bachelors | English | 9 th - 12 th |
| Bob | 2 | Bachelors | Math | 10 th - 12 th |
| Gordon | 10 | Bachelors | Social Studies | 9 th - 10 th |
| Matthew | 16 | Masters | Foreign Language | 9 th - 12 th |
| Josh | 24 | Masters | Social Studies/Special Education | 9 th - 12 th |
| Berry | 11 | Bachelors | Physical Education | $9^{th}-12^{th}$ |
| | | | | |

Results

I collected data on the participants' lived experiences being a White male teaching in an urban school. The study followed the central research question and three sub-questions by collecting data using individual interviews, focus groups, and written letters. The data revealed seven themes: connections to the school, relationship building, respect, use of technology, not enough pay, motivation to teach, and student absence.

All of the participants' individual interviews were conducted in person and recorded on voice memos, being transcribed on paper then proofread on Microsoft Word. The focus groups were recorded through voice memos and then transcribed on paper and proofread on Microsoft

Word. All letters were either emailed or handwritten and then altered to remove identifiable information. To ensure the data was safe and secure, I stored all recordings, documents, and transcriptions on a password-protected flash drive and put physical copies of data in a locked filing cabinet. All the transcriptions were sent to the participants to check for accuracy.

NVivo and HyperRESEARCH were used to assist in coding the data. All the individual interviews and focus groups were transcribed and changed through Microsoft Word to remove any identifiable information. The letters were marginally altered to remove identifiable information. All data was open-coded and, after multiple rounds of coding, I was able to establish and classify the cases to develop themes and subthemes. Table 5 presents the themes and subthemes of the data.

Table 7

Themes & Subthemes

| Theme | Sub-Theme 1 | Sub-Theme 2 | Sub-Theme 3 | Sub-Theme 4 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Connections to School | Family Ties | Coaching | Grew Up in the Area | |
| Relationship Building | Interaction with Students | Being involved in the Community | Love for Students | Influence of Colleagues and Administration |
| Respect | Giving Respect | Earning Respect | | |
| Use of Technology | Too Much Cell Phone Usage | Online Curriculum Materials | | |
| Motivation to Teach | Sense of Calling | Seeing Student Success | Being a Positive Influence | |

| Not Enough | Compensation | Working Multiple |
|---------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Pay | | Jobs |
| | | |
| Student Absences | Chronic | Student |
| | Absenteeism | Disengagement |
| | and Tardiness | |

Connections to School

The first theme identified by this research was connections to the school. Nine of the 10 participants had some type of close connection with the school. The sub-themes that appeared from the themes included family ties, growing up in the area, and coaching. One exceptional statement from this theme was Stan's connection: Stan stated, "I did my student teaching here and enjoyed it." The only participant that did not have a direct connection with the study site was Matthew, who claimed, "I wanted to move from teaching SPED to a foreign language and was interested in the student transition." Matthew's quote was pertaining to his job while he was searching for a new job opportunity. Overall, all of the participants, except for Matthew, either were coaches locally, had family ties, or grew up in the area. When I interviewed Gary, he stated that he chose to work at this school because, "the administration that was entering and a strong drive to influence the community in which he lives in." In Doug's letter he expressed:

When you move back to Lynchburg to help your mom and dad, you'll decided to go back and work at one of your favorite places on earth...... the high school you went to! What could be better than to share your life experiences with the young people there, right?

The theme of the connections to the school was an evident commonality that pertained to the participants. Nine of the participants explained their connection to the study site, which provided a commonality amongst the participants.

Family Ties

The first subtheme that emerged from connections to the school was family ties. Five of the 10 participants had family connection to the high school. Walter, in his letter, expressed, "Speaking of your children, both of your children will attend the high school and they will thrive there!" The family ties of connection to the study site explained by Walter conveys the heritage of influence this participant experienced in the result of this study. In addition, Walter added, "Your wife is going to be the School Nurse at the high school after she graduates from Nursing School!" As Walter shared in his letter, he told himself about the impact the study site has influenced his entire family in a positive perspective, which helped drive his motivation going into several of the other themes unraveled in the results of this study.

Walter was not the only participant whose entire family was impacted by the study site. Bob's experiences with the connections to the school included his entire family and their family ties to the study site. Bob, during his interview, stated, "I choose to work at the high school as my wife works there and both of my children attended high school there." Bob's experiences mirrored Walter's connections to the school in that both of their wives were employees at the study site and both Bob's and Walter's children attended the study site.

Doug expressed, in his interview, "All of my family attended (the high school). My two older brothers and myself attended while living in a house less than 150 yards away." Eddie also shared that his wife worked at the high school, and Walter shared at the end of his letter that, "The high school will quite literally become part of your family and it will impact the lives of every single person in your family in profound ways. Do your best to make it the best place you can." The influence of family ties that was displayed throughout the interviews and letters share a motivating factor of the evident theme of the importance of the connection to the school the participants had that set the foundation for several other themes discovered in this study that will

be discussed later in this chapter.

Coaching

The second subtheme found in connections to the school was coaching. Five of the 10 participants were involved in some type of coaching role at the high school. Harvick, in his interview, shared:

I choose to work at the high school because I was unhappy in my previous school with the direction it was headed. I was the JV baseball coach in 2020 at the high school and saw they were looking for a SPED teacher.

Gordon and Gary both shared that they coached a sport at the high school, and Berry stated, in his interview, that, "I choose to work at this high school because I was coaching lacrosse here since 2008." Both Gordon and Berry's main connection to the study site was their opportunity to coach.

Josh shared, "Coaching football has driven my decisions to work in the school." Josh also expressed through his interview many other factors that are included in the upcoming themes that will be discussed in this chapter. Lastly, Berry concluded in his interview that, "My passion is coaching and that has come hand in with working with the youth and trying to impact their lives. I have struggled with it at times, but I think I keep coming back to the fact that I am doing my best now to impact more people." The subtheme of coaching enabled a connection to the school that was outside of a family connection that enabled the understanding of the culture to the participants who may have not known about the area and were considered an outsider, as Berry, who did not grow up in the demographic area.

Grew Up in the Area

The third subtheme that emerged from connections to the school was growing up in the

area. Josh shared, in his interview, "One of the reasons I choose to work at this school specifically, was because I grew up in the county and even though I didn't attend this high school, the school was known as the school that was the most diverse in all the land." Harvick also shared in his interview and focus group that he grew up in outside of the city, but in the area. This commonality discovered within this subtheme displays that the learned experience of understanding the area enables the opportunity to build relationships with the students and community naturally.

An in-depth element of growing up in the area pertaining to connections with the school was the participants that attended the school. Doug, in his interview, shared that he attended the school and in his letter, he said,

My biggest piece of advice to give you, when you do this, is to prepare yourself for being surprised. For, despite your two older brothers' experiences there in the 1970's and your own in the early 1980's, you will be surprised.

The connections to the school either through family ties, coaching, or growing up in the area all set the foundation for building relationships, providing the motivation to teach at the study site, understanding and applying respect in the teaching environment, and creating successful material and methods for student success in the classroom.

Relationship Building

The second theme that emerged from this research was relationship building. All 10 of the participants expressed some form of relationship building. The sub-themes that were identified from this theme included interaction with students, being involved in the community, love for the students, and influence of colleagues and administration. Both Stan and Gordon agreed in the focus group that relationship building was key to teacher success in any context.

Harvick shared in his interview that, "One of the things that keeps me in the teaching profession is the students. I love interacting with the kids." Josh, in his interview, said, "A method that I use in my classroom to be successful is developing relationships." The ability to build relationships is viewed as a natural gift that all the participants possessed throughout the data in this study.

Lastly, Berry, in his interview, stated, "I think my relationship building really helps the kids feel safe with me and make it easier for them to trust me and engage in a relationship." The importance of the theme of relationship building in the forms of interacting with students, being involved in the community, the love for the students, and the influence of colleagues and administration was a commonality found that impacted all the participants throughout the data in the focus groups, individual interviews, and letters.

Interaction with Students

The first subtheme found in relationship was interaction with students. Bob, in his letter, said, "I would have never guessed entering this profession that the students that are the biggest challenges at the start of the year are often the students that end up developing the best relationship with you in the end." Stan, in his interview, said, "A method that I use in my classroom to be successful is that I try to get to know my students and build positive relationships with them." Walter, in his interview, added, "The first few weeks of school, I do my best to learn as much about my students as possible. Showing investment in them usually reciprocates eventually." Harvick, in his focus group, shared, "I try to reach the kids on a personal level, and I try to understand their likes and dislikes." Lastly, Walter shared in his letter the importance of interaction with students by stating:

Most of the students that you will teach at the high school have experienced a vastly different childhood from what you experienced. Many of them face poverty, food

When they are angry or they act out, this is usually the reason. Don't take things personally, instead, be their advocate and give them a space where they feel like they can let their guard down a little and discover some things about who they are and who they have the potential to be without judgement, ridicule, or stress. That's what being a teenager is all about and it's a good teacher's job to guide them through it.

The subtheme of interaction with the students is a strategic factor and results in building relationships with the students to be possible.

Being Involved in the Community

The second subtheme found in building relationships was being involved in the community. Stan, in his focus group, said, "To connect with the students at whatever place they are at in their lives and that includes being involved in the community." Gary, in his interview, shared, "I have a strong drive to influence the community in which I live in a positive manner." The influence of being involved in the community, according to both Gary and Stan is a tool that they use to build relationships with their students. The participants that are involved in the community displayed a commonality within their connections in building relationships and set up the avenues for the other themes that emerged from this study.

The engagement in the community also looked different in the perspectives of some of the participants. Harvick, in his interview, said, "I volunteer with the local fire department and even though that is stressful at times, it gives me a sense of accomplishment helping my community." Lastly, Walter shared that he first got involved with the school while being involved in the community through the drumline in the summer of 2003 and 2004. Harvick and Walter's involvement in the community are vastly different, but the commonality of their

involvement allowed them a path to build relationships.

Love for Students

The third subtheme for relationship building was the love for students. From the 10 participants, seven of them directly mentioned a love for the students. Doug, in his interview, said, "I have a true love for the young people and for the high school." Josh also shared in his interview, "I have a love for the students at this high school." The participants that mentioned a love for the students provided a commonalty in the theme of building relationships. The subtheme of the love for students set up a motivational factor in the connection to building relationships. The participants who acknowledged this during their interviews, letters, and focus groups displayed a passion in the tone of their responses to this subtheme.

An example of the passion of the seven participants that mentioned this subtheme, Walter, in his interview, stated, "I love working with young people and teaching has allowed me to continue to do things I'm passionate about as a career. I really couldn't imagine doing anything else and really having my head and heart in it." Lastly, Gordon, in his focus group, expressed that, "I love interacting with the kids and seeing them succeed and develop." All the other participants in his focus group publicly agreed with Gordon's statement, which concludes the claim of the commonality of the love for students being an ingredient for building relationships.

Influence of Colleagues and Administration

The fourth subtheme for relationship building involved the influence of colleagues and administration. Walter, in his letter, expressed, "Don't be afraid to rely on colleagues. You will meet some of the most incredible people you will ever know that building including students and teachers." Gary, in both his interview and focus group, said, "I choose to work at this high school

initially because of the administration that was entering the building." Gary's consistency within his responses both privately (his interview) and publicly (his focus group) supported the importance of relationship building with the spectrum of the commonalities of the experiences the participants shared. In addition, Walter's encouragement to himself in his letter expounds the advice of building relationships with your co-workers as being one of the essential aspects to hold on to while in the teaching field.

Gordon, in his focus group, shared, "The influence of my colleagues and administration has been a vital tool to help me in this environment." Gordon's connections with not only his colleagues but also the administration was a resource to help him survive at the study site. Berry, in his interview, stated, "Administration support has been a lot better this year and it has made it better in dealing with the issues at this school." Berry's perspective and his experience at the study site displayed the difference administration makes at schools. Lastly, Josh expressed in his interview, "Co-workers and administration are a few tools that I use to help me at this job."

Overall, the subtheme of the influence of colleagues and administration blends its way into the fabric of building relationships. The result of this subtheme's outcome revealed that the effects of the influence of colleagues and administration guide the relationship building that the participants have with the students

Respect

The third theme identified by this research was respect. All the ten participants mentioned something regarding respect in their interview, letter, and focus group (if they participated in one). The sub-themes that appeared from the themes divided into two categories that included giving respect and earning respect. One of the unique findings that involved respect was Doug's perspective in his interview when he said, "It has been difficult dealing with the lack of respect

from both adults and students at times." Respect was not just a commonality found within the student relationship but also with parents, co-workers, administration, and other outside influences. Stan shared from his interview, "The key to being a successful teacher in any environment is to have respect for your coworkers and students and try to connect with them at whatever place they are at in their lives." The theme of respect is identified throughout the data in the letters, interviews, and focus groups of the participants that builds off the previous theme discussed on building relationships.

Giving Respect

The first subtheme emphasizing respect focuses on the area of giving respect. Harvick, in his interview, shared, "I think some of the teachers don't really look at the students as equals, not based on anything in particular." He then went on to say, "The first and foremost most important method I use in my classroom to be successful is respect." Harvick pointed out that when the teacher does not view the students with respect, it is very difficult to build relationships and create a successful classroom environment. Walter also emphasized the concept within the commonality of giving respect when he stated in his interview:

I think being a White man in an urban school is great. It does require that you put in a lot of work up front to let the students know that you respect them, and that you deserve their trust and respect in return.

Gary and Harvick also agreed in their focus group that one of the most useful methods they use in their classroom to be successful is giving respect to the students and co-workers. When the teachers show respect towards the students, that respect transforms into a tool, that creates a successful classroom environment and, according to Gary and Harvick, respect provides a useful method towards their co-workers at the study site.

Earning Respect

The second subtheme regarding respect is earning respect. Gary, in his interview, said, "The methods of culturally educating yourself in an organic way is an excellent way of earning respect of the students." Gary was sharing that when he shows respect, respect is then naturally given to him, enabling him the opportunity to be a successful teacher. Bob also shared in his letter:

I think I came into the profession expecting students to have the same level of respect that my peers and I had towards authority figures 35 years ago. While this likely is not an issue for a new 22-year-old teacher entering the classroom, it certainly was shock for me when I entered the classroom. I was not prepared for simple expectations and directions to require a negotiation between teacher and student.

Walter also added, from his interview, "It is important to understanding and respect the existing culture in a community to be successful teaching within it. I think once I learned the ins and outs there weren't many barriers and I earned respect." Matthew also shared from his interview that, "I feel respected by most students, as it was something that I earned over time."

Use of Technology

The fourth theme identified by this research was the use of technology. Five of the ten participants had mentioned very specific uses of technology. The use of technology was a commonality found in the experiences of half of the participants. The sub-themes that appeared from the themes included too much cell phone usage and the use of online curriculum materials. Matthew, in his interview, shared that, "unfortunately, technology like Chromebooks and Gimkit are tools that I use in my classroom." Matthew is clearly unhappy with his need for the use of

technology in his classroom, but he knows that it is essential to be successful as a teacher at the study site.

On the positive side of the use of technology in the classroom, Gary shared, in his interview, that, "I use a lot of virtual lab simulations and animated videos to help students learn and understand content." Gary also stated in his interview that, "I incorporate technology by keeping the room lights dim and either music or a quiet, science related show playing in the background." The use of technology was an essential tool that the participants used within their classroom that has earned enough credibility to be a theme from this study.

Too Much Cell Phone Usage

The subtheme of too much cell phone usage was relevant in the usage of technology. Bob was very passionate about too much cell phone usage during his interview when he claimed:

The last big issue I see is technology, in particular cell phones, and the negative effects they are having on our students. Students miss so much valuable instruction as their attention in other places; many teachers loosen up or entirely give up on monitoring and holding students accountable to cell phone policies as they feel, with a finite amount of class time, that they have to choose between monitoring cell phones or teaching. Students often come to class to fatigue to participate even sleeping through entire lessons due to cell phones during the evening hours.

Gordon also added in his interview, "The increase usage of cell phones, negatively impacts student performance in the classroom." The results from the study that included negative implications of cell phone use by the students was mentioned by all the participants in the focus groups and four of the participants in the interviews.

Online Curriculum Materials

The second subtheme of the online curriculum materials is summed up by Gordon's statement during his interview, "The tools I use include material from my colleagues and online curriculum materials." Bob goes into detail of what the online curriculum materials are in his interview, stating, "I utilize Google Classroom heavily and students quickly learn that they can find class notes, reference materials, daily slide decks, assignments, and sometimes partial answer keys there." Stan also shared in his interview, "I use a variety of technological tools to help my students gain understanding. Some of these tools are: Nearpod, EdPuzzle, Google forms readings, Google Docs draw and drop Google Drawing, Quizizz, Quizlet, and Kahoot." Lastly Bob shared from his interview,

I also utilize electronic assignments, such as IXL, Edulastic, Google Forms, and Edia.

While a lot of what we do in math lends itself to a worksheet, students can quickly tire of the monotony of worksheets as they also do electronic assignments.

The use of online curriculum materials was an essential tool for a majority of the participants and was a tool within the technological sphere that this group of teachers use in their environment.

Motivation to Teach

The fifth theme that emerged from the data was motivation to teach. This theme contained three subthemes that included a sense of calling, seeing student success, and being a positive influence. All ten participants commented on this common theme from one or all of the subthemes. While Mathew shared, "Teaching can be really rewarding," Harvick explained in his focus group that his most memorable moment as a teacher actually occurred recently when "I was able to help one of my students pass their SOL so they could graduate high school." Harvick's motivation of student success stories opened up much discussion within his focus

group, which provided the motivations of the teachers to teach at the study site. Stan also added from his interview that, "Overall I feel like I am having a positive impact on the lives of young people and that is rewarding." The subthemes of seeing student success, being a positive influence, and a sense of calling are the elements of the participants' motivation to teach in their current environment.

Sense of Calling

During the individual interviews, Josh contributed his faith as the driving motivating factor that keeps him in the teaching profession. Josh stated, "My Faith in God and understanding my calling as a teacher with the ability to establish and maintain accountably within the football program keeps me in the teaching field." Walter shared in his interview, "I am passionate about my career and I really couldn't imagine doing anything else and really having my heart in it, it's like I'm meant to do this." Walter, in that statement, provided an unspoken motivation that he could only sense but not fully understand or explain.

Lastly, Harvick, in his focus group, shared, "I'm in this profession because I feel a sense of calling to do this." The other participants in Harvick's focus group agreed with his statement, as Gary shared that he felt the same way. The commonality of an unexplained sense of calling for the participants to work at the study site was addressed by six of teachers in their interview, letter, or focus group.

Seeing Student Success

The second subtheme found in motivation to teach was seeing student success. Gary said in his letter, "Your students realizing their potential and achieving success will be of insurmountable value. A value no money could touch." Gordon and Stan, in their focus group, were very passionate about student success, when Gordon stated, "Seeing students succeed in

and outside of the classroom, is what it is all about." Berry, in his individual interview, said, "I think I keep coming back to this high school because I am doing my best now to impact more people and see the students succeed." During Bob's interview, he shared that:

What keeps me in the teaching profession is believing that I am making a difference by being here. The 'ah ha" moments that students have when suddenly they get it and their perspectives of what they are capable of changes.

In addition, Bob's most memorable experience as a teacher involved student success, which sums up the importance seeing student success when he shared:

My most memorable experience is that of a student who transferred to our school around the beginning of the second quarter this year. About halfway into the second quarter she was struggling in her Geometry class where the teacher was out on maternity leave so I was asked if she could join my class. She had a lot of knowledge gaps, had a lot of struggles in her home life that prompted the mid-year transfer from another state, and she was less than excited about math class and school in general. To say that she started my class with a rough start would be an understatement. Her attendance was very poor, she was often tardy, required frequent redirection regarding use of her cell phone, and did very little to no classwork on a daily basis. Slowly I began to see a shift in her from her classroom participation to her attitude to even her attire. Unfortunately, at the point it was almost mathematically impossible to overcome the grade she had accumulated from second and third quarters. We were able to get her enrolled in an in-school tutoring program to assist and design a program where she could fill in some of her knowledge gaps and recover her earlier grades. To see her perspective and achievements change over time was very memorable and I anticipate may end up making a significant different in

her overall trajectory in life.

During all the focus groups conducted, the participants, who shared their most memorable moment, all involved a story of a student's success. The factor of student success within the theme of the motivation to teach shared a strong connection throughout the study.

Being a Positive Influence

Being very similar to the sense of calling, being a positive influence was another subtheme that was identified from eight of the 10 participants. In his interview, Gary said, "The knowledge that I will have positivity influenced or helped students realize their greatest potentials. It is honestly humbling, and I am very grateful to have the opportunities that are before me." Harvick agreed with Gary in the focus group when Gary shared:

I would just add that as a teacher, I am overwhelmingly aware of the power I wield to influence and mold young people. I do not take this for granted or lightly. I carry out my profession with the utmost respect for the role I may play in the lives of the students who enter my class. My only hope is that other teachers do the same.

The importance of recognizing the importance of being a positive influence by several of the participants keeps them accountable while providing them a drive to do their work at the study site.

In conclusion, to this subtheme, Doug shared in his interview that, "being a positive influence goes a long way in keeping me at this place, especially on the hard days." Doug's experiences of being a positive influence not only keeps him accountable and providing him the motivation to teach, but it also is an outlet and tool to help him remain teaching. The importance of the participants' belief in being a positive influence sets the access to consistency and retention these teachers require to stay at their position at the study site.

Not Enough Pay

The sixth theme identified by this research was not enough pay. Seven of the 10 participants said that this was the main reason that they would leave the teaching profession. The theme was organized into two subthemes that included compensation and working multiple jobs. In his interview, Berry shared, "I would leave to make more money." Matthew, in his individual interview, said, "I would leave the teaching profession due to the pay." The theme of the connections to the school these teachers have runs throughout all the individual interviews, letters, and focus groups.

Compensation

Compensation was a consensus during both focus groups. Gordon was very vocal in expressing, "Teachers do not get enough compensation and pay to do what they do." Matthew, in his interview, added, "I think teachers should be paid 100K and work year-round. We no longer live in an agricultural society when students need the summers off to work in the fields, we can and should do school all year round." Stan, in his interview, quickly stated, "Compensation! Not being paid enough would be the main reason I would leave." Stan was very passionate, and his vocal level increased drastically to answer this question. Stan's response displayed the overall commonality of the lack of pay and compensation the participants felt regarding this subtheme. The participants also displayed a sense of frustration when discussing this specific subtheme, especially in the focus groups when the participants were in a group together.

Working Multiple Jobs

The second subtheme revealed in not enough pay was working multiple jobs. In Walter's letter he said,

Work hard, you won't make much money and you'll have to do multiple jobs to make

things work, but you'll always get to do things you love, and that's really important.

Don't forget to take a step back from the daily grind and remember that every once in a while.

The lack of pay resulted in different solutions for the participants to continue to teach.

Walter was a prime example of a teacher who believed he had a sense of calling to teach at the study site, and he was willing to make sacrifices to continue to do it.

Seven out of the ten participants claimed the lack of money would be the main reason to leave but all the participants mentioned the lack of money. This was a strong commonality, as Walter also shared in his interview, "If I were to leave the teaching profession, the reasons would be not enough money, tired from having two jobs and two side gigs." In addition, Harvick added from his interview that, "I work multiple jobs and if I were to leave the teaching profession, would be because of the lack of income and not being able to provide for my family." The lack of income described by both Harvick and Walter supported the finding in the study that explained one of the main reasons why teachers are forced to leave or not to leave the teaching profession.

Student Absences

The seventh theme identified by this research was student absences. Seven of the ten participants had some form of student absences being one of the issues that working at this high school faces. The sub-themes that appeared from the themes included chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and student disengagement. During his individual interview Bob stated:

One of the biggest issues I see at our school is attendance including absences, late arrivals, tardies, and skipping. While this is an issue at many schools, our school's attendance is significantly worse than state averages. Students miss valuable instruction

when their seat time is diminished. Unfortunately, when attendance causes students to struggle, they often become frustrated with their classwork and react negatively with behavioral issues and often increased attendance issues. It is a downward spiral that students often do not escape.

The theme of student absences is a commonality throughout the study. The data supported through the individual interviews, letters, and focus groups provided the discussion of the negative impacts of student chronic absenteeism and tardiness. The student absences subthemes did not just include the student's physical absence but all the mental and psychological absence of student disengagement.

Chronic Absenteeism and Tardiness

The first subtheme was chronic absenteeism and tardiness. Matthew, in his interview, said, "Some of the issues that I face at this high school include chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and cell phone use." Matthew was very quick in his response when asked about the issues that he faced at the study site. Doug shared from his interview, "Chronic absenteeism is a big issue at this school." Both Matthew and Doug expressed a commonality of the issue of student absenteeism. Bob also shared from his interview:

Unfortunately, the effects of these attendance issues don't just affect chronically absent students, but other students who regularly attend and are negatively affected by instruction that has to slow its pace to accommodate the needs of chronically absent students.

Bob explained in detail the effects of what the student absenteeism results meant from his experiences, and his statement on the attendance issues serves as an example of this subtheme.

Lastly, Harvick also stated from his interview, "That students not being present at school

creates a huge issue with their success." Harvick was very discouraged when he brought this up in his interview because Harvick, throughout his interview, expressed his love for the students, being a positive influence to them, and the motivation he receives when he sees them succeed. So, when Harvick shared about the students not being present at the school, the students not being present does not allow Harvick to build relationships and be able to do all the things that make him a successful teacher.

Student Disengagement

The second subtheme from student absences included student disengagement. A student can be both physically and mentally absent. Gary shared from his interview, "The biggest challenge that I have at this high school is student attendance and motivation to complete work." Stan also stated in his interview, "Also, if it got to the point where increasing numbers of students were apathetic, that might be discouraging enough to make me want to leave." Throughout the data collection when the participants mentioned this subtheme, there were similar reactions to the theme of lack of money. The frustration was evident in all the participants that mentioned anything about student disengagement. Five of the ten participants expressed this commonality in either their interview, focus group, or letter.

Lastly, Berry said in his interview, "Some issues I have faced was dealing with some students not listening or respecting me as a male giving instruction." Berry's statement provides the connections between building relationships and respect and with the lack of respect comes student disengagement. In addition, Stan shared from his interview:

The most difficult issue that I deal with on a consistent basis is student apathy. The majority of students pay attention, do their work, and participate in class, but there are about three students in every class that are hard to motivate. These apathetic students will

often put their heads down for large portions of the class and will resist attempts to get them to engage in class, as a result of this lack of engagement, they usually end up failing.

To the participants the effects of student disengagement was heartbreaking in their profession. From the data, the results of student disengagement devastated the teachers who experience it. When exploring the issues of teachers leaving the teaching profession, lack of pay and student disengagement are factors that provide major implications in the overall topic of teacher retention.

Outlier Data and Findings

An unexpected finding within the themes that did not align with specific research questions or themes was the use of humor amongst several of the participants. Gary, in his letter, shared, "So my advice is simple, remain young at heart, laugh as often as you can, and remember that the power of genuine connection will supersede even the toughest of times."

Humor

This finding fit into several of the themes but did not align with just a specific research question or theme. Berry shared in his individual interview that, "One of the strategies that I use in my classroom is sometimes I will take a mental health break to give them a mental break. Also sometimes adding some comic relief within the classroom always helps the kids come back down." Stan also added from his interview, "I think having a sense of humor plays a large role in reducing stress. The ability to laugh with your class, and sometimes at yourself, helps to reduce stress." Lastly, Gary also stated in his interview, "A couple of methods that I use in my classroom to be successful are the introduction questions I have students complete at the

beginning of the year, and humor." The outlier of humor was a tool to battle fatigue and a tool to use for relationship building.

Research Question Responses

The purpose of the phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school; I explored the lived experiences of 10 White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia. The findings resulted in seven themes that align with the research questions of this study. The research questions include a central research question and three sub questions. The central research question was what are the lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia? The sub questions included why White male teachers choose to work in the urban secondary school setting. What are the most common issues White male teachers share teaching in an urban secondary school in Virginia? What is the motivation for White males to teach in the education profession? There were seven themes discovered out of the research questions that included connections to the school relationship building, respect, use of technology, motivation to teach, not enough pay, and student absences.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia? The themes that addressed the central question are connections to the school, relationship building, respect, and not enough pay. The lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia are that they have connections to the school, they build relationships, incorporate technology in the classroom, and all struggle financially. All the participants showed the importance and ability to build relationships. One participant (Berry) stated, "I think my relationship building really helps the kids feel safe with me and make it easier

for them to trust me and engage in a relationship." The connections to school, another theme addressed in the central research question, as Doug shared, "All my family attended this high school. My two older brothers and myself attended while living in a house less than 150 yards away." The teachers heavily used the incorporation of technology in the classroom. Bob said, "I utilize Google Classroom heavily and students quickly learn that they can find class notes, reference materials, daily slide decks, assignments, and sometimes partial answer keys there." Respect was a major similarity found in all the participants. Harvick stated, "First and foremost is the respect. It is what was instilled in me as a young kid and to this day, that's how I approach my kids." It was also very evident that the financial struggles of the participants were a shared common experience being a White male teacher in an urban secondary school. In addition, Walter said, "I would leave teaching due to not enough money and being tired from having two iobs and two side gigs." The commonalties discovered in the study of the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia included the factors of the participants' connections to the school, their ability to build relationships, the understanding and tool of respect, and the lack of pay they feel they receive in their profession.

Sub-Question One

Why do White male teachers choose to work in the urban secondary school setting? The themes that addressed sub-question one were connections to the school, relationship building, and motivation to teach. White male teachers choose to work in the urban secondary school setting because they have connections to the school, whether it be family ties, growing up in the area, or coaching. They also have a sense of calling to be in this setting and a love for the students. One participant stated, "I choose to work in this environment because I grew up in the area, I feel like I am called to be here, and also coach football." The sense of calling, love for the

students, connection to the school appeared an evident formula and commonality for several of the participants' experiences working at the study site.

Most of the participants felt a strong connection to the school, Walter explained, "This high school will quite literally become part of your family and it will impact the lives of every single person in your family in profound ways. Do your best to make it the best place you can." The perspective expressed by Walter also summed up Gary's beliefs in the importance of building relationships in relation to choosing to work in the urban secondary school setting in his letter:

Initially, your motivation for being a teacher is you fascination with the natural world. The joy you find in learning about biology and how life perseveres is immeasurable. This feeling will continue right up to your first teaching assignment in Grad school. They your motivations being to shift. You realize a deeper connection to your chosen profession, and it will ultimately shape your philosophy as a teacher. Now, you are realizing that content matters little without genuine connection. Recalling what you felt as a high school student: those emotions, thoughts, uncertainties, decisions, and deciding to never forget them, will be the greatest decision you will make as a teacher.

The motivations shared by Gary's experiences molds together sub-question one and the themes that connected to the research question. The participants' outlook on the emotional aspects of choosing to work at the study site was foundationally formed by connections to the school, relationship building, and motivation to teach.

Sub-Question Two

What are the most common issues White male teachers share teaching in an urban secondary school in Virginia? The themes that addressed sub-question two were respect, use of

teachers share in regard to teaching in an urban secondary school in Virginia are not enough pay, lack of respect both from students and administration, too much cell phone use, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement. One of the participants' stated, "One of the biggest issues I see at our school is attendance including absences, late arrivals, tardiness, and skipping." Doug also shared that, "It has been difficult to deal with the lack of respect from both adults and students at time." Berry also added, "Some issues I have faced was dealing with some students not listening or respecting me as a male giving instructions, but administration support has been a lot better this year and it has made it better." The theme of respect discovered from the data provides a clear insight into the answer to sub-question two through the commonalities of the mention of respect, both earning and giving it to the students and others.

A very passionate issue was expressed by Gordon who was very vocal in this focus group that, "Teachers do not get enough pay and they should be paid more." Matthew also proposed that, "teachers should be paid \$100K a year." Lastly Bob stated, "The last big issue I see is technology, in particular cell phones, and the negative affects they are having on our students." The themes of respect, use of technology, not enough pay, and student absences are discovered in the most common issues White male teachers shared teaching in an urban secondary school in Virginia. The issues of not enough pay, lack of respect from both students and administration, too much cell phone use, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement are the most common issues that were discovered by the data.

Sub-Question Three

What motivation and causes White male teachers to stay or leave the teaching profession? The themes that addressed sub-question three were motivation to teach, not enough

pay, and student absences. The motivation and causes of White male teachers staying are seeing student success and being a positive influence. While the motivation of White male teachers leaving the teaching profession are not enough pay and student disengagement. Gary in his letter:

Never lose sight of what it means to be a kid. This mindset will help you form unbreakable bonds with your students. It will allow you to motivate them, direct them, mentor theme, and experience life with them. Your students realizing their potential and achieving success will be of insurmountable value. A value no money could touch.

Gary explained that the motivation of teaching is rooted in the ability to build relationships. Once the relationship is formed, the potential of seeing students succeed provides the motivation to teach at the study site.

The summarization of sub question three stated the commonality of Stan's response concluded in his interview:

Overall, I feel like I am having a positive impact on the lives of young people and that is rewarding but if I were to leave the teaching profession, it would be Compensation! Not being paid enough would be the main reason I would leave. Also, if it got to the point where increasing number of students were apathetic, that might be discouraging enough to make me want to leave.

Stan shared that having a positive impact is the driving force of him teaching while the issues that addressed for him leaving include all of the reasons shared throughout the data on why the participants would leave the teaching profession because of lack of pay and student disengagement.

Summary

This chapter outlined the results from the individual interviews, focus groups, and

individual written letters. Participants expounded upon their lived experiences as a White male teacher working in an urban secondary school in Virginia. The established themes resulting from this study included connects to the school, relationship building, respect, use of technology, motivation to teach, not enough pay, and student absences. The findings of this study revealed the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia have connections to the school, build relationships, incorporate technology in the classroom, and struggle financially. White male teachers also experience lack of respect from both students and administration, too much cell phone use, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement. Overall, the motivation for White males to teach in the education profession are seeing student success and being a positive influence. While the motivation of them leaving the teaching profession are not enough pay and student disengagement.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of the phenomenological study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for White male teachers at an urban secondary school in Virginia. The lived experiences of the participants offer insight into the motivations, tools, methods, and factors White male teachers encounter and experience working within the urban school environment. The chapter presents the summary of thematic findings and expounds on the answer to the central research question, the three sub-questions, and the subsections for discussion, including a summary of thematic findings, implications for policy and practice, theoretical and empirical implications, limitations and delimitations, and recommendations for future studies.

Discussion

The study highlighted the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia. Data analysis of the individual interviews, focus groups, and written letters revealed substantial themes and subthemes used to answer the research question and sub-questions. The findings of this study revealed the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia have connections to the school, build relationships, incorporate technology in the classroom, and struggle financially. White male teachers also experience lack of respect from both students and administration, too much cell phone use, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement. Lastly, the motivation that causes these teachers to stay are seeing student success and being a positive influence. While the motivation of them leaving the teaching profession is not enough pay and student disengagement.

Summary of Thematic Findings

The data collection methods used in this study included individual interviews and written letters. Six participants were divided into two separate groups, participating in a focus group interview, with questions utilized in the data collection methods to answer the central research question and the sub-questions. This study's central research question is the following: This study's central research question is the following: What are the lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia? The lived experiences of White male teachers in urban secondary schools in Virginia are they have connections to the school, they build relationships, incorporate technology in the classroom, and all struggle financially.

There were three sub-questions involved in this study. This study's sub-question one is the following: Why do White male teachers choose to work in the urban secondary school setting? The data provided that White male teachers choose to work in the urban secondary school setting because they have connections to the school, whether it be family ties, growing up in the area, or coaching. They also have a sense of calling to be in this setting and a love for the students.

The study's sub-question two is the following: What are the most common issues White male teachers share teaching in an urban secondary school in Virginia? The results of the data showed the most common issues White male teachers share teaching in an urban secondary school in Virginia are not enough pay, lack of respect both from students and administration, too much cell phone use, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement.

The study's sub-question three is the following: What motivation and causes White male teachers to stay or leave the teaching profession? The data from this study concluded that the motivation and causes White male teachers stay are seeing student success and being a positive

influence. While the motivation of White male teachers leaving the teaching profession are not enough pay and student disengagement.

There were seven themes discovered from this study. The first theme that emerged was connections to the school, and the subthemes included ties, coaching, grew up in the area, and attended the school. The second theme that emerged included relationship building with the subthemes being interaction with students, involvement in the community, love for students, and the influence of colleagues and administration. The third theme was respect, with the subthemes including giving respect and earning respect. The fourth theme that emerged was use of technology, with the subthemes: too much cell phone usage and online curriculum materials. The fifth theme that emerged was motivation to teach, with the subthemes including a sense of calling, seeing student success, and being a positive influence. The sixth theme was not enough pay, with the subthemes including compensation and working multiple jobs. The last theme that emerged from this study was student absences, with the subthemes including chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement. The themes and subthemes clarify the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school.

The themes were addressed in the responses of the research questions from the data of this study. The themes that addressed the central question included connections to the school, relationship building, respect, and not enough pay. The themes that addressed sub-question one included connections to the school, relationship building, and motivation to teach. The themes that addressed sub-question two consisted of respect, use of technology, not enough pay, and student absences. Lastly, the themes that addressed sub-question three were motivation to teach, not enough pay, and student absences.

Critical Discussion

The study highlighted the commonalities and factors for retention of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia. The data comprised of the individual interviews, focus groups, and written letters revealed significant themes and subthemes that answered the research question and sub-questions. The findings of this study revealed White male teachers also experience lack of respect from both students and administration, too much cell phone use, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement. The motivation of the participants to stay in the education profession include seeing student success and being a positive influence. While the motivation of them leaving the teaching profession were not enough pay and student disengagement. Overall, the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia have connections to the school, build relationships, incorporate technology in the classroom, and struggle financially.

Teacher pay was a major concern discovered in this study and in the literature supporting that compensation and benefits are a reason why teachers leave the teaching profession. Higher salary linked to higher teacher retention, and teachers' dissatisfaction with their salaries linked to higher teacher turnover (Lynch, 2012). To retain teachers in urban schools, higher salaries need to be offered, or at a minimum, considered, because they are teaching in schools with higher rates of teacher turnover (Ward, 2022: Griffin & Tackie, 2017)

Overall, the discoveries from this study on the experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school harmonize with many of the causes of teacher retention in the literature. A prime example would be from McKinney et al. (2023) revealing that giving back to the community, location, diversity, autonomy, job satisfaction, effective with population, and perseverance are all the major factors contributing to teacher retention in the urban school

environment. White male teachers prioritized building relationships, interaction with the students, being involved in the community, thrived from seeing student success, and struggled with the lack of compensation.

Implications for Policy or Practice

There were several recommendations for policy or practice that pertains to school districts, administrators, and teachers. Throughout this section, the implications for policies and practices will be discussed in an effort to clarify the lived experiences of White male teachers working in urban secondary schools to better understand and equip teacher retention in the urban school setting.

Implications for Policy

The findings of this study displayed implications for policy. Administrators and school districts should evaluate the potential teachers while hiring with the evidence of these themes and subthemes. Administrators during the interview process while hiring teachers should put into consideration the candidates' connections to the school. The Administrators should focus on if the candidate has family ties or grew up in the area. If they do this, it may be a key element in a good fit for the position. In addition, addressing the issues of cell phone usage and chronic absenteeism, these areas of concern effect the teacher's performance and motivation. The implications of policy in solving these issues would enhance teacher retention.

Lastly, relationship building is foundational in teacher retention. If leadership makes relationship building a priority, the communication between the teachers, students, and leadership results in a successful learning environment. In addition, within the interview process for teachers, if a teacher cannot build relationships with the students, they will not be successful

in that teaching environment because the themes and literature points to relationship building as foundational piece in teacher retention.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study offer multiple practical implications. Successful teachers within the context of urban schools should have the at least several of these characteristics within the themes, such as connections to the school, ability to build relationships, respect, and the elements of the motivation to teach to be successful in the classroom and for teacher retention. In addition, teachers, when looking for places of employment, should consider the themes and subthemes that emerged from this study to help navigate the most suitable school for them in their careers within the field of education.

Empirical and Theoretical Implications

The purpose of this section is to address the empirical and theoretical implications of the study. The theoretical implications concur with social impact theory by Latané, (1981) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980). The empirical implications addressed by explaining the lived experiences of White male teachers working an urban secondary school in Virginia that align with the literature in Chapter Two.

Empirical Implications

The empirical implications that align with the examination of the findings in relation to the literature review include staff motivation, backing from administration, and an understanding of urban schools and the community. The factors of gender and race also play a role in the urban setting; the presence of male teachers affected the school environment, regardless of race, and many of the participants' shared this in their interviews and written letters. The positive male

influence in the urban environment affects the community, and the participants' displayed their influence on the lives of students.

The empirical implications concurring with the literature regarding the causes of teacher retention in the qualitative content analysis within urban schools (McKinney et al., 2023) revealed that giving back to the community, location, diversity, autonomy, job satisfaction, effective with population, and perseverance are all the major factors contributing to teacher retention in the urban school environment. These aspects of teacher retention flow into the needs in other school settings as well, and this study that revealed White male teachers prioritized connections with the school, building relationships, motivations to teach, and lack of compensation.

This study's findings concurred with the lack of administrative support plays a vital role in teacher attrition. West (2022) expounded that developing a strong relationship within positive school culture is vital in mentoring male teachers. For strong relationships to be effective, the participants in the study conducted by West aligned to promote relationships and provide professional development that supports and sustains an individual's skills, responsibilities, and needs for growth. This study concurred with the identified leadership practices that supported challenges influenced by student achievement, professional growth, and teacher retention. The roles administrators play in establishing mentor programs are essential, and creating a strong support network, knowledge of resources, instructional planning, progress monitoring, and data training on assessment platforms is important to enhancing professional learning communities within the school and district environment.

The study concurs with the literature in supporting that compensation and benefits are a reason why teachers leave the teaching profession. High compensation can decrease teacher

turnover (Ward, 2022). Higher salary linked to higher teacher retention, and teachers' dissatisfaction with their salaries linked to higher teacher turnover (Lynch, 2012). To retain teachers in urban schools, higher salaries need to be offered, or at a minimum, considered, because they are teaching in schools with higher rates of teacher turnover (Ward, 2022: Griffin & Tackie, 2017).

The literature also concurs in explaining that there is an abundance of studies that have shown that teachers are more likely to remain in schools that have a social culture of collegial relationships, built on a professional culture of respect and trust, and that a collaborative school culture was a determining factor that influenced a teacher's longevity. The social conditions tend to matter the most regarding teacher retention, and that schools interested in increasing their retention rates need to consider their cooperation levels and practices. Teacher collaboration is a key factor that influences teacher retention (McKinney et al., 2023).

Theoretical Implications

This study utilized social impact theory (Latané, 1981) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) as its theoretical framework to address the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia. Self-determination theory focused on intrinsic motivation, while social impact theory described how it is more difficult to influence a target when other targets that have the same opinion surround them. In this study, participants align with social impact theory by the emphasis on the experiences of the male teachers influence through their actions with others, and the participants are a source of social influence within the school and community. Social impact theory is a model that conceives the influence from other people as being the result of social forces acting on the individual. Many participants

shared the ability to build relationships, have a connection with the school, and being a positive influence.

Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) represented a broad framework within the realm of the study of human motivation and personality. The importance of the theoretical framework concerning self-determination theory explained the social and cultural factors that facilitate or undermine humans' sense of volition and initiative with the well-being and the quality of their performance. The participants' motivations with their connections to the school and their sense of calling with the influence of colleagues and administration effect their performance. Self-determination theory also supported that people are driven by three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The participants' motivation to seeing student success and connections with the school provide the basic psychological need of autonomy that pertains to the desire to be casual agents of one's own life, acting in harmony with one who has integrated self and constitutes a feeling of overall psychological liberty, and freedom of internal will. Competence describes the control of an outcome and experience, with relatedness consisting of the will to interact with, be connected to, and experience caring for others, which many of the participants' concurred with in this study.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations and delimitations were discovered while conducting this study. The limitations included the inability to have all 10 participants participate in the focus groups and the small sample size chosen. The delimitation of this study included the specific location of the participants chosen.

Limitations

There were two limitations to this study. The limitations included the inability to have all

10 participants participate in the focus group and the small sample size chosen. The participants were all able to conduct the individual interview and written letter. The time scheduling conflicts and reliability of having all the participants participate in the focus groups was not a possibility. The second limitation of this study was the small sample size chosen. There were 10 participants who were chosen for this study. While participants represented different departments, content and subject areas, and grade levels, there was not enough variety to represent the different departments and grade levels evenly.

Delimitations

The delimitation of this study included the specific location of the participants chosen. I chose this particular high school because of its diversity and urban location. The community and its surrounding area defined this school as an ideal area to conduct this study. The high school in 2022 had 1,381 students, with 49% female and 51% male. The high school is ranked within the bottom 50% out of the 1,800 Virginia schools. The student: teacher ratio is 14:1, with an 80% graduation rate, and the minority enrollment is 59% of the student body (majority Black), which is higher than the Virginia state average of 54% (majority Black).

The history, the student, and cultural climate allowed this study to supply pure results into the purpose of its intent due to the school's diversity. The study site's diversity has remained the same over the last five school years, and the administration has gone through several leadership changes, including four different head principals within an eight-year span and multiple new and resigned associate principals within that timeframe of those eight years. The administration team consists of five principals, including a head principal.

Recommendations for Future Research

In future research regarding teacher retention in urban schools, researchers should add

literature on the study of White male teachers in urban secondary schools. The first recommendation includes expanding the study of experiences of White male teachers working in urban secondary schools from multiple locations and different states. This would provide more data and a wider depth of understanding the factors of White male teachers in teaching in the urban environment. The second recommendation would be to focus on the motivation of White male teachers working in the urban secondary schools. Majority of the participants in this study reflected on their personal faith as a motivation to teach in the urban context, and it would be beneficial to explore if certain beliefs or religions contribute to the success of teachers within the urban school setting. The third recommendation would be to conduct this study again, or one similar, using hermeneutic phenomenology as its research design instead of transcendental phenomenology. The fourth recommendation would be to use this model and conduct a study similar to this using White and Black male teachers to discover the commonalities of lived experiences in the urban secondary school environment. The last recommendation for future research would be to explore the relationship White male teachers have in connections to the school. What connections to the school result in longer teacher retention?

Conclusion

The purpose of the phenomenological study was to discover the commonalities and factors of retention for White male teachers at an urban secondary school in Virginia. The established themes resulting from this study included connects to the school, relationship building, respect, use of technology, motivation to teach, not enough pay, and student absences. The findings of this study revealed the lived experiences of White male teachers working in an urban secondary school in Virginia have connections to the school, build relationships, incorporate technology in the classroom, and struggle financially. White male teachers also

experience lack of respect from both students and administration, too much cell phone use, chronic absenteeism and tardiness, and student disengagement. Overall, the motivation and causes these teachers stay is seeing student success and being a positive influence. The motivation of them leaving the teaching profession is not enough pay and student disengagement. Future research needs to be explored by expanding the study of experiences of White male teachers working in urban secondary schools from multiple locations and different states and to focus on the motivation of White male teachers working in the urban secondary schools student success and being a positive influence, while the motivation of them leaving the teaching profession is not enough pay and student disengagement. Future research needs to explore by expanding the study of experiences of White male teachers working in urban secondary schools from multiple locations and different states and to focus on the motivation of White male teachers working in the urban secondary schools.

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Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

May 15, 2024

Bryce Woerner Jonathan Bracewell

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY23-24-1820 TEACHER RETENTION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE EXPERIENCES OF WHITE MALE TEACHERS IN AN URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Dear Bryce Woerner, Jonathan Bracewell,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the following date: May 15, 2024. If you need to make changes to the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit a modification to the IRB. Modifications can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

For a PDF of your approval letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study Details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found on the same page under the Attachments tab. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you

https://outlook.office.com/mail/inbox/id/AAQkADIIMGQ5Z|k4LWYwNjMtNGNiYi04NmFhLWUwYmVkOGE1YzJkNAAQAJATmXSB2m5lluYizXvmF84%3D 1/2

plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP Administrative Chair Research Ethics Office

Appendix B

Site Permission Request Letter

| D | |
|------|--|
| Dear | |
| Dear | |
| | |

As a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree. The title of my research project is A Phenomenological Study on the Experiences of White Male Teachers in an Urban Secondary School, and the purpose of my research is to collect the data needed to explore the experiences of White male teachers in the urban secondary school setting

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at High School and utilize your staff to contact and recruit participants for my research.

Participants will be asked to participate in an individual interview, focus group, and write a letter of advice to past self in regards to teaching in an urban secondary school. This will take approximately 95 hours total. Participants will be presented with consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

For education research, district/school permission on approved letterhead with the appropriate signature(s) is preferable, but emailed permission is acceptable if the time-and-date stamp(s) and email signature(s) are retained and visible. Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval or respond by email to researcher's email address.

Sincerely,

Bryce M. Woerner Ph.D. Candidate Liberty University

Appendix C

Approval Letter from School District/Site

| | Deputy Superintender |
|---|--|
| | |
| | |
| To: Bryce Woerner RE: Permission to conduct research | May 10, 2024 |
| Please accept this correspondence as approval of your research, Phenomenolo Experiences of White Male Teachers in an Urban Secondary School. You will research at | |
| Anonymity requirements Any research subjects or participants, research site or location, and affiliation City Schools must be referenced using pseudonyms to maintain anonymity an privacy of employee, students, and city school. Any personal info identify participants and/or their affiliation with City Schools must changed before files are shared with other researchers or results are made pub | d protect the rmation that could t be removed or |
| Opt out conditions Any research subjects or participants employed with City Schools of their right to opt out or decline to participate in the research project. | must be informed |
| Consent: Any research subjects or participants within City Schools must proconsent to participate. Consent for those participants under the age of 18 must writing by a parent/guardian. | |
| Termination of research: If it is determined that the risks of the research or risks of the research process benefits of the research, the research process may be ordered to be terminated of the research process may be prohibited. | |
| Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have. | |
| Kindest regards, Superintendent | |

Appendix D

Recruitment Letter

Hello Potential Participant

As a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. in Education. The purpose of my research is to collect the data needed to explore the experiences of White male teachers in the urban secondary school setting and I would like to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be a White male teacher of 18 years of age or older, who has worked in the urban school setting for at least two years.

"Yes" response: Participants will be asked to participate in an interview, lasting approximately 30 minutes, in person. Possible request to participate in a focus group with two other participants. The focus group will last approximately 45 minutes, in person. Both the interviews and focus groups will be audio recorded to allow for later transcription and analysis. Participants will also write a letter of advice to past self in regards to teaching in an urban secondary school. This activity will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Lastly, after the interview and focus groups have been transcribed you will be asked to read the interviews for accuracy. This task will take approximately 20 minutes.

"No" response: Unfortunately, you do not meet my participant criteria, so I am unable to include you in my study. Thank you for your time.

Would you like to participate?

, even

"Yes" response: Great, could I get your email address so I can send you the consent form.

"No" response: I understand. Thank you for your time.

Here is the consent form. The consent document contains additional information about my research. Please read it, sign it and return to me as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time. Do you have any questions?

Appendix E

Consent Form

Title of the Project: A Phenomenological Study on the Experiences of White Male Teachers in an Urban Secondary School

Principal Investigator: Bryce M. Woerner, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education, Liberty University

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a White male teacher who has worked in the urban school setting for at least two years and are 18 years of age or older. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study

Things you should know:

- The purpose of the study is to collect the data needed to explore the experiences of White male teachers in the urban secondary school setting. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to participate in an individual interview, focus group, and write a letter of advice to past self in regard to teaching in an urban secondary school. This will take approximately 95 hours total.
- Risks or discomforts from this research are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.
- Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. The study is expected to benefit society by helping society better understand the experiences of White male teachers in the urban secondary school environment. Also, add to the literature in the area of teacher retention in urban schools.
- Taking part in this research project is voluntary. You do not have to participate, and you can stop at any time.

Please read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate in this research.

The purpose of the study is to collect the data needed to explore the experiences of White male teachers in the urban secondary school setting.

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

- 1. Participate in an interview, lasting approximately 30 minutes, in person. The interviews will be audio recorded to allow for later transcription and analysis.
- 2. Possible request to participate in a focus group with two other participants. The focus group will last approximately 45 minutes, in person. The focus groups will be audio recorded to allow for later transcription and analysis.
- 3. Write a letter of advice to past self in regards to teaching in an urban secondary school. This activity will take approximately 20 minutes to complete
- 4. After the interview and focus groups have been transcribed, you will be asked to read the interviews for accuracy. This task will take approximately 20 minutes.

Participants should not expect a direct benefit from participating in this study.

Benefits to society include helping society better understand the experiences of White male teachers in the urban secondary school environment. Also, add to the literature in the area of teacher retention in urban schools.

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. White discouraged, other focus group members may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group
- Data collected from you may be used in future research studies and shared with other researchers. If data collected from you is reused or shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed beforehand
- Data will be stored on a password locked computer and may be used in future presentations. The researcher will have access to the data. After three years all electronic records will be deleted and all hardcopy records will be shredded. Data will be retained indefinitely.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer. The researcher will have access to the recordings. After three years once participants have reviewed and confirmed the accuracy of the recording transcripts, the recordings will be erased.

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number in the next paragraph. Should you withdraw; data collected from you, apart from the focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and not included in this study. [Retain the following information in red if you will conduct a focus group.] Focus group data will

| The researcher conducting this study is Bryce M. Woerner. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at or [phone number and/or email]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jonathan Matthew Bracewell, at |
|--|
| If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and want to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, number is, and our email address is |
| Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) ensures that human subjects research will be conducted ethically as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University. |
| By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above. |
| I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study. |
| ☐ The researcher has my permission to retain audio-record me as part of my participation in this study. |
| Printed Subject Name |
| Signature & Date |

not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if

you choose to withdraw.

Appendix F

Follow Up Letter

Dear Participant,

Thank you so much being choosing to be a part of this study and signing consent form. I will be in contact with you to arrange a time to conduct your individual interview and focus group. I will give you the information to write your letter of advice to past self in regards to teaching in an urban secondary school.

The total time for the participation for this study will take approximately 95 hours total. Taking part in this study is voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher. Should you withdraw; data collected from you, apart from the focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and not included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw. Sincerely,

Bryce M. Woerner Ph.D. Candidate Liberty University

Appendix G

Individual Interview Questions

Individual Interview Questions

- 1. What is your educational background and career in your current position? CRQ
- 2. Why did you choose to work at this high school? SQ1
- 3. What are some of the issues that you face at this high school? SQ2
- 4. What do you believe are the cultural barriers at this school? SQ2
- 5. What are some of the cultural barriers that you personally face at this school? SQ2
- 6. What are a few methods do you use in your classroom to be successful? SQ3
- 7. Are there any tools that you use to help you, and if so, could you describe them? SQ3
- 8. What are the strategies that you use to reduce stress in this environment? SQ3
- 9. How do you battle to avoid fatigue, due to your occupation? SQ3
- 10. What keeps you in the teaching profession? SQ3
- 11. If you were to leave the teaching profession, what would be the reason or reasons? SQ3
- 12. What else would you like to contribute to this study? CRQ

Appendix H

Focus Group Questions

- 1. What would be considered the most memorable experience working at this high school?
- 2. Throughout your experiences, what would you identify as the cultural barriers between the students and the teachers at this school?
- 3. What are some of the methods and tools do you use to be successful in the classroom?
- 4. What keeps you in the teaching profession, and if you were to quit, would be the main reason or reasons?

Appendix I

Written Letter

Letter writing is a complement to interviews and can enrich participant perspectives because there is typically much more time for participants to draft, edit, and submit responses, as well as being an excellent alterative to journal prompts. Participants will be asked to type this letter and email it to the researcher within one week of the interview. The prompt given to the participants:

If you were able to travel back in time and write a letter to yourself before you entered teaching, what advice and instructions would you tell yourself?

The written letter may take 10 minutes to complete and provides a reliable perspective of the participant. The letter writing approach allows participants more time to draft and edit their thoughts. The researcher will allow the participants two weeks to complete their letters.