BLACK FEMALE TEACHERS PRESENCE, PERSEVERANCE, AND PROMISE: HOW
EDUCATIONAL LEADERS CAN COMBAT TEACHER TURNOVER TRENDS

By

Darrius A. Stanley

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

K-12 Educational Administration—Doctor of Philosophy

2018

ABSTRACT

BLACK FEMALE TEACHERS PRESENCE, PERSEVERANCE, AND PROMISE: HOW
EDUCATIONAL LEADERS CAN COMBAT TEACHER TURNOVER TRENDS

By

Darrius A. Stanley

This dissertation explores the depth of the Black educator turnover problem in today's

public schools. Black educators across the country have experienced higher than average

turnover rates, eroding the success of recent minority teacher recruitment efforts. This epidemic

has left the field of teaching consistent with the status quo, white and female. More recent

research reveals that Black female teachers are leaving the classroom at alarming rates. Research

consistently highlights school leadership as a primary influence for Black teacher turnover.

Together, the research and turnover statistics suggest that race and school leadership are primary

factors contributing to the increased departure of Black female teachers. However, there is less

qualitative understanding of the depth of these impacts on Black female teacher turnover.

This study explores three distinct queries.

1. What factors do Black female teachers perceive as most influential to their decisions to
    stay or leave their schools?

2. What role do Black female teachers suggest race plays in their decisions to stay or leave
    their schools?

3. What role do Black female teachers suggest school leadership plays in their decisions to
   stay or leave their schools?

Fifteen Black female teachers' voices, experiences and perspectives are centered in this

study which leans upon phenomenological and case study methodologies. The primary data

collection tools included interviews and documents. The participants represent a diverse sample

of Black female teachers that range in teaching experience, contexts, personal background, and grade levels. Elements of Black Feminism in Education and Critical Race Feminism were used to guide analysis and more importantly highlight the unique intersectional identities of the participants. Three major themes emerged from the interviews that have contributed to participants' career experiences: 1) the impact of racial, cultural and gendered identity; 2) the impact of school leadership; and 3) the impact of organizations.

The findings from this study highlight the impact of intersectional identity on Black female teachers' career journeys. It exposes the sacrifices and commitments they have to teaching that are heavily influenced by their raced, gendered and classed herstories. Further, the findings suggest that school leaders who have the awareness of Black female teachers' social justice related commitments and the pledge to uplift their voices within schools are better positioned to retain them. This study also finds that when organizations lack the awareness of racial, cultural and gender related issues, Black female teachers become less satisfied in those organizations. At the center of this study is the need for school leaders to develop and sustain more inclusive organizations that consider the personal backgrounds and intersectional identities of Black female teachers, if they wish to retain them in today's public schools.

The results of this study suggest that school leaders must play a more intentional role in retaining Black female teachers. The results suggest that school leaders must willfully support Black female teachers' social justice agendas and pedagogies on their terms. Also, school leaders must create organizational cultures that are conducive to the unique needs of Black female faculty. Finally, schools and school leaders must listen to the voices of Black female teachers as a mechanism to retain their presence in the classroom and to uplift underserved, specifically Black, students in the curriculum and the school.

"I contend that Black people must come to realize that our greatest strength, our salvation secret, if you will, is Black Women" - Derrick Bell

This dissertation is dedicated to memory of my grandmother Rozell "Teenie Mae" Bryant. She was my first Black female teacher and the reason I have reached great academic heights. Her prayers, love, devotion and support lifted me to pinnacles that I never thought were imaginable. She was and continues to be my rock in a weary land. Her love encompasses me when I feel weak. Her compassion shelters me in times of storm and uncertainty. I love her, I always have and I always will. I dedicate this dissertation to my guardian angel, my soul salvation. May her spirit live on.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are a number of individuals who have made this dissertation possible that I'd like to acknowledge.

To my loving parents *George and Valerie Stanley* who paved the way for my success and uplifted me throughout the doctoral process, I say thank you.

To my grandparents *George and Savannah Stanley*, I say thank you.

To *Jaimee* for the love, support and dedication she afforded me throughout this process, I say thank you.

To my wonderful, warm hearted and supportive advisor *Dr. Terah Venzant Chambers*, I say thank you.

To my professional and academic mentors *Dr. Patricia Marin and Dr. John T. Yun*, I say thank you.

To the fifteen Black Freedom Fighters without whom I could not begin to write this dissertation, I say thank you.

To my friends and colleagues at Michigan State University who supported me through this process, I thank you.

To my committee members *Dr. Chezare Warren* and *Dr. A. Chris Torres*, I thank you.

There are not enough pages in this dissertation to properly acknowledge all the friends, mentors and loved ones who have made this dissertation possible. However, for all who have helped me along this journey I want you to know that you are loved and appreciated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Despite Cherng & Haplin (2016) finding that today's students prefer minoritized teachers in their classrooms, we continue to see a field dominated by white females. Increasing Black educators' presence in the field of education is a major concern for contemporary schools; however, given their continued underrepresentation (Boser, 2011) and their amplified turnover (Ingersoll & May, 2011), there is still much work to be done in this area of research.

Many have argued that Black teachers provide a host of benefits to minoritized students. On one hand scholars argue that Black teachers are best suited to teach Black and other minoritized students because of their similar cultural backgrounds, role-modeling affect, ethic of care, and ability to build strong relationships (Dixson, 2003; Gist et al, 2017; Irvine,1989; Milner, 2006; Morris, 2001; Quicho & Rios, 2000; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Villegas & Irvine, 2010). Others argue that Black teachers have important effects on academic outcomes such as achievement, graduation rates, and recognition of giftedness (Dee, 2004; 2005; Delpit, 1986; Grissom et al, 2015). My own view is that Black teachers have the potential to be cultural brokers for minoritized students and assets to white students as well. Their increased recruitment into the field, which could provide a much needed shift in the eurocentric power structure of the educational enterprise that is currently dominated by white females is currently undermined by longstanding turnover trends. The sustained recruitment and retention of Black teachers can only happen through more intensive research studies that seek to answer the question, what is happening to all of our Black teachers?

This dissertation study aims to examine the process and the factors that influence Black classroom teacher's decisions to stay or leave their schools. Of particular interest is understanding how school leaders, who have a strong impact on teacher turnover at large (Boyd

et al, 2011), can help to reverse the turnover trends of Black teachers. This study is informed by my own classroom teaching experiences. Thus, I begin with a brief story of my experiences as a Black teacher to help situate this study.

"You got the whole hog now"

My interest in Black teacher turnover is influenced by my own personal turnover behavior. All my life, I knew two things for sure; I loved history and I wanted other people to love it too. After multiple conversations with my family, undergraduate advisor meetings, and prayer time, I embarked on the journey to become an educator. I began my journey as a K-12 educator in Orange County Public schools in Orlando, Florida in 2012. I was a brand new middle school social studies teacher, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed as I started my new career. Although I completed student teaching and passed my certification exams, I had no clue what was ahead of me.

This school was situated in the heart of white suburbia. It stuck out like a sore thumb as it was in the immediate vicinity of a premier, A+ rated high school, prominent private academy, local country club, and a sea of white lawyers, doctors and other professionals that lived nearby. With its beige colored stucco and bumpy, cracked driveway, my school was simply no match for the affluence that surrounded it. Things didn't get better when I crossed the threshold into the school for the first time.

I was one of six Black teachers in a school that was experiencing vast and swift demographic changes. Black students were being bused in from the poorest neighborhoods of the nearby central city and fear among the white teachers had reached an all-time high. The effects of the growing Black student population showed in the faces of the seasoned white teachers in the school. Their constant whisperings of disgust, worry, and retirement filled the vacant

hallways after school. It was clear that despite their training and experience they weren't prepared for the "new" students. But was I?

It didn't take long for me to realize that my classroom roster, materials and resources were vastly different from many of my white colleagues down the hall. After a few days I recognized that this was the case for many of the other the Black teachers as well. Every one of my students talked of the other Black teacher they had next period and I wondered if there were more than six of us on this campus. Ultimately, I came to realize the reality for myself and my Black colleagues was majority-minority student classrooms, with high proportions of students with labeled behavioral or learning disabilities and none of the necessary tools or people to support them. Honestly, I never saw any administrator until a fight broke out or it was time for the dreaded classroom observations.

It was hardly a month into my job when I realized that the preparation from my degree program, internship experience, district-wide orientation from the month before, and advice from relatives couldn't have prepared me for what I was about to experience in the academic year. There was no free period, nor was there a supervising teacher. There was no foreseeable end date and no between class supports. I thought about what my grandfather always says: "You got the whole hog now." I never knew what he meant by that until my first year teaching. It was just me and one hundred and twenty diverse sixth and eighth graders in an old computer resource room, with no technology.

I remember a Black parent calling me about in-home violence and the first three fights I broke up in late October. I recall the dysfunctional classroom with limited technology and the overwhelming amount of 504 and Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings I had weekly. I will never forget the growing needs of my predominantly Black male classrooms and my revolving

door officially known by other teachers as the "time-out room." I was the disciplinarian, a Dean, just without the title. Anytime Mrs. [insert white teacher name here] had a problem with [insert Black student name here], the door to room 809, my classroom, would swing open with an all too familiar Black face. It was clear that white teachers were upset, Black teachers were overwhelmed, and school administrators were just complacent, hoping to make it through the day without a major altercation. I was limping through each observation, parent conference, and data talk, starting to contemplate my career decision as the semesters ticked by. Students weren't loving history and I wasn't even sure if I was teaching it anymore. I wondered if this teaching thing was really just a daycare position or maybe just some cruel joke. Where was my administrator when I needed them?!

During this time, I was "teaching" during the day and getting my masters degree in educational leadership at night. The hour long ride to campus was filled with moments of decompression and daily reflection. Somehow, I knew that education was the place for me, but pulling into my school's parking lot every day made me question why I was really there. The lack of support and acknowledgment made me wonder if I even mattered to the school. What was I doing there? What did I add? I resolved that though education was still for me, but the situation in that school simply wasn't. After the completion of my two-year masters degree I left to become a doctoral student committed to changing the realities of those young Black educators who would come to the classroom after me.

I often wonder how my career in education and my experiences at that school might have been different had I had the support of my administrator(s). I wonder if, had I remained and had an opportunity for open discussions about the struggles I was having, if I would have stayed? Instead of them lending a helping hand my administrators always came to me with a new set of

requests. Those requests included lunch duty, after school monitoring, Dean duty, and a host of other disciplinary actions in an attempt to control the "troubled" population. I wasn't a scholar, a teacher, or an educator. I was the "Black Male Role Model" sent to control the "new" Black student population. However, as I came to learn during my graduate study, my own experience sadly mirrors the experience of too many other Black educators in this country. It is evident to me that the field must address the reasons that Black teachers are leaving schools so that stories like my own are no longer a dominant narrative.

Positionality Concerns

My experiences inform but do not inherently reflect the experiences of all Black teachers. More specifically, Black female teachers likely experience different circumstances and conditions that lead to their turnover. I am mindful that though my experiences may be similar that my positionality as a man presents a different perspective and set of challenges. Therefore, in my attempt to understand the diverse reasons that Black teachers leave, it is imperative that I am reflexive about singular narratives and the patriarchal dominance of my story.

To be clear, it must be understood that as a Black man I harbor implicit patriarchal biases. My research includes Black female teacher's discussions of their individual careers which present positionality concerns. Despite a connection to Black female teachers' experiences I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge my own place in patriarchal oppression as well as acknowledge the predominance of male-centric Black teacher turnover discussions. That said, this research project is an attempt to disrupt the Black male patriarchy that has obscured and, in some cases, trivialized the plight of Black female teachers in the literature. More on my positionality will be discussed throughout this dissertation.

Background to the Problem

Research has shown that Black educators face many unique challenges (Griffin & Hackie, 2016). Although Black teachers have a positive influence on minoritized students (Dee, 2004; 2005; Milner, 2006; Ivine,1989), Black teachers continue to be an underrepresented (Boser, 2014). Black educators represent roughly 6% of a field dominated by white females (Boser, 2014; National Center for Education Statistics, 2012;White, 2016). In response to these statistics, various efforts to recruit more minoritized teachers have been launched in alternative programs like the Teach for America (White, 2016) and residency programs like the New York City Teaching Fellows (Boyd et al, 2006). Thirty-one states across the country have worked diligently to implement policies to continue to recruit teachers of color (Villegas et al,2012). These efforts have been mildly successful, as minoritized teachers have begun to enter the field at higher rates in the past twenty years (Ingersoll & May, 2011).

However, despite efforts to increase the numbers of Black teachers in the field they experience higher than average rates of turnover compared to their white colleagues, hovering around 20% annually as opposed to 16% for white teachers (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). This includes both movers (those who switched schools) and leavers (those who left the field altogether) (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). Utilizing nationally representative data sets, Ingersoll and Connor found that in 2003-2004, 104, 688 minority teachers entered the field; however, by the next school year, 105,086 minority teachers had left, breaking down to 48,842 movers and 56,244 leavers (2009). For Black teachers specifically, 36% were in job transition during the same time period of the Ingersoll and Connor study, including 25,157 movers and 30,924 leavers (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). These troubling trends are unmatched by any other group of teachers. This leaves the field in a precarious position, entry and access for Black educators has

increased. However, turnover rates have remained consistently high for this population of

teachers. To truly realize the purpose of recruitment we must better understand how to retain

Black teachers. This begins with understanding why they leave.

Turnover Statistics

Annual Turnover Statistics	Entry and Exit Behavior	Types of Turnover
Black Teachers 20%	44,783 entered 56,081 exited	25,157 Movers 30,924 Leavers
Minoritized Teachers 19.4%	104, 688 entered 105,086 exited	48, 842 Movers 56,244 Leavers

Table 1: Entry and Exit behavior of minoritized and Black teachers (2004-2005) (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009).

The conversation regarding Black teacher retention has been approached from systemic

and institutional perspectives. On one hand research identifies larger systemic barriers such as

poor salaries (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009), that often make teaching a financially unsustainable

field for teachers of color. At the institutional level, Achinstein et al (2010) suggest poor

organizational conditions can cause heightened Black teacher turnover. In other words, for

minoritized teachers there is a significant relationship between substandard school organizational

conditions (i.e. resources, administrative support, autonomy) and heightened turnover (Ingersoll

& May, 2011). Though concentrated in diverse, high poverty contexts (Ingersoll & May, 2011;

White, 2016), research has found that Black educators are more likely to leave or move when

they lack key organizational conditions like classroom autonomy or administrative support

(Achinstein et al, 2010; Connor,2011; Ingersoll,2007) not due to the demographics of students.

The data suggests that a school's organizational characteristics have a dissatisfying effect on

Black teachers, beyond its racial or socioeconomic demographics. However, the details of the organizational conditions, specifically administrative support are largely absent from the literature and warrant further exploration.

Other research on Black teachers cites a myriad of oppressive and marginalizing experiences in schools. Scholarship has recently identified the distinct challenges and experiences Black teachers face in schools, citing hostile school racial climates (Bailey Report, 2016; Kohli, 2016), over-concentration of Black teachers in schools susceptible to turnaround policies (White, 2016), Black teachers' course assignments, specifically their gross underrepresentation in higher level instructional programs (i.e. Advanced Placement) (Kalogrides et. al, 2013), biased teacher certification exams serve as barriers to potential Black teacher candidates (Madkins, 2011), feelings of isolation and voicelessness (Castaneda et al, 2006; Kelly, 2007; Milner, 2006), and issues of role entrapment or forced positions based on preexisting racial generalizations (Mabokela & Madsen, 2005). However, this work has not been explicitly tied to heightened turnover rates for Black teachers despite the obvious implications for this issue.

Black Female teacher turnover

The Black teacher turnover narrative differs when we think about Black male and female teachers. Minoritized male teachers are 50% more likely to leave or move from schools than their female colleagues (Ingersoll & May, 2011). This is so despite their similar commitments and orientations towards students of color when they enter the field (Irvine, 1988; Su,1997). Bristol (2014) suggests that this may be because Black male teachers often experience disproportionate numbers of students in special education courses. These unequal assignments could be attributed to the Black Male Role Model narrative that is noted across the current

literature. Bristol (2014) also posits that the social conditions that Black males are situated in within schools also matter; Bristol suggests that whether Black men are loners (alone in their schools) or groupers (with other same race colleagues) makes a difference for their retention behavior. We cannot be sure that the social conditions that inform Black male teachers' behavior (Bristol, 2014) are the most important issues at play for Black female teachers or that they unfold in the same ways. What's clear is that Black female teachers have had a long and sustained presence in the field since the antebellum period (Dixson & Dingus, 2008). In addition, Black women have historically been the anchors for Black community schooling, serving as "other mothers" to Black students (Dixson, 2003:2006; Dixson &Dingus, 2008; Foster, 1997; Gist et al, 2017; Siddle Walker, 2000).

Despite the relatively robust information available regarding Black male teacher retention, less is known about the particular conditions and lived realities that Black females report as reasons to leave or stay in their school. This is alarming, given that the vast majority of Black teachers in the field are Black women, not men. Only recently have scholars begun to dig deeper into Black female teacher turnover specifically. The Black female teacher turnover rate is significantly (60%) higher than other non-Black female teachers (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Further, scholars have identified that many Black female teachers leave because of salaries, low classroom autonomy, performance pressures, stress, administrative turnover, and experience involuntary turnover (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Farinde et al, 2016; Fitchett et al, 2017; White, 2016). It is imperative that research continues to explore the potential nuances of Black female teacher turnover more thoroughly to identify potential ways of addressing this problem.

School Leaders and Black Female Teachers

Research has shown that school leaders play a pivotal role in retention decisions for teachers (Boyd et al, 2011). The current field of educational leadership is 80% white (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2016) and predominantly male. White leaders often struggle to address diversity issues (Mabokela & Madsen, 2005), their potential impact on heightened Black female teacher turnover is important to explore. Further, given the overwhelmingly white and male presence in school administration, it is imperative that this study explicitly explores elements of race and racism. For example, many scholars (Aleman, 2009; Brooks, 2012; Terrell & Lindsey, 2009; Theoharris, 2007) have written explicitly about social justice leadership and how school leaders, sometimes regardless of racial or ethnic background have reproduced racial inequities in their schools. For example, white and Latinx school leaders facing demographic change in schools have reported feeling ill-equipped to make the requisite changes to address their school's diversity and, in some cases, make half-hearted attempts to do so (i.e. tasking minoritized teachers with the duties they do not want) (Young et al, 2010). In other cases, even school leaders of color utilize practices which reproduce inequities for students and teachers of color, like supporting second-generation segregation practices within schools (Brooks, 2012). Taken together, I argue that these examples of (mis)leadership this place an onus on Black female teachers to be advocates for their Black students, this additional labor makes the jobs of Black female teachers more taxing and potentially leads to heightened Black female teacher turnover.

Problem Statement

In spite of the glaring need for more Black teachers (Milner, 2006) and favorable impressions of them in the classroom (Cherng & Haplin, 2016), schools are still struggling to retain them. More specifically, Black educators are severely underrepresented in the teaching

field (White, 2016); experience a multitude of oppressive organizational conditions in schools (Griffin & Tackie, 2016; Kalogrides et. al, 2013; Kohli, 2016; Mabokela & Madsen, 2005) and also have higher turnover rates than other teachers in the field (Carver Thomas & Darling Hammond, 2017; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). Further, there is a paucity of research on Black female teachers which leaves the field with scarce information about Black female teacher turnover in comparison to Black male turnover. The field has quantitatively identified some of the major factors specifically contributing to Black teacher turnover like organizational conditions (Achinstein et al, 2010; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009; Ingersoll & May, 2011), identified some racialized issues that Black teachers face in schools (Griffin & Tackie, 2016; Kohli, 2016), and have found that school administrators have a strong impact on overall teacher retention (Achinstein et al, 2010; Boyd et al, 2011), however the field lacks a plethora of nuanced qualitative understanding of the specific influence that school leaders could have on Black female teacher turnover.

The large quantitative data sets utilized by (Connor, 2011; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009; Ingersoll & May, 2011) allows the field to identify the pertinent issues affecting turnover, however, we need qualitative perspective to explore how these issues particularly affect Black educators. Achinstein et al (2010) suggest that "these findings (referring to Ingersoll & Connor, 2009) indicate that research is needed to discern whether the most recent findings constitute the beginning of a new and troubling trend and to determine the prevalence and causes of the different types of turnover for teachers of color (p. 82)." In my view, this is an explicit call for more qualitative understandings that center the voices and sense-making of teachers in the research. Moreover, qualitative research approaches can elucidate how identity related factors like race and culture for Black female teachers influences their turnover behavior.

11

Quantitative data on turnover suggests that the turnover factors are narrow, however it is likely that turnover is an accumulation of factors. I argue that Black female educators interact with the identified turnover factors fluidly and that there are other factors that cannot be captured through survey measures. Boyd et al (2011) explain that nationally representative data sets (like the Teacher Follow-Up Survey and Schools and Staffing Survey) can be problematic for many reasons, namely common source bias. Finally, quantitative approaches cannot account for how Black female teachers make commitments to schools despite the presence of relevant turnover factors. A qualitative approach could help to unpack the individual originality that may exist in this phenomenon for Black female educators.

Purpose of Study

Given the depth of the turnover problem, it is important that research further explores the nuance of Black female teacher's stories. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the qualitative narratives behind Black female teacher turnover in schools. Specifically, this research seeks to expose how the Black female teacher career decisions are impacted by their racial backgrounds, the support of school leadership, and institutional characteristics.

Research Questions

1. What factors do Black female teachers perceive as most influential to their decisions to stay or leave their schools?

2. What role do Black female teachers suggest race plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools?

3. What role do Black female teachers suggest school leadership plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools?
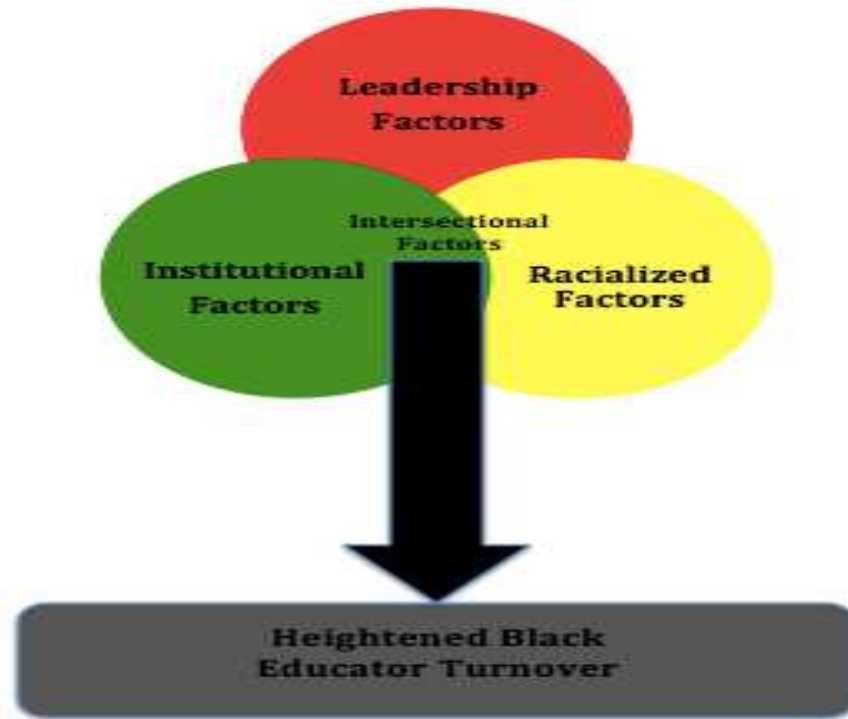
Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework identifying the major factors contributing to heightened Black teacher turnover

Conceptual Framing

The conceptual framework for this qualitative study aims to examine the factors (identified through literature) that uniquely contribute to the Black female teacher retention conversation. This framework considers the leadership, institutional, racialized, and intersectional factors that have a conceivable impact on Black female educator turnover. The framework begins with the leadership factors, which have the most pertinent impact Black educator turnover. Research shows that *administrative support* is an intricate part of school leadership practice that must be present in order to retain all educators, especially Black educators (Boyd et al, 2011; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009; Grissom, 2011). The institutional factors, which are most directly impacted by school leadership, include the *organizational conditions* (i.e school resources) and *school climate* as research shows that Black educators are less likely to

leave schools that have important institutional characteristics like classroom autonomy (Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll & May, 2011). The racialized factors include teachers' and school leaders' *personal* and *professional backgrounds* that likely have implications for their commitments, values, beliefs, and even practices (Dixson, 2003; Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Gooden, 2005; Su, 1997). Finally, the intersectional factors represented in the framework illuminate how these factors collectively contribute to the issue. The factors at this particular nexus include the *human* and *social capital* present for Black educators as well as the *racial climate* that exists at the school (Achinstein et al 2009; Bristol, 2014; Kohli, 2016). Together these factors complicate the dominant and fixed quantitative explanations by instead presenting a complex description of Black educator turnover.

Methodological Overview

This study will employ qualitative and case methods (Merriam, 2009) to advance our understandings of Black female teacher career decisions. Moreover, this study relies on relevant literature outlined in the conceptual framework to explore the unique effects of leadership, organizations, and race on the turnover issue. This research approach will borrow from phenomenological methods of interviewing to explore how Black female teachers make sense of their career journeys. The qualitative methodological approach is a major contribution to the turnover literature that seeks to deepen our understanding of the process theory that undergirds Black female teacher turnover.

Significance to the field

Turnover Research and Black Female Teachers

Unfortunately, we lack a nuanced understanding of why Black female teachers feel the way they do, as well as the systemic or leadership factors that may also contribute to turnover

patterns. Thus, results of this research will be integral to the future success of leaders and policymakers to retain diverse faculties and increase the presence of diverse perspectives in their schools. There are key implications for Black female teachers like reducing harmful within-school segregation practices; decreasing the presence of hostile racial climates; and, ultimately, increasing Black female teacher satisfaction and retention in the field.

School Leadership

This work suggests that leaders are implicated in the teacher turnover phenomenon. Therefore, this research also has the potential to inform and influence leadership preparation as well as in-service practices. All teachers report that supportive working environments are important to their retention, and there is increasing evidence that school leaders have a particular influence in developing supportive workplace conditions that help retain teachers (Boyd et. al, 2011). This research contributes significantly to our knowledge of Black female teachers and the nuanced approaches we should be considering to recruit as well as retain them.

Definition of Terms

Turnover- the attrition behavior of a teacher, either from a school or the field altogether

Mover- teachers who move from one school to another

Leaver- teachers who leave the field altogether

Minoritized- groups of humans that occupy marginal identities related to race, gender, sexuality and nationality, to name a few. As a result, they also lack power in the White, Capitalist , Imperialist, Hetero-Patriarchal structures of America

Urbanized- schools and districts that are negatively effected by city urbanization including but not limited to economic dispossession, population shifts, changes in housing patterns

Conclusion

The story of Black female teacher turnover is unique and must be examined through the voices of Black female teachers. The extent to which we continue to have a paucity of Black educators in the field is related to the historically significant actions taken against Black teachers. Further, our lack of nuanced understandings of Black teachers' experiences, decisions to leave or stay in their schools, and the extent to which school leaders play a role in these decisions create the overall context of this study.

As this study unfolded I found that the experiences Black female teachers report about their careers needed additional theoretical framing. Hence, the original conceptual framework proved to be necessary but insufficient to this research. Therefore, this work includes theoretical concepts and assumptions that borrow from Critical Race Feminism and Black Feminism in Education. Moving forward it is important to understand that the intersectional realities of Black female teachers significantly influence their career decisions and therefore these identities must be centered in the study. In the following sections, the unique intersectional identities of Black female teachers will be intentionally centered in the discussion.

The following chapter will be an intensive review of the literature on Black teacher turnover factors, career trajectories, experiences in the field, and the impact that school leaders have on teacher turnover. Chapter three will include the methodology and methods that will help answer the research questions. Chapter four will present the relevant findings. Finally, chapter five will consist of the analysis, conclusions, and implications of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Literature Review Process

This literature review highlights the most relevant scholarship pertaining to Black female teacher turnover. It begins with an overarching discussion that focuses on traditional turnover scholarship. However, as my work intends to both expand what we know about turnover and consider the qualitative narratives of history and identity specifically; this review will focus on the specific aspects of what it means to be a Black female teacher. Thus, after a brief overview of teacher turnover literature, this review turns its focus to the systems, policies, structures, organizational experiences, leadership influences, and identity of Black teachers to expose a qualitative gap in scholarship. Further, I hope to make a clear argument for why we must consider the historical and identity related reasons for Black female teacher turnover.

Understanding Teacher Recruitment and Retention

This section serves as a brief overview of the literature on teacher recruitment and retention in the United States. Specifically, I highlight the increasing faculty-student racial and cultural disproportionalities. It is important to understand that the field of teaching is primarily white and female, Boser (2014). Given the growing population of diverse students and families in public schools, the domination of the field by white women can be problematic for a number of reasons. As the minoritized teacher population remains increasingly marginalized, around 17% (6% for Black teachers) and the minoritized student population slowly creeps to the majority; the field continues to face the reality of faculty-student racial and cultural disproportionality (Boser, 2014; White, 2016).

Recruiting and retaining teachers, especially teachers of color for an increasingly diverse student population is an ongoing task for policymakers and administrators across the country.

The results of these efforts however, are mixed at best and the need for further measures to retain teachers is evident (Ingersoll & May, 2011). The most common response to teacher shortages across the country has been the influx of alternative certification programs, like Teach For America that helps to increase the teacher pool (Ingersoll, 2001). These measures have been helpful as teachers, specifically minoritized teachers, are entering the profession at increased rates over the past ten years (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Further, Ingersoll & Merrill (2010) explain that over the past few decades (1988-2008) the teaching force has increased exponentially, with a 41% increase of white teachers and a 96% increase for Black teachers. However, the effects of these efforts have been marginal given the exit behavior of teachers across diverse backgrounds, especially amongst beginning teachers. Despite the increased recruitment and subsequent teacher pool expansion, exit behavior during these same periods of time (1998-2008) also increased for all teachers. For white teachers, turnover increased from 14.4% in the 1988-1989 school year to 16.4% in the 2004-2005 school year and went back down to 15.6% in 2008-2009. For minoritized teachers, there has been a notable and steady increase in turnover. Minoritized teachers experienced a 15.1% turnover rate in the 1988-1989 school year and we saw an increase to 19.3% by 2008-2009. These numbers are intensified for teachers who work in hard to teach spaces, like schools that lack a plethora of material resources (Achinstien et al, 2010). This also holds true for beginning teachers, who are more likely to leave teaching. Ingersoll (2003) estimates between 40% and 50% of teachers leave within the first five years of their job. What is clear is that research has well documented the increased turnover behavior of all teachers over the years and we need more information explaining why. One other important point to consider is that Ingersoll & Connor (2009) found that retirement only accounts for about 12% of the turnover of teachers across the country. This suggests that the majority of teacher loss we

experience is as a result of systemic, personal, district or school level factors that push them out, not a natural progression through their careers.

These data suggest that teacher recruitment and retention discussions must occur in tandem moving forward. The alternative methods we have traditionally used to recruit teachers have been successful over the years but these initiatives are only one half of a much more complex story. Overall the alarming turnover statistics suggest that teachers are leaving their schools and the profession for a number of reasons that are worth further exploration. Until we understand more about why teachers are leaving, the recruitment efforts will continue to have a marginal impact.

Types of Turnover

In an effort to increase our understanding of teacher turnover it is imperative that we understand the different ways in which teachers leave. It would be an oversight to assume that teachers leave in any singular way or that their behavior is always of their own doing. Boe et al, (2008) explain that there are several types of teacher turnover to consider (see table below).

Types of Teacher Turnover

Type of Turnover	Definition	Example
Attrition or Leaver	Teacher decides to leave the profession	Retirement from the profession
Area Transfer/Switchers	Teacher moves from one area or subject to another	Teacher moving from teaching reading to teaching social studies. Or teacher who moves from middle school to high school.
Migration/Movers	Teacher moves from one school to another	Teacher leaves current district for another
Involuntary Transfer/Displacement	Teacher is shuffled or fired because of budget cuts, turnaround policies or performance	Teacher is fired from a school as a result of their low test scores.

Table 2: A representation of the different types of turnover as defined by Boe et al 2008; Ingersoll &Connor, 2009; White,2016)

The first of these types is attrition or leaver. Attrition is when a teacher decides to leave the profession (Boe et al, 2008). This type of movement suggests that a teacher has either entered another line of work or has just left the field of teaching altogether. The next is teacher area transfer, also known as switchers (Boe et al, 2008). These are teachers who move from one area or even subject to another. An example of this is if a teacher moves from an elementary school to a middle school. Switchers may also switch from teaching science to teaching math. Also, there is teaching migration or movers (Boe et al, 2008; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). These are teachers who have left their current school for another. To be clear, this could mean schools in the same or in different districts. Further, a mover can also be an area transfer mentioned above. The key is that when a teacher is labeled a mover, they have chosen to leave their current school for another. Finally, there is involuntary transfer or displacement that happens to teachers. In this instance, teachers are shuffled or fired as a result of turnaround and other performance-based

policies, which require the dismissal of faculty (White, 2016). These cases are more prevalent in urbanized or high poverty settings, nevertheless they push teachers out of their schools for poor school performance. Additionally, budget cuts, seniority, and individual teacher performance could contribute to involuntary turnover (Boe et al, 2008).

Making Sense of Turnover Types

It appears that these types of turnover fall into two separate bins that make them unique to this discussion. On one hand switchers, movers, and those who attrite have some autonomy over their turnover behavior. Teachers that fall into these categories have chosen to leave a school or the profession on their own, because of a myriad of reasons. However, involuntary transfer or displacement describes teachers who have lost autonomy over their turnover behavior. These distinctions are important and integral to this study as the particular school and district contexts that teachers are working in (i.e urbanized, high poverty) could have implications for the types of turnover they discuss.

Teacher's racial and cultural backgrounds are not at the center of these definitions. However, I argue that a teacher's identity likely has a conceivable impact on the types of turnover that specifically Black teachers are most likely to experience. For example, Black teachers are more likely to be found in urbanized and high poverty districts (Achinstein et al, 2010; White, 2016) and the characteristics of these districts are often tied to high stakes turnaround models and constant budget cutting; therefore these contexts could reduce the autonomy these teachers have over their turnover behavior. Hence, research on teacher retention and turnover must be conscious of the types of turnover and their implications for teachers of different racial identities.

Reasons for Overall Teacher Turnover

A meta-analysis of 34 large-scale quantitative data sets by Borman & Dowling (2008) found that there are a plethora reasons that teachers cite for their leave behaviors. Although they found a mixture of both professional and personal reasons, the focus of this section will be on the push or turnover factors present in schools or districts.

Student Characteristics: Discipline, Poverty and Urbanicity

One significant way to predict teacher turnover is to examine the student characteristics. In many cases urbanized and high poverty schools are saddled with different obstacles for teachers to navigate. Those typically include a lack of financial capital, economically dispossessed school contexts and intense classroom diversity (Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll & May, 2011). Although these obstacles should not be viewed as deficits, working in these contexts does require teachers to have a specific skillset to ensure the the academic success of students in the school. Without the requisite set of skills and administrative support, schools in these contexts tend to experience higher turnover rates due to issues like classroom management.

Borman & Dowling, (2009) found that teachers who taught in schools with majority minority students were three times as likely to leave the school than teachers who taught in schools that had a majority of white students. Schools that were considered high poverty, measured by the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, also experience high teacher turnover rates (Hanushek et al, 2004). In these contexts, teachers need continuous support and development if schools wish to retain them.

Ingersoll (2001) found that turnover was affected by the perceived discipline problems in schools in urbanized contexts. If organizations struggled with discipline issues including high referral, suspension and expulsion rates then teachers were more likely to want to leave their

schools or the profession. This research also suggests that teachers often left because they perceived a lack of student motivation. Teachers who are not properly prepared to teach in urbanized contexts with diverse student populations are not likely to be retained in these schooling spaces.

Financial versus School Capital

There is a commonly held belief that teachers leave a school or the profession due to salaries. This is evidenced by policy conversations, the exploration of value-added models, and performance pay options to improve teacher quality (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007). Many scholars have found that higher salaries are related to the decreased likelihood of teacher turnover (Hanushek et al, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) That said, there is no consensus on whether teacher salary has a direct and significant impact on turnover. One research study identified that teachers who taught in districts that had lower salaries were more likely to leave their districts to work in other districts that had higher salaries (Hanushek et al, 2004).

However, a study published in 2007 Hanushek and Rivkin (2007) explained that working conditions have a stronger impact on turnover decisions than salaries alone. They further suggest that policymakers consider how the combination of poor salaries and working conditions likely contribute to teacher turnover rates. The financial capital represented by the school's instructional resources, for example, contribute to the working conditions and likely the impact of salaries on turnover. Schools that have less in terms of facilities or instructional materials are more likely to have higher teacher turnover (Loeb, et al, 2005). Taken together, the schools' financial capital in terms of teacher salaries, school resources and facilities have a collaborative impact on teacher turnover. However, the specific ways that Black teachers process their perceptions of financial and school capital is an area worth further exploration.

Induction and Professional Development

Scholarship has consistently shown that beginning teachers struggle with classroom management, student motivation, and building relationships with parents to name a few (Veeman, 1984). Over time additional early career obstacles have surfaced, like student safety, teaching in diverse communities, and adolescent development concerns (Graziano & Litton, 2007). Retention tends to be higher amongst teachers who report having stronger professional ties and networks (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). These include teacher induction opportunities for newer teachers and effective professional development for teachers at different levels. Johnson & Birkeland (2003) found that newer teachers are more likely to remain in schools that appeared organized for success and gave them more instant gratification. This is important to consider as schools tend to lose teachers in their formative years (the first 2-5 years) in the profession. Finally, Lau et al, (2007) posit that formal mentorship and socio-emotional support, particularly for young teachers of color is paramount to their continued success. This scholarship suggests that we must pay close attention to the professional development and induction of teachers to prevent turnover. Further, we need more research that discusses the ways that Black female teachers specifically perceive induction and how they feel it impacts their career trajectories.

School Autonomy

Ingersoll (2007) posits that teachers often "have little influence over schoolwide decisions that shape the instructional program, such as establishing the overall school curriculum, conceiving changes and innovations to the curriculum, and even choosing their own course textbooks (p.3)." Further, he explains they lack input on behavioral and discipline policies. The voice and autonomy teachers have in schools are important components that

contribute to turnover rates (Ingersoll, 2001; Torres, 2014) this is especially true for teachers of

color (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). Torres (2014) concurs; he found that when teachers feel like

just "construction workers" enacting a school vision rather than "architects" of the school vision

their likelihood of turnover increases. Together, this research suggests that the ability of teachers

to see their values reflected in the school's direction is important for their retention. More

scholarship is necessary to explore how Black female teachers make sense of the impact of

school autonomy on their career decisions.

Administrative Support

Administrative support and teachers' perceptions of support has consistently been cited

as the most important factor in increasing teacher retention (Allensworth et al, 2009; Borman &

Dowling, 2008; Boyd et al, 2011; Brown &Wynn, 2009; Grissom, 2011; Ingersoll, 2001; Lau,

2007;). Boyd et al, (2011) found that even when controlling for all contextual factors,

administrative support reigns as the strongest predictor of teacher retention in New York public

schools. This scholarship finds that the impact school leaders have on the organizational working

conditions make them most directly responsible for school turnover trends. Grissom (2011)

supports this research as he finds that "good" principals can retain teachers regardless of the

school context. In this study, he found that teachers in high minority contexts, high poverty

contexts, and schools with other disadvantages were less likely to experience high turnover rates

if they had "good" principals. This research posits that "good" principals indirectly affect student

achievement and increase retention by building and sustaining strong instructional capacity in a

school. In Charter Management Organizations, Torres (2014) cites that teachers' perceptions of

workload have considerable implications for their eventual turnover behavior. In this case, the

support of administration could have much to do with whether or not a teacher decides to leave.

Expanding on administrative support, some studies have specifically focused on school leaders who have been successful in retaining teachers (Brown and Wynn, 2009; Johnson Birkeland, 2003; Wong, 2004). Brown and Wynn (2009) found that school leaders who share decision making, support new teacher induction, prioritize professional development, model high expectations, increase teacher leadership capacity, maintain visibility, and promote collegial environments are often successful in retaining teachers.

Trust and School Leadership

The type of support that teachers receive from their school leaders likely has heavy implications for their ability to trust them. Researchers have argued that trust in school leaders is an important characteristic that influences teacher turnover decisions (Hanford & Leithwood, 2013; Grissom & Keiser, 2011). Hanford and Leithwood (2013) explain in depth that teachers prefer working with school administrators they feel they can trust. The specific characteristics associated with trust include visibility, providing support, consistency, reliability, dependability, integrity, and respect. This research suggests that the ability of school leaders to sustain these practices and promote these values contributes to a high trust environment. Trust is likely to be disrupted when school leadership's vision and direction of the school are misaligned with the values of the teachers. Torres (2014) explains that when teacher feel like they lack voice or autonomy as well as an impact on the direction of the school, trust is likely to decrease leading to turnover. Trust is further complicated when one considers the racial congruence of school leaders. Grissom & Keiser (2015) find that job satisfaction is often increased for Black teachers when they have Black school leaders. This suggests that trust may be increased when leaders and teachers share racial backgrounds. Trust in school leaders likely plays an integral role in turnover behavior suggesting that leaders must align their school visions with teachers to retain them.

This section highlights the most consistent reasons teachers leave schools or the profession. The impact of organizational factors such as student body characteristics and school resources, professional development, salaries, leadership support and trust all collectively contribute to teacher turnover trends. Importantly, school leaders are either directly or indirectly responsible for all the stated factors, except for salaries. This substantiates and supports the leadership focus of this research.

Black Educators, Retention and Turnover

The vast majority of research on teacher retention relies heavily on evidence from large national data sets, follow-up surveys and staffing surveys (Achinstein et. al, 2010; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009; Ingersoll & May, 2011). Research on Black teacher turnover speaks mostly about their goals when entering the field (Su, 1997; Villegas & Irvine, 2011) and then relies on national survey data to make sense of why they leave the field or their schools in such disparate rates (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). What follows is a brief discussion of studies that explore various reasons associated with Black educator turnover specifically.

Workplace Factors

Exiting literature has identified some key organizational or workplace factors that have proven influential to Black teachers' retention and turnover.

Salaries

One of these factors involves financial capital (Achinstein et. al, 2010; Kearney, 2008; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009), more specifically *salaries*. Salaries seem to play a more pivotal role for Black teachers and their choices to leave their schools (Leukens et. al, 2004). Leaning heavily on national teacher surveys, Leukens et al (2004) revealed that African Americans were more likely than whites to report leaving the field for a higher salary. Kirby et al (1999), in a study of

teachers in Texas, found that salary increases were more helpful in retaining teachers of color. Salaries are important to consider in the turnover conversation for Black teachers, as many of them work in urbanized and often under-resourced communities (Achinstein et al, 2010). Their commitments to particular student populations in these schools likely conflicts with their own personal needs, namely their financial capital.

Another study found that for Black female teachers salaries are important to their intention to remain in schools given their shifting social lives (Farinde et al, 2016). This study posits that opportunities for advancement which often come with pay increases were few and far between for the participants. This suggests that the impact of salaries may differ depending on the case, or the particular aspirations of different teachers. Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond (2017) find that Black Female teachers are more likely to report being dissatisfied with their salaries. In context, they also report that Black female teachers are more likely to be working in high poverty schools within cities. This suggests that increased salary dissatisfaction is related to their overconcentration in underresourced schools.

Social Capital

The personal and professional supports for Black teachers have powerful implications for their retention in schools (Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). Achinstein et. al (2009) found that the lack of support for Black teachers' commitments to socially just teaching and other emancipatory initiatives for minoritized students proved detrimental to their retention. They described that teachers of color moved schools because they perceived a lack of cultural capital and organizational support for a social justice agenda. Leonard and Evans (2013), although this research is not directly related to turnover, found similar job dissatisfaction when Black teachers felt under-supported in their pursuit of social justice practices. This work suggests that school

leaders must both, value social justice practices and provide professional development for Black teachers to implement them.

The other form of capital that is important for Black teacher retention is socio-emotional. Bristol (2014) explains that Black male teachers who were groupers instead of loners in their school space were more likely to remain and feel supported. The presence of other Black teachers in the school serves as a source of comfort. Lau et. al, (2007) identified mentoring and training as key social and emotional supports necessary for the retention of Black teachers. In a survey of 65 teachers, they found that a lack of mentoring and emotional support significantly affected their retention. The impact of same race colleagues is vital for Black teachers considering their extreme marginality in the field. It is plausible that Black teachers are more likely to want to leave schools where they feel they lack a sense of belonging or feel their identities are oppressed. That said, special attention should be given to the professional supports, socio-emotional support groups and simply the number of Black teachers in a school if the goal is to increase teacher retention.

Classroom Autonomy

Ingersoll & May (2011), found that one of the top reasons that minoritized teachers gave for leaving their school, was the lack of classroom autonomy. Ingersoll & Connor (2009) predict that minoritized and Black teachers would experience higher turnover when they had lower levels of autonomy. Their models suggest that they would experience 30% turnover in low autonomy schools versus 15% in high autonomy schools. Reportedly, classroom autonomy is reduced in high poverty schools in comparison to low poverty schools (Ingersoll & May, 2011). This significantly disadvantages Black teachers as they continue to be over-concentrated in high poverty contexts (White, 2016). These contexts are likely tied to strict state standards that

prioritize reading and math proficiencies significantly limiting curricular creativity. Therefore, there isn't much room for Black teachers to bring in elements of their cultural relatability which is so often central to their pedagogical style. Organizational conditions, such as these, likely oppress the identities and teaching practices of Black teachers and could potentially lead to increased turnover.

Administrative Support

The literature highlights that all teachers are more likely to leave schools where they experienced lower administrative support, through poor working conditions, lack of school-level autonomy, curricular support or professional development (Boyd, et al, 2011; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009). Ingersoll & Connor (2009) found a negative association between teachers of color and low administrative support. Farinde et al, (2016) also found that poor administrative support defined as increased workload, intimidation and a lack of follow through contributed to the increased likelihood of Black female teacher turnover in an urbanized district. To date, these are the only studies I found that explicitly mention administrative support as a factor for Black teacher turnover. The specific relationship between Black teachers and administrative support, however, needs further investigation.

Beyond Turnover Discussions: Racialized Commitment

Black teachers, unlike white teachers likely come to the profession and commit to school communities for different reasons, related to race. Research has not explicitly tied these factors to turnover, however, the following racialized factors have a conceivable impact on the discussion. What follows is a brief discussion of the racialized experiences of Black teachers that could potentially contribute to turnover decisions.

Duty to the Black Community

Another factor that could contribute to the Black teacher retention narrative is their commitments to particular communities. Research has shown that Black teachers are likely to enter the profession with the expressed dedication to changing educational outcomes for other Black and minoritized students (Allensworth et al, 2009; Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Farinde-Wu et al, 2017; Mccray et. al, 2002; Su, 1997). These studies identify the motivations that many Black teachers have as they enter the field to serve as agents of change in Black communities. That said, the context that Black teachers work in may have strong implications for their willingness to stay. The conflict may exist when Black teachers remain committed to minoritized students in organizations that do not have the necessary conditions to retain them (i.e. classroom autonomy or strong administrative support). These competing realities in schools are worth further investigation.

Systems, Structures and Policy

The majority of the research highlighted above represent policy approaches to teacher turnover issues. Most studies on this topic lean on large-scale quantitative data sets and other measures to identify national trends focusing on turnover behavior. This is the case, even when researching teachers from different racialized histories and backgrounds. These quantitative approaches situate much of the turnover discussion in the policy arena and glances over Black female teacher's unique histories and narratives. Often policy initiatives and other reform efforts are misinformed or ahistorical as they do not take into account the historical experiences that shape the current problem (Horsford & D'Amico, 2015). In order to truly understand the experiences of Black female teachers and how they fit in the turnover discussion, we must historicize how law and policy have shaped their careers over the years. What follows is a

discussion of how *Brown* and future desegregation efforts help to shape the turnover discussion of Black female teachers.

The Perspectives, Affects and Effects of Brown vs. Board of Education

"If and when they (Black) are admitted to these (public) schools certain things will inevitably follow. Negro teachers will become rare and in many cases disappear (DuBois, 1973, p.151)." The 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education Topeka, Kansas* decision was and remains a considerable point of contention for Blacks in the pursuit of quality schooling. It presented a troubling duality that produced split opinions in the community. On one hand, *Brown* presented a way out or form of liberation that Blacks had been in pursuit of since their arrival in America. It offered the possibility of more equitable schooling, better resources and proximity to whiteness (as whiteness is and was associated with freedom). Conversely, as DuBois warned, it demonized Black schools and subsequently the communities they resided in. Further, *Brown* created a looming feeling of potential loss to these communities in the forms of control over education and of course Black teachers. Morris (2009) describes this struggle as, a "precarious predicament" (p.18) as he suggests that a push for Black students to attend white schools posed a risk of significant loss for communities and a cultural mismatch for their Black students. At the same time, the relegation of Black students to inferior resources in all Black institutions constituted another dilemma altogether. Dr. Martin Luther King further explicates this conflict stating:

> I am for equality. However, I think integration in our public schools is different. In that setting, you are dealing with the most important asset of an individual-the mind. White people view Black people as inferior. A large percentage of them have a very low opinion of our race. People with such a low view of the Black race cannot be given free rein and

put in charge of the intellectual care and development of our boys and girls. (Morris, 2009, p. 21).

Evidenced by these discussions and arguments we find that *Brown* had a significant impact and strong implications for Black students and teachers alike. Less is known, however, about how it split opinions for Black teachers of the time.

Perspectives on School Desegregation for Black Educators

Arguably, the most pivotal moment in the history of Black educators was their experiences with desegregation. Derrick Bell calls for a retrospective view of the legacy of desegregation from the viewpoint of Black teachers. He argues that in many ways African Americans were so blindly focused on integrating into white schools that the hard work and determination of Black teachers in poorly resourced schools often went under-recognized (Bell, 1983). He states:

Dr. DuBois would not have been surprised when Blacks at last became entitled to desegregated schools that we would literally lust for racially balanced schools and promptly suppress all memory of the wondorous teachers and principals who, despite the restraints of "separate but equal" policies, somehow enabled generations of Black children to learn enough to both survive and fight successfully for school desegregation. (p.292).

The best way to describe Black teachers' perspectives of school desegregation is they had mixed views. Douglass-Horsford (2010) uses counternarratives from Black superintendents to describe the perspectives of desegregation efforts. Three emergent themes surfaced in this study. She explains: "There is nothing wrong with something being all Black", "Sometimes I feel like the problems started with desegregation", and "We've never truly integrated" as key findings in

her study (p.298). This work explains the diversity of opinions of Black educators ranging from the benefits of Black schools, the lack of teeth *Brown* had to be fully implemented and the illusion of access to equitable education that *Brown* promised. On one hand, Black educators were hopeful for the promise of better facilities and resources for their Black students. Siddle-Walker (2013) explains that many Black teachers were ardent advocates for desegregation efforts. She posits "in addition to their collaborative activity, their educational advocacy plan predates the known NAACP advocacy, provides a more expanded vision of educational needs, maintains a consistent focus throughout, and utilizes a variety of local and national strategies to accomplish their goal of solving problems in education (p.216)." Black teachers served as the local behind the scenes advocates in support of the NAACP's national efforts to challenge school segregation.

Conversely, some Black teachers were leery of their impending demise in the field as unilateral desegregation plans would undoubtedly lead to some losing their jobs. In the years leading up to the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* decision Black teachers and leaders were concerned of the potential consequences that they would face with integration looming ahead of them (Fairclough, 2004). Many teachers were encouraged by other Black leaders to think of the children and the potential benefits they would receive, ahead of the potential job losses they would experience.

Despite the perceived benefits of looking at the bigger picture teachers and leaders continued to have mixed feelings about the NAACP's integration efforts (Fairclough, 2007). Fairclough states, "the basic premise of integration, that white schools were better than black schools, encouraged an implicit assumption that white teachers were also better (p.394)." Black teachers often harbored these ideologies during this time because of their school's poor

conditions and the oppressive behaviors exhibited towards them from the school districts they were in. Black teachers occupied a complex stance on the *Brown* decision. Nevertheless, their commitment to Black students was unwavering, despite personal sacrifice.

Dismissal of Black Teachers

After the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision, Black teachers became an endangered population in schools as they were dismissed from the field in astronomical numbers. Teaching was a profession that once represented about 50% of Black professional employment in 1950 (Siddle Walker, 2000). Between 1954-1965, Hudson & Holmes (1994) found that 39,000 teachers had lost their jobs in 17 states. Black communities across the South lost upwards of 240 million dollars in salaries (Baker, 2001). Tillman (2004) describes this period as one of the most destructive events in education, "the wholesale firing of Black educators." Douglass-Horsford (2011) describes Black teacher loss as a threat to the social, economic and cultural fabric of the Black community.

Also, the increasing teacher credentialing process after the Brown decision aided this plunge in the Black teacher population. Black teachers traditionally scored lower than their white colleagues and therefore could not gain necessary teacher certification (Gitomer, Latham & Ziomek, 1999; Madkins, 2011). They also faced continued denial of access to teaching positions because of racist tactics from white school officials (Anderson, 1988). It wasn't enough for white districts to dismiss Black teachers they found additional ways to bar them from even entering the profession, which helped to maintain white supremacy in schools despite the influx of Black students. This dismissal threatened the economic, social and cultural welfare of the Black community.

Losses for Black Students

Black teacher dismissal also had lasting detrimental effects on groves of Black students who no longer had much, if any, access to these teachers (Tillman, 2004). The growing population of Black students was quite disproportionate to the presence of Black teachers within the schools they attended. Black teachers served as strong pillars in the community and sacrificed a great deal to ensure the proper education of Black students (Anderson, 1988; Dingus, 2006; Foster, 1993; 1997; Siddle Walker, 2000). Black students lost a great deal with the dismissal of so many of their greatest resources in the areas of curriculum, care, counseling, and overall support. Foster (1993) describes Black educators as having the freedom in their segregated schools to discuss issues of race and culture in America. She explains that the curricular freedom and the ability to socially situate lessons to ensure open conversations about race, power, and privilege helped to empower Black students. These conversations would begin to erode as Black students moved into newly desegregated schools.

Facing seemingly insurmountable odds and left with very few options, they (Black teachers) would have to make a decision to find another profession or mobilize outside of their communities (Horsford & Mackenzie, 2008). Often times this meant that Black students were forced into schools that they and their parents were increasingly skeptical of, because of the lack of Black teachers. Black teachers had always lead and educated with a strong ethic of care. Some describe them as "irreplaceable assets" (Dingus, 2006 p.222) who always had a vested interest in the well-being of their Black students. The impact of that care would slowly diminish as Black students sat in desegregated classrooms.

The Green Factors and other Legal Failures

"Green Factors-six areas in which the court could evaluate whether or not a district had achieved unitary status. The six areas included: pupil assignment, faculty, staff, transportation, facilities, and extra-curricular activities (Shircliffe, 2012, p.107)."

As *Brown* made its presence known across the country consistent evasive measures were taken to erode its effects. These tactics include the maintenance of dual-school systems and questionable freedom of choice plans (Douglass, 2005). States and counties across the country attempted to maintain multiple school districts, one black and one white, after the ruling (Douglass, 2005). These systems left Black teachers in underfunded schools and white teachers in the better-resourced schools, within districts. Another tactic to evade *Brown* was freedom of choice plans, Shircliffe argues that freedom of choice plans in the South were the primary means to maintain segregated schools, offering parents limited options amongst already segregated campuses (Shircliffe, 2012). These plans offered an illusion of choice that rested on assumptions of families' mobility, class, transportation, and other factors that were not adequately accounted for. The discursive practices of school districts made post-*Brown* desegregation a tumultuous time for Black students, parents, and teachers.

One aspect of desegregation history, that is particularly pertinent to this topic is faculty desegregation. The arena for faculty desegregation conversations took place in the judicial system, specifically in New Kent County,Virginia, and Jackson, Mississippi. The NAACP's Legal Defense and Educational Fund lawyers, namely Thurgood Marshall, fought tirelessly for teacher integration well after 1954. They argued, "the racial assignment of school personnel was predicated on the assumption that African American teachers were inferior to white teachers and therefore unfit to instruct white children (Shircliffe, 2012, p.71)."

In *Green vs. New Kent County, Virginia 1968* the court stated that the freedom of choice plan in the Virginia county was inadequate and that until they desegregated faculty they were operating an illegally segregated school system (Orfield & Eaton, 1996). The 1968 *Green* decision promised to create more equity in school districts' faculty ensuring that the Black to white ratio was equal in schools, amongst other things. Faculty ratios were supposed to be one of the determining factors that showed progress in a school's desegregation efforts (Orfield & Eaton, 1996).

Another important case was *Singleton vs. Jackson Separate School District.* This case set the parameters for determining racial balance or targets for schools as guidelines for integration. Singleton's promise was to be a "defense against the massive displacements of African-American educators: it mandated that any teacher whose position was eliminated due to school desegregation would have the opportunity to fill other positions before school officials could recruit or appoint someone from a different race (Fultz, 2004, p.33)." Ultimately, the regulations that were born out of these cases were at the mercy of white districts and school leaders to implement them with fidelity. Therefore, they were constantly undermined by white districts, white school leaders and had design flaws that upheld a system of white supremacy (Shircliffe, 2012).

Black Female Teachers Careers, Beyond Desegregation

The displacement of Black teachers did not cease at the conclusion of most southern desegregation efforts. Valerie Hill-Jackson (2017) clarifies that the exodus of Black female teachers from the profession started in the 1970's and 1980's. The decline in the Black teacher workforce (USDOE, 1972) during this time can be seen as a residual effect of school desegregation efforts mentioned above. These declines opened the door for increased policy

discussions and national initiatives to increase the presence of Black teachers (Villegas et al, 2012). Hill-Jackson (2017) describes "four central thoughts" contributing to the decline of Black female teachers. One study she outlined found that the percentage of Black female teacher candidates from 1975-1982 declined from 30% in 1975 to 19% in 1982 (Lyson & Falk, 1984). She explains that post-desegregation many future Black female teachers began to pursue other majors in college. This is likely the result of a lack of faith in the profession given the closing of so many Black schools. The next contributory factor she describes includes the attraction of other lucrative careers that came with higher salaries. She cites that Black female teachers are more likely to leave the profession due to poor salaries or the promise of more lucrative careers in other fields (Haberman, 2017). Post-desegregation Black female teachers began a search to locate careers that would give them more social mobility.

Third, Hill-Jackson explains that there are fewer Black women attending 4 -year institutions and therefore negatively affecting an important piece of the Black teacher pipeline. She explains "in 2014 the percentage of Black 25-29 year olds who completed a Bachelors degree or higher hovered around 22%....the percentage who completed at least a high school diploma was approximately 90% (Kena et al, 2014, p.24)." Finally, White suggests that involuntary displacement (a term previously discussed in this review) pushes out Black teachers who are concentrated in schools susceptible to district turnaround policies (White, 2016). These policies that are aimed at the improving student outcomes often end up pushing out Black teachers who are committed to the uplift of Black students (Ingersoll et al, 2016). Together the outlined historical, political, and economic forces set forth by Hill-Jackson frame the context for more contemporary influences on Black female teacher turnover

Together, the failures of these desegregation efforts help to shape the story surrounding Black and Black female teacher turnover in different ways. First, *Brown* creates the scarcity of Black and Black female teachers as they were dismissed when school segregation became outlawed. Next, the *Green* and *Singleton* cases lacked the teeth to reinstate Black teachers in newly desegregated schools. Together, these cases forced future Black teachers to seek other professions, as teaching was no longer the predominant career for educated Blacks and Black females. Finally, the dismissal of Black teachers and the inability to reclaim equitable space in the profession; removed educational control from Black communities and instilled a narrative of Black teacher and school inferiority that proves pervasive in contemporary discussions of Black education.

Contemporary Policy Effects

Contemporary school policies that are related to performance standards differentially effect schools in majority minoritized contexts (White, 2016). Hence, performance related policy initiatives are more likely to affect Black and Black female teachers that are concentrated in these school environment (Carver-Thomas & Darling- Hammond, 2017). What follows is a brief discussion about how contemporary state, neoliberal, and district policies affect Black teachers and schools. More specifically, we find that contemporary educational policy both rest upon deficit notions about Black schools (and therefore the Black teachers within them) and perpetuate Black teacher displacements evident in previous desegregation litigation.

Neoliberalist Agendas and Black Teachers

There are strong critiques of new neoliberal initiatives like Teach for America, charter school movements, and overall divestments in public education (Picower & Mayorga, 2015). Lipman (2015) considers contemporary neoliberal policies and their effects on traditional

urbanized school closures. Lipman vehemently critiques neoliberalist concepts and initiatives. In her view, these initiatives prove problematic for communities of color as they push an ideology of social mobility and rugged individualism. Lipman suggests that this ideology ignores the historic and current disinvestment, destabilization, and abandonment of communities of color. These spaces (i.e low-income school communities) are often demonized for their lack of performance or simply because they are communities of color, without any acknowledgment to how they got to this point. Further, Lipman explains that neo-liberal initiatives, like charter schools, have managed to dismantle and displace communities of color in some urban spaces already, which has significant negative implications for students, faculties, and families of color. These decisions are made by big donors like Bill Gates and other political actors who seek to supplant, gentrify or simply tap into the city budgets through the creation of charter schools (Russakoff, 2015). This is effectively the dispossession of communities of color for the accumulation of wealth by white investors.

More specifically, some scholars explore how performance related policies sustain Black and Black female teacher turnover. White (2016) identifies that there are some significant policy related effects that are detrimental to Black teacher retention. "In this vein, Black teacher displacement refers to an acute racialized impact of policies on Black educators in low-income communities (White, 2016, p.1)." Similar to Lipman (2015) and Ingersoll (2016), White suggests that the Black teacher retention problem is closely related to recent policy initiatives like Teach for America and the rise of charter organizations. Essentially, she suggests that Black teachers are disproportionately impacted by policies as they are more likely to be concentrated in low-income schools with poor working or organizational conditions. White explains that there are, "a set of circumstances where macro level policy-initiatives geared toward restructuring low-

performing schools in high-poverty communities of color are acutely felt by ToCs (teachers of color) who work disproportionately in such schools (White, 2016, p.15)." Hence, Black teachers have the increased likelihood to be involuntarily displaced from their schools, which is in some ways beyond organizational or personal control.

Additionally, some of the discussion about contemporary policy and neoliberalist effects on Black teacher turnover considers teacher unions. Jones (2015) examines the impact of an attack on teachers unions, for Black teachers. He discusses how attacks on unions for the support of neoliberal initiatives like Teach for America and rise in charter schools, actually exclude Black educators who are so pivotal to communities of color. He explains most Black educators are geographically concentrated in large urban centers like NYC and New Orleans. "Black teachers are 19% of the K-12 staff in New York City, for example, 21% of public school teachers in Boston, and 26% in Chicago (Jones, 2015). However, the fates of these public schools are often tied to high stakes testing policies and performance measures that advocate for faculty dismissal. Further, Jones (2015) explains that "the most dramatic attacks on unionized teachers has taken place in large urban districts (p.89)." This proves problematic for heavily concentrated Black educator populations. The privatization movements, especially in urbanized contexts supplant public schooling options and advocate for the destruction of teachers unions which have historically been helpful for Black wealth accumulation and development of the Black middle class. Instead, these movements advocate for neoliberal tools like Teach for America which privileges white teachers by subsidizing their masters' degrees while simultaneously displacing Black educators.

Together these scholars outline the significance of policy and neoliberalism in the contemporary Black teacher retention conversation. Fundamentally, the relegation of Black

teachers to dispossessed community schools works to their detriment under contemporary policy initiatives. Therefore, we must consider the impact of larger systems and policies in any discussion.

Organizations, Black and Black Female Teachers

This section explores the racialized experiences of Black and Black female teachers in schools. It begins with a brief introduction to the experiences of Black and Black female teachers in desegregated schools. I argue that the inception of racialized issues in schools began as Black and Black female teachers gained access, although limited, into mixed school environments. What follows is how these organizational issues unfolded for Black and Black female teachers over time.

Black Educators in Desegregated Schools

When Black teachers gained access to the newly desegregated schools they often experienced limited options. Initially, Black teachers were only allowed to teach Black students and poor white kids whose parents were quiet about their child's situation (Foster, 1990). In an effort to minimize their interaction with white students, Black teachers were often assigned to remedial or vocational courses overpopulated with Black students (Fairclough, 2007). When Black teachers tried to help make conditions better for themselves and their students, white school officials immediately shut them down. Foster (1990; 1997) explains a specific situation where a Black teacher started an advanced math course for his Black students in a newly desegregated school and was forced to stop teaching the course because the white students didn't have an equivalent. In other cases, Black teachers mention being assigned to only coach athletic teams, even if they did not have college athletic experience (Foster, 1990; 1997). Black teachers in early desegregated schools were forced to teach in closets, storage rooms, and in other

deplorable conditions (Foster, 1997). Teaching had taken on a new meaning for Black teachers in newly desegregated school environments. For many, their experiences were tainted by overt and covert forms of racism from white colleagues and administrators. Thus, immediately post-*Brown*, Black educators experienced intense racialized oppression.

Organizations and Racialized Experiences

The experiences of Black teachers in today's public schools are not vastly different than their experiences immediately during desegregation. One could argue that it is because of the way *Brown* was carried out that Black teachers are having these intensively racialized experiences. I am referring to the deliberate speed and wholesale Black faculty dismissals. Black teachers consistently manage racialized microaggressions, extreme marginality, inferior facilities, spotlighting effects, other oppressive structures and policies. These racialized experiences in schools make the profession tough to maneuver. What follows is a synthesis of the most pertinent literature related to this topic and issue.

Mabokela & Madsen (2000; 2003; 2005) explore the experiences of Black educators in Midwestern suburban schools going through mandated desegregation. In their qualitative study, they found that Black teachers experienced significant obstacles like racial micro-aggressions, spotlighting, isolation and white teachers' deficit portrayals of Black students. They describe the multiple challenges of Black teachers in predominately white spaces through six major themes. Themes include *performance pressures* or feeling like they were under constant scrutiny of white teachers; *symbolic consequences* like isolation or having to represent all Black students, *discrepant characteristics* which suggests they had to continuously prove themselves; *cultural switching,* the suppression of one's own culture in favor of the dominant; *boundary heightening*

described as pedagogical mismatches, negative stereotypes and the pigeon-hole affect; and finally *role entrapment* serving as the Black expert in the school.

Kelly (2007) speaks to the experiences of Black teachers in white schools utilizing a theory of Racial Tokenism. In this piece, the author explains how Black teachers conceptualize their marginal position within the school as a space of hope and opportunity. The Black teachers in the study describe the harsh psychological conditions and role entrapment of their marginalized positions but offer a unique perspective on how to optimize that position. The teachers in the study use a Civil Rights Ideology to justify some of the positive aspects of racial tokenism. These aspects include humanizing blackness in the curriculum and working to counter white supremacy with their physical bodies as they occupy space in traditionally white classrooms.

Rita Kohli is one of the premier voices of minoritized educator experiences in schools. In her most recent work, Kohli (2016) explains the "Hostile Racial Climates" that minoritized educators experience in the field (p.1). Although these experiences include a combination of teachers from various marginalized racial backgrounds, the experiences represented are relevant to Black educators as well. Kohli (2016) utilizes a sample of 218 urban educators from a national professional development conference to discuss their experiences in schools. What she found was that despite the glaring need for more minoritized educators in the field, especially in urban schools, that the minoritized teachers themselves often had less than favorable perceptions of their school environments. In this qualitative study, they suggest that they experience constant stereotype threat, marginalization and experiences with colleagues who essentialize their experiences as racial minorities, to name a few. They all report that they are overburdened with having to be the voice for all things multi-cultural and for the minoritized student population.

Further, Kohli (2016) cites that consistent racial microaggressions, being overlooked for leadership positions and under-supported by school leadership all contribute to the oppressive conditions surrounding them. The article concludes with the participants beginning to wonder whether teaching is really the field for them.

In a recent Education Trust report (Griffin & Tackie, 2016) highlight that Black teachers are consistently underserved and under supported across all schools. Focus groups of Black teachers across various school contexts revealed some troubling themes. The teachers described that they often were tasked with handling discipline problems. One participant remarked, "I was the only Black teacher there, but I handled basically all the discipline problems (p.6)." Others describe having to prove their worth to colleagues, the burden of supporting the whole Black student and the constant othering by their peers as significant obstacles to teaching.

Relational and Racial Demography

This section highlights the impact of school racial diversity on Black and Black female teacher retention and turnover. First, Fairchild, Tobias, Corcoran, Djukic, Kovner, and Noguera (2012) suggests that relational demography matters for job satisfaction in schools. They posit that the racialized and gendered congruence between teachers, principals, and students are essential to job satisfaction, specifically in urbanized schools. Similarly, Farinde –Wu, Allen–Handy, Butler, and Lewis (2017) identify the draw of the Urban Factor, as an important influence on Black female teacher turnover and retention. In this study they reconstruct common deficit narratives about urbanized schools, suggesting that Black female teachers see them as spaces of opportunity. As previously stated, Black female teachers often enter the profession with social justice agendas and commitments to their communities. Farinde-Wu et al, (2017) explain that their participants were attracted to urbanized schools because, they love to celebrate

46

diversity and difference, they want to provide an urgent need for underresourced schools, and their personal and educational experiences in urbanized schools give them some insider knowledge about the minoritized students that attend them. Together this work challenges previous research that suggests urbanized schools are less desirable (Achinstein et al, 2010; Ingersoll & May, 2011) and explains how retaining Black female teachers is correlated to school racial demography.

Slightly dissenting from the previous discussion Fitchett, Hopper, Eyal, McCarthy, and Lambert (2017) find evidence that Black female teachers' commitment to majority minoritized schools can cause an increase in turnover. Using Schools and Staffing Survey (2007-2008) responses the authors find that Black female teachers report both positive appraisals of majority minoritized schools and feeling more stressed. Essentially, this scholarship suggests that Black female teachers are caught in a bind of being committed to urbanized schools but also are saddled with burdening responsibilities within these schools. This research is consistent with other scholarship (Achinstein et al, 2016; Griffin & Tackie, 2016) that describes these school environments as particularly taxing for Black teachers. Conversely, it contradicts previous research on the impact of racial demography on teachers that identifies Black teachers as more willing to stay in urbanized schools (Kearney, 2008). Ultimately, this study finds that Black female and white teacher turnover in comparatively high in these working environments, suggesting that more work must be done to find out why.

Collectively, these studies identify that Black female teachers face a double–bind and are forced to reconcile their commitments to minoritized students and their own well-being. It is at this critical juncture, that turnover research must consider the complexity of Black female

teachers' career decisions. To that end, it is important that research identify what happens between the intersection of their humanistic commitments and heightened turnover behavior.

Educational Leadership and Black and Black Female Teachers

In the following section, I will briefly outline the impact educational leadership has had on the development of Black teachers. The primary focus will be the strong influence of Black educational leadership and the support for Black teachers through mentorship, and instructional leadership in segregated schools. Further, I will explore the shifts and changes in educational leadership that have implications for their experiences in schools today.

A Brief History of Black Teachers and Black School Leaders

Scholars have explored the historic influences of Black educational leadership on Black teachers (Alston, 1999; Anderson, 1988; Brown, 2002; Douglass- Horsford, 2010; Foster, 1997; Morris, 2009; Siddle-Walker, 1996: 2000; Tillman, 2004). Tillman (2004) explains that historically Black educational leadership was paramount to the success of Black teachers in segregated schools.

She details:

> "Black principals served as connections to and liaisons between the school and community. They encouraged parents to donate resources to the schools and helped raise funds for schools, were models of servant leadership, and were professional role models for teachers and other staff members. As instructional leaders in these segregated schools, Black principals provided vision and direction for school staff, helped to ensure inclusion of relevant curriculum, and transmitted the goals and ideals of the school to a philanthropic White power structure (Tillman, 2004, p.283)."

Specifically, Black female administrators played a pivotal role in the success of segregated Black schools and the teachers that comprised them. Alston & Jones (2002) posit that Black female administrators who ascended from the classroom were vital to the success of Black schools and provided curricular and socio-emotional support for their all Black faculties. These school leaders were strong advocates for the needs of Black schools and teachers, however, their influence began to erode as desegregation efforts unfolded.

Post-*Brown*, few of the strong Black principals retained their jobs (Ethridge, 1979; Tillman, 2004a, 2004b). Fultz (2004) characterizes the intensity of Black principal dismissals as having an "avalanche-like force and tempo (p.28)." Unfortunately, these swift changes had daunting implications for Black teachers. Karpinski (2004) explains that Black teachers lost great mentorship, advocates, and potential employers. The research on losses of Black leadership is scant (Tillman, 2004), however, given the scholarship we have, it is safe to say that Black leadership was almost completely eroded post-*Brown*. This loss of advocacy and support from Black school leaders had a detrimental effect on Black teachers across the country.

Today, scholars continue to explore the influence of Black school leadership post-desegregation (Bass, 2012; Dillard, 1995; Douglass Horsford, 2010; Lomotey, 1989, 1993; Morris, 2009). Although Black school leaders continue to play an integral role in the pursuit of educational equity, they lack the influence they once had before desegregation efforts. Black and Black female teachers continue to feel the lingering effects of the loss of Black educational leadership and Black educational control today. Arguably the specific lingering effects include the lack of advocacy from Black educational leadership, which continues to contribute to Black teacher turnover issues.

School Leadership, Administrative Support and Black Female Teacher Retention

As stated in previous sections, school leaders play an integral role in teacher turnover (Boyd et al, 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2009; Grissom & Keiser, 2011; Ladd et al, 2011). Grissom (2011) explicitly posits that school leaders influence the organization and working conditions that teachers work within and directly impact them through support, recognition, and mentorship. Further, a number of studies highlight school leaders impact on the experiences of Black teachers, namely through their influence on the surrounding working conditions (Fairchild et al, 2012; Grissom, 2011; Grissom & Keiser, 2011). This scholarship also explains that racial congruence between school leader and teacher as well as administrative supportive practices are key to Black teacher retention. What follows is a brief review of the research that focuses on how school leadership can effect Black female teacher turnover.

Black Female Teachers, Organizations, Leaders and their Career Trajectories

The most current and relevant study focusing on Black female teacher turnover is by Abiola Farinde-Wu. Farinde, Allen, and Lewis (2016) describe the experiences of Black female teachers in a large urbanized district and the turnover factors that they outlined. In this qualitative study, they found that poor administrative support, low salaries and reduced opportunity for advancement significantly contributed to their likelihood of leaving the school or profession. In this study, they describe that poor administrative support constituted a lack of follow through, increased workload and administrative intimidation. Further, they suggest that the poor salaries created an inverse relationship between their shifting social responsibilities and their financial capital. Finally, and related to salaries the Black female teachers in this study perceived a lack of opportunity to advance or pursue leadership opportunities. This study explores the unique experiences of Black women

50

through a Black feminist lens which helped to view their experiences as unique and distinct from Black men or white female teachers.

This study is the only recent qualitative scholarship I found to explicitly focus on the current organizational factors that affect Black female teacher turnover. The research mentions that administrative support is a strong factor that influences teacher turnover for this population. However, because the study wasn't designed to focus explicitly on the impact of school leadership, it doesn't explain why and how in great detail. Hence, my research explores specifically the impact of school leadership on Black female turnover.

Black Female Teachers and Leadership Relationships

Grissom & Keiser (2011), explicitly state that race congruence leads to teachers reporting more administrative support, recognition, and autonomy. This is, even more, the case when principals are African-American. This study utilizes the Schools and Staffing Surveys and Teacher Follow Up Surveys (2004-2005) to find that Black teachers are more satisfied in schools with Black school leaders. Further, they find that Black teachers are more likely to take on other duties for supplemental income and are also paid more for those opportunities. This study, although it does not explicitly focus on Black female teachers, does suggest that racial match between school leaders and teachers is important for turnover. To be clear, however, this research must be taken up carefully so as not to assume that turnover will decrease for Black teachers just because they have a Black administrator. That said, further studies must consider if and how intersectional identity congruence between school leaders and teachers (Black and female) affects teacher turnover.

Black, Black Female Teachers and Administrative Support

One study, Williams & Johnson (2011) explores the impact of school leadership on early Black teachers. This qualitative research finds that novice Black teachers are often disproportionately burdened with more responsibilities than other teachers in the school. The authors identify three major findings, they suggest Black teachers have to navigate Politics of Pleasing, Politics of Efficacy, and Politics of Match. This study suggests that for beginning Black teachers, one of their primary concerns was with pleasing school administrators who were constantly surveilling their classroom. This made the participants feel like they had to comply with school leader's expectations even when they were incongruent with their own values. They also report feeling less efficacious when school leaders lacked consistency and organization. Further, they find that there was a mismatch between their experience and responsibilities. Specifically, they reported being saddled with heavy teaching loads and large proportions of students with behavioral disabilities. This study although not explicitly about turnover identifies some organizational practices that can have a conceivable effect on Black female teachers.

Clearly, this scholarship identifies the potential impact of school leadership and administrative support on Black female teacher turnover. However, the aforementioned scholarship does not explicitly focus on Black female teacher turnover nor does it explain in detail how school administration impacts this population. It leaves one to question, what specific practices help retain Black female teachers? Why does racial congruence increase Black female teacher job satisfaction? Unfortunately, there is a gap in the qualitative research that focuses explicitly on these queries. That said, my research seeks to explore how school leaders' identity and practices specifically affect Black female teacher turnover.

Black, Black Female Teachers and Identity

The final section of this literature review explores the impact of Black and Black female teacher's multiple identities. This literature shows turnover for Black female teachers becomes more complex once one considers their identities, histories, and commitments to Black students. I begin this section with a brief history of the development of Black teachers. Then I explore their sustained commitments to the classroom as well as their pedagogies of liberation and social justice.

Black Teachers in the Antebellum South

Black teachers were instrumental in the development of literacy skills for Africans that were enslaved in the antebellum period. Williams (2009) describes the early education of enslaved Africans as self-taught. Often enslaved Blacks learned to read on the plantation or were taught by the children of slave owners and subsequently they taught their enslaved brothers and sisters. This learning took place in secret meetings that were covered by the fall of night, so as not to be caught by the plantation overseers. In this era, we see the consistent fight for education by enslaved Blacks who were barred by law from learning to read (Anderson, 1988)

Education was a means to achieve liberation from the bondage of slavery. Blacks in the antebellum period saw learning to read as an opportunity to access freedom, which had been so elusive since being brought to America. In some cases, despite the bondage of slavery, Blacks pursued an education in formal settings. In the early 1800's, freed and enslaved Africans were building and attending schools when allowed (Savage, 2001). Early freed and enslaved Africans' commitment to educating themselves by any means necessary sparked a movement, education for liberation.

The Early Black Teacher Corp: Black School, Black Community

Fairclough (2007) further expounds on this work through his focus on Black teachers in the segregated south. In the original Freedman, Rosenwald and independent Black schools, the teachers of newly freed Black students were almost completely Black. Most of the teachers were Black females, Black ministers, or other community leaders that were committed to eradicating Black illiteracy within their communities. Black teachers were at the center of community efforts to educate their own as a means to achieve economic and social independence. Educational endeavors were carried on the backs of Black educators who were aware of their inferior training (Savage, 2001). Despite strapped resources and poor facilities, Black educators were able to empower their Black students, often with the silent support of the community (Anderson, 1988; Brown, 2002; Fairclough, 2007; Savage, 2001). These Black community schools were safe havens that involved "African-American families in the affairs of the school as well as functioned as stabilizing institutions for African American communities (Morris, 1999 p.602)."

Savage (2001) explains that historically Black educators have done more with less in an endless pursuit of education for liberation. Their agency in this process is best described in three distinct ways. They focused on resource development sacrificing their own finances to ensure students had what they needed to be successful; dedicated their time to instill values of racial pride and self-reliance; and centered the school in the community as a space for communal development (Savage, 2001). Clearly, early Black educators had both the zeal and fortitude to educate newly freed Black students, despite the intense obstacles against them. However, history would soon take a turn for the worse in many Black communities as white philanthropy continued to encroach.

Black Education Under White Control

The hard work and commitments of Black communities and educators during Reconstruction cannot go unnoticed. However, as the buzz around educating the new freedman moved North, white financial and human capital moved South (Anderson,1988). The northern Rockefellers, Carnegies and Vanderbilts saw an opportunity to invest in a "noble cause". However, their philanthropic commitments proved to be *dangerous donations* for Black communities and educators (Anderson & Moss,1999). Fairclough (2007) explains that as the American Missionary Association, philanthropists, and other "noble" northern institutions began to infiltrate southern Black education they slowly replaced the Black teacher population in favor of northern white teachers. This phenomenon bears a striking resemblance to the contemporary gentrification of Black teachers in schools today.

In the struggle to attain education Blacks were now confronted with the oppressive forces of white supremacy in their formal educational institutions. Particularly, Black religious institutions opposed white supremacy in Black schools. They were keenly suspicious of white teacher's intentions and doubtful of their ability to teach Blacks better than Black teachers. There was a fear that white teachers would teach inferiority, ignorance, and destroy racial solidarity. One Black minister openly expressed his disdain for white teachers as he stated

> It is impossible for white teachers, educated as they necessarily are in this country, to enter into the feelings of colored pupils as the colored teacher does…I do not think that it is good for our children to eat and drink daily the sentiment that they are naturally inferior to the whites, which they do in three-fourths of all schools where they have white teachers (Fairclough, 2004).

Black Teacher Degradation, Decline and Inferiority

The erosion of the Black teacher influence in schools eventually led to the blossoming of Black teacher inferiority narratives in formal educational settings. This inferiority is rooted in the idea that white teachers were simply better than Black teachers (Fairclough, 2007). Jim Crow (1877-1954; Douglass, 2005) Black teachers were often relegated to the most rural, destitute, underresourced Black schools in the South where they would be left to plan around the planting seasons, manage high absenteeism, and even face opposition from the extremely poor Black families who lived in these areas (Anderson, 1988; Fairclough, 2007).

One significant change that would shape the future of Black educators for years to come was the shift in training for these teachers. Northern Philanthropists chose Booker T. Washington, a disciple of Union General Samuel H. Armstrong (founder of the Hampton Institute) to lead the charge on a new industrial curriculum. This curricular shift would focus intently on menial labor training for the manufacturing of raw goods to support the industrial revolution of the North (Anderson, 1988). The chosen one, Booker T. Washington set out to develop schools (schools funded by Northern philanthropy) that helped Blacks become skilled in brick-laying, seamstress work, domestic labor and cooking to name a few (Anderson, 1988). This type of work wasn't a far cry from their free labor tasks prior to emancipation, however, it presented some semblance of freedom. The most famous of these industrial institutions was Tuskegee, which would serve as the model for future northern funded Black schools. As curriculum continued to resemble the Hampton-Tuskegee Model of industrial education, Black teachers slowly became dull plodders, or perpetuators of industrial educational initiatives to bound Blacks to the land (Anderson, 1988). Fairclough (2007) marks this shift in training as the movement from classical or academic education to industrial education for Blacks in the South.

Fairclough labels this shift as the republican ideal of caste education that helps socially

reproduce systemic inequities, further suppressing Blacks. The early efforts of Ante and Post-

Bellum Black educators were swiftly co-opted by white's pursuing personal and economic

endeavors. White philanthropists understood that if Blacks were to be classically trained in

academic subjects, that whites would lose their ability to control them. Further, they understood

that the southern economy (raw materials) depended too heavily on Black labor and so did their

northern industrial pursuits. That said, the future of Black education including the training of

future Black teachers, rested in the hands of these early venture capitalists.

By the 20th century, Black educators were at odds with the industrial direction of

education. Many began to develop grassroots schools to regain ownership over the education of

their communities (Anderson, 1988). These efforts are evident in the community support of

independent Black schools like Ballard Normal School, Caswell County Training School and

other Black academies for learning (Brown, 2002; Siddle-Walker,1996: 2000). These schools

held multiple curricular options for students, electives, and extra-curricular activities. Most

importantly these schools were spaces of hope and care for the community. Home visits, church

attendance, and tutoring were all important elements that self-sustained Black schools provided

Black students (Tillman, 2004; Siddle Walker, 1996). Unfortunately, however, many of these

schools pioneered by figures like Mary McLeod Bethune and Charlie Adams were often

financially undermined by Tuskegee model schools, the onset of the Great Depression, and other

factors detrimental to their causes (Fairclough, 2007).

On the tail end of the Great Depression Black schools in cities began to grow. The

growing Black community in cities also led to an increase in Black students and resurgence of

Black teachers. Although these teachers were held as middle-class status symbols (Siddle-

Walker, 2000) by the Black community, they still faced significant challenges. Black teachers in newly urbanized communities endured the hardships of teaching in underresourced schools that lacked proper facilities and textbooks. Furthermore, they dealt with the constant disrespect from their white superiors sometimes in front of their own students (Fairclough, 2007). White teacher supremacy resulting from the legacy of inadequate training continued to loom over the heads of Black teachers.

The Reconstruction and Jim Crow Eras were pivotal times in the development of a Black teacher population and identity. The ulterior motives that shaped the way Black teachers were trained proved detrimental as it sustained a system and ideology of Black inferiority. As a result, Black teachers who were teaching Black students, with the state sanctioned industrial curriculum were seen as inferior to their white counterparts who taught academically rigorous subjects in white schools. The stench of perceived Black teacher inferiority cultivated in southern industrial training schools and Black teachers' subsequent experiences in underresourced Black schools bears a close resemblance to the stench that modern Black teachers carry into schools every day. That stench being their perceived inferiority, by white colleagues.

Contemporary Black Female Teacher Identity

Identity Oppression

Black teacher's identities remain under attack in predominately white schools especially. Lee (2013) explains that minoritized teachers, in attempts to avoid spotlighting, often feel pressured to assimilate into the dominant, white school culture. This causes Black teachers to check their racial and cultural identities at the door to evade racialized stereotypes from white colleagues. Casteneda et al (2006) further expound on this discussion in their study of minoritized teachers in rural schools. The participants in this study explicitly describe entering

rural schools to provide cultural examples of minoritized people for students who wouldn't otherwise have that perspective. However, in this pursuit, they report feeling invisible and characterized as abnormal because of their intelligence. Milner & Hoy (2003) expound, as they describe how consistent othering in the profession can lead to lowered self-worth. In this case study, they describe the experience of a Black teacher working with predominately white colleagues who must recreate her identity and expertise to improve her self-efficacy. Despite the identity oppression felt in today's schools; contemporary Black teachers continue to carry the charge of racial uplift of previous Black teachers in history.

In Pursuit of Social Justice

As mentioned above, Black teachers have historically taken a social justice stance and maintained their commitments to Black students (Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Foster,1990:1997; Hill-Jackson, 2017). Contemporary Black teachers still come into schools with explicit social justice agendas. However, schools are not always suitable spaces for the pursuit of social justice. Evans and Leonard (2013) in a study of six Black teachers in urban schools, found particiapant's goals to use Social Justice and Critical Race pedagogies were not supported in their schools. They explicitly focus on a diverse set of Black educators in urbanized spaces. Further, they suggest that testing policies and a lack of autonomy created a pedagogical mismatch between the teachers and schools. Here we see a prime example of the misaligned commitments of Black teachers, with today's schools.

Black Female Teachers and Intersectional Oppression

To this point, the focus of this review has considered Black teachers' historical and contemporary experiences in schools. These discussions set the scene needed to understand the

intersectional experiences of Black female teachers. What follows is a more intensive focus on the literature that highlights Black female teachers' identity.

The focus on Black female teachers is important and relevant given their historical influence and contemporary commitments to underserved students. Horsford (2012) posits that Black women are able to bridge competing realities in the best interests of underserved communities. Although this essay focuses on the need for Black women school leaders, the message maintains its relevance for Black female teachers as they have historically served on the frontlines as advocates for underserved populations (Dixson & Dingus, 2008).

Adrienne Dixson is a leader in Black female teacher research. She describes that Black female teachers provide a particular kind of support that is shaped by their social justice advocacy. In a study of Black female teachers' pedagogy in the Midwest, five distinct themes emerged: Teaching as a Lifestyle and Public Service, Discipline as Expectations for Excellence, Teaching as Othermothering, Relationship Building, and Race, Class, and Gender Awareness (p.225). She explains in immense detail that Black female teacher's see the profession as community work. In that, they are committed to engaging students and families in their pursuits of social justice. Further, they lean heavily on relationship building or communal connectedness to address issues of race and culture in schools and in the curriculum. Due to their cultural congruence with Black students, Black female teachers are able to serve as other-mothers and warm demanders to improve their academic achievement. Dixson explains that Black female teachers serve as powerful agents of change for Black students in schools and in Black communities.

Preparing Black Female Teachers

Scholarship has consistently highlighted the importance of preparation in the experiences of Black female teachers, as it relates to sustaining a strong pipeline. Waters (1989) suggested that the recruitment of Black teachers into the classroom begins as early as high school. She explains that Black teachers require more support in terms of tutoring and mentorship in order to maintain their commitments to the classroom. Further, she suggests an agenda that includes teacher education program engaging in more financial and academic support for Black teachers.

Brown (2014) takes a more ideological standpoint on the issues of teacher education programs and Black teachers. Utilizing Critical Race Theory, specifically the concept of Interest Convergence, she posits that much of teacher education programs' push to recruit future Black educators is tied to diversity quotas. Ultimately, she argues that these programs and the professors in them, harbor harmful structures and ideologies that are situated in white supremacy. She suggests that these programs are often not suitable for Black teachers because of pervasive deficit rhetoric about students of color and racially charged micro-aggressive behaviors.

In a more recent article, *Pushed to Teach,* Conra Gist, Terrenda White and Margarita Bianco (2017) discuss the importance of Black female teachers for Black female students. They posit that the access to and mentorship of Black female teachers has the ability to lead to more Black female educators to the classroom. The authors sum up the importance of Black female teachers stating:

Black teachers, and Black women educators in particular, are potentially a critical political and pedagogical instrument in this ecosystem due to their justice commitments to education and Black youth. They represent and embody who Black girls can become,

61

displaying and enacting an array of community cultural capital, that when applied in strategic and authentic ways, can navigate Black girls away from the pushout route to instead push them along the route of intellectual potentiality via education (p.3).

This research considers the possibilities for a stronger Black female teacher pipeline that could lead to a stronger presence in classrooms. Further, this work describes the influence that Black female teachers can have on Black female students, who are vulnerable populations in schools. Current research finds that when compared to other race female students (White and Latino) Black female students are more likely to experience exclusionary discipline practices (Blake et al, 2011). That said, the presence of Black female teachers and cultural congruence of their experiences are likely to have a positive impact on these underserved school populations.

Together, I argue this research focusing on the identities and development of Black female teachers is paramount to their career decisions. Scholarship has yet to focus explicitly on the multiple identities, herstories, and experiences of Black women that impact their turnover and retention.

Critical Race, Black Feminist and Black Female Teacher's Experiences

Research on Black female teachers demands an intersectional lens to explore how race, gender, class, and even culture more specifically affects their experiences. Too often the particularized experiences of Black women in education (as well as in society at large) go underrecognized and in some cases undertheorized. Therefore, scholars have engaged in intersectional theories to explore these experiences such as Black Feminist thought and Critical Race Feminism (CRF). Wing (2003) contends that a fundamental assumption of Critical Race feminism is "the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism (p.23)." Which suggests that to focus singularly on either form of oppression or simply state that women

of color experience racism and sexism, is not enough. Instead, we must lean on the individual voices of women of color to further understand the complexity of their lived realities.

Other scholars cite Patricia Hill Collins as the mother of Black Feminist thought and ideas. More specific than CRF, Black feminist ideas are taken up in education to explore the unique experiences of Black women (teachers, students, and school leaders) in schools (Bass, 2012, Dillard, 2000, Dixson, 2003; Horsford & Tillman, 2012; Evans-Winters & Esposito, 2012, Evans-Winters & Love 2015). In my research, I found it imperative that I consider the unique experiences of Black female teachers as I discuss their career journeys.

Evans-Winters (2015) explains that Black women are uniquely and differently oppressed. They are often positioned as opposite of white maleness (the societal norm or standard). Further, their experiences aren't completely reflected in Black males and white women as they often are forced to fight oppression on a racialized and gendered front. Evans-Winters (2015 p.131-132) identifies four key elements of Black Feminism that I draw upon to theorize about the experiences of Black female teachers' careers.

1. Black women experience a special kind of oppression, due to their racial and gender identity and access to limited resources in a racist, sexist, classist, society—Black women confront a triple jeopardy (Guy-Sheftal, 1995).

2. The political, social, and intellectual needs of Black women are characteristically different from Black Men and white women—suggesting that Black women must simultaneously fight racial and gender oppression.

3. Black women's commitment to challenging racism and sexism is directly linked to their lived experiences of being Black and woman.

4. Black feminism is theoretical, methodological and political discourse— it illuminates the voices of the Black women as they speak to and address issues of whiteness, maleness, and wealth.

Taken together, both CRF and Black Feminism lend a unique perspective that allows one to explore the lived realities of Black women in education. More poignantly, this work carves an important area of theorizing that is much needed as we seek answers to issues of intersectional oppression. Therefore, it stands to reason, that an explicit focus on Black female teachers' experiences with retention and turnover is informed by these powerful perspectives.

Summary

Collectively the scholarship reviewed highlights Black and Black female teachers' histories and experiences that have implications for their status in today's schools. The turnover scholarship is devoid of explicit qualitative discussions on Black female teacher's, histories, experiences, and identities. I chronicle how educational policy, organizational and leadership changes have impacted their presence in contemporary classrooms. This review identifies that Black female teacher's histories, backgrounds, and identities have not been considered in contemporary turnover conversations. For example, *Brown* and other desegregation policies sparked the decline of Black female teachers in the classroom. Subsequent educational policy initiatives have been enacted (i.e Race to the Top), but because they are devoid of historical implications, they continue to displace Black teachers. Hence, the current policy initiatives sustain the scarcity and consistent turnover behavior of Black female teachers. This suggests a disconnect in scholarship between historical and identity related discussions that would be helpful to Black female teachers. Also, since early desegregation efforts Black female teachers have experienced various forms of structural and organizational oppression, based on racist

64

perspectives of white colleagues. Although scholarship continues to document the pervasiveness of these issues, they have not been explicitly tied to the Black female teacher turnover story in meaningful ways. Moreover, scholarship has identified the impact of school leadership and even teacher-leader racial congruence on Black female teacher turnover. However, these studies do not consider the loss of Black educational leaders as advocates for Black teachers as a result of desegregation efforts. Finally, scholarship explores the impact of Black female teachers' identities, on their commitments, pedagogies and community connectedness. Nevertheless, these studies do not explicitly focus on how their identities relate to their turnover decisions. Further, we must center theoretical frames that feature Black women, such as Black and Critical Race Feminism to truly understand their turnover and retention decisions. What follows is a discussion of how Black female teachers' voices were placed at the center of their career (turnover and retention) stories.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Methodology and Research Design

This dissertation study explored the relationship between race, gender, culture, school leadership, and heightened Black female teacher turnover in today's public schools. Evidenced in the previous chapters, Black female teachers are leaving the field at alarming rates and little research has focused on the particular impact that race, gender, culture and school leadership have had in this process. Further, the intense focus on more quantitative approaches (i.e. Ingersoll & May, 2011) has left a qualitative void in the Black female teacher turnover conversation. Addressing the literature gap, this research seeks answers to the following research questions:

1. What factors do Black female teachers perceive as most influential to their decisions to stay or leave their schools?

2. What role do Black female teachers suggest, race plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools?

3. What role do Black female teachers suggest school leadership plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools?

A Qualitative Approach

A qualitative approach is necessary to answer the research questions. Merriam (2009) explains that qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning that a phenomenon has for participants. When using this approach, the researcher is interested in the ways that individuals interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and the overall meaning they

attribute to those experiences (Merriam, 2009). According to Maxwell (2013), those that pursue a qualitative journey are more fixated on the complex intersection of people, events, and situations. This study will attempt to fill the qualitative void with a nuanced, qualitative approach, which will help to elucidate the relationship between race, school leadership, and Black female teacher turnover.

Philosophical Approach: Decolonizing the Process

Research is colonizing endeavor despite our attempts to (de) colonize the process. However, I attempted to employ humanizing techniques to reduce harm in this project. To be clear, despite the space given by qualitative and participant-centered research, the researcher cannot be completely absolved from participation in the colonizing project." Even with the best intentions, a careful research design, and respectful, collaborative relations with participants, researchers are likely to encounter interpretive dilemmas. And despite efforts to bring the voices of others into research reports, researchers remain implicated in speaking for and about them. (Kirsch, p.58, 1999)." My position as a scholar and interviewer significantly implicates me in the act of colonization. I am further implicated by patriarchy and therefore chose to engage in feminist, anti-patriarchal research approaches. I am conscious of my own complicity as a researcher but remain committed to the emancipatory process.

The philosophical approach for this project is a part of the critical tradition. It examines the multiplicity of truth especially as it speaks to issues of power (Sipe & Constable, 1996). According to Sipe & Constable (1996), critical theorists recognize that there is an underlying and singular truth of power that works to privilege some and disenfranchise others. Pattie Lather (2007) argues, "critical qualitative research represents inquiry done for explicit political, utopian purposes, a politics of liberation, a reflexive discourse constantly in search of an open-ended,

67

subversive, multi-voiced epistemology (pp.x-xi)." With such a sensitive and marginalized group, Black female educators, it is important that this research illuminates the narratives that can be dwarfed by more positivist approaches. In this specific case, Black female teacher turnover is conceptualized as an issue of disenfranchisement most directly affected by the power and privileges of school leadership and also by other systemic issues of society. In response, Black female teachers' truths are privileged all in the name of identifying what is socially, morally, and even politically just. Further, their narratives serve as an explicit medium to critique the aforementioned powers.

Critical Race and Black Feminist Theory

I arrived at a philosophical quandary during data collection and analysis which challenged the utility of my existing framework. The sample for this project was unforeseeably and exclusively Black female teachers. Accordingly, I revisited the literature on Black feminist theories to help illuminate the lived realities that my framework had not accounted for. I chose to integrate principles of Critical Race Feminism and Black Feminism after the second round of coding. I will explain more about this process at the end of the chapter. I chose these two theories as I realized that the only way to truly elucidate the nuance of Black female teacher's experiences with turnover was to connect it with the societal conditions of racism, classism, and sexism.

Critical Race Feminism (CRF) is an analytical tool that works to center the voices of the marginalized and oppressed to transform ideologically the way we interpret and utilize policy (Childers-McKey & Hytten, 2015). It serves as an explicit critique of the ideological assumptions associated with traditional policy and reform efforts that marginalize minoritized communities, in this case, women of color. Moreover, Critical Race Feminism "draws upon both

68

Critical Race Theory and Feminism in exploring social phenomena from the perspective of people doubly marginalized by both race and gender (p.395)." As stated in previous sections, the traditional approaches to teacher turnover and other concerns of teacher diversity have largely been "cookie cutter" policy initiatives that lean too heavily on large-scale quantitative data. CRF helps me to analyze how these initiatives are necessary but insufficient given the nuance of Black female teachers' intersectional experiences.

I also borrow from Black Feminist theories primarily because it explicitly centers the experiences of Black women. Evans-Winters (2015, p.131-132) identifies four key elements of Black Feminism that I draw upon to theorize about Black female teacher's turnover and retention narratives.

1. Black women experience a special kind of oppression, due to their racial and gender identity and access to limited resources in a racist, sexist, classist, society—Black women confront a triple jeopardy (Guy-Sheftal, 1995).

2. The political, social, and intellectual needs of Black women are characteristically different from Black Men and white women—suggesting that Black women must simultaneously fight racial and gender oppression.

3. Black women's commitment to challenging racism and sexism is directly linked to their lived experiences of being Black and woman.

4. Black feminism is theoretical, methodological and political discourse— it illuminates the voices of the Black women as they speak to and address issues of whiteness, maleness, and wealth.

In sum, these theoretical approaches give depth and improve the integrity of this research project. In my view, any initiatives about double and triple oppressed groups that are devoid of

similar lenses will fail to achieve their stated purposes of helping to improve their conditions. I lean on these approaches to center Black female's voices, reduce patriarchy, make the plights of Black female teachers more visible, and help lead the field into a process of decolonizing traditionally marginalizing policy approaches to teacher turnover.

A Man Trying to Engage in Black Feminist Project

"While gendered difference might be said to complicate the prospect of a non-phallocentric black male feminism, it does not render such a project impossible (Awkward 1998, p.150)."

Black men occupy similar racialized positions in society as Black women. However, we are also participants in the gendered oppression of patriarchy. With that comes a series of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives associated with patriarchal privilege. Therefore, I also lean on scholars who have engaged in similar critique to guide this process and to help me to center the voices of Black female teachers in this research. In *Men Doing Feminism* (Digby, 1998), Michael Awkward cites three essential points that I use to guide this feminist project.

Positionality Interrogation

First, Toril Moi (1989) explains:

The main theoretical task for male feminists, then, is to develop an analysis of their own position, and a strategy for how their difficult and contradictory position in relation to feminism can be made explicit in discourse and practice. (p.184)

Ultimately Moi describes that as a man, it is important to both acknowledge and continuously interrogate my own positionality throughout the research process. It remains imperative that male researchers are not blinded by their own patriarchal stances while attempting to do feminist research.

Taking an Anti-Patriarchal Stance

"The important thing for men is not to spend their time worrying about definitions and essences, but to take up a recognizable anti-patriarchal position (Moi, 1989 p.184)." In this scholarship, I in no ways attempt to establish myself as an authority nor authoritative voice in the work of Black feminist critique. Therefore, the use of Black feminist theories operates as an explicitly anti-patriarchal stance rather than a proclamation of expertise in feminist concepts or experiences.

Voice

Also, it is important that males engaging in feminist research develop their voice in the writing. Boone suggests to "discover a position from which to speak that neither elides the importance of feminism to his work nor ignores the specificity of his gender (Boone,1989)." He explains that while engaging in writing about women or when using feminism, we must do so without trivializing women's experiences. Further, we must not minimize or dilute the importance of feminist critique in our research. In sum, utilizing feminist theories to talk about women requires a strong understanding of positionality first and a developed writing stance that works to decenter patriarchal perspectives.

Taken together, I see these outlined steps as intricate to the journey of decolonizing research. Moreover, the selection of Critical Race and Black feminist theories was the best way to help center the voices of Black female teachers. I view these theories as analytic tools for liberation and therefore necessary for this research project.

Methodological Approach: Qualitative Case Study

"The condition of truth is to allow suffering to speak."- Theodor W. Adorno

71

The specific methods for this work are best situated in the critical and case study traditions. The research design embodies the criticality of my own philosophical approach, employs the meaning-making characteristics of qualitative approaches and utilizes the various surrounding, contextual evidence of case study methods. In other words, I am exploring how Black female teachers make sense of their lived realities (qualitative approach) in relation to the oppressive turnover factors being cast upon them (critical approach), utilizing various methods to create a more powerful picture of the story (case study methods). The heart of this study is the perceptions of Black female educators (their experiences with the turnover phenomenon) and their relationships with their school leadership and organizations. Other case data collected will be utilized to create a more holistic picture of the turnover phenomenon.

In comparison to other methodologists such as Yin, Merriam and Stake bring a more interpretive approach to case study research. Merriam, for example, focuses on the interpretation of the experiences within a system or with a phenomenon. Merriam (2009) describes case studies as in-depth descriptions and analyses of bounded systems. Each individual participant has a particular context by which they are bounded; therefore, evidence surrounding their experiences will be helpful in bolstering their stories.

Although the "big three" (Merriam, Stake, and Yin) provide insight on case study methodology, they don't completely cover the ways that I am defining case study. Ragin (1992) however, explains that a case is simply a product of a researchers' construct, in a term he coins *casing*. In other words, the case becomes defined by the researcher and is bounded by the cases' relationship to the larger social phenomenon. Ragin (2012) suggests that social phenomena are unknowable for social scientists, at least for the way they would like to see it. These phenomena are much more "complex, contingent and context specific (p.4)." Ragin & Becker (1992)

developed a strong typology of casing. Their casing categorizations are manifested in cells that represent the fluid and diverse ways in which one could case a study. Casing begins with one's philosophical and ontological understandings. Cell 1 suggests that cases are found, presumed to be real and very specific, likely fluid in nature. Cell 2 explains cases as objects that are defined and bounded conventionally absolving the need for verifying their significance in the research. In other words, cases have fixed definitions that need no further explanation. Cell 3 suggests that cases are made. This specific orientation posits that cases are simply theoretical constructs that emerge during the research. Finally, Cell 4 explains cases as conventions, like "theoretical constructs, but nevertheless view these constructions as the products of collective scholarly work…therefore as external to any particular research effort (Ragin & Becker, p.10)." Ragin & Becker (1992) argue that the outlined approaches to cases are not absolute and should not be considered as boundaries, because pieces of either approach could be combined with another (i.e. Cell 1 with Cell 3).

Defining the Case

In this case, I lean on the interpretivist characteristics outlined by Merriam (2009) and the casing characteristics of Ragin & Becker's (1992) Cell 1 *Cases are found* and Cell 3 *Cases are made.* In thinking about how this case is made, it is important to return to the conceptual framing of this study. I argue that Black female teachers' career stories (turnover and retention experiences) are specifically impacted by their own racial, cultural and gendered backgrounds as well as school leaders, organizations and various external factors. The extent to which this theoretical construct becomes real and nuanced coalesces in the research process. However, it is also important to think of this case as being found. Although my unit of analysis (Merriam, 2009) and the bounding of this case are Black female teachers' careers, in general, it is likely that

the participants interact with the phenomenon differently. Therefore, I am careful not to rigidly define specific cases or communities beyond the general unit of analysis (Black female educators' careers). I also allow the cases to emerge inductively through the data. In summary, the case is defined by Black female teachers' experiences with turnover and retention in their schools as it pertains to their experiences with school leaders, organizations and external factors to be discussed later.

Participant and Site Selection

Sampling

Fifteen self-identified Black/African American teachers were selected through a combination of purposeful and snowball sampling techniques (Miles & Huberman, 2000). Creswell (2007) suggests purposeful sampling to intentionally target particular groups that are informed by some theory or framework. Snowball sampling is defined as the identification of other interesting and important cases by other participants (Creswell, 2007). This study involves a good mixture of both to capture the perspectives of diverse Black female teachers not only in various contexts but at diverse points in their careers. To be clear, sampling was an iterative process throughout the study as interesting and critical cases emerged via snowball techniques. These cases include recent leavers, movers, stayers and other teachers who occupy the margins of these outcomes.

Participants Table

Pseudonym	Current Position	District Type	Teaching Experience	Education
Antonia	Elementary Assistant Principal	Suburban	14 years	Bachelors in Elementary Education Masters in Educational Leadership
Aritha	Out of Teaching (Taught 9th Grade English)	Urban	6 years	Bachelors/Masters in Secondary English Education
Dimples	High School English/Language Arts	Urban	14 years	Bachelors in English Education
Dorothy	6th-8th grade Math	Urban	4 years	Bachelors in Middle Grades Education (Concentration in Mathematics)
Edwidge	8th grade English Language Arts	Urban	11 years	Bachelors in African American Studies

Table 3: Participants Table

Table 3 (cont'd)

Harriet	6th grade teacher	Suburban	7 years	Bachelors in Elementary Education
Jackie	1st grade teacher	Suburban	9 years	Bachelors in Elementary Education Masters in Curriculum & Instruction
Maya	Elementary Special Education Teacher	Multiple	19 years	Bachelors in Special Education
Michelle	Kindergarten Teacher	Suburban	4 years	Bachelors in Early Childhood Education Masters in Curriculum & Instruction
Myrlie	High School Math Teacher (9-12)	Suburban	17 years	Bachelors in Mathematics Masters in Curriculum & Teaching/Educational Technology

Table 3 (cont'd)

Octavia	2nd Grade Teacher	Suburban	7 years	Bachelors in Elementary Education Masters in Curriculum & Instruction
Ruby	3rd Grade Teacher	Multiple	33 years	Bachelors in Elementary Education Masters in Instructional Design
Senaya	2nd Grade Teacher	Multiple	22 years	Bachelors in Elementary Education Masters in Educational Leadership
Shirley	5th grade Teacher	Multiple	9 years	Bachelors and Masters in Business Masters in Elementary Education

Table 3 (cont'd)

Sojourner of Truth	High School Math Teacher	Multiple	33 years	Bachelors in Mathematics Masters in Middle/High School Mathematics Education

Context, Organizations, and the School Community

The sample is comprised of Black female teachers in public schools across the geographic Midwest and the South. Fine, Tuck & Zeller-Berkman (2014) explain that we must document the "geography of pain (p.15)." In other words, Black female teacher turnover is an epidemic that cannot be critically and thoroughly understood utilizing insular research techniques. Further, the experiences of Black female teachers in schools are likely to vary given the context of their upbringing, early educational experiences, and the dynamics of their current and former school communities. Therefore, expanding the sample to include Black female teachers from different geographic and school contexts is necessary for this study.

Data Collection

Denzin, Lincoln and Smith (2014) explain that documentation, "critical personal experience narratives," life stories, field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to self all create a shared "critical space for resistance, critique, and empowerment (p. 7)." For the purposes of this study, I chose interviews, observations, documents, and artifact review as analytic tools to examine the specific lived experiences of the Black female participants. These methods are consistent with the qualitative and meaning-making goals of this study.

In-Depth Phenomenological Interviewing

The primary method utilized in this study was in-depth, phenomenological interviewing (Weis, 1994). The strengths of interviewing include its focus on participants' lived realities and the meaning they make of those experiences (Seidman, 2006). "Every word that people use in telling their stories is a microcosm of their consciousness (Vgotsky, 1987, p.236-237)." Seidman suggests that interviewing "provides access to the context of people's behavior" giving researchers an avenue to make meaning of that behavior (Seidman, 2006, p. 10). The structure of Seidman (2006) style in-depth, phenomenological interviewing is open-ended questioning situated within a semi-structured framework, which opens the door for participants to introduce new concepts or ideas. Given the nature of this project and the aim of the research queries it is imperative that I employ an in-depth phenomenological approach to focus on the participants lived realities with the Black female teacher turnover phenomenon.

Seidman (2006) suggests that to gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences it is important to collect interview data in waves. These waves are completed in a structured, three-step process beginning with "a context of interviewees' experiences", a construction of the experience and "finally a reflection on the meaning it holds" (Seidman, 1991). The first wave should consist of life history questions. For this study, first wave questions are centered on the career trajectories of the Black female teacher participants. In the second wave, the focus is on describing the particular experiences. In this wave, questions are about pivotal points in their careers like decisions to leave or stay in a school. Also, how school leaders have impacted that journey. The third wave is focused on the meaning that was made of the experiences. Due to researcher costs and time limitations, I combined the Seidman's three waves into a single sixty-

minute interview. This interview combined the life history, critical experiences, and meaning-making questions into a hybrid version of Seidman's interview process.

Teacher Interviews

The teacher interviews were face-to-face, (all except one which had to be conducted over the phone), audio-recorded and lasted approximately sixty minutes per interview. I began each interview by establishing some rapport to build relationships with the participants. This project is a unique part of my lived experience therefore, I presented an in-depth description of who I am and explained my positionality with the study. The scope and purpose of the study were thoroughly explained prior to the interview. The flow of the interview remained a fluid and reflexive process.

The interview is a part of a masculine paradigm that has historically overshadowed the feminist characteristics of women, giving their stories strong masculine identities (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The colonizing power of patriarchy in interviews often centers a male authoritative voice. Given my positionality and the presence of power issues (induced by Black patriarchy), it was imperative that I loosely guided the conversation rather than dominate the discussion with questions. Further Fontana & Frey (2000) suggests we have to engage in humanizing practices challenging our own patriarchal positionalities to create space for feminist perspectives and knowledge to prevail. I was continuously reflexive in my interview techniques to ensure that the perspectives of the Black female teachers were centered over the needs of my research questions.

Observations

Marshall & Rossman (2010) suggest that observations are a consistent recording of events and interactions within a chosen setting. The process begins with a wide angle of note taking that tries to capture the entirety of the setting and then narrows as the focus of the study

becomes more defined. Finally, the researcher notices patterns and can develop typologies of observations (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In this study, it was imperative to explore and observe the physical working environments of Black female teachers, whenever possible. Organizational conditions are important to the Black female teacher turnover story; therefore, I committed to observing physical space (how Black female teachers are situated on the school campus) and the material resources in their classrooms (i.e. technology, textbooks). The observations that I conducted began the moment I entered the school environment on my way to the interview. I took field notes on the surrounding working conditions during the walk to the teacher's classroom, and once I entered the classroom prior to the interview. As time progressed, my observations focused on the internal resources of the schools and classrooms. I noted the participant's access to updated resources in her classroom such as technology, sufficient textbooks, classroom libraries, and desks. Further, I noted the overall condition of the school and classroom focusing on cleanliness and maintenance issues.

Documents and Artifacts

An important portion of case study research is the utilization of documentation. Documents are helpful in providing details about the specific contexts in which the participants are situated. The key strengths of analyzing documents are that they are stable and able to be revisited; they do not disturb the context and can give good descriptive information about the context (Merriam, 2009). The other source of information that is necessary for this project is documentary evidence of the participant's specific backgrounds. For teachers, the documents were demographic sheets, which help identify participants' gender, race, teaching experience, and possible transitions to and from other schools. These are called researcher-generated documents (Merriam, 2009) and they are important to learn more about the participants in the

study. These documents were helpful in telling the overall story of what aspects are important to consider and may contribute to the Black female teacher turnover. I also asked teachers to provide me with or allow me to take photographs of an artifact in their classrooms. I posed the question, "what is something in your classroom that keeps you motivated to teach?" Ten of the fifteen teachers were able to provide me with an artifact that represented their response to my query. I found this to be a useful tool that uncovered more important details about the participants. Finally, I collected district and school demographic data to further contextualize the participant's experiences. I researched the student and teacher demographics of each participant's schools to highlight the details of their context. Some noted items include a racial breakdown of students, socioeconomic status, number of Black teachers on campus and location in the district (i.e. suburban). These data, in tandem with interview transcripts, were primarily used for descriptive purposes.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process was a completely individual effort by me the researcher. I leaned heavily on Merriam (1998), LeCompte (1993), Ragin (1992), and Saldana (2009) to guide my approach to this process. Merriam (1998) explains that "data analysis is the process of making sense out of the data. And making sense out of data involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read-it is the process of making meaning (p.178)." Throughout the data analysis process, it was imperative that I remained reflexive about what my participants said and how they were making sense of this phenomenon. Harkening back to Ragin's (1992) realist perspective (cases being made and found), it became clear that throughout the process I had to negotiate between what I was establishing as the phenomenon and how participants described the phenomenon.

From a process standpoint, Maxwell (2013) suggests that analysis begins as swiftly as data is collected. Therefore, I worked vigorously to conduct, transcribe, and do preliminary coding with the data in each stage. All audio-recorded teacher interviews were sent to an online professional transcription service. They were returned in word documents that were placed in a password protected Google Drive for coding and analysis. Using Google Docs, I was able to begin the coding process as it gave me access to all of my transcripts at one time for comparison purposes; this was necessary for me to feel close to my research.

Prior to an official coding process, I found it increasingly imperative that I read through each transcript individually to capture each participant's story. This process was very important, it gave me insight into the unique story of each individual teacher. I logged extensive notes and summaries in the margins of each individual transcript. Next, these notes were transferred into a single profiling document that details the sense-making, experiences, and demographic information of each participant. Logging detailed analytic memos (Merriam, 1998), was an important tool in the analysis process, as it led to the development of future categories, themes, and points of comparison.

Coding

Lecompte et al (1993) explain data analysis as a process of taking the pieces of the puzzle apart and then putting them back together. After transcription, each interview went through two stages of coding, one preliminary and a second stage to potentially uncover other emergent themes. They along with the documents and artifacts were used to weave together a story, a story guided by the research questions and conceptual framework.

The first round of coding was modeled after Lecompte's (2000) stage two of doing analysis, which includes searching for the *frequency* of concepts, the *omission* of ideas, and

declaration of present items as told by the participants. In other words, in the initial round of coding, I focused on the volume or number of statements that were related to the established factors in the conceptual framework (i.e. racialized factors). Guba and Lincoln (1998) suggest that the frequency which something occurs often signifies its importance to the phenomenon (p.185). This was helpful as it allowed me to see which category proved most influential to a participant's career story. I also looked for specific ideas that were not mentioned in their conversations. The impact of the stated factors in the framework worked as a strong starting point for data analysis, but it also served as a powerful tool for identifying factors that have not been previously discussed in the literature reviewed. Finally, I analyzed the participant's statements or declarations to establish a final code. In sum, the first round consisted of a mostly structural approach (Saldana, 2015), leaning heavily on the research questions and conceptual framework. In this initial search of through the data, I looked for evidence of the factors outlined in the original conceptual framework. I carefully read each line of the interview and analyzed each statement to see if it aligned with the stated turnover factors in the established framework.

First Round Coding Details

For example, if a teacher identified that school leadership had an impact on their decision to stay or leave a school, that line in the transcript was assigned a letter and number code. Each code was assigned based on the pre-established, larger category (i.e. leadership factor) and the unique statement made by the participant (i.e. race of the school leader) to create a singular code that best captures what is being conveyed. In some cases, unique codes emerged from an emic perspective as ideas surfaced that were not previously identified in the framework (i.e. politics of leadership). Whereas, in other cases codes emerged directly from the outlined factors in the framework or emit perspective (i.e. hostile racial climate). After reading each transcript, the

codes were categorized into a large table that grouped similar codes together in a manageable space. Merriam (1998) suggests that the process of categorization is important as codes initially fracture the data, categories allow the researcher to bring them back together in a way that creates a space for comparative analysis. One final step in the first round coding process was taking the existing codes and attaching them to their quotes and to the participant. Each code, quote and participant name was placed into a table as a data management technique, to ensure that codes were properly assigned (to the correct participant) in the writing process. At this juncture, it was clear that my existing framework was necessary but insufficient in capturing the depth of my participant's story.

Round 2 Coding

After discovering what is present and what is not, it was useful to do a second round of inductive coding (Saldana, 2015) that examines the depth of the issues that the participants describe. This portion of the analytic process gave space for additional ideas to surface from the data. I repeated the line-by-line reading of each individual transcript. When I noticed an emergent idea or concept that had not been previously defined I applied a code to it. These new codes were subsequently mapped onto the existing code table. Most of the new codes consisted of gendered and intersectional experiences that have had a significant impact on the participant's career (i.e. mothering). These ideas were consistent with cultural theories and Black feminist concepts that had not been previously outlined or accounted for in the original framework. These emergent data points required me to return to the literature and identify research on the cultural experiences of Black female teachers and the impact of Black feminist principles.

Critical, Black Feminism and Qualitative Research

Black Feminism is the best way to study issues of race, gender and class as it privileges the voices of the subaltern, Black women's experiences and perspectives —it examines and uplifts their dialogic ways of knowing —it centers multiple texts to make research accessible to communities—it reclaims the margins and extends the work beyond the ivory tower to the communities that matter (Evans-Winters, 2015). I began this project with a framework that did not have a Critical nor explicit focus on issues of gender and intersectionality. My sample grew to be completely comprised of Black women, therefore rendering my previous framework insufficient. I found that the only way to properly address the intersectional experiences of oppression was to incorporate Black feminist theories and lenses into the data analysis.

After a thorough survey of the literature, namely Critical Race and Black Feminist theories I conducted a third round of coding. I read each individual transcript line by line, focusing explicitly on evidence of the unique experiences that were more closely related to their intersectional identities. For example, when a participant mentioned centering the voices of Black women in the curriculum I coded the statement as an expression of their intersectional identity and an explicit challenge of racism and sexism. Codes of this variety would have been otherwise overlooked by the previous framework. This third round of coding proved crucial as it allowed me an opportunity to delve into how Black women's social realities permeated their teaching experiences. It also illuminates the various ways that school leadership, school organizations, districts, educational policies, and structures overlook Black female teacher's specific needs. Returning to the literature and analyzing the emergent ideas through a Critical and Black Feminist lens led to an expansion of my own ideas.

Contextualizing, Categorizing, and Comparison

Lecompte (2000) describes codes as stable taxonomies that should be further grouped together based on patterns or categories. After three separate rounds of coding, I decided that I had sufficient evidence to develop categories. To be clear, the process of categorization, contextualizing and comparison began the moment I conducted initial reads of the transcripts. Detailed notes and analytic memos were an early part of the analysis that proved helpful when developing categories and comparisons. It was necessary to read the transcripts at an individual level, develop categories of reported career influences, and compare experiences across teachers to capture the richness of the individual and collective stories.

Contextualizing

Contextualizing (a case method) data is a process of collecting multiple data points around an individual to understand the phenomenon within its context and to help construct a cohesive story (Maxwell, 1996). Each transcript, profile, observation, and artifact was grouped so that I had all of the codes, documents, and artifacts for each participant in a central folder. At this point, I contextualized the experiences highlighted by the participant and compared them to all of the existing and surrounding data I collected. Contextualizing, allowed me to see the unique stories about retention and turnover that the participants discussed and the individual nuance they give to their career journeys. After a thorough read of the transcripts, I analyzed and compared the demographic information and documents to weave together a composite narrative for each participant. These narratives highlighted the key influences on retention and turnover as told by the participant. Further, it gives the reader a sense of the surrounding context that may influence their experiences. This step was paramount in the development of individual vignettes (see chapter four) that capture the essence of participants' career journeys.

Categorization

        The categories formed in this study, derived from the researcher, existing literature, and the participants. The initial categories were transferred from the conceptual framework to the code mapping process, which most directly represents my own researcher thoughts and the existing scholarship on the topic. I saw the previously established categories (i.e. leadership factors, intersectional factors) as both broad and relevant enough to retain. The emergent codes (from participants), derived from the analytic memos and second round of coding were categorized. A third round of coding utilizing Critical Race Feminism and Black feminist concepts commenced leaving me with an additional set of codes to further categorize.

        It was imperative that I remained reflexive and constantly checked to ensure that these categories met two important criteria. I first, had to confirm that each category represented comparable levels of abstraction and secondly, were mutually exclusive (Merriam, 1998). After reflection on the rigor of the categories, I proceeded to develop themes.

        Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) describe "the themes ultimately developed and selected for analysis are those that resonate with personal or disciplinary concerns (p.173)." Further, Saldana (2009) describes themes as "an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience—captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole (p.139)." Through the analysis of the categories, three major themes emerged to both speak to disciplinary concerns and bring meaning to the frequent and shared experiences. Lecompte (2000) reminds qualitative researchers, the frequency at which concepts surface in a study, signifies the importance of that finding. Therefore, the following themes are derived from codes and categories that were heavily saturated by the participant's interviews. In other words, I chose to both abstract and represent the most heavily discussed areas as the themes for this

analysis. Those themes included the *impact of racial, cultural, and gendered backgrounds*, *the impact of school leadership and the impact of organizations* on Black female teacher turnover. These themes helped me to construct complex comparisons at three essential levels of analysis for the participants.

Comparison

Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that in case analysis, "the researcher attempts to see processes and outcomes that occur across many cases, to understand how they are qualified by local conditions and thus develop more sophisticated descriptions and more powerful explanations (p.172)." In the data analysis process, I recognized there were similar stories and comparable outcomes among participants. It was necessary to compare participants to bolster my findings without minimizing their unique experiences. Therefore, participants were compared across the identity related factors, leadership, and organizational experiences.

Trustworthiness

Creswell and Miller (2000) suggest that researchers employ two internal validity measures and one external to ensure the validity of the research. However, this work is more in the direction of post-positivism or constructivism and negates the objectivity of truth and qualitative rigor in favor of terms like credibility or transferability. Therefore, I employed three different measures to attend to the trustworthiness of this project.

Triangulation

I employed methods for the triangulation of the data (Merriam, 2002). Each method used in this study, interviews, documents, and observations are important to show that I was not relying on a singular source of evidence when explaining this phenomenon. Further, the

interviews of the teachers' experiences with turnover were compared to one another to help increase credibility.

Rich Data, Thick Description

Maxwell (1996) explains that an important technique to ensure the trustworthiness of a project is to use thick description and verbatim interview quotes. Merriam (2002) explains that it is imperative to ensure that the participant's voice comes through clearly in the data, to avoid researcher bias. Participants statements were quoted verbatim and this technique shows how they have processed their career decisions. Therefore, this project was explicitly guided by the voices of the participants which was the primary focus of the study.

This process however exposed a particular tension for me given my positionality with the project and the project participants (i.e, patriarchy). Therefore, I used block quotes but felt that I should reduce the amount of interpretation that was included to make sense of participant's statements. The negotiation of this tension was discussed at length with colleagues.

Practice Reflexivity

This project also includes a constant process of researcher reflexivity (Merriam, 2002). As I am close to this topic, both psychologically and physically it was important that I was reflexive throughout the research process. I was continuously thoughtful of my own approach to this study and avoided making hasty judgments or impositions throughout the process. This is evident in reflexive coding processes and peer debriefing of data interpretations. One key example of reflexivity was in the interviewing process. As a man working with Black women I recognize that I have power in the interviewing process. Hence, I engaged in practices that reduced that power differential, such as taking an open interview approach. Early in the data collection process, I began to give space for Black female teacher participants to think through

their experiences in their career without interruption. I took a more reactive position asking participants to elaborate on their career stories, rather than strictly focusing on the interview protocol. When a participant spoke on a topic that was included in the protocol, I noted that and asked them to elaborate on it. This was key in sustaining a fluid conversation with participants, rather than a question and answer session.

Further, reflexivity was practiced in the interpretation and analysis sections. Given my position in this project and the patriarchal reality of my identity, it was difficult to engage in interpretation. I was challenged by the tensions between centering the participants and decreasing patriarchy or my own voice in the project. I spent a lot of my time writing the findings and remaining in constant conversation with colleagues to strike some balance between my own voice and the voices of the participants.

Utilizing these various credibility methods make me confident that I am accurately representing the experience of the participants and explaining the phenomenon of Black female teacher turnover. Anfara (2002), suggests that the process of qualitative research become more public. In response to a strong call for more public scholarship, I attempted to maintain the integrity and reliability of my scholarship. I created tables inspired by Anfara et al (2002) (see appendix).

Research questions were explicitly aligned with the subsequent interview questions. Yin (1994) suggests that each question be logically connected to the data collected. Further, each interview protocol was reviewed by colleagues to check for logic and alignment with research questions.

I also utilized code mapping "to bring meaning, structure, and order to data (Anfara et al, 2002, p.31)." Each code was matched, categorized and themed in a large table for later comparison.

Together, these specific techniques were paramount to the publicizing of the qualitative process.

Positionality

As mentioned in my narrative (see Chapter 1) I enter this project as a Black male with a background in teaching and administration. I have been exploring this topic through various lenses as a graduate student. I also have applied multiple theories to further analyze this project. As a young teacher, I felt like I was placed strategically in a school to serve a specific population of students. It seemed that the purpose was to teach students of color and struggling students in the school, as they represented the majority of my classroom demographics. Although I wanted to be a service to students that looked like me, I felt under-supported and undervalued in this position.

My background as a history major inspired me to want to help other students learn the importance of history and hopefully inspire them to study history as well. Instead I was the disciplinarian, constantly pulled out of the classroom to help "control" the minoritized student population. My experiences with teaching fuel my passion to pursue this topic. My own turnover behavior was as the result of a systemic and leadership problem that must be addressed in order to increase the presence of Black educators in the classroom. I am committed to telling other's stories and the process of liberating oppressed Black educators.

There are pros and cons to this position when it comes to the research process. As a former Black teacher, I readily identified with the struggles of other Black teachers. This in turn allowed the conversation to remain relaxed and comfortable for the participants. My positionality

also opens doors for deeper conversations that may not have otherwise been available. I was also able to use teacher terminology as well as share my similar experiences which was helpful for the participants to feel that I am an advocate for them.

Black Male Working with Black Women

The proverbial elephant in the room is clear. How can a Black man ethically conduct research with Black women? I consistently engage in an internal battle that forces me to confront my own positionality. The experiences of Black women are uniquely different from those of Black men. Whereas our racialized experiences are often similar, the gendered and intersectional realities (brought on by patriarchy, racism and classism) of Black women are markedly different. Despite racial congruence, my own maleness often renders me unfit to fully grasp Black women's multiple truths. In other words, patriarchy presents me with a noticeable handicap to interpretation.

I felt it imperative that I delve into the works of Patricia Hill Collins, Adriene Wing, Venus Evans-Winters, Cynthia Dillard and others as an attempt to bring light to my endarkened, male-centered positionality. I realized that my conceptual theories and hypotheses were laced with patriarchal fallacies as they focused explicitly on issues of race and ignored the intersectional realities evident in this research. The research on Feminism, specifically Black Feminism helped to both illuminate and do justice to the narratives of Black female teachers in this study. Engaging in this Critical approach required much reading, consultation, peer debriefing, and reflexivity. Neal (2007) suggests that Black men can and should be Black feminists. However, when engaging in this kind of work it requires constant reflection; one should critique patriarchy but also recognize their participation in this form of oppression. Whereas I cannot foreseeably nor completely divorce myself from patriarchal oppression: it is

important that I center anti-patriarchal critique in my research to reduce the harm of my own gendered reality.

Chapter 3 Summary

The research design was constructed to focus on Black female teachers' career stories, specifically their experiences with turnover and retention. The qualitative approach allowed me to focus on the process and meaning-making of their careers, as told by the teachers. Further, the case design created space for comparison between teachers and further contextualization of each individual story. I was also able to focus on and be critical of the practices, systems, and contexts that influence Black female teacher turnover. The design was an intentional and explicit attempt to shift from a traditional outcome focused topic (teacher turnover) to instead focusing on the fluidity and process that leads to turnover outcomes. This process was influenced by three essential themes that were used to identify the process theory that undergirds Black female teacher's turnover behavior.

Forecasting Chapter 4

What follows is an exploration of fifteen Black female teachers' experiences. I begin with individual vignettes that chronicle each participant's unique career story. Next, I focus on the most relevant themes, identity, the impact of school leadership, and organizations to compare their unique career decisions. Finally, this chapter summarizes participants experiences with turnover and retention to answer the three research questions that guide this study.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

To this point I have outlined the problem, relevant literature, as well as the methodology and methods applied to this dissertation study focusing on the career trajectories of Black female teachers. Throughout this study, my participants revealed rich and unique experiences that contributed to their retention and turnover decisions. I began this study hoping to answer my research questions below, a) What factors do Black female teachers perceive as most influential to their decisions to stay or leave their schools? b) What role do Black female teachers perceive race to have on their experiences and decisions to stay or leave their schools? c) What role do Black female teachers suggest school leadership plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools? What follows is a rich collection of stories about Black female teacher retention and turnover decisions. Further, there will be an analysis of three major themes that most affected their career journeys.

The three prominent themes and multiple subthemes in this study include:

1. The impact of Racial, Cultural and Gendered Backgrounds

2. The impact of School Leadership

3. The impact of Organizations

Together, I lean on these three themes to weave together a chronicle of turnover and retention stories that answer the stated research questions. To be clear, although data are presented in discrete themes and subcategories, in some cases interview responses addressed multiple themes. Therefore, those data are illustrated and represented in the areas that they most logically fit. Also,

the data represented in this study includes teacher interviews, teacher demographic information, school and district demographic information.
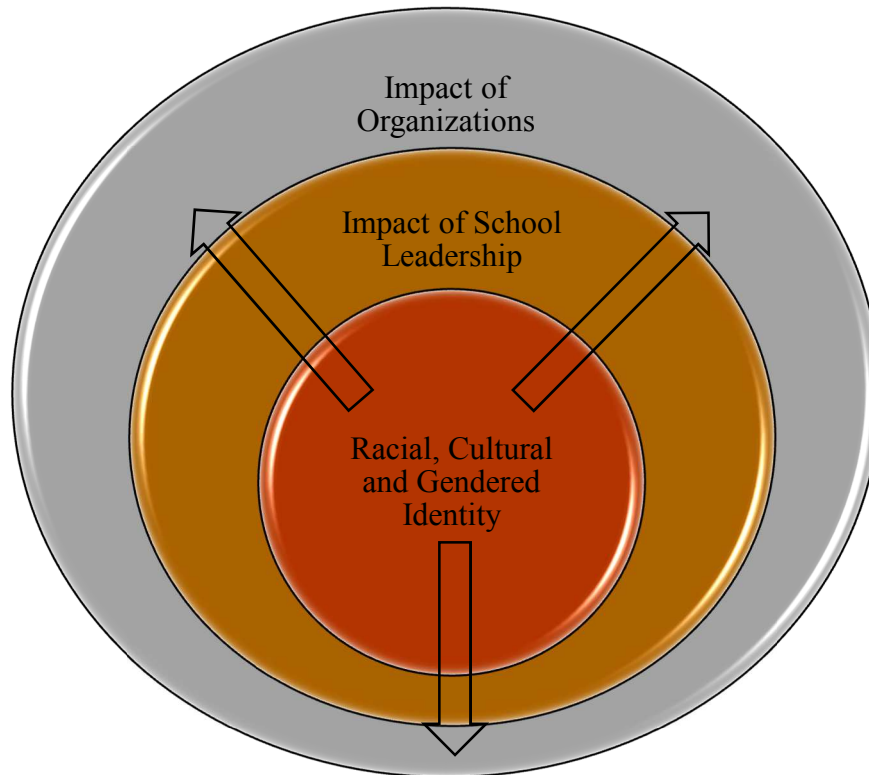
Figure 1.2**:** Conceptual Model of Research Findings

The Fifteen Freedom Fighters

To further humanize the participants in this study, I felt it necessary to describe them individually before drawing comparisons on their experiences. It is imperative that this research focuses on the uniqueness and individuality of Black female teachers in attempts to avoid

essentializing their career experiences. Each participant chose their own pseudonym from a list of Black female leaders in history or submitted one of their own, as an explicit attempt for them to choose an identifier that most represents their personality. Further, the following contextual characteristics represent a combination of existing documents on their schools' and their self-report of the school community. In other words, the description of the context is woven together using participants' descriptions and existing demographic statistics. Therefore, what follows is an explicit anti-essentialist move to represent the individual narratives of fifteen Black female teachers.

Antonia

Contextual Characteristics: Antonia was the only Black teacher in a predominately white and affluent suburban elementary school located in a medium sized southern school district. Today this school serves a predominately white population of approximately 60%, 15% African American students and 12% Asian students. Currently 14% of the student population participates in the free and reduced lunch program. It is important to note that this school is situated in one of the premier and most affluent neighborhoods in the district.

Antonia's exposure to the field of education and classroom teaching began at an early age. "I guess I was always that person that wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. It was something that I did as a child, playing teacher." Her stepmother was a teacher and would eventually become a key influence on her career decisions. However, before her entry into the profession Antonia attended a local Historically Black University in her hometown. After a few years at her prized institution, enjoying Greek life, and having her first child, she decided that it was important to secure a career for her growing family. That's when Antonia walked into the field of elementary education and never looked back. She explains that she had great professors,

mentors and subsequently great courses however her most impactful experience was her summer internship inside the classroom. At this crucial point in her career she decided that she would give back to her community and work at a predominately Black elementary school on south side of town after graduation. "Yeah, I want to teach at the SouthSide school, and want to give back to my community." She explains. However, a combination of her step mother's guidance and the courting of a predominately upper class white school principal brought Antonia to the north side of town instead. Her step mother says, "No you don't." She said, "No you don't, you want to go to a different school."

Antonia embarks on her journey that would lead to fourteen happy years at her school. She enjoyed strong administrative support in pursuit of her masters, National Board Certification and leadership opportunities. Not to mention, she was empowered and financially supported to bring Black history celebrations and discussions to a school that had never openly discussed those perspectives before. Despite being one of only two Black teachers in the school she found her colleagues supportive and collegial. Further she had the support of the community and families who were constantly involved in the school. After years of success she ascended and became an assistant principal which is the position she holds today.

During her tenure and even today, Antonia likens her teaching identity to the creativity of the group *Outkast*. She remarks that she likes to "spice things up" and get people to think outside the box. She explains that she always felt she had to be different and work hard because of the perceptions related to her racialized identity. For Antonia, teaching is deeply connected to her being as she describes that her primary role is to shape the images of Black people for white students and teachers alike. As such, her commitment to this cause has tapered her return to her community school.

I describe Antonia as a highly satisfied stayer who as recently ascended to assistant

principal. The key to her staying and satisfaction was the strong commitment that school

leadership had to supporting her personal and social justice agendas. Further, she found a new

role as an educator who could disrupt negative perceptions of Black people, in white classrooms.

Her only career move primarily comes from the offer to become a school leader.

Aritha

Contextual Characteristics: Aritha taught in a large, intensively urbanized district in the

northeastern region of America. Her school served predominately minoritized (Black and

Brown) student population. Faculty, staff and administration were predominately Black. During

Aritha's tenure the state average teacher turnover rate was 14%. 41% of the students in her

district were eligible for free lunch, 7% for reduced lunch.

Aritha first peered into the teaching profession through the eyes of her father who had

been a classroom teacher for as long as she could remember. But, she was first nudged into the

field by a pew mate at church who said, "you look like a teacher." Aritha, a lover of the arts and

letters pursued her degree in English Education at the hometown liberal arts college. She

explains that she loved her courses and loved reading, but nothing could prepare her for what she

would endure for the next six years.

Aritha took a job at a local high school in their English department. This urbanized

school was primarily comprised of Black students, teachers, leaders and staff. "I will say this

right off the bat, I was in a unique situation where the administrators were black. Most of the

teaching staff was black. Custodial staff was black." Everybody at the, up in that building was

Black." She was assigned ninth graders who traversed from troubling experiences, some even

seeing time in detention centers. However, the realities of the conditions of the school community had just begun to unfold.

Aritha recounts a tale of a toxic working environment marred by chaos, curricular change and turnover from top to bottom. Leadership changed every year, curriculum shifted constantly, teacher turnover had gotten out of control, and the overall health of the environment began to decline. The effects of this kind of environment took its toll on Aritha. She noticed the manipulation among colleagues, the competition, and toxicity of the school culture as she matured in the school. More importantly, leaders were not stable enough to curb the negative effects. Finally, after covering other classes and a constant lack of consistent support, Aritha's health had begun to fade. She left the classroom, the school, the field, and her hometown to pursue a doctoral degree. She remains committed to making the field a better place for Black teachers that follow in her footsteps.

Aritha is best described as a victim of a toxic climate riddled by constant change and turnover. She is a leaver, as those conditions pushed her out of the field of teaching.

Dimples

Contextual Characteristics: Dimples is one of many Black teachers in her high school situated in an intensively urbanized school district. Her school serves approximately 98% African American student population, with approximately 80% eligibility for free and reduced lunch. Her high school is located within an intensively urbanized district that is experiencing increasing student enrollment declines and swift community demographic changes.

For fourteen years, Dimples has watched her first and only job degenerate into something unrecognizable. Dimples explains that after a great experience with her undergraduate preparation that she was afforded an opportunity to teach at the school she had interned in. At the

100

time the school had its obstacles but was a place she enjoyed coming to work. Over time, however, Dimples describes a "horrible" school culture that has deteriorated and made her life much more difficult.

Dimples laments that leadership is "non existent", there is a lack of administrative care, inadequate discipline policies, poor instructional support, and the insufficient resources have contributed to the school's demise, in her view. "You should be actively putting something in place to affect the culture here at the school, the crime and the culture, because that's their title. No steps have been put in, just to say the bare minimum." For Dimples the future remains bleak as she explains that she probably cannot even teach at another school. She says that for so many years she has not taught a rigorous English and Language Arts curriculum and doubts she could do so anywhere else. With a new house, growing family and student loan interest, Dimples sees no foreseeable way out of her situation and unhappiness. "I want to leave ASAP, but of course no district wants to pay me at the top of the pay where I am, so I would have to take a pay cut if I go to another district." So, she stays.

Dimples is an extremely unsatisfied stayer. She wants to leave but feels stuck because of her financial responsibilities and decreased self-efficacy.

Dorothy

Contextual Characteristics: Dorothy works as the only Black teacher in the middle school portion of a charter school that serves approximately 800 students in a medium size, urbanized city. The school serves approximately 53% African American students, 20% white students and 12% students of two or more races. Approximately 85% of the students are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

Dorothy's four years in the classroom began back in her hometown in the south. With the network of support and collegial environment she describes her first school as the ideal space to teach. However, after getting married she found it necessary to move to the Midwest to be with her husband. Her first year, she had to take what she could get and ended up in a middle school one hour away from her new residence. After a year, she found her current school in the same city as her family.

Dorothy's commitment to racial uplift coupled with the love and care she puts into teaching is unmatched. However, the school environment that she works in suffers tremendously from segregation, demoralized teachers, and a school leadership team that has yet to address these issues. Dorothy pours her heart into teaching her minoritized students through racialized and gendered empowerment. Her loving daily quotes and commitment of time to Black boys and girls is heart work to say the least.

Dorothy, the only Black woman on campus, has managed to persevere in the face of the constant barrage of racialized microaggressions against her and her students from white colleagues. Even when the school leader doesn't support her classroom needs, Dorothy finds a way to transgress. Dorothy grabs her lunch and her bible and finds peace to navigate this storm. She laments, "No, I don't want to leave. Even though some days I do, but these kids of color, especially need me. And, hell, I need them, too."

Dorothy is best described as a mover-for her family and a stayer-for her students. She exposes the tension between leaving for a better school environment and more support but staying because of her commitment to racialized justice.

Edwidge

Contextual Characteristics: Edwidge is one of the multiple Black teachers on her middle school campus. Her school is situated in an affluent suburban neighborhood on the outskirts of a large southern city. The students are approximately 60% Black, 25% white and 15% Hispanic/Latinx. Approximately 75% of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Edwidge's works in a magnet school that serves students from urbanized communities in the city.

Edwidge began her adult life as a social worker with a degree in African-American studies. Over time she describes that she loved working with youth, especially Black youth but grew weary from the tragic stories of their lives. Edwidge is encouraged to try teaching as a new profession. She enters an alternative certification program and blazes her way into teaching for social justice in the secondary English classroom.

In eleven years Edwidge has touched the lives of many urbanized youth through her passion for social justice and her mothering style of pedagogy that she uses to "pour everything into them." Recently her school has gone through changes in leadership and experiences constant teacher loss. She has reached her boiling point with her new school leader and cannot wait to get out. Edwidge describes her leader as a "bully" who has a bad relationship with her and the teachers left over from the previous leadership team. "But a lot of teachers come to me crying, like literally in tears, because of something she said them, something she's done to them. Because she's punitive, and so if I piss her off, she is going to push me out." Edwidge explains. In her tenure as principal, Edwidge has noticed teacher demoralization, a decline in school culture, and a complete disregard for conversations about race. She debated with her family about quitting, but their goals to buy a new house for their growing family has trumped those

103

efforts. She explains, "it's a job and it's nothing else. I let them know this year that if it wasn't for the fact that we're trying to buy a house and I can't make any other major moves right now, I'd be leaving as well." So, she wades another year, with her metaphoric bags already packed. Edwidge begrudgingly awaits the final bell of the 2017-2018 school year.

Edwidge is a dissatisfied, future mover, who has decided that she will leave the school at the end of the year. The biggest contribution to this move is her bad experiences with the new school leadership.

Harriet

Contextual Characteristics: Harriet is one of four Black teachers in the middle school portion of a southern, public charter school. The entire school predominately serves approximately 50% white students, 30% Black students and 15% Hispanic/Latinx students. Approximately 30% of students participate in the free or reduced lunch program.

Like many others, Harriet identified the field of teaching as a future career at an early age. Harriet begins her career in education at a local Historically Black University. She describes her experience as well suited for her needs and her preparation as on par with the contemporary conditions of today's classroom. What she did not expect was her future experiences with recruitment.

Harriet explains that her first job was truly a product of racial tokenism. "I would say that in the schools I have taught at, it was like they always needed that Black person. It almost felt like they were meeting some type of quota." Harriet explains. Despite getting what they (the school) wanted and Harriet getting her first job, the marriage between the two would not last. Although she reports a strong relationship with her Black students and immense resources in her school these conditions were not enough to hold her in her position. Harriet was "doing more

yelling than teaching", and her relationship with school leadership was surface level, at best. Therefore, with no one to turn to and with an "invisible" school leader in her times of need she considers moving to another school for more support.

After three years, Harriet was drawn to a new school headed by a Black female school leader. "With it being a Black elementary principal, she automatically relates just because of race. It's more of a bond, I feel like. It makes you feel a little bit more accepted because you know they may have your best interests at heart." Although not a perfect situation, as she recognizes racialized misrepresentations in school programming, she sees her current school as a much better place than her previous school. One which she is hesitant to trade in.

Harriet is best described as a current stayer. She originally left her previous school because of feeling undersupported in the area of discipline, primarily by her administration. A better situation which includes the support of a Black female leader has made this current school a better place to be.

Jackie

Contextual Characteristics: Jackie works as one of three Black teachers in the elementary portion of her K-12 public charter school. Approximately 50% of the students that attend the whole charter school are white, 30% Black and about 15% Hispanic, the remaining students represent mixed race, and Asian students. Approximately 30% of the students that attend the public charter participate in the free and reduced lunch program.

Jackie found the importance of education at an early age. In her culturally dynamic and racially diverse hometown she experienced various aspects of structural oppression that firmly shapes her commitment to education. This commitment manifests itself in a pedagogy informed

by her racialized and cultural experiences. As a child of an immigrant mother from Jamaica she spent much of her youth learning to navigate the American educational system.

She remarks that one of the best things that could have happened to her was going to a Historically Black College located eight hours north of her hometown. The web of support and authentic care displayed by her professors helped to shape her professional acumen. Further, Jackie did not get a job right out of college but explains that the next best thing to happen to her was being a substitute teacher for a year. "I feel like if I would have gotten a job I probably would have not be so great."

Jackie's first job was at a brand new school that she helped to open. She reports initial job satisfaction: "The school was great. He (the school leader) was a disciplinarian, he looked at data, it was no misunderstanding with him, he was very straightforward, and he was there for the teachers, very strong, and he left the second year and I feel like that's when everything changed." The administration changed, parents began to influence the school, cliques form among teachers and what had once been a suitable working environment became a stressful situation. Jackie after four years, felt it was time for her to make a move.

Jackie's hope for greener pastures has resulted in five years of some disappointment. She enjoys the presence of a Black female school leader and a plethora of great resources at her new school. However, the parental politics, racialized tensions and hostility have made this job less than desirable over the years. " I've gotten better where I don't get offended by it as much, my Christianity helps keep me from that. I think I seem to be more grounded as a Christian. It helps me matriculate through my teaching." Jackie now clutches tight to her religious faith to guide her next move.

As it sits, Jackie is a stayer who is growing increasingly dissatisfied with her highly politicized and racialized climate. She left her previous school primarily due to similar shifts in climate and culture. Her faith will guide her next decision.

Maya

Contextual Characteristics: Maya is the only Black instructional staff in her predominately white elementary school. The school is situated within a highly affluent, suburban neighborhood in a southern county district. Her school serves approximately 900 students, 60% white, 30% Hispanic/Latinx and 5% African American. Approximately 38% of the students participate in the free and reduced lunch program.

Maya comes to education as an obligation to special needs populations. Although she has experiences in multiple schools she has spent her nineteen year career as one of the few Black teachers in her predominately white district. Her career began in more diverse schools in the area, where her race was never really discussed. That was about to change.

Last year she moved to her current school whose population consists primarily of white students, teachers and school leaders. Hence, her intersectional identity became more salient in her white environment. "Just because it's a predominately white culture and you can't just be yourself." Maya suggests that her current set up is a racial and cultural mismatch and has led to multiple racialized microaggressions. Further her administration handles her from a distance. She however manages by employing her defense mechanism, "two faces." "The other part is because we've had to wear those two faces. You learn to perfect that. Other people from other cultures that have been in a majority, not a minority, they don't get that." Her two face theory, although it has allowed her to persevere in this school it has likely taxed her teaching identity. Although she has experience in different schools Maya explains "I don't really like to move from school to

school, I know it doesn't seem like it, but I don't like to do that, and I don't foresee myself making any changes, even up to retirement if I do I could see me maybe moving to secondary school. Maybe, I still love these guys even though they give you a run for your money. I don't know. I don't think I would change my field."

For Maya moving schools is connected to her own personal reasons because she has learned to persevere in even tough environments. She is best described as a stayer whose movement is primarily influenced by simply personal choice.

Michelle

Contextual Characteristics: Michelle was one of four Black teachers in the elementary portion of her K-12 public charter school. Approximately 50% of the students that attend the whole charter school are white, 30% Black and about 15% Hispanic, the remaining students represent mixed race, and Asian students. Approximately 30% of the students that attend the public charter participate in the free and reduced lunch program.

Michelle's teaching journey begins after a change of major at her Historically Black University. She soon began her pursuit of early childhood education and explains being "overly prepared" for the field in four short years. Michelle was most influenced by her professors to be a great classroom manager and to fight for the educational success of Black students. She took this charge to her first job.

Michelle vehemently pursued social justice in her predominately white and highly politicized school climate. The segregated culture of the school fuels her social justice pursuits. "It's not equal, it's not equal and I have an issue with that, and I feel like if I'm not a part of the solution I'm a part of the problem." Her advocacy for Black students to get additional academic support and to be tested for giftedness has fallen on deaf ears at her school. The politics of the

school has even strained her once strong relationship with her Black female administrator. Moreover, the hyper-surveillance of her Black female body by her white colleagues, has taken a toll on her. Given these experiences and a call to come home, Michelle has packed her bags to her hometown district.

Michelle is best described as a dissatisfied mover. Her pursuit of social justice went unattended to by her colleagues and administration, so she resolved to return to her hometown to teach.

Myrlie

Contextual Characteristics: Myrlie works as the only Black classroom teacher in an affluent suburban district outside of a medium sized midwestern city. Her school is comprised of approximately 70% white students, 15% Asian students, 10% Black students and 4% Hispanic/Latinx students. The school serves approximately 15% students on free lunch, this is substantially lower than the state average (approximately 45%).

Myrlie is primarily influenced to teach because of the circumstances surrounding her upbringing. Growing up poor in what she describes as an economically dispossessed city, invigorated her commitment to educational pursuits. Myrlie explains that she didn't quite understand why her schooling experiences were so different than white students on the other side of town that she knew. After seeing better resourced schools "the only conclusion I could draw at that time, was that their parents had an education and mine didn't." Myrlie explains. Seeing this propelled her into teaching.

Although she had a desire to teach in a diverse community like her own, she fell into a predominately white school district, one in which she is the only Black classroom teacher. Despite her racialized isolation and the paucity of minoritized students in her high school, she

retains her strong commitment to social justice. However, for seventeen years in this school she has taken up this fight alone as she explains that her leadership has paid lip service at best to issues of race. Further, as the only Black teacher on campus she has been subject to racialized violence in the form of microaggressive behaviors from colleagues, spotlighting from school administrators and an outright avoidance of discussions about race. "So now I do, I must say I feel less supported. I feel like my concerns are paid lip service a little bit, and the kinds of concerns I'm raising are different though. I'm the only one that is willing to talk about race, and how students are being treated."

Myrlie has grown weary in her pursuits at the classroom level. Her racialized battle fatigue at one level has only fueled her commitment to social justice at another level of education, a doctoral degree. "And the only way, the only conditions under which I'm leaving is because I know I'm moving forward to do even more work to make education better for those kids."

Myrlie is best described as a leaver to pursue her doctoral degree. She explains that she has just grown weary from fighting for social justice alone in her school and feels that she can make a better impact at a different level of the field.

Octavia

Contextual Characteristics: Octavia is one of six Black teachers in her medium sized suburban midwestern school district. She is one of two Black teachers on her elementary campus. The school serves approximately three-hundred students who are over 50% white, approximately 15% Asian, approximately 9% Hispanic/Latinx and African-American. 22% of the students in the school are characterized as low income, participate in the free and reduced lunch program.

Octavia weaves a broad and complex narrative chronicling her unorthodox path to teaching. Growing up a "military brat" she traversed the country and those experiences have inspired her commitments to education. As she pursued her bachelor's degree she ran into a few obstacles that delayed her path to the classroom but also proved to only strengthen her commitment to education. After having her child while in school she explains pausing her academic pursuits and opening a daycare. Octavia later resumed her academic career, became a paraprofessional, and eventually a classroom teacher.

Her first teaching job she describes "wandering into this district." She had no real concrete plan, but knew she needed financial stability, given her experiences running a daycare and being a Black woman in a predominately white district, she suggests her hiring was a no-brainer. In the seven years to follow Octavia portrays a series of events by which she has been forced to navigate the extreme whiteness of her organization. She remarks about the racially charged statements from colleagues and constant eye of school leadership. Conversely, she describes a stable set up, she has the collegial support, classroom resources and curricular freedom that she desires. "For me, I would have left a long time ago if I didn't have these things that make me want to stay." Her pursuits of racial and social justice in the classroom are seen as an asset. Her primary frustration is that the school and district as a whole is not committed to long term and deep social change. "I feel that it gets difficult after a while to even tease out all of the different facets that are related to my satisfaction, my identity as a teacher, my identity as an African-American teacher, my identity as a (teacher in this district). All of those things come to bear, so when you ask that question of me on the surface, when I think about it now, yeah. But you know three weeks from now when I'm dealing with something else this will come back and I'll be like, wow, there's another element that I hadn't thought about, you know what I mean?"

Octavia has reached a crossroad, where the benefits of navigating and assimilating into the whiteness of the school have been fruitful, conversely the side effects have caused racialized frustrations.

As Octavia's frustration mounts, but she has managed to stay in this school for seven years, primarily for the resources. She is best described as an increasingly frustrated stayer.

Ruby

Contextual Characteristics: Ruby is one of four Black teachers on her campus. Her school serves approximately 450 diverse students in a medium sized southern county district. Approximately 57% of the students are white and approximately 30% are Black. Approximately 40% of the students participate in the free and reduced lunch program. Ruby's school is located in the rural area of the county and serves primarily students who live outside of the local city limits.

Ruby is a seasoned veteran in the field and in her school. She describes herself as a Black girl from the Pacific Northwest who always knew she wanted to be a teacher. Her thirty-three year career began in a planned community out West, which shaped her commitment to community schooling, and then she moved to the South to pursue her masters and to start a new school in a rural community. She describes originally feeling satisfied in this new school that was so community oriented. "When this school started, we were fairly small. This was like a tiny, little country school, it used to be. How it was the best kept secret in this particular county, but, and of course it grew. Back then it was more of a family school. Parents were welcome to come at any time. Just sign in and come on in, it's fine." However, the "little country school" and its community commitments began to fade. Ruby later explains that her school now is "not the school I started in." Ruby is the last founder still at the school and has recognized that her time

may be up. She has already made plans for her departure next year stating, "I don't even ... I can't even kind of wrap my head around it." Even though it's a year from now, it seems like it's way over here, because I've always been teaching, and I've always been working. I'll probably just be in shock first. What, what, what am I gonna do? It won't hit me per se until September. When everyone is going back to school and I'm not."

For Ruby, her primary concern is the shifts in the community and she sees the writing on the wall of her exit. Ruby is best described as a leaver or retiree.

Senaya

Contextual Characteristics: Senaya is one of seven teachers in a predominantly white school that is located on the suburban edge of a medium sized southern county district. Her elementary school serves approximately 78% white students, 12% Black students and the remaining percentages comprise students from different races. Further her school serves approximately 20% students on free or reduced lunch.

Senaya's story begins with her mother's experience as a classroom paraprofessional. She knew that teaching was the field that she wanted to get into as she applied to the local Historically Black University. Although she reports being well prepared by her institution she identifies the Sunday School classroom at church as her most influential training grounds. Further, the church gave her a space to bring together all she has learned in the classroom in real time, with real students. These early experiences propelled her into a satisfying twenty-two year career in elementary education.

In most cases her career decisions have been influenced by family, whether it was the distance to the school or the amount of time she devoted to teaching. For example she left her first job simply because it was too far from home. "My biggest obstacle is just my family life and

trying to help my husband understand that it's not just a job. It's my life." Senaya describes her current school as racially diverse and a great situation for her family as it is closer to home. She has found a supportive administration who listens to her voice and has empowered her to take leadership opportunities. Senaya has seen some hardships but, remarks that her school really respects her as a professional and she is not giving that up.

Senaya is best described as a satisfied stayer. She has found a school that supports her needs and is well suited to help her balance work and family life.

Shirley

Contextual Characteristics: Shirley is one of seven Black teachers at her current elementary school. Shirley' school is situated in a suburban portion of her southern country district. The school serves approximately eight hundred students, 80% who are white, and about 15 % Black. These racial demographics are drastically different from the district and state averages (in terms of the percentages of white students) Approximately 20% students receive free or reduced lunch.

Shirley took an alternative path to teaching, as she began her adult life in the business field. Shirley had come from a family full of educators with the expressed intention to never be an educator. However, as circumstances changed, she had her first child and needed a more stable job. Shirley took her first teaching job in a white rural community in the South. She remarks that she was "probably called a nigger everyday", but learned to win over her white students and families after four years.

Marriage and a growing family brought her closer to her roots in the Southeast. However, her business background had begun to catch up with her. "So I do think it makes me stronger as a person because I do prove myself every day and even when I first got here, I sent out, like 32

resumes, and I probably got four call-backs and out of that I had two people offer me positions. And it's funny because where I am right now they did not even look at my resume. They didn't call me at all." She took a job at a local title one school, but left after her strong, visible and supportive administrator left the school. In her second year at her current school she was nominated for teacher of the year. Since, being at the school she explains that her experiences have been great, she has classroom autonomy and enjoys having input at the school level. Further, and most importantly, she teaches close to home and in a school community that is well suited for her school age children.

Shirley's experiences in the field, although turbulent to start off shaped out for her good. She is best described as a satisfied stayer whose career decisions have been mostly attributed to familial needs.

Sojourner

Contextual Characteristics: Sojourner teaches in a medium sized midwestern district, at a high school that is ranked as one of the top in the state. She is one of eight Black teachers in her district. The high school serves approximately 2,000 students, 60% white, 15% Asian and approximately 15% African American. Around 15% of the students in the school receive free and reduced lunch.

Sojourner has committed thirty-three years to educating students in the Midwest. Her training began in her southern hometown at a Historically Black University. She describes being very well prepared to pursue teaching and prepared for children from diverse backgrounds. Sojourner has seen many sides of the field and notices the significant changes in education, teaching, leadership and even families. Nevertheless, she has committed to being a multifaceted role model and to building strong relationships with students over the years. "I'm a teacher. I'm a

counselor. I am a mediator. I'm a mama to some kids. Because, I mean, some of these kids- need a friend. They see me as a friend. And some kids say once they've been through my classroom and they come back and they see me, it's more than just teacher-student. They have somebody they can come and talk to, and they need you."

Unfortunately, for Sojourner the field has changed too drastically. She explains that the high stakes culture of the school, increased accountability, and teacher evaluations are her last "pendulum swing". Further the intrusion of the state and the "bureaucratic" powers that be have symbolically signaled to her that it is time to retire. "Yes, because I've got my 30 years in and I'm done. I am literally getting tired. I'm getting tired of the curriculum, I'm getting tired of the bureaucracy, the demands that are put on teachers. I'm just getting tired of all that."

Sojourner is best described as a disgruntled leaver or retiree. Ultimately her choice to leave can be attributed to her disdain for increased performance standards, accountability and state intervention.

The following findings will explore the impact of race, culture and gendered backgrounds leadership and organizations on Black female teachers' career journeys.

Summarizing Stay and Leave Influences

Factor(s)	Reported Reasons to Stay	Reported Reasons to Move or Leave
Racial, Cultural and Gendered Identity	- Commitment to Black and minoritized students - Financial and Familial Stability - High Performing School - Commitment to Hometown	- Stress or tax - Racial Tokenism
School Leadership	- Support for personal advancement and upward mobility - Support for Social Justice Agenda	- Ineffective discipline structures, policies and practices - Leadership turnover - Poor instructional leadership - Poor relationship with school leader
Organizations	- High Trust Environment - Collegial Support - Curricular Freedom - School Level Autonomy - Material Resources	- Adverserial School Climate - Toxic School Culture - School micropolitics - Faculty turnover - Segregated School Environment - Racial microaggressions - Intersectional hostility - Isolation - Organizational mismatch
Outside Factors (not explicitly discussed in findings)	- School Community Relationship - Strong teacher preparation	- District and State Intervention - Performance Pressures - Pursue other career

Table 4: Reported reasons to stay or leave

The table above is a representation of participant's stated reasons for wanting to stay or leave their schools. It is important to understand that the overall story, is greater than the sum of its parts. Also, there are factors and influences that are not represented in this table that have a strong influence on their career decisions. However, the table above serves as an indicator of the most consistent and direct impacts on stay and move behavior.

Black and Critical Race Feminist Concepts

Throughout the findings we find that the hallmarks of Black Feminism and Critical Race Feminism reign important for participants. These frames give us a unique viewpoint by which to engage in understanding their experiences. Above in table 4, I explain that the core of this project is identity related factors, then the impact of leaders and organizations. On a fundamental level, Black and Critical Race Feminism are both uniquely tide to the liberatory tradition. Black female teachers in this study remain ardent in their struggle to denounce racism, sexism and classism in the classrooms. These frames help us to see their role in the liberation process as beyond race, as that was my limited role in the classroom, instead a more inclusive role of eradicating sexism and classism. Further, Black feminist concepts help us to see how the intersections of race, gender and class help to shape identities of Black female teachers. It also exposes particular aspects of their intersectional needs that go beyond race related concerns and considers gendered realities, like motherhood and includes class backgrounds. Further, Critical Race Feminism help us to see how traditional policies and practices may obscure Black womens' intersectional realities. In other words, when policies or practices consider race, but not the intersections of class and gender, Black female teachers may experience marginalization in the field or organization. It is important that this research teases out these tensions, to expose how Black

teacher turnover and Black female teacher turnover are similar, but also have points of divergence.

Theme 1: The Impact of Racial, Cultural and Gendered Backgrounds

What follows are discussions highlighting how race, gender, culture and the intersections of these experiences have contributed to Black female teacher's willingness to stay or leave their schools. This theme is presented in four distinct sections. Section one focuses on the explicit impact of race, section two explores the cultural aspects of their journey, section three identifies how gender has influenced them and section four details their unique intersectional experiences Black female teachers throughout the study identify how their race, their cultural backgrounds and their gendered realities have impacted their career decisions. Specifically, they identify how racialized issues like the absence of Black teachers in the classroom, commitment to racial uplift and experiences with educational injustice has shaped their career decisions. Further, they describe how cultural experiences with faith and the characteristics of their childhood communities have influenced their commitment to teaching. They also describe their unique gendered realities of motherhood and how they have had to balance their commitments to the classroom and their families. Finally, they discuss the distinctive challenges of their intersectional realities of being Black, female and a teacher in predominately white schools. At the conclusion of this section the reader should understand the specific ways that Black female teachers socialized experiences with race, gender and culture have fueled their commitments to the classroom and influenced their career journeys.

Section One: Impact of Race

To be clear, race was a pervasive topic and continues to resurface across all findings. However, for the purposes of this section I attempt to highlight the unique ways that race has

119

impacted them prior to entering the field, led them to the field, and influenced their teaching

experiences. Throughout this section, Black female teachers signal that their racial identities and

race related commitments strongly impact their commitment to the field and specific classrooms.

Standing in the Gap: Black Teacher Scarcity

Many participants remark that teaching for them is primarily about filling a void they

recognized from their childhood. The scarcity of Black teachers in classrooms exposed for them

a need in the field of education, one they felt they should fill for the uplift of their communities.

Dorothy remarks,

> So that's when I decided to get into the educational field, because there weren't a lot of
>
> teachers who looked like me in my childhood in my schools. There weren't any teachers
>
> ... I can name two you know, teachers who have truly stood out. Only two out of my
>
> whole career. And so making sure to change that for children of color so they don't get
>
> missed out or fall between the cracks. That was my reason of going to education.

Here, Dorothy describes filling this Black teacher void in hopes of rectifying the wrongs of her

childhood schooling experiences. Black teacher scarcity is a consistent narrative, one that fuels

this study. Here, it is important to recognize how the lack of Black teachers can contribute to an

increased flow into the pipeline. Similarly, Senaya describes the particular urgency and need for

Black teachers. She states "I think the biggest thing for me is that we're able to influence student

lives. Black teachers, African American students need to see African American teachers in

school." Here again, the fervor associated with representing for Black children inside of

classrooms reigns important. Senaya makes clear that her presence in the classroom is a

necessity as Black teachers can have a particular impact on Black students. What Dorothy and

Senaya explain is that their commitment to the field is ignited by the absence of Black teachers

across contemporary classrooms. For them it was important to become a teacher to ensure that Black students have a representation of themselves in the classroom. Hence, the scarcity of Black teachers serves as a draw to the classroom.

"You have to want it for them": Teaching for Racial Uplift, Diversity and Social Justice

Black female teachers consistently described that their teaching styles and their approaches to the field of education are influenced by their own experiences and understandings of race. Ultimately, Black female teachers in this study align themselves with Black feminist concepts of racial uplift. They, in their own ways explore what it means to be "the underdogs biggest cheer leader," as Maya puts it. Further, they explicated the tensions and sacrifices associated with their commitments to racial uplift.

The Push and Pull of Teaching for Social Justice

Shirley describes her connection to teaching and how it is directly influenced by her racialized background. She explains:

> To go farther in life, and I think that being a black teacher, knowing the struggles that black ... that my son, that my husband, that I grew up with my brother, knowing the struggles that they have, and my daughter and all of us. I think it helps me to push those.

Shirley describes the unique ways that life outside of the classroom influences her approach to education and educating others. Part of Shirley's commitment to her position is connected to being able to share those background experiences in the classroom.

Myrlie explains:

I'm the only black teacher. I can't leave my babies. If I do, as it is, unless you have me for

math, you will go through this district without having a black teacher, and chances of

having me for math are slim to none now that I'm only part-time. That's why I stay.

Further, she exposes her tensions with the previous statement. "And the only way, the only

conditions under which I'm leaving is because I know I'm moving forward to do even more work

to make education better for those kids."

Myrlie describes the popular predicament that Black teachers often face at some point in

their career. She is forced to consider what it means if she leaves and what it could mean for her

students if she doesn't. In other words, she nuances this conversation, explaining that her moving

to occupy another role in education is fueled by her commitment to Black students. However, by

leaving she creates an access issue or void for minoritized students who need to see a teacher of

color.

Conversely, Jackie identifies a tension between her background and her satisfaction with

her current position. "And there are days when I'm just like, I feel like sometimes there's not a lot

of diversity, I'm from a place that's diverse. So I'm used to that so there are days that that

influences my decisions, like, oh I just want to go back and teach where there is more diversity."

For Jackie her schooling experiences were in more diverse settings and therefore she

remains committed to multi-ethnic populations. The lack of diversity at her current school limits

her influence on the populations of students that she cares about, which complicates her

commitment to her current position. Although she hasn't yet left the school it is plausible that

she may do so in the future given her unfavorable position on the school's demographics. This

section exposes the tensions of commitments of Black female teachers to social justice and the

realities of schools, districts and the field. In these cases we find that Black female teachers

remain committed to social justice related issues but schools and districts sometimes lack the diversity or the commitments that are more favorable for their social justice orientations. Hence, career decisions are influenced by their personal dispositions and the realities of their school environment.

These findings suggest a particular difference between Black female and Black male teachers like myself. Given the higher turnover rates of Black male teachers, these stories suggest that Black male teachers have less of a conundrum with leaving the classroom. What participants in this study expose, is that they have a duty to remain in their classrooms that, in some cases outweigh the attraction to other fields, schools, or opportunities that I myself, fell victim to. This is consistent with what we know about Black women and their commitments to racial uplift, from Black feminist thought. Black female teachers in this section show their unwavering commitment to uplifting their Black students that keeps them in their classrooms, even when those positions do not have the most favorable conditions. Black women show that they are staying for personal, social justice reasons.

Being a Martyr for Black Students

In other cases, teachers describe their explicit approach to teaching students of color and Black students particularly. What they identify is their ongoing and unwavering commitment to these students against the odds. Research has consistently found that Black female teachers engage in other-mothering and social justice pedagogies, which contribute to their teaching identity. What follows is how Black female teachers in this study make sense of their racialized identity as it pertains to their commitments to a social justice agenda and social justice pedagogies.

Edwidge explores her internal conflict and moments of weakness as she describes her commitment to teaching Black students.

She posits:

> In a title one school, it means you have to really care about children. You have to really want to (teach in a) title one school, you have to really want to help black kids, because they come with so much entitlement, so little structure, there's so few expectations systematically from their families, from society, that you have to give them things that they should of gotten long before they got to you and that they're probably not going to get in the future. I don't know elementary school, I've only taught middle, but the amount of skills my kids don't come with socially and academically, it's disheartening. At times I feel like there's no hope for the future, but you just kind of have to give them everything you can pour, not just academically give to them, but socially and emotionally, you have to pour everything into them that you can so that you see where they are going or where they could be going and you have to want it for them more than they want it for themselves. otherwise it's the wrong field.

There are moments of deficit rhetoric in Edwidge' narrative, she describes Black students coming to classrooms, socially and academically inept. However, Edwidge remains ardent in her struggle to pursue educational and social justice for Black students. Edwidge contextualizes her statements suggesting that it is the fault of organizations and systems that do not support Black students. Edwidge describes the significant struggles associated with teaching in title one schools with large populations of Black students. In her view teaching in these contexts is tough because Black students are academically under supported by their elementary schools and come to middle school without the requisite skills to be successful. She further explains that schools often

124

lower the expectations for these students and therefore she commits to holding high standards to uplift them. She portrays a consistent sacrifice to reach them and help them navigate systems that are predicated on their demise.

She expounds, "Really. It is. If you don't see more than what the state benchmark sees in them or the data sees in them, don't do it. You're not numbers. You are not a three. You are not a two. You're an actual person and when this is all over, no one will care or even know about that one or two."

Her humanizing rhetoric shows how Black female teachers continue to inspire students to resist essentialist narratives and high stakes terminology that marginalizes their personhood or humanity. Edwidge's remarks about the approach to educating for racial uplift are powerful. She explains that any teacher, but a Black teacher specifically, must commit to Black students and pursue social justice advocacy. She laments that school organizations do not have the best interests of Black students in mind, therefore it is the job of teachers to commit to humanizing them. Her career decisions are fueled by her charge to ensure that Black students have the requisite academic and socio emotional support they need to succeed.

Others expound on these approaches and consider their chosen avenues to uplifting Black students. Edwidge's remarks represent a larger narrative of Black female teachers' commitment to Black students. What follows is how participants in this study specifically engage in social justice advocacy through their pedagogies.

Social Justice Pedagogy: Centering Race in the Discussion

This subtheme explores the different ways that Black female teachers engage in uplifting their Black students through pedagogies. They explain the ways that African-American voices are infused in the curriculum. Further, they describe how they bring in aspects of the community

into the classroom. Participants in this section display how they teach for racial uplift as a part of their commitment to Black students in their schools.

Octavia and Ruby describe the incorporation of African-American perspectives into their pedagogies and the curriculum.

Octavia articulates:

> my vision of education positions history and contributions of African Americans within the historical record in a very obvious way, not a tangential way, but in a very, very obvious way. This is where you and your people fit within history.

What she describes is a fierce and needed challenge against traditional curriculum that often trivializes the contributions of Black people. Ruby expounds and considers a more multicultural view of the matter.

> When we talked, and this is fast, I incorporate African-American history through everything. But when they (colleagues) do just the family works scenario. I can't show this movie, I have to stop and talk about it, because nobody else has taken the time to learn about. And my African-American students are different from everybody else's. But it's not just that. It's Asian-American history, it's Native-American history, it's women's month, it's everything. But I shouldn't be the only one that knows everything, because our young (teachers) need to know something too because I'm not going to be here forever.

Ruby, who is on her way out, describes a commitment to teaching for racial uplift for thirty plus years. However, as she phases out of the school she shows concern that this charge will not be taken up by younger teachers. Together, Octavia and Ruby show their explicit commitment to race and multicultural approaches to teaching that fuel their commitments to their positions.

126

Social Justice Toolkit

Dorothy and Edwidge expound on their social justice pedagogical toolkit intended to center the needs of Black students. Dorothy explains that her commitment to her current position is driven by her expanded role beyond teaching math.

She states:

> And so that's why I'm a black educator. That's why I'm teaching more than just math, because I have to inspire and I have to make sure they know they can be whatever they want to be, and I'm proof of it. Even though someone said, "You're just a math teacher."

More specifically she describes an example of their classroom discussions:

> Why does Colin Kaepernick not stand for the pledge? And does that mean you should? And you shouldn't? Because I've had kids that, "I'm not standing." "Well, why? Are you doing it just because he's not? Or do you have a reason?" So, I'm making sure I'm teaching the whole child and fueling them mentally, spiritually, and academically.

In her statements she describes a commitment to teaching students about racial and social justice that goes beyond her contracted role. Here, her willingness to stay in her current school is directly affected by a perceived need for her to inspire her students.

Edwidge describes similar techniques to reach students that are beyond her stated role as an English teacher. She explains:

> I tell my black kids ... My brown kids, because I tell my Latino kids as well, you kind of have to wear two hats, and so with my African-American students, I can, when it's

necessary, I can take it down a notch, be a little bit more personable, and speak a different language to get them to where I want them to be.

Edwidge identifies that there is a specific manner by which to engage her minoritized students in a discussion. Her ability to do so allows her to reach her students in hopes of improving their success and experiences in the school.

Summary

Consistent across these narratives are the racialized identity factors and sacrifice associated with Black female teacher's career experiences. The teachers in this study describe a strong response to the lack of teacher diversity in their own schooling experiences. Each Black female teacher remarks on their commitment to their students and their abilities to identify with their students because of shared racial experiences. However, in most cases (except Shirley) their commitment to a social justice charge forces them to teach beyond their contracted role. In that they incorporate African-American perspectives into their curriculum as an explicit attempt at racial uplift. With that charge comes a cost and sacrifice described most explicitly by Dorothy, Ruby, Jackie and Edwidge, which can have implications for their turnover and retention decisions down the road. For Jackie her commitment to diversity makes her current position in some ways unsatisfying. She could potentially leave for a position that allows her to engage with more diverse populations. Whereas for Edwidge and Dorothy their sacrifices to teach beyond their contracted roles also creates a heavier workload. Although they remain committed to their students of color, it is likely that the burden of racial uplift could take a toll on them. Finally, Myrlie and Ruby describe the loss that is associated with their soon departure from the classroom. Although leaving the classrooms for different reasons, and leaving different voids in their schools, they both identify a complex tension with their departures. That tension rests at the

intersection of the critical needs of their students and their personal goals outside of the classroom. This double-bind complicates their careers.

In terms of Black Feminist Theory, these narratives suggest that Black Female teachers engage with teaching as a result of their lived realities. They are shaped by their background experiences with race and racism. Hence, they teach from a position of racial uplift that is consistent with the history of Black teachers. Evidenced throughout these narrative is presence of a ideological and pedagogical commitment to racial uplift. BFT, helps us to see this commitment as a unique characteristic of Black women that is connected to mothering and other-mothering. As Black women continue to serve these mothering roles in schools, it creates a more complex tensions when they begin to consider a career move. In other words, their students ae viewed as their own children, as Myrlie explains, so leaving them feels like abandoning one of their own. Their commitment to mothering students and shielding them from racism, sexism suggests that their career decisions are markedly different from Black male teachers who likely do not view their students in the same ways.

Section Two: Impact of Gender

This section includes the impact that gendered experiences, specifically mothering, has had on participants career paths. More specifically, participants describe how becoming a mother and wife have influenced their willingness to stay or leave a school and the profession. After becoming a mother, many describe that teaching took on a whole new meaning, presenting different obstacles and shifting their teaching identities'.

"You live this life": Mothering and Balancing Responsibilities

Participants explain that motherhood and having a spouse significantly contributes to changes in lifestyle. Antonia states:

I had a daughter at the age of 20, so my thought was, "Okay, I have to be a mother, I have

to make money. What is a job that I can go and do and be a mother," and think about my

future that I'll, you know, have some stability and maintain a job. As an adult that was my

choice being solidified by being a parent. When you become a parent and you have

children and you want them to go to school with you. So, it was the perfect scenario for

me to be in and one that I wouldn't get out of.

Part of Antonia's decision to enter the profession was related to the birth of her daughter.

Further, it was necessary to take a job in a school that she felt comfortable bringing her children

to. She describes needing financial stability for her growing family and a need to work in a stable

place that would provide her children with a top-notch education. Shirley confirms this

viewpoint when she says "this school is the perfect actually for my family situation. My son goes

to the middle school right there. My daughter goes here." She expounds, "I wanted her close to

home, close to me. I wanted to be able to bring my son too. I wanted both of them. We live close

to here." Together, their commitment to their current schools is inextricably tied to their state of

motherhood and the need to provide safe and stable environments for their children.

Octavia shared a similar experience, but from the viewpoint of single motherhood. She

describes "Long story short, at the end of my senior year I had my daughter and so I stayed home

with her for three years. I worked at a daycare, I used everything that I knew to raise her and give

her the disposition that I wanted her to have, and handpick her friends, and was broke as a duck,

but with my child." She illustrates how her experience with motherhood presented a separate set

of obstacles. "I mean, first of all being a single parent is really difficult. Being a single parent

without resources is hard. The difference between my situation and most single parents" she

explains. For Octavia, she explains that her trek into teaching was partially influenced by the

need for financial stability and about bringing her daughter to a good school. Different from other teachers, single motherhood provided a unique set of obstacles that she had to overcome.

The presence of obstacles associated with motherhood and even marriage was a consistent finding for participants. Dimples identifies a shift in her commitments since she first started teaching. She says, "well, I guess I had two kids since I started teaching here, and other than that, nothing else has changed. Well I moved, I bought a house, but other than that, buying a house and having two kids, that's it, that's it." She expounds "no, I feel I'm able to do extended days until 6:00, my kids are at home. I still do that. I don't devote any of my time on the weekends to my job. They'll ask me to do PDs, or professional developments." She describes having to negotiate her time and the time she devotes to the school differently since becoming a mom. Senaya also describes related obstacles and negotiation. She states:

> My biggest obstacle, I would have to say is my family. My husband wasn't as understanding with the amount of time I spent with school, with work, and with even coming home and saying, no, I gotta grade these papers or I gotta do this or I gotta stay late at school because we have parent conferences tonight. You get off at 3:15, I really don't have a start and finish time to my profession. You live this life.

What Senaya characterizes is the difficult tension between family needs and duties to teaching. For her, and many others, teaching becomes a lifestyle and that lifestyle often runs counter to the needs of their family. Therefore, as a mother and a spouse its difficult to maintain a healthy balance between work and home life. However in some cases, like Antonia and Shirley, finding suitable jobs where children can attend school works out.

Together, we see that Black female teachers in this study must negotiate their responsibilities to the classroom and their families. It is vital that they consider the distance of the school, the academic prestige, the needs of their families and their own well being. The demands of the profession prove unyielding, so participants have to find specific ways to reduce their workload and support the needs of their families. Therefore, they find schools that are close to home and have strong academics. As Shirley and Octavia explain, it is also important to bring their children to the school and ensure that they are surrounded by like-minded students. For Octavia, single motherhood poses a unique set of financial obstacles so teaching for her is also about stability. In some cases, this negotiation comes at a cost and puts a strain on the family. This balancing act is pivotal in understanding their career decisions and commitments to specific schools.

For Better or Worse: Teaching for Stability

Further this section speaks to how Black female teachers make sense of their career decisions considering their familial financial stability. In what follows we find that many teachers remain in their schools and the profession for financial reasons.

Dorothy, who recently got married, explains how that influenced her second career move. She states, "I moved up here, and I just needed a job. So I had to do what I had to do in order to make sure my family was being able to have income." Post-nuptials Dorothy had to decide to leave her job (in her hometown) so that her family could be together. Rather than choosing a job that was a great fit for her, she describes having to take what was offered, which in this case was a job one hour away from her new home. After a year of commuting, she eventually found her current job which is local.

Edwidge describes a different perspective on the impact of financial stability. She illustrates:

I asked my husband if I could quit, but again, we're trying to buy a house. [inaudible 00:21:22] another job, you'd quit, but there's nothing else that I can readily do that I'd want to do, outside of the dream jobs that are probably outside of my reach right now. What I decided a couple weeks ago was going in to this year, because I know I didn't want to be.

She explains how the need for financial stability to buy a house kept her in her current school, at least for another year. In this case, despite her dissatisfaction and urge to leave the school she is bound by her financial responsibilities to her family. Dimples expands these sentiments saying:

I don't want to continue, I can't go anywhere else because I'm at the top of the pay scale, so right now the teaching profession, they just want to hire people who are new teachers so they can pay them as minimal amount as they can, like the TFA (Teach for America). So, the TFAs who are not committed to teaching, they just want their student loans paid off for three years. After they teach three years, they get their whole student loans paid off. I, who have been teaching for 14, don't get a penny put towards my student loans. You think that's fair? So, I want to leave ASAP, but of course no district wants to pay me at the top of the pay where I am, so I would have to take a pay cut if I go to another district.

She further describes "and you think about it, maybe I could just leave for peace of mind, you know. But I can't, because I've still got this high student loan I have to pay off. I can't leave, so I'm stuck."

Dimples communicates a complicated tension that makes her feel stuck primarily because she cannot make any more money in the district no matter where she goes. Despite a strong yearning to leave, she stays because she sees no readily available solutions to student loan debt and salary ceilings.

Summary

In sum, the career journeys and decisions by Black female teachers in this study are heavily impacted by their gender related realities. In many cases the negotiation between motherhood, nuptials and the financial responsibilities associated has made decisions to leave or stay in a school complicating. They describe a tethering of responsibilities that forces them to negotiate their classroom and familial commitments. Their responses suggest that motherhood and partnership must be more intensively considered in the turnover discussion. As Senaya stated "you live this life."

This section is important and it presents a different narrative that is likely more unique for Black women than for Black men. While a teacher, I never once considered the impact of partnership and family in my career decisions. I always felt that changing careers and going back to school were options. Hence, leaving the classroom was not as complicated for me as it was for the Black female teachers in this study. Their negotiations related to the needs of their families increased the magnitude of their career decisions. We find the intersectional needs of Black women associated with mothering, motherhood and partnership that make their career decisions much more complicated, than my own. Whereas I had the freedom to consider pursuing a masters and doctoral degree, the additional responsibilities of Black female teachers in this study, significantly impacted their career moves despite aspirations.

I see the experiences in this section connecting back to the Black feminist concept of Black women's intersectional needs. In other words, Black female teachers in this section explain their unique social needs related to motherhood and partnership. The participants in this study explain teaching as a lifestyle, and therefore deeply engrained in their social and work lives. Evident throughout this section are discussions of how the social needs and work related needs always swing in the balance for Black female teachers. For example there are multiple instances where participants explain that their staying in a particular school is related to the prestige of the school and its suitability for their home life. The school community must be close to home, a safe place for participant's children, and provide the necessary conditions to sustain their unique needs of being a mother, partner, and teacher. However in some cases like Dimples and Edwidge's, narratives we find that their stay behavior is only connected to familial and financial stability. This is increasingly problematic as it suggests that these teachers have no interest in being in their current classrooms, and were it not for the financial stability of the job, they would not be there. BFT, helps us to see that the needs of Black women are different and their stay behavior in specific schools and classrooms may be fueled by a separate set of needs that are outside of the scope of leaders and organizations. In this instance those needs are related to motherhood, partnership and familial stability.

Section Three: Impact of Intersectional Identity

This section highlights the experiences of Black female teachers from an intersectional perspective. Here participants identify how they navigate their career decisions as it relates to being Black and woman in the classroom. Further, they describe how class and culture complicate their career decisions. In what follows, Black female teachers identify that their

intersectional identities both draw them to the field and forces them to navigate specific obstacles within it.

Navigating Triple Jeopardy (Racism, Classism, and Sexism)

This section explores the unique and intersectional experiences of participants as they navigate the triple jeopardies of society, which is a concept of BFT. Specifically, they highlight how their identities, experiences in the classroom and overall career decisions are deeply connected to the complex intersection of racism, classism, and sexism.

Octavia most directly speaks to her experiences having to challenge and maneuver these forms of oppression. It is important to know that Octavia describes her school as a "plantation" of sorts where she and one other Black female teacher are trying to persist. She describes "I am black, female, bracing to throw my leg over the wall of middle class. Yes I have tried to meet that expectation, yes it's always bothered me, having to go above and beyond, especially since my circumstances are very different than the people in this building." Octavia most directly highlights the trials of racism, classism and sexism to explicate how she is different from the other teachers in the school.

She extends:

> I don't really like calling it (my journey) an obstacle because it's not going anywhere. If I am teacher of the year they're going to be like, "That's amazing." Because in their heart, I understand that in your heart you truly believe that I am not equal to you. You congratulate me for rising to the occasion for this one moment, I understand that. I would say that for a lot of those people, my existence here is, in a lot of ways, an anomaly. I didn't want people to know that I lived in Section 8 housing. I didn't want people to know that I had food stamps or WIC or that was on the bus. When I first got this job, I had just

had a car for a year because I had to scrape together the, it's all the things I don't like talking about, because I don't like feeding into white peoples' assumptions that all black people are derelict and they're just two bounce steps away from being on a Sally Strothers commercial. I'm not.

Octavia eloquently illustrates what she perceives as deeply raced, gendered, and classist perspectives of her being, from the perspectives of her white colleagues. She explains that the distance between her background experiences and those of her white colleagues forces her to navigate stereotypes in her school. On a fundamental level, Octavia feels like the other in the school and that has shaped her thoughts about her position.

Jackie describes a markedly different perspective on how her intersectional identity influences her. She states:

> I think for me like I definitely think coming from a household where we grew up on welfare, my mom does not have a high school degree, so we were I wouldn't say we were in poverty, but I didn't have the stuff that other people had. So I think my mindset was just totally different. I never wanted to be somebody on welfare, I never wanted to depend on anybody but I think I just went into teaching with a different mindset that You don't have to ... your lifestyle doesn't make you. So again, it was like I was the first person to actually leave and go so I think that played a part in it and I think my relationship with my mom.

What Jackie is describing is her initial draw and commitment to teaching is ultimately inspired by her background experiences navigating issues of racism and classism. For her growing up Black, poor and undereducated is what drives her commitment to education,

specifically classroom teaching. Similar to Octavia, it seems to be the navigation of the stereotypes associated with these structures of oppression that reigns important. She later explains how she is viewed by colleagues in her current school that is related to the background experiences she highlights. Jackie states, "I don't care how many degrees I get I'm always going to be that black teacher that she teaches, but we prefer to have a teacher that (is white)." Jackie realizes that on her campus Black female teachers like herself are not as valued as the white teachers on campus. Further she explores how her education will never increase her value enough to be seen as equal to her white colleagues.

Myrlie, who is the only Black teacher in her district describes the influence of her background on her career experiences.

She begins:

> Yeah. I've wanted to be a teacher for a very long time. I grew up in (the city). Poor family on the north side of (the city), living in the hood." Further, she states "the only conclusion I could draw at that time, was that their (kids at other schools) parents had an education and mine didn't. I didn't even know if my mom ... I know she definitely didn't graduate high school. Then my dad wasn't in the picture." In this section, Myrlie describes the way she got into teaching and how this journey was shaped by early experiences with race and class inequities.

After an experience in a school swap program she participated in, in high school she decided that education or teaching was the appropriate career path. She posits "(the only way I) was going to change the course of my life and not live in the north side of (the city) for the rest of my life was through getting an education. And slowly but surely over the next year or two,

138

decided, and I got to preach this message to everybody. This is what changes things. Do you want this kind of life or do you want this kind of life? Education, no education. So that's when I decided I wanted to be a teacher." Her background navigating deeply raced and classed issues influences her subsequent career choices and commitments to liberate children like her.

Next Myrlie complicates and connects how her background is related to her seventeen years in her school.

She states:

> If I was black woman from (this mostly white suburb), I think that that would come across a little bit different. So there's class in there, also. I think that they're always questioning because ... The best way I can put this is because of how I present as an African American woman, who has had leadership roles in a number of ways at the school. I've been the department chair. I've been on our school improvement committee. I've had some say in a couple things. I think because of how I present, my motives are always questioned. For some reason, if I were a white woman or switch gender, a white man, I don't know that people would question my motives as much as they do because of the skin I'm in.

> Myrlie, like Jackie and Octavia, highlights how pervasive issues of racism, classism and even sexism has permeated her work environment. She illustrates how the perceptions of her, from predominately white school community has elicited both surveillance and skepticism of her professional acumen.

Harriet speaks to this issue differently, she defines her intersectional identity as a form of job security. Harriet portrays an experience leaving her first job.

139

But I do know being black in this field, I would say that in the schools I have taught at, it was like they always needed that black person. It almost felt like they were meeting some type of quota, because when I left (my first school), I noticed I had a friend who left my old school the year I did and she was a black female. They replaced her with a black female. When I left my old school, they replaced me with a black female. Honestly, and I may just be crazy, but they also replaced with someone who looks like me. Harriet explicates.

She details "when I left, they replaced me with a tall, dark-skinned girl with a short haircut. I tell you no lie. I'm looking at the picture like, "Is that me?"

Although she left that school she explains just how pervasive these issues are. She explains, "then when I got to my current school, it was almost the same thing. I felt the exact same way and they do the same thing there, too. When a black person leaves, they hire another black person. It's just something that I've noticed year after year. That's one thing I can think about it."

Harriet is identifying how her intersectional identity, even extending to her phenotypic characteristics, has uniquely shaped her career. She identifies a relationship between school's need for Black teachers and her own job security.

This section explores the intersectional realities of the participants and how they have affected their career journeys. In many ways their identities are spotlighted and become salient when describing their teaching experiences. Whether through recruitment strategies, or the perspectives and in some cases devaluing by white colleagues; Black female teachers explain that their intersectional identity is a clear factor in their career experiences. In the following

section, they explain how their intersectional identities are used to engage Black students in the classroom.

These experiences connect back to the BFT concept of triple oppression, which suggests that Black women must navigate racism, sexism and classism. The participants in this section explore how they arrived at teaching and how they have experienced first hand, the triple oppression of society and the profession. What's clear is that some of the Black female teachers in this study have unique background experiences that have impacted their social lives and subsequently their teaching experiences. Their narratives extend beyond simply being a Black teacher in predominately white field, to include their experiences navigating sexism and classism. Myrlie and Octavia most clearly represent this idea of triple oppression. They both describe growing up in economically dispossessed communities, as a Black girl and how that experience has shaped their reception by white colleagues in their schools. They explain that they must shield and persevere through the racist, classist and sexist projected by their colleagues who do not see them as a part of the school community.

Teaching for Race, Gender and Cultural Uplift: Black Women's Pedagogy

The Black female teachers in this study explain that their pedagogies are often inextricably tied to their intersectional identities. These identities are both a draw and a commitment to diverse classrooms. In this specific case, it means staying committed to young Black girls in their various classroom settings.

Dorothy describes her unique role and the work the commitment she has for representing Black women's success. She posits:

So my role, I think, is super important as a woman of color to be that representation of a successful black woman who is able to have her things together and be able to teach and represent women of color.

She expounds on her role stating:

and I'm here to show the kids, "You are okay. You're beautiful. Your skin's beautiful. Your hair's beautiful. I'm a black woman. I'm a person of color, and I'm still successful. I'm still proud of who I am, and you can be as well." So I think that has been my role here." Dorothy speaks vehemently about her multifaceted role and commitment to women of color in the classroom. Here she describes a responsibility to Black girls who often face intersectional oppression in schools.

Dorothy's pedagogy is influenced by her commitment to uplifting students. Hence, she teaches with care and compassion in hopes of instilling racial pride.

Sojourner also remarks about her multiple classroom roles from the perspective of being a Black female. She describes:

I'm a teacher. I'm a counselor. I am a mediator. I'm a mama to some kids. Because, I mean, some of these kids need a friend. They see me as a friend. And some kids say once they've been through my classroom and they come back and they see me, it's more than just teacher-student. They have somebody they can come and talk to, and they need you.

Specifically her identifying as a "mama" shows the influence of her intersectional identity. She serves multiple roles and develops strong relationships with students that are connected to her intersectional identity.

Summary

Together, the Black female teachers in this study highlight how their experiences with racism, classism and sexism have permeated their careers and career decisions. Ultimately, they remark that their commitments to the field and to classrooms are related to their background experiences from as early as childhood. Further, they recognize that working in a predominately white field and school makes these experiences more visible. Therefore, they see an explicit need to address intersectional oppression through their pedagogies.

Black female teachers intersectional uplift through pedagogy, connects directly to the BFT concept of fighting on multiple fronts. Different from Black male teachers, I ind that Black female teachers are committed to a unique form social justice pedagogy, that connects to their intersectional backgrounds. Whereas Black male teachers are often lauded as role models for Black male students, this work exposes how Black female teachers can do the same for their Black female students. BFT gives us a language to discuss Black women's liberatory pedagogies that uplift Black students, but also more specifically Black female students. Again we see a consistent thread of mothering, across participants pedagogies. For Dorothy she employs intersectional uplift techniques for her students to navigate race, class and gender related oppression as she attempts to instill pride on all three fronts.

Section Four: Impact of Culture

This section explores the unique ways that cultural practices, specifically family upbringing, religion, social norms, community practices, brought Black female teachers in this study, to teaching. Most teachers describe that their cultural practices and familial backgrounds also fuel their commitments to their classrooms.

Family Influence and Support

Most participants in this study identify and describe that the value of education was instilled in them at an early age by a family member who was an educator.

Senaya attributes much of her drive in the profession to her mother. She explains "there was several different things, my mom, I said she was an educator, she was an instructional aid. She had two years of college but she never went back and she did try to go back and she said, "Oh, this is not for me." She always worked with kids." Senaya identifies that teaching has always been an important part of her and her mothers' relationship. Although her mother never became a full-time teacher, Senaya has enjoyed twenty-two years in the field.

Harriet shares similar sentiments as she identifies how she was also "mothered" into the profession. She states "well, I first had the interest. I actually got the interest from my mom because she had always wanted to be a teacher. Then as an elementary student, she put that in my head, like when I thought she wanted to do it, I wanted to do it as well." In both cases, mothers' influence helped shape their career paths in education.

Shirley describes how her family both influenced and scaffolded her in her career. "I would say ... I want to say this. I think part of it is, I was a bit privileged because I had so many family members that were in it. So, they kind of helped me along a lot" she discloses. Shirley originally went into the business field to avoid education. However, the support and influence of family brought her back to her roots in the classroom. In this particular case we find that sometimes the presence of Black educators in the family could deter one from entering the profession. Shirley exposes the internal conflict she dealt with as she wanted to do something different, but soon realized that education was the field for her. Aritha and Antonia also describe

being influenced to teach by their parents. In Aritha's case, she had the support of her father who was simultaneously in the classroom while she was. She says "my dad was a teacher. He just retired." Whereas, Antonio explains that her stepmother helped to guide her career path into teaching. She explains that she was steered into taking specific kinds of jobs, like A rated or affluent schools, over other jobs in disadvantaged areas. According to her stepmother, it was better for her to start her career in a school that was better resourced. In these particular cases parents have directly shaped and guided career decisions. Aritha and Antonia's parents' experiences in the classroom were used as tools to help their children make decisions about their careers.

Taken together, participants careers have been significantly affected and shaped by the past experiences of their family members. What's clear is that teaching for the participants in this study is often a family profession. Hence, they are brought to teaching at an early age because of their exposure to the profession. Their draw to teaching is therefore an outcome of a deeply ingrained family ethos.

BFT, helps us to understand why Black female teachers speak to being mothered into the profession. First, we must understand that Black women have historically and contemporarily had a stronger presence in the field than Black men. The Black feminist concept of living through intersectional realities, suggests that participants in this study were influenced to teach because of their own or their parents lived experiences with racism and sexism. Further, their professional identities were shaped by their mothers and their other lived experiences which fuel them to denounce racism and sexism for their students. Teaching is a family profession. The above narratives are consistent with BFT and the long history of Black female teachers challenging racism and sexism in this country.

Faith, Religiosity and Teaching as Cultural Work

Other participants identify that they are influenced and lean heavily upon their faith in the field. This connects teachers' community cultural practices from childhood to their career trajectories. Throughout this section participants describe that faith and religion are often tools that help them to navigate the profession.

Specifically, for Senaya, she describes also being drawn to teaching because of her early success in Sunday School classrooms.

She illustrates:

> I know when I worked with kids at church and at Sunday School, when they understood or they got it and that light bulb went off, I had this intensive feeling of success, awesome, I felt very good about myself. When I thought about that, when I was working with kids during the summer, I said, "Hey, why not be a teacher." Because that was really fun, I really enjoyed that. Working with kids one on one and helping them to be successful. It was after my freshman year in college when I decided teaching was for me.

Senaya explains that her experiences teaching Sunday School were pivotal to her choice to become a teacher. She is inspired to enter the career because of her success with students at her church. Here we see an example of how early experiences with teaching can influence one to enter the profession later in life.

For Jackie, Maya and Dorothy, faith is described as a tool for navigating the profession and the experiences in their schools. Jackie states "my Christianity helps keep me from that (issues among teachers). I think I seem to be more grounded as a Christian. It helps me matriculate through my teaching." Many teachers, like Jackie describe having to navigate toxic or negative climates at their schools. When asked specifically how her faith guides her career

decisions, Jackie posits "its a growth thing for me in my Christianity where I feel like wherever I am, it has to be that decision because God says to do it. So yes, the money can do very well, but I feel like I probably will, that's something I would pray about before I made a decision like that so, I'm saying no, but .." Here we see that Jackie leans more on her religious practices to guide her decisions to stay or leave her current school. Faced with some adversities in the school participants explain that they must use alternative tools to persist in the school.

Dorothy validates these sentiments stating, "and then you have an environment where the staff doesn't have a high morale. So you have people complaining a lot, which is when I had to separate myself and put my bible in my classroom and read my bible every lunch period." Dorothy's dissatisfaction with her negative climate influences her to find a space to engage in religious reflection as a form of peace. For Maya, prayer is the primary tool for navigating negative situations. She describes one specific situation with a hostile colleague "So I had to brace myself and pray and I think once I prayed I knew the rest was a cakewalk because I know my personality, I know my upbringing, I know what I am and am not supposed to say, but I'm going to be me." Here Maya describes how her religious beliefs were a part of her upbringing and continue to help her in her adult life.

Through prayer and reading the bible participants describe needing religious reprieve while navigating the field and their schools. Together they explore the unique ways that they have persevered in the profession as they lean on their faith to guide career decisions. Whats important to understand is that the school can often present significant challenges. Hence, career decisions and participants ability to traverse are related to the ways that they engage with their religious faith.

In order to persevere through the profession, we find that Black female teachers employ alternative methods connected to religion. Through prayer and faith they find ways to navigate oppressive school environments. This again connects back to the navigation of triple oppression, as we find the participants are using the tools of their faith to rationalize their experiences and subsequently guide them to a place of peace or solace.

Community Work

Some participants see teaching as a form of community connectedness. They describe the unique ways that the profession goes beyond the classroom. They explore the ways that they connect the community with the classroom.

Myrlie and Ruby speak to the effects of culture differently and describe education as a responsibility to the community.

Myrlie clarifies "but I see it as a responsibility to my community and my people, because until we are considered equal, until we are ... Until we feel liberated, until we feel like we can move through spaces and not be inhibited like other people are able to move through spaces." In this loaded thought she conveys a sense of community responsibility that is deeply connected to her staying the field and specifically at her school. Myrlie is ardently committed to racial and community uplift that will elevate Black students to a level of equality. Ruby supports and expounds upon this commitment:

> I love these kids. I do. And I love the parents. And I love the community. And this is the type of school, it is more fun, but I'm going to say something about the majority of time I've been here. This has been like a beacon in the community. I mean, it was more. It's a school, there was, you know, sports going on in the afternoon. We would have things through PTO that would be kind of a socialization. We have a fall festival, we have a

father and daughter dance sort of thing, we have a mother/son ... There was always ... It was more than just school.

For Ruby, the communal connectedness of the school is important to her commitment to the school. However, as the school community ethos has shifted she is growing increasingly dissatisfied and considers more seriously her departure. She illustrates:

But in my teaching, colleagues have changed. It's like they don't want to be bother(ed) any more. I love that kind of stuff, and they're like, "Ugh. You just see that (culture day)." I say, "Yes, I'm gonna keep fighting for it as long as I can." Because I'm going to do one next year. I was new this year. I'm doing one next year for the crew. Anything that can bring community, you know, a sense of community for the kids. Something they can be proud of. Your mother makes black-eyed peas, bring them in, brother, we're going to eat them. So, I miss that. I do miss that a lot.

Ruby grows significantly unhappy with the waning of community in the school and describes a significant strain on her career since this shift. It is clear how deeply connected and committed she is to the community, unfortunately that runs counter to the current commitments of the school.

Summary

In sum, teachers identify how culture has both influenced their draw and sustained commitments to their schools. Further this section shows how they have maintained themselves by leaning on their faith, religion and other cultural practices that have been instilled in them. The family and the church reign as consistent influences on Black female teacher's career decisions.

Together participants explore the identities of Black female teachers and how their identities have brought them to the classroom as well as complicated their journeys. They describe that their initial draw to the profession is their commitment to Black students, communities and racial uplift. However, their journeys are complicated when they have to negotiate these commitments and their familial responsibilities. Further, they describe that their unique identities are salient in their experiences in their schools and in some cases causes feelings of devaluation. To persevere they lean on their faith, spirituality and religiosity. The impact of their identities continues to affect their experiences with school leaders and organizations in the sections to follow.

Theme Two: The Impact of School Leadership

To this point we have discussed the most salient identity related impacts on Black female teacher career decisions. Next, the participants describe how their identities influence their relationships with school leaders. The theme highlights the experiences that Black female teachers in this have had within their schools as it pertains to leadership influence. They describe the interactions and relationships they have with school leaders, specifically how those experiences have influenced their willingness to stay or leave the school. In what follows is a discussion of the relevant leadership factors that have helped to retain Black female teachers and conversely pushed Black female teachers to leave or consider leaving their schools. Participants who exhibit staying behavior, describe the strong administrative support for social justice, leadership relationships. However, other teachers who have considered leaving their school describe a lack of support for racialized issues, a negligence by school leaders for disciplinary problems as well as political relationships. What follows is a discussion about specifically how school leadership plays an important role in Black female teacher career decisions.

School Leadership, Administrative Support and Black Female Teacher Turnover

Leadership Relationships

  This section starts with an explicit focus on the ways that Black female teachers describe their relationships with school leadership. Two cases, Edwidge and Aritha, present how their relationship or lack of relationship with school leaders has contributed to their turnover decisions.

"I don't want to work with that woman": Leadership Relationships

  Edwidge illustrates specifically why she plans to leave at the end of the school year. She begins stating that, "at this school, I know I don't want to work with that woman. Smile in your face, stab you in the back." Edwidge has noticed and been a part of multiple situations with her principal that were filled with conflict.

She gives a short overview explaining:

> I think she has a select group of teachers who walk on water. Like I said, she brought a
>
> lot of people with her when she came. Or as people left, she replaced them with people
>
> that she knew. You definitely know who her favorites are. I don't think I'm the lowest on
>
> the rung. I think I have a hot and cold relationship with her, she has a hot and cold
>
> relationship with me. There have been some things, like little stuff, where I ask her and
>
> it's not a problem. I asked about field trips, not a problem. But something like this. You
>
> know when you have bad moment, somebody just talks to you the wrong, I think she has,
>
> with me, I think she has a lot of moments like that. She's having a bad day so she'll just
>
> take it out.

Here, Edwidge describes a rocky relationship with her school administrator that has made her feel like she no longer needs to work at the school. Her distrust comes from both personal experiences as well as observations of other conflicts.

Aritha also speaks to the different ways that school leadership relations can influence teachers careers.

She states:

> I'm not saying don't hold people accountable. I'm saying that as an administrator, do you care about your teachers? If they are simply a means to an end to you, you are going to get some jading. You are going to have people saying, "I am trying, but at the end of the day, you don't really care about me. So you know what? I'm going to just do the bare minimum. I'm going to keep my head low.

What Aritha is explaining is the demoralization that she and others experienced in the school when it appeared that the school leadership did not care about their hard work. She regularly uses the term "jading" to describe how she felt about how she was treated and subsequently why she left the school after six years. The importance of school leaders relationships and dispositions towards Black female teachers surfaces in these comments. We find that Aritha and Edwidge are dissatisfied with the lack of attention and care of their school leader.

"It depends on who you are": School Leaders Playing Politics

Connected to school leader relationships, Black female teachers in this study identify that many of their school leaders exercised politicized actions that marginalized them and their students.

Aritha speaks to this issue of micro politics from an urbanized school perspective. She explains:

There can be jealousy. We can have a puppet leader or leaders, if someone else is actually running the show." She further details, "I felt that there were some really decent people in there, some people I really respected. I also felt that there were people who were very manipulative, incredibly manipulative, and there were people who played along with the manipulation. I also believe that at a few points, administration gave up their power to certain folks and let them sort of run the show.

She paints a picture of school leaders who relinquished their power to other faculty on the campus. This caused conflict and "jealousy" as she describes factions and manipulation which contributed to school culture issues, to be discussed in further detail.

Whereas Aritha speaks to the effects of leadership politics on the school Myrlie shares a more personal effect. She posits, "So yeah, I still feel like, and the reason I say not trusted, is because I still feel like I have to cover my butt. I feel like I have to cross my t's and dot my i's because if a parent comes with a lawyer and says the right or wrong thing, then I could be in trouble. So yeah, I don't feel like they have my back fully." Myrlie, whose experience is in an extremely white suburban school, feels that at any moment she could be "in trouble." The threat of white, suburban backlash is present in her mind as leadership has yet to prove that they will support her if conflict arises.

Harriet and Michelle echo similar sentiments.

Harriet describes her experiences with school leader politics in two different schools. She says:

... Well, both schools I can say they want to please the parents, so it depends on parents that might have some type of position within the city. Those students may get treated

153

better or the principal would make sure that if you have a problem with those students, make sure they get on it right away.

Harriet reverberates the threat of power and status that often sways the school leaders to show partiality to certain families.

Michelle extends this point and identifies the depth of the issue for her. In response to a question about support she begins, " it's really case-by-case. It's case-by-case, it depends on who you are, it depends on who your family is, and if your family has some kind of (status) then you're pretty much already up on it. You're priority. If it's discipline, depending on who you are, it's how severe your discipline will be." She extends, "my principal, she's involved but I do see it being involved with or taking a liking to a certain kind of kid when it's just interacting." "Gravitates to ... If they're ... I don't know how to say it without saying ... Like, if they're not this ... It's the ... Honestly, it's the little snobby ... The kids who basically their parents have some kind of status in the (city) so ... That's what I see her gravitate to." Similar to Myrlie and Harriet, Michelle describes a situation where her administrator plays the politics and tilts her hand in favor of white and powerful families in the school.

Summary

This section explores the relationships that Black female teachers have with their school leaders. These cases illustrate how political and personal relationships can complicate relationships and contribute to turnover for the participants. Black female teachers in this study seem to thrive and yearn for a strong relationship with their administration. They do not explicitly reveal the details of their desired relationship. However, they do describe the negative aspects of poor leader and teacher relationships. This suggests that an ethic of care and visible support from school leaders is preferred by Black female teachers in this study. It appears that

154

school leaders aligned themselves with white and powerful families and the interests of micropolitical factions within the school, rather than the needs of Black female teachers in this study. This caused them to question their care and subsequently their supportive practices. Further, these tensions contribute to subsequent urges to move or leave.

Administrative Support, or Lack There Of

What follows is a portrayal of participants' experiences with administrative supportive or unsupportive practices. They identify the specific routines, accommodations and other practices that contributed to their decisions to stay or leave the school.

Supporting Social Justice Agenda and Community Work

In two cases Antonia and Ruby describe that part of the reason they stayed so long in their schools is because of the support that school administrators gave to their social justice agendas. Antonia explains:

> But, being sensitive to those types of things. The importance of Black History. Black History month was not celebrated there until I got there. Things like that, being sensitive to the needs of everybody not just what looks like ...

Antonia described that her predominately white school had not previously participated in Black history month activities. However, her commitment to highlighting the work of African-Americans in her pedagogy, was an asset to her administration. Therefore, she explains that she received discretionary funding and other support to pursue these social justice efforts. Here, we find that administration both recognizes and respects the perspective of their Black female teachers. In this specific case, the commitments to racial uplift and social justice are rewarded and supported by an administration that sees an important opportunity to increase curricular inclusion.

155

Ruby shares a similar experience with her administrator. She describes "because he, at that time at the beginning of the school, said, "I'm going to give you ten hours of comp time right now, because I already know how much time you put in." Ruby, who remains committed to the community and cultural work of teaching beyond the classroom, was recognized by her school leader as an important part of the faculty. Further her efforts to pursue a social justice agenda was prioritized and legitimized by the school leadership. They both describe these interactions as key to their retention.

In these two examples, we find that white administrators respected the perspectives and approaches of Black female teachers in their schools. What we find is that the recognition of their expertise in social justice education, proved to be the primary influence to their retention in their schools. These experiences suggest that in some cases school leaders who are at least aware of the Black female teachers' contributions can in turn employ specific support practices that increase their retention.

Supporting Personal Advancement

In one particular case, Antonia describes that it wasn't just the support for her social justice agenda that kept her in her school for fourteen years. Antonia felt that she was valued as an asset to the school in multiple ways that reflected her school leadership's support practices. She indicates different levels of support for her professional advancement.

First, she describes "When I wanted to pursue a master's degree, they were supportive." She expounds, "I did national board certification about my fourth year of being a teacher. That's a year long tedious process and they, again, were very supportive of the time you have to take off." Finally she says, "they provided opportunities for me to do it (leadership) in their role so that I could have something. Supportive about me doing outside things. A plus and that.

Supportive of providing opportunities for me to be a leader in the school, absolutely. Anything I was willing to do ... Head up they allowed me to do that." She illustrates that the support of her personal and professional development was key in her decision to stay in the school.

This specific example shows that administrative support goes beyond curricular changes or social justice agendas and extends into the Black female teachers' personal lives. Antonia's aspirations to do more in than just be a teacher was both recognized and supported by her school leadership. Hence, they invested in her mobility in the profession, which led to leadership and other enrichment opportunities. In this case, we find a school leader that has a vested interest in Antonia's career and is willing to advocate for her ascension and success. This type of support yielded great results in terms of her retention.

"But you're not fighting for it": Inefficacious Social Justice Advocacy

Conversely, many participants describe being under supported in their pursuits of social justice advocacy. In the following case the Michelle describes school leadership that would not fight or advocate for the needs of minoritized students and teachers.

Michelle begins stating, "and honestly, in my opinion with my principal being an African American woman she does not support our (Black students) ... And I'm not saying give us a handout, but at some point you know we're not being represented in the right way. But you're not fighting for it. So I think that bothers me more so than, now if I had a white principal, I could see, I could accept it more." Michelle describes that her administrator, despite identifying as a Black woman, does not take measures to ensure adequate representation in school programming demographics or support for minoritized students. She chronicles two different experiences where she felt under supported in her pursuit of social justice.

She explains:

My biggest one, it probably had to be this year. With me trying to get support for a

particular student and it kind of being ignored from my administration side I think.

So I took it took my principal the first week ... And the response was, and I quote, the

response was "Oh I guess this will be her first rodeo". And from that point on I knew that

that was not, like, I had to do what I had to do because the person that I have to go to (my

principal). So that's been my whole obstacle then, fast forward 130 days later ... I kept on

pushing, pushing her to get tested. They (administration) come and tell me, "Oh, she's not

eligible for any kind of IEP, she's just low". Yeah, so that right there at the end of the day

(I decided) when I was going.

Michelle's commitment to her Black students surfaces in her comments above. However,

her efforts to get a student additional support is unparalleled by her school and school leadership.

The school administrator is unwilling to provide the support she requests, therefore she feels that

her school is no longer conducive to her needs as a teacher. This wasn't the only event that made

her feel that way.

Michelle continues to portray a separate issue:

And then there was another ... Even in the gifted program there are none (black students).

If there are, there's one little girl and I think she's kinda like bi-racial. And I just actually

referred a little girl to get tested and I told the mom, please do not, you know, get your

hopes up about, you know, your child being gifted because they're underrepresented here

and I don't know any black child. I think that goes back, and I'm not even saying that it's

the, you know, whoever testing them, their fault. I mean, it's teachers, they're not

referring those kids to get tested so ... I mean you can't tell me there's none (gifted black

students) out there but, whatever I guess.

In two separate occasions Michelle describes that she could not get support from

administration to help her minoritized students in her classroom. This caused conflict in her

relationship with the school leader and she began to view her position in the school differently.

She resolves, "... It's not equal, it's not equal and I have an issue with that, and I feel like if I'm

not a part of the solution I'm a part of the problem. So, I think that was my biggest and when that

happened with the little girl, that was just like ... You gotta go."

Michelle recognizes the representational and other equity related issues on her campus.

She attempts to rectify and raise awareness to these issues with school leadership. However, the

school leader seems both disinterested and unwilling to address Michelle's concerns. The neglect

and disregard of her social justice advocacy eventually lead to her departure from the school.

This is a classic case of what can happen when school leader's support practices and the unique

needs of Black female teachers are at odds. This is not to say that Michelle's school leader is not

quality or does not support her. However, what's clear is that social justice advocacy for Black

students is Michelle's primary concern, and her school leader does not support that particular

endeavor.

Summary

Antonia and Ruby, and their combined forty plus years in the classroom are a clear

signifier of the effect that social justice leadership can have on Black female teacher retention.

However, when these needs are not met, as in Michelle's case, conflict arises and things can get

bad quickly. In this case Michelle concludes that she needs to find another school to work at, one

that is more conducive to her social justice pursuits. Together, administrative support for social

justice endeavors proves to be a salient and important factor when it comes to Black female teacher retention. In these cases we find that if administrators are aware of the unique equity related commitments of their Black female teachers, they can provide the necessary support that will help retain them in the school. Further, these supportive efforts reveal that school leaders have an awareness and commitment to improving their schools through social justice endeavors. However, the commitment to social justice is not clear in Michelle's leadership. Hence, we find a mismatch between a teacher's endeavors and commitments of the administration, that leads to turnover. Administrative support for social justice is key and essential to retaining Black female teachers in this study, and therefore must be held as a priority if schools wish to retain them.

This section and the experiences embedded within, relate to two separate ideas of BFT and CRF worth further discussion. First BFT, suggests that Black women have unique political, social and intellectual needs. What Black female teachers describe in this study are the details of their needs from administration. Specifically, in terms of strong relationships, visibility, support for social justice and personal advancement. When these needs are not met we find that Black female teachers are less satisfied and increasingly more likely to consider leaving, as in Michelle's case. It seems that Black female teacher's and their leaders' political agendas must be aligned if they are to remain in that school. Their discussions show that when school leaders want to pursue social justice education, they have better relationships and are more likely to stay. However, when school leaders reinforce the white, normative values of the community, we find that this marginalizes Black female teachers and decreases their satisfaction with the school. This marginalization is structural as it connects to CRF. The traditional leadership practices, evident in Michelle's description, and the reinforcement of the values of the surrounding community posed significant issues for some of the participants in this study. Hence, Black female teacher's

160

career decisions can be impacted by a misalignment of political and intellectual agendas, intensified by school leaders' upholding of white supremacy in the school.

"My team needs more training": Inadequate Instructional Leadership

Beyond social justice concerns, some participants describe that it was the lack of instructional leadership that makes it tough to navigate the curriculum and stay at their school. Dimples illustrates this tension, stating:

I don't think we see any good support here. If I want good professional development support, I go outside to (the local) ISD. They offer great PDs. The PDs that they always have are those two downtown, or in school, and I think they're a complete waste of time. I do, I don't think it helps in any way. It doesn't apply to what we have to do, or it's stuff that you already know. I think (the local) ISD does a great job. We have to go online and pay for them, but I think it pays to find out whatever initiatives they always buy into, they don't see, they've only been independent one year, and then they start into something else.

Dimples is identifying a breakdown in instructional leadership that pushes her to seek professional development opportunities elsewhere. The professional development and lack of instructional leadership at her school forces her to sacrifice her time and money to seek outside support. What she describes is school leadership who is either inept or lack the resources to provide the instructional support she feels that she needs.

Edwidge, who is team lead at her school echoes and expands this notion. She states:

My team needs more training. We've not been to any trainings outside of this textbook for years." I was told in the meetings was, she (the principal) only does meetings with teachers if both APs are there, so if you go to meet with them, it's all three of them, and so I sat in front of all three of them, said, "We need training. Here's what we need training

161

on." I was told we would get it. still not possible. Can I come and talk to you in the morning?" And I did. I went and talked to her one on one, let her know, we really need to be trained. I don't feel like I'm doing as well as I can be doing. I was told I would get training. I didn't get any training. need training. We need help." Didn't get anything.

Differently, Edwidge is describing a lack of instructional support for her as well as her team. As a department head, it is her responsibility to request additional support from administration on behalf of her colleagues. However, she explains that the administration never fulfills their promise to provide the support she requested. This led to further issues with teacher evaluations down the road.

She later explains a conflict with a classroom observation:

> When my evaluation came around, I got a developing because I needed to work more with my PLC to get what I needed. But I told you what I need, you told me you would get it for me and my team, the thing you penalized me for asking for help.

The very support area that Edwidge requests for herself and her team, is the area in which she was downgraded in her evaluation. She is describing an administration that has disregarded her request for instructional support and instead penalizing her for not being developed in the evaluated areas.

Edwidge further reconciles her experience with her impending departure:

> Again, I will never ask her for help on that level again. If I can't be vulnerable, and it is vulnerable for me, if I tell you that I need help, it's because I really need help. I don't ask for help unless I'm desperate, so if I come to you three times and ask you for help and you penalize me for doing it? I'm done. That trust isn't there anymore. With her, that trust

is not there anymore. Teachers leaving because nobody wants to work with her. If she stays, I can't.

Edwidge, who is making plans to leave the school, identifies a lack of instructional support from her school leader. This lack of support, even after meetings, lead to an unsatisfactory evaluation score that caused conflict for her. Together Dimples and Edwidge describe that their instructional needs contribute to their dissatisfaction and willingness to leave. They however, experience poor instructional leadership differently. In Dimples case she explains that professional development is insufficient to her curricular needs so she has had to sacrifice her time to pursue support in other districts. In Edwidge's case, the issue arises when she asks for help, was told she would get support for her team and never got what she needed. That lead to a poor evaluation score that she felt was inconsiderate. These actions contribute further to her dissatisfaction with the school leader and her position. Together, poor instructional leadership whether through personal professional development or support for a faculty team, proves paramount in these participants willingness to leave their school. This suggests that Black female teachers, require and expect to be supported not only in their social justice pursuits but they also need instructional support. This shows that school leaders must attend to the instructional needs of Black female teachers.

Support for School Discipline

The majority of the participants in this study mention a lack of support for discipline as a key factor in their turnover decisions. Some of their stories are highlighted and detailed below.

Dorothy begins with her description of discipline support in her urbanized school environment. She begins:

163

but I have noticed just a lack of support that is there for teachers. So when I say "lack of support," it's more so in the disciplinary range. So being able to know that there is consequences for students who choose not be a part of the learning environment, who choose to be disruptive, who choose to be disengaged and get other students distracted.

She identifies a lack of identifiable structures, policies and practices teachers can use to manage discipline. Dorothy describes that teachers are feeling less supported because the school lacks a strong discipline policy or structure to support their teachers.

She further explains:

So there's plenty of times where we need to have a student removed, but there isn't the support to do that, or there's not a plan in place, or there is not true consequences that can be done. So there isn't any in-school suspension. There is not after school detention. There is lunch detention, but that truly is within the same space as all the other students, so therefore shows to be ineffective. So we, as teachers, we wish we could have one true consequence that would matter to the students, and right now that doesn't exist.

Here, Dorothy critiques the current systems and structures that are in place at the school. She calls them ineffective because they do not correct behavior or there just isn't a tight protocol for behavioral issues.

Also, Dorothy cites the ineffective leadership actions when it comes to discipline.

She says:

So we feel like the leadership itself is very just apathetic to what's going on, and they say they support us. They'll verbally say, "We're here for you. We're here for you." But when

it comes time for something like, "I need you this. It's about to pop off, where are you?" And don't just take my kid and give them some cookies and send them back. That's kind of how the leadership has been for us, and it's just really lack of support in disciplining and creating consequences for students.

Dorothy also laments that leadership although "apathetic" only pay disciplinary support lip service. She explains that when she really needs someone, no one shows up so she feels less supported. Further, if they do attend to the behavioral issue, Dorothy explains that there are no corrective actions and the problems persist.

Dorothy goes on to describe the extra responsibilities that she takes on personally to help with discipline. She describes, "so it's kind of like, "Just shadow (Dorothy)," and then that rarely happens. We don't do teacher observations of each other. We don't have PD that is beneficial. We don't have anything that's truly feeding us to help us, support us, with these disciplinary issues, so for me it's like, "Thank you for the compliment, but my teachers are drowning, and so what are you gonna do to save them? Because I only got two arms." Here explains that she has had to take disciplinary issues into her own hands because of the lack of support from school leadership. This poses an issue as she has often had to support other white teachers on her wing, who also struggle with disciplinary issues. However, Dorothy recognizes that she cannot solve discipline issues for other teachers and fulfill her responsibilities to her own classroom. The burden of balancing her teaching responsibilities and discipline issues in her wing of the school weighs heavy on Dorothy's dissatisfaction. Hence, she reports that she doesn't feel supported by administration and has considered leaving because of it.

She states:

I don't feel supported. I feel like my kids aren't being supported. I just need to get out." If I, even as a teacher of color had that support from all angles I would be more able to stay, feel more comfortable, be able to truly blossom as a teacher of color within this setting. So I just think that's so important just support on all levels for the teacher. That was it.

Harriet also explains that lack of administrative support for discipline pushed her out of her previous school. She posits, "the experience at (my previous school) was more so I felt like I couldn't do what I was there to do because I dealt so much with behavior. It was a lot of discipline versus teaching. Now at (my current school), I deal less with discipline and I can actually teach." She explicates further, "my biggest reason for leaving my previous school was because I felt like I couldn't do what I was there to do, which was teach. I needed something that didn't stress me out all day, where I wasn't dealing with behavior after that." Harriet explains that her teaching was being compromised by the number of discipline issues she had to manage. Had Harriet had the support for behavioral issues she could have foreseeably stayed in her previous school environment. However, she felt that leaving was her only option as school leadership showed no evidence that they would increase their support.

When asked about why those discipline issues were so pervasive for her she says:

> The leadership I think had an influence because it was more so laid back. When I was having discipline problems, I didn't have someone that I could necessarily go to to help out with that. I had to handle it all on my own. I would say if the leadership was a little bit more firm, it might have kept me there because some of those behavior students would have been disciplined in a way where maybe that would stop.

Like Dorothy, Harriet describes a lack of action taken by school leadership in order to get a handle on behavioral related issues. They both resolve to take discipline matters into their own hands as a tool for survival. However, the burden of this task has pushed Dorothy to consider leaving her school, whereas Harriet has already left. This movement from her school suggests that school leadership has to be more supportive of behavioral issues , even for Black teachers.

Michelle, also describes managing discipline on her own after she asked her school leadership for more support. Michelle explains:

> I've had issues, I mean, I personally when I have an issue if it's a discipline issue I kind of take matters into my own hands even though I know I'm not supposed to. But I went to administration and I asked "Can there be a step-by-step put into the handbook or something so when these incidents occur" and I was told that's not gonna happen.

Again we see that Black female teachers in this study will carry the burden of discipline related issues. What's different about Michelle's story, is that she asked for policy and structural changes, to no avail. This not only shows a lack of administrative support for discipline issues, but also an unwillingness to reconsider or amend the practices set in place.

Dimples vents and illustrates the depth of disciplinary issues in her school and the lack of support for teachers. When asked about administrative support she quickly explains:

> As far as leadership goes, we have none. Principal stays in her office, we never see her. Never comes out of that office to even implement some type of order, or we have these town halls in the auditorium, they never address the behavior.

Dimples raises a unique concern as she posits that school leadership is to blame for the behavioral concerns on campus due to their lack of visibility. Further, school leaders avoid conversations or discussions about discipline problems on campus in various school meetings. Extending her points about discipline she describes:

> There's no consequences for the student behavior in here, so the kids do whatever they want because they know there's no consequence. The only consequence that is in place is just suspension. The only thing that they do, the only consequence they have is suspension. They will come back readmitted without a parent. If the parent doesn't feel like coming, they don't have to.

She makes sense of the discipline channels that are in place stating:

> Mm-hmm (affirmative), yes, we have a Dean of Culture, and all he does is write students up with a suspension, that's it. That's it. There's no type of discipline in here, nothing. It's either suspend ... that's it. That's it. Suspension. So you would think that with all these facilitators, security guards, there would be some type of organization, some type of discipline. So what happens when you've done something wrong, well this is automatic suspension. Kids don't care about suspension, because of course they don't want to be here anyway, so it's just like some free time out of school for them, and they come right back and do whatever they did before. So it's just a continuous cycle, I do what I want, I get kicked out for a couple days, I'm back, and it starts all over again.

Dimples paints a picture of a school climate that is bogged down with discipline issues. The inattention to behavioral concerns has an ill effect on the culture and climate of the school. What Dimples describes is that she feels the students are running the school because the policies

in place do not correct behavior and are not carried out with fidelity. So the students have become complacent and the few structures that are in place become ineffectual leading to a cycle of behavioral violations. The persistence of these issues has taken a toll on Dimples and the entire school morale. She reports a lack of proper structures and leadership visibility that create and sustain discipline issues in the school. Dimples, because of consistent failures of discipline policies and lack leadership is increasingly dissatisfied with her position.

This section explores the tensions between Black female teachers and school leaders in terms of discipline. Whereas I was a Black male teacher who was positioned as a disciplinarian in my school, Black female teachers in this study do not suggest a similar characterization. Despite the differences in our positions as it relates to discipline, participants do describe that the burden of managing discipline issues on their campuses in similar ways. In other words participants were participating in the same behavioral management, particularly as it relates to Black students, but were not lauded for their efforts in most cases. Therefore administrative support for discipline for Black female teachers takes on a new meaning. CRF, helps us to see the structural marginalization associated with this topic. On one hand, it seems that Black women were expected to handle discipline and were disproportionally affected by a lack of support for discipline from administration. This is likely tied to their commitments and subsequent relationships with Black students. However, on the other hand school leaders seem to ignore their concerns, and in Dorothy's case add to the stress of managing discipline by asking her to help other teachers. Differently for Michelle, she would prefer a change in discipline policy that would give her some relief in her own classroom. Together, the policies and practices of administration associated with discipline marginalizes the Black female teachers in their respective schools. This negligence contributes to the career moves of Harriet and Michelle.

Summary

This section details the experiences of Black female teachers in relation to personal support from leaders, social justice advocacy, discipline, and instructional leadership. They identify the specific ways that school leaders were able to help retain them, but also describe how ineffective or non-existent support in some areas leads to their pending departure. What's clear, is that administrative support means different things to different Black female teachers. Further, when that support, structure or policy is not present the decisions to leave become much clearer. One major are of concern is the lack of support for discipline issues. Participants lament that their lack of support for discipline add an additional tax on them, as they have to take matters in their own hands. The school leaders described in this study refused to amend policies, have inadequate approaches to discipline and place the burden on Black female teachers. The compounding effects of these reported experiences have caused Black female teachers to leave or consider leaving their positions. This suggests that even Black female teachers need disciplinary support and that school leaders must have stronger structures in place to help Black female teachers with disciplinary concerns.

Theme Three: The Impact of Organizations

The following section is dedicated to the narratives focused on organizational structures and practices. Black female teachers identify that beyond just school leaders, there are important organizational factors that contribute to their willingness to stay or leave the school. In this section, teachers who decided to stay and remain satisfied in their positions reported having strong school-level autonomy, classroom autonomy and an investment in the school. Further, they describe an organization that had high trust and strong collegiality among faculty. Conversely, teachers who have left or are considering leaving their schools report a battery of

170

concerns. In what follows, these teachers describe toxic school climates, hostile racial climates, and isolation as relevant push factors out of their classrooms. This theme highlights that organizational, specifically organizational approaches to issues of race, have a significant impact on Black female teachers' career decisions. What follows is a focus on the most consistent narratives chronicling impacts of organizational conditions on Black female teacher career decisions.

Autonomy

What follows is a depiction of participants perspectives on autonomy and how those organizational characteristics contributed to their career decisions.

My Voice is Heard

Senaya describes how school-level autonomy or having a say in the top level decisions affects her satisfaction at the school. She explains that this autonomy influences her to continuously be involved. She posits, "they always involved teachers and got teacher input and feedback and would do pretty much whatever the teachers felt like was good for students. I've always been involved with a lot. Everything that I could. Sometimes too much. When somebody said, we need a committee for this, I was there. I'm on the committee." Her commitment to staying involved in the school decision-making process is because she always felt that the organization (and leadership) were willing to hear her voice.

Shirley describes a similar situation:

> I think, well one thing that they do at the end of the year is that they give us a survey that we can fill out and then we get to tell them certain things about that survey. So we get to talk about ... Like, they ask us questions like, "What went well?", "What didn't go well?" You know, "What could be improved?" And next year when we come back to school that

first free planning week they kind of talk to us about those things. Say, "Okay, give me some ideas for this sentence if you didn't like it." And they pull out the board and write stuff down, and it's kind of cool because you actually see some of the stuff coming to fruition. It's not just a "Oh you wrote that down and you just have to move things." They're really good about that.

Shirley details the processes in place to include her voice in the decision-making at the school level. She reports how these systems encourage her to stay involved stating: I'll go above and beyond I'm over student council, I'm over the multicultural committee, I'm over the pep rallies. There are things that I do at the school, too, to kind of help out and pull my weight. I think that I do a great deal as well as they do a great deal, too, for me. Here Shirley, describes a mutual investment in the school and school leaders investment in teacher input. Finally, Antonia describes her leadership and their open-door policy.

She explains:

> They (school leadership) were really open to new ideas. Since I was young and just coming out of college, many of the teachers that were on the faculty were older teachers. They were eager to hear new things but they also laid things out and set expectations. The expectations were always high and the expectation was that you reach for it.

For Antonia, school leaders saw her as an important asset to the team because of her ability to bring new and fresh ideas. Together, Senaya, Antonia and Shirley attribute much of their satisfaction in the classroom to the inclusion of their input at the school level. Participants explain that they had a significant influence on the school level decisions and their voices were included to help guide the future directions of the school. Their leadership shows a commitment

to including teacher voice and school level autonomy which proved pivotal to their satisfaction in their position.

Investing in the School

Relatedly Octavia, Jackie and Ruby describe investing in the school and school community as a way to exercise autonomy.

Octavia, outlines the way that school-level autonomy is carried out at her school. She declares:

> She (the principal) puts out a call for people to help her make that vision, so the vision of having an all-school assembly every day, the vision of having spending at that. She has a vision but we have to be the ones to make that vision happen. So that requires a certain level of investment and commitment from your staff.

Octavia who has been increasingly involved in committees and clubs like the "Hula Hoop Club", explains that her investment in the school is a response to the call put out by her school leader. For Octavia, she feels like it is her responsibility to reciprocate the school leader's investment in teacher's.

Jackie describes her service to the school on multiple committees. She begins, "I serve on the science committee, I'm the first grade representative for the finance committee." Jackie expounds on her roles saying:

> They don't need us as much as they think they do or are suppose to, so that's a pretty laid back kind of position that I do. I go and report how we can find stuff in our classrooms especially for science and social studies in the younger grades, so we report back on how we connect the resources that they want us to try, I'm usually the person that has to actually try it and present it to the team.

173

Here Jackie describes the nature of her investment in and commitment to the school as she serves on multiple committees. Jackie is committed to exercising her voice at the school level. Further, she feels a responsibility to contribute to the continued improvement of the schools, by way of curriculum.

Ruby reverberates as she reflects on her long tenure at the school. She starts, "that's how life is here. I was actually here when the school was built, and was coming up with the mission statement and all that stuff, I was there for that. So that's why I have invested into this school."

She continues to describe her investment, "after school, I've been the math advocate for years up there. I did a pre-algebra club I've been doing for like 15 years. Kids go to competitions and many competitions. I'm doing my last one this year. I'm not going to do it next year. Somebody else in charge. I've been the staff chairperson. I've been in charge of the school improvements ran, you name it, I've done it." For Ruby, it is paramount that she is involved at the school level and her occupation of those roles contributes to her satisfaction as well as her retention. Octavia,

Ruby, Jackie, and Octavia explain that they hold school-level autonomy in high esteem and this latitude serves as a contribution to their satisfaction in their position. For Jackie she prizes her input on school level curriculum, whereas Octavia and Ruby remain invested in student clubs and extracurricular activities. These remarks display the importance that participants put on school-level autonomy and the vital role it plays in their willingness to stay in the school. It shows that Black female teachers who have been made to feel a part of the organization, have an increased likelihood of staying. Further their remarks suggest that organizations should extend the latitude for teachers to exercise their autonomy in the ways they prefer.

"I do feel like I'm free": On Classroom Autonomy

For some participants classroom autonomy was significantly more influential to their

willingness to stay in their positions.

Jackie proclaims:

> in my classroom I do, I feel like I'm free, like nobody is like "Oh you have to do it this
>
> way." I think we're very flexible when it comes to like what we do in our classrooms,
>
> how we group our kids, like I know the way we group for math. We can stop it if we
>
> want to, it's our decision. So when it comes to teaching, within our classroom and within
>
> our grade level.

Although she also exercises autonomy at the school level, she prizes her classroom freedom.

Octavia also describes the importance of pedagogical and some curricular freedom. She

states, "what I do in here is mine as long as I'm getting results. I like that. I understand that there

are places where you have to go on page 37 on a certain day, you do not get any autonomy,

you're not really a teacher, you're just really a loudspeaker for a curriculum. And that is not

teaching, that's soul crushing. I'm really lucky, because that's what I expected." Octavia, like

Jackie, reports having school-level autonomy however her appreciation for classroom autonomy

shines through as a key influence to her job satisfaction.

Octavia and Jackie explain that the autonomy they have in their classrooms is an

important factor to their retention. They identify the luxury of being able to tailor curriculum and

pace in their classrooms. This suggests that Black female teachers who are able to shape and

mold their classroom manner are more satisfied and willing to stay. Moreover, Octavia explains

that classroom autonomy is not consistent across all schools. She feels lucky to be free enough in

her classroom.

"Blowing hot air": Limited School Autonomy

Conversely, Michelle and Sojourner have more limited views of autonomy in their schools. Michelle illustrates:

> The only policy you have is the policy in your classroom. That's all you have. When it comes, I mean they preach, you know, policy and la la la you can talk to us about anything ... But like I said that's blowing hot air, so I don't really engage in that kind of activity, I don't, I kind of just if I can, I can probably handle things on my own.

Michelle expresses her frustration with school leaders discussions about autonomy and instead posits that the classroom is the only space she feels in control of. Sojourner, describes the shift in her role and the subsequent changes in teacher autonomy over the years. In response to a question about autonomy she says, "I would say probably not really. Because I don't see that as being my role. My role is about going into my classroom. At the school level, we have committees, and I've joined the committees. So I guess I could probably say some, because they tell you the direction of the school, in many cases, long ago, was directed kind of by the teachers." Sojourner explains that in her thirty plus years the input of teachers has waned significantly. Now, she sees her role in the school differently. She primarily focuses on her classroom as now the direction from the school comes from administration.

Differently, Sojourner and Michelle express that school-level autonomy is not present for them. Their autonomy is more clear in their classrooms over school-level decisions. Michelle particularly explains that school-level autonomy discussions from the administration are hollow words rather than an expectation. Here we see that Black female teachers recognize and see through school leaders' rhetoric around autonomy. In other words although they are told they

176

have autonomy they do not feel like they are necessarily free to do as they please at the school or classroom level. Hence, their satisfaction with their position takes a negative hit as they feel the intrusion and pressures of mandates.

Summary

Across the board, participants describe the importance of school level and classroom autonomy. For some Black female teachers, they remark that their voice is respected at the school level. These experiences increase their satisfaction and willingness to stay in their schools. In some cases however, Black female teachers in this study describe limited or waning autonomy which frustrates them. A lack of school level autonomy, despite what school leaders say, takes a negative toll on some participants making them feel like they should leave the school or profession altogether. Autonomy is a structural concern that should be attended to as it connects to CRF concept of structural marginalization. When the policies and practices of the school effect autonomy, Black female teachers begin to feel the marginalization. In sum, the consistency of autonomy in the discussion suggests that it is a strong factor in career decisions.

Organizational Trust and Collegiality

A major characteristic of a school environment that creates a sense of belonging for participants is the presence of collegiality. Sojourner, Octavia, and Ruby highlight the importance of that trust and collegiality in their career journey.

Octavia begins with the diversity of experiences and school human capital that she professionally benefits from.
She describes:

A setting in which people really want to collaborate, they want to support you. A setting in which there is a gradation of experience. You've got people that have been here for

177

seven years, eight years, they've been teachers as long as I've been alive. That adds to the collective, the intellectual capital of the building. I've got people who remember those old readers and can tell me things. I've got people who can do Google docs and help. There are some things about the way the building are (is) structured that are beneficial.

She further details her trust:

At a certain level, yes. You can trust them on a professional level. On a professional level, if you go to someone in this building and you say, look, I am struggling with instruction for math, you'll get support. There is definitely an ingrained culture of support here. The kids say school is a safe place to make mistakes. That's something that even the staff feel. There is no shame. If you screw up, pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and let's keep going. That, I appreciate.

The "culture of support" Octavia describes, has been a key component contributing to her job satisfaction. She explains the diversity of experiences in the school is an asset for her as a relatively young teacher. Also, she describes herself as an asset to other teachers given her expertise in specific areas. Professionally, her current position is suitable and conducive to her retention in the school.

Sojourner also reports feeling organizational support from colleagues. She says, "now, my colleagues, this floor is basically English and math. And this wing where I work is just basically math folks. And actually, if you ask a few people in the building "What's the best department in the building?" They'll say, "The math department." Not that we keep to ourselves, but we'll have luncheons here at school, we'll meet somewhere for dinner together. Do I trust these folks in my department? Mm-hmm (affirmative). To be honest, they would have my back. When we're having issues, we talk to each other."

Sojourner describes the collegial support that extends beyond the professional and permeates her personal and social life. This suggests that support goes beyond the professional and permeates the personal for Sojourner. She describes a kinship among her departmental colleagues that contributed to her satisfaction over the years. Ruby reverberates the importance of this personal and professional collegiality, in her remarks about missing those colleagues. She posits, "there has been such a turnaround. I'm the last person here that opened this school. So, everybody else, they get to go to happy hour. But I miss them. We used to have a wonderful time together, but I miss that type of camaraderie."

Taken together, the importance of collegial support whether professional or personal reigns as an important factor for these Black female teachers. The support they receive from other colleagues likely help to keep them in their positions. Hence, the absence of these collegial interactions could have the opposite effect, evident in the next section (s).

"The Culture of the School is Horrible": A Toxic School Culture and Climate

In some cases, Black female teachers who have left or are considering leaving report that it is partially due to school climate issues. They describe toxicity and the residual effects on the teacher and student morale. In some cases this is catalyzed by the absence of school leadership or administrative support.

Dimples portraits a demoralized school environment stained by constant shifts and changes. She states, "right now, the semester's starting off horribly. There is complete disorganization, complete chaos. Because they have implemented a new block schedule this year, a lot of the seniors are confused because our special needs population is so high, it takes ... let me see, how can I say this. They're not used to sitting still for two hours." She expounds, "the culture of the school is horrible. Disrespect, cussing, fighting, hanging out in the hallway, it's like

179

they (the students) run the school, it's their school, and there's nobody here or who will do that job of maintaining order, or even trying to do something that maintains order in the school. It's just wild, like a zoo." In her fourteen years at her school Dimples suggests she has never seen it this bad. She attributes the "chaos" to too many drastic changes and a lack of administrative action to curb disciplinary issues. It is important to note that her predominately Black, intensively urbanized and underresourced school experiences much of the residual effects of many schools in urbanized settings. What's clear is that top down policies, curricular changes and faculty turnover during Dimples tenure, has taken its toll on her satisfaction. Finally, she describes that these persistent issues have caused turnover problems in the school. She explains, "and we just lost a science teacher last week and a math teacher last week. I think more people going to be quitting because this is a horrible place to work. Horrible. But I still do my job, as you can see." Dimples paints a vivid example of the impact of toxic school culture and the specific effects it has on teacher turnover.

Aritha shares a similar story in her teaching experiences however, the school cultural issues rested in the hands of the teachers. She explains:

> There were several teachers who had actually been former students, who actually were former students, and they came back to serve. In some ways that was good and that was bad. It's difficult to shift the culture in a school when you have people who have been there for years, teachers. You have students who have come back to teach who experienced that culture. Sort of replicated in different ways.

She describes some of the attributes of the culture that they were trying to move away from. Aritha identifies, "I wasn't going to sit there just talking about folks like that. Just because you said it doesn't mean I have to agree with you. I'm going to watch for myself." For Aritha, the

180

negative talk and manipulation at the teacher level was a point of discord. She makes sense of what she experienced: "Then I understood, "You know what? I understand why you keep your door closed all the dang time unless your students are coming in your classroom. I understand you. You trying to stay in your righteous mind and do your job." That to me, just that little picture right there is evidence of a lack of trust. There was some teachers who did that, and it's never we're anti-social. They would be very friendly in certain spaces." What Aritha is describing is an egg-crate model school with teacher factions or cliques who were toxic to the school culture.

Aritha further explicates how the toxic culture of the school can negatively affect teachers.

She exclaims:

When you're in a school and it is hard and you keep getting the kids from a jail, and those kids are getting letters about transferring out, and when there's fear ... I mean, teacher morale sank so badly in the years I was there. When I came in, people were still gung ho, and then by my last couple of years, the last two to three years, the teacher morale sank so badly. People left or they were kicked out. The health stuff that was coming up with people ... Who had ulcers? Who had a stroke? Who died? It was real. This is not some kind of melodramatic stuff. Who had a heart attack on the way to school and crashed? Some crazy stuff went down.

In a matter of a few short years, student demographic change and teacher demoralization peaked at Aritha's school. This led to health concerns and a revolving door of teachers and students. She expands her thoughts: "I didn't realize it, but at the time, I had some serious health

181

problems that were impacting me. I didn't realize how serious it was at the time. It was actually the year that I was accepted to this program, just two months later I found out how serious that was. Before I came to this program I had to address."

> When asked what was causing these health problems she declares, "Stress! Straight up stress. Some of those things I found out when I was there. I had my own health issues. Then some of that stuff I heard happened after I left. I said, "Come on now. You can't have all those sick people in one building and it just so happens ... " It was real. It was crazy.

Together Dimples and Aritha, who come from intensively urbanized communities describe the details of school culture concerns. The extreme organizational conditions that they were working under have lead to intense demoralization or "jading" as Aritha explains. To be clear, they do not attribute their negative experiences in these schools to the students and families that comprise them. In both cases they were and are teaching in their hometown communities. This suggests that they have a commitment to Black students, urbanized schools and families. It is important to couch their experiences in this context to show that their teaching experiences were not unfavorable because it was a Black school. Instead, they suggest that their unfavorable working conditions were a product of too many school level shifts, financial instability, poor administrative support, and adversarial faculty relations, which are common characteristics of intensively urbanized schools. These conditions, not Black students, pushed Aritha out of the field and has Dimples on the edge of her seat.

Edwidge also speaks to school culture and climate issues, but with less convicting results. She describes how teachers have reacted to a lack of institutional trust and cohesion.

When asked about school trust and culture she remarks:

> It depends. Most teachers, I would say, are not very involved. You have your ones who come in 8:30 and leave at 4 and don't volunteer for anything unless it's time to get their domain four in and they volunteer for one or two things and they're done. I'll set-up, I'll clean-up, but I'm not actually planning anything.

> More often than not I hear from teachers that they're not getting paid for that, so they don't have to do it. Or it's outside of their contract hours, so they're not doing it. It just seems when it's time for something to happen, the same hands go up all the time.

These type of organizational interactions and experiences prove demoralizing in themselves. As Edwidge notices the lack of involvement it also has an adverse effect on her, as she feels she must take up the slack.

Taken together we find that Black female teachers are both aware of and affected by adverse school cultures. In urbanized community schools the increased accountability and the residual effects of those policies shape the working environment in problematic ways. The increased turnover, chaos and changes have a powerful effect on participants, and has led to teacher turnover. Differently, we find in other contexts that teachers can disinvest in the school and this proves to be an effect of low trust. Hence, in Edwidge's case the teachers have decided that they no longer value the school enough to be collegial, until they absolutely have to be. Together, these experiences are symptomatic of low trust, low morale and advarserial school culture that can have a strong effect on Black female teacher turnover.

Navigating Hostile Racial Climates

In this story of Black female teacher career decisions, I consistently found evidence of racialized, cultural, and gendered experiences that were explicitly described. In this case, issues of race were highlighted in participants negative experiences with organizations. What follows is a detailed portrait of those organizational interactions.

Policing the Black Body

This section begins with descriptions of interactions with white teachers and leaders who micro aggressed participants through comments about their body.

Octavia begins this discussion focusing on a specific conversation with a white colleague about "spirit week" activities.
She illustrates:

So we had this spirit week, and on spirit week, you can wear the school colors, you know, everybody does something together to build community spirit for your school. One of the days is always crazy hair day. I said, well you know, while we're on the subject, crazy hair day is an interesting day. She was like oh what do you mean, and I said, well you say crazy and kids come to school with hairstyles where they have like a bunch of ponytails, hanging out ponytail holders, and that's the kind of stuff I used to wear when I was a little girl. And instantly she goes, "well I thought," and I said, "Yeah, yeah." And she says, "well, well," when I didn't expect that as her rebuttal she went, "well, do you mean even the ones that have their ponytail like on the front?

Octavia expands the conversation:

And I said, "Well, black hair wouldn't flop to the front of your face like that though." It has properties that allow it to actually defy gravity a little bit, so yeah. But it wouldn't be

in my face, it'd be off to the side curl and it'd stay there. And she didn't have anything to say to that except (confused facial expression). And so I took from that, you're afraid.

In this instance, Black hair became the focal point of the conversation. As the white colleague described hairstyles as "crazy" Octavia perceived such comments as culturally insensitive.

In another example of racialized body policing Dorothy describes a set of interactions with some of her colleagues. She begins, "we try to address race within our school. We try to talk about it, but those conversations fall short when you still have women of color who refer to young black men as, "Oh, yeah, that one with the wild hair." Or when they come up to me when I wear my hair and say, "Oh, your hair is fun. Your hair is so fun." In this case she indicates, although she doesn't specify racial background, that teachers of color have also contributed to body policing and racially insensitive comments. More importantly, she describes that these conversations have extended to her students. Dorothy declares, "and so those are things that they don't understand puts our kids in a box, puts me in a box. Makes me feel like, "Oh, I'm a costume." The comments from colleagues about her and her Black children creates a feeling of marginalization.

Dorothy expands the conversation and brings up a separate occasion.

She explains:

Then, of course, this woman went on to say later I looked like Alicia Keys. like that's the problem. You know, I have my hair wrap on, and she was just like, "Oh, I just love your hair wrap. You look just like Alicia Keys." And that's when I was like, "No, you're just." You know. No, there's just so many problems.

Dorothy highlights her struggles with a constant barrage of culturally insensitive comments about her appearance.

For Jackie and Michelle, they have experienced similar interactions with white colleagues. The difference is that the comments they have fielded focus on their work attire. Jackie describes her conflict with casual Friday. She says, "when it comes to dress, I feel like I can't ... I'm not a jeans person anyway, but even on a day when we can wear jeans, I feel like I just can't come in jeans and tennis shoes because again, looking at it. Oh, it's Friday. I'm just always going to be that. Until people's mindsets change." Although she doesn't explicitly articulate it, her apprehension to "dressing down" is in a response to the surveillance of her colleagues. Michelle articulates her issues with comments about her attire stating, "I think that's like the number one ... They say it's because, I get it all the time, "You just so sexy, the way you dress" and I'm just like, this is a profession, you can't just ... Flip-flops, I don't wear flip-flops to work."

Colleagues comments about her style of dress bother her and she feels like it brings undue attention to her. She explains that the surveillance of her, or style of dress is both unnecessary and unprofessional.

Here we find that organizations that lack racial awareness and oppress Black female teacher's through insensitive comments about their bodies. In multiple examples, participants discuss that they appearances, including their hair and style of dress were the focal points of their school environments. These interactions raise concerns, as it appears that their organizations are marginalizing rather than inclusive spaces. Although participants do not explicitly point to these interactions as leading to turnover, they do suggest that these experiences are an additional tax on their identities.

186

This experience that involves both racist and sexist interactions shows the impact the BFT concept of triple oppression has on Black female teachers. Whereas I may have fielded racist comments from white colleagues I never fell victim to comments about my body, hair or attire. The participants discussions about navigating these forms of oppression expose the different level of tax on their teaching experiences.

Fear of the Unknown

Separate from more direct comments about their bodies and attire, Black female teachers remark that there are times where white colleagues were demonstrating forms of racialized fear. Maya, who works in an intensely white school and district describes the puzzling apprehensions of her white colleagues.

She describes:

> To go from allowing the women to even a woman of color to ... And I'm not just talking African American, any woman of color, I would say ... I don't feel like I'm treated unfairly, but that hasn't, the jury's still out on that because it's still new. They're handling me from a distance I'll say. I get a lot of looks, you know the look up and down from probably the way I wear my hair to ... Not in a bad way, in a puzzling way, to and I know I'm reading people's minds and I know that's not the case, but I get the head to toe look with one of them, but there's other issues why that happens and I know that. It's just their makeup, who they are, who their circles are. And personalities. Some people are materialistic, some people are petty, I'm thinking once they get to know me and get past their wall that they've put up, if they have, I'm not saying the right words there, whatever their shield whatever and once they get to know me and interact with me, because there's not much interaction right now, how about that?

Specifically, Maya is speaking of her new administration and the distance that exists between them. She identifies this as a racialized issue, which to her, is attributed to a lack of knowledge of how to interact with Black people or Black teachers.

She expounds on her previous comments stating," I won't say they (leadership) haven't accepted me. They, like my peers are still trying to figure me out." Further Maya explains, "It's that fear of the unknown. It really is. Maybe what they've been told growing up. I have no idea. Not very many experiences with us. That's what it is."

Harriet shares similar sentiments when she talks about her previous school leader. She says, "as far as leadership at my previous school, maybe we didn't relate as much because of our ethnicity. I'm just thinking maybe she couldn't. She didn't know how to approach me or maybe she didn't know how to start a conversation." When asked specifically about that leader's disposition towards Harriet, she states "I feel like at my previous school it was just, it was a pleasant disposition, but not necessarily and I care what's really going on with your life. Just more so like we're smiling at each other." Although she doesn't mention an explicitly negative relationship, Harriet does explain a clearly surface level relationship, that likely had an impact on her departure.

Further Ruby identifies her dissonance with school leaders and colleagues, and her perception that they are intimidated by her.

Ruby explains:

Okay. Sometimes I think they're intimidated, because I can relate well to the majority of the kids, some of them cannot. I can relate well to the parents, and some of them do not.

I think there always worrying I'm gonna have to come back and apologize, "Did I say something to offend you?" I'm like, "No." I said, "You said what's on your heart, and it comes out. And as a black person, I'm very thick skinned." Because you know, I just have to be. And there's, "I didn't want it to come out that way, I mean I didn't want it to come." "It is fine. Calm down.

In this instance, white fear or apprehension manifests itself in envy and intimidation. Ruby further describes that her white colleagues are overly apologetic when they know they have said something racially or culturally insensitive. She insists however that these apologies are empty when she says "No. You said what's on your heart."

Together participants describe a physical and cognitive distance between them and the organization. They explain that in their schools white colleagues are often unable to engage in positive interactions with them. This suggests that the organization lacks racial awareness that would make Black female teachers feel comfortable in the school. Instead the "fear of the unkown" ostracizes Black female teachers in the organization and contributes to their dissatisfaction with their positions.

Navigating Stereotypes and Inferiority Narratives

Also, Black female participants identify that they constantly must navigate racist narratives about themselves or Black students in their classrooms. Octavia describes the condescending narratives of her white colleagues on one occasion.

She portrays:

> particularly my colleagues, think it's incredible. I say that because we do little things like we'll have a luncheon or something, and they'll be like oh can somebody warm up this casserole, and I'm like oh yeah I can do it. And if I show up and I'm struggling with stuff

they're all like, "Oh, I have husband that home that puts it," and I'm like what? You

know?

You think you're doing me a favor because you think that I go home to the projects,

ducking bullets. You have these limited ideas about me that make you give me

advantages I don't really need, and I'ma take them, okay?

For Octavia, she views the comments by her white colleagues as offensive and based on

inferiority narratives about Black women, specifically racist ideas. She critiques their

paternalistic comments, and suggests that they come from a perspective that is both racist and

classist.

Myrlie speaks to this issue as it pertains to her minoritized, specifically Black male

students. Myrlie describes a white colleague's thoughts about a math course comprised mostly of

minoritized students.

They have a joke about a class called More On Math, like a lowest level class. But if you

say it fast, it says moron math.

That's a constant joke. It's not about what we can do ... Don't get me wrong. They want to

help kids. They do. They're well intentioned, but they want to help kids fit a certain mold.

If you don't fit that mold, they dumb things down and it makes me mad, because my son

is in the lower level math classes and he needs to be challenged. He's going to be a six

foot tall black man in two years walking out of these streets and he's going to need some

critical thinking skills, he's going to need all of these things. I feel like they baby the kids

who are in the lower level classes. That frustrates me, because they don't know what else

to do. So our meetings are intolerable.

Myrlie exhibits how, even well intentioned white colleagues, perpetuate racist ideas and recycle deficit narratives of minoritized students. Instead of challenging these students, they find ways to lower the standards operating from the belief that they are helping these students. These actions are evident of deficit notions and pervasive stereotypes associated with race.

"It's literally you are on your own": The Isolation of Black Female Teachers

Participants also chronicle their intersectional experiences and reflections of their organizations. Primarily, they describe how their specific needs which are connected to their intersectional experiences and commitments are often ignored. These conditions create feelings of isolation.

Dorothy begins this conversation explaining, *"we* don't have PLC's here. We do not have professional learning communities. We are supposed to have them, but there is no enforcing of it." Further she says, "so there is no sharing of knowledge. It's literally you're on your own. That makes a difference of keeping teachers here." Dorothy believes in support and sharing of knowledge, but the school doesn't enforce professional learning communities and therefore makes her feel like she is on her own. In context, Dorothy is the only Black teacher in her middle school. So the lack of professional learning communities takes on a racialized meaning for her, that goes beyond just the sharing of ideas. Thus, she experiences both identity and professional isolation.

Maya expands these notions of isolation in her descriptions of her school leadership and support. Maya says," I feel in some instances I have had to defend myself from other peer teachers, but most of the time, the administrator has not sided with me, they were objective enough to see both sides, and kind of judge wisely." Situating this statement in context, as only one of two Black teachers on campus, having to defend herself from other white colleagues

contributes to an isolating environment for Maya. In other words, she like Dorothy, is more intensively marginalized because of her identity in relation to her predominately white colleagues.

For Myrlie, she retains her commitment to minoritized students in her school although her pursuits are not supported by the organization nor the leadership. She states, "so now I do, I must say I feel less supported. I feel like my concerns are paid lip service a little bit, and the kinds of concerns I'm raising are different though. I'm the only one that is willing to talk about race, and how students are being treated."

Myrlie continues:

Come to my classroom. Observe me. Know what's going on, and I guess it does connect to the trust, respect thing. Because if you do, and you see me and you see what I do, and you see how I interact, you could see how much I love kids. Then I would not feel like I had to cover my butt. The single best way that they could support me is by being in my room often and talking to me about teaching and learning and kids' behaviors and experiences in our school. Maybe if they visited more classrooms they'd know what the racial breakdowns are. Now we have some brown classrooms in some of my classrooms, but I feel that's the single best thing they could do is be in my classroom often."

In these complex, layered statements Myrlie is identifying the extreme isolation she is experiencing both physically and ideologically. Not only are her ideas, concepts and proposed discussions not being heard, but her administration has taken no interest in her classroom manner. She vents that this shows a lack of professional respect, trust and support. Myrlie also remarks that the school leadership and organization intensify her isolation through spotlighting.

She explains:

> I also felt, to a degree, exploited. I don't know if that's the right word, but ... For example, I would be just asked to attend certain meetings where there would be parents involved, and not meetings like IEPs or anything like that, but where the district was putting on a face for parents to show that we had some diversity on staff apparently. Once I was flat out asked by this older principal, who I actually adored, but I was flat out asked, "Could you come? We really need them to see ... It'd be great if you were there, because we need them to see a black woman, math department." I'm like, "Oh. Okay. Let me think about that.

Instead of the commitment to diversity and explicit conversations about race that she asks for, school leaders further marginalize Myrlie by presenting her as the school's Black face.

Summary

What is clear is that the organizational conditions, that are highly racialized and school culture have a profound impact on the career decisions of Black female teachers. When teachers mentioned climates of trust, sharing and high autonomy they were most likely participants who have happily stayed in their schools for an extended period of time. For others, they highlight the impact of low trust, limited autonomy, racialized hostility and demoralized school climates that contributed to dissatisfaction or turnover behavior.

Throughout this section we also find that structural marginalization and navigating triple oppression are deeply engrained in participants experiences. They are forced to traverse school organizations that present classist, racist and sexist forms of oppression. This is particularly the case when Black female teachers are working with predominately white colleagues in

predominately white schools. The hyper surveillance of their Black bodies surfaces in this discussion as contributory factor to their careers.

Summary of Chapter 4

Taken together, this chapter represents the unique narratives that undergird Black female teachers' career experiences. Black female teachers share distinct intersectional backgrounds and realities that influence their career experiences. Their intersectional identities impact their subsequent experiences with school leaders and within organizations. Together, these experiences have impacted their career decisions. This chapter portrays the complexities of Black female teacher turnover and retention through narratives. In the following chapter I will expand the analysis to more intentionally include Critical Race and Black feminist concepts. This additional framing will deepen the analysis. Further, the following chapter will compare the findings and themes to existing scholarship in the field. Finally, chapter 5 will discuss the implications and scholarly contributions of this study.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction and Organization of Chapter

In the previous chapter I attempt to outline the diverse career stories of fifteen Black female teachers. I began with a brief summary of the pivotal points in their careers and how they have made sense of staying versus leaving their schools. Then, I lean on three essential themes, a) racial, cultural and gendered identity, b) school leadership and c) organizations, to draw comparison among the participants in the study. These three themes highlight the most important impacts on Black female teacher's careers in this study. Chapter five engages in the review, interpretation, analysis and discussion of the interview and document data, in light of relevant literature. Further this chapter includes recommendations for school and district leadership, policy, and research.

Research Questions Revisited

1. What factors do Black female teachers perceive as most influential to their decisions to stay or leave their schools?

2. What role do Black female teachers suggest, race plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools?

3. What role do Black female teachers suggest school leadership plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools?

Summarizing Chapter 4

The stated findings portray a unique and complex story that undergirds Black female teacher career decisions. The individual stories elucidate the true complexity of these decisions. What I found was that turnover decisions are in no ways singular or isolated, but instead an accumulation of multiple factors. These factors range from financial strain, to decreased self-

efficacy, and even navigation of racialized microaggressions, to name a few. What is important to understand is that the intersections of these experiences tell a more complete story of why a Black female teacher decides to leave or stay in a school. Further, these stories shift our gaze from an explicit focus on outcomes, whether a teacher left a school, to the process and meaning-making of a career journey. I argue that this information will more explicitly guide us to practical solutions to the turnover problem.

The individual stories explain that in most cases retention in particular schools comes at a cost. For example, Octavia explains that she has had to assimilate and navigate to maintain her highly resourced position. Despite a school with great collegial support, resources and autonomy, in this particular case we find that Octavia's decision to stay in the school comes with an identity cost. Similarly, Jackie, Maya, Dorothy and others' decisions to stay in their classrooms comes with a strong sacrifice of self. They are forced to lean on their faith and spirituality to persist in their current positions. Hence, Black female teachers' retention in schools is often a result of resilience and perseverance.

Given these complex narratives I find that turnover and retention for Black female teachers is an uncommon story and that there is not a singular, identifiable factor that contributes to their career moves. The complexity of their career decisions surface at the intersection of identity, school leadership and organizations. In other words, a decision or willingness to leave a school happens when a Black female teacher's multiple identities conflict with school leaders and organizations. Ultimately school leaders and organization do not properly attend to nor are they inclusive of participants' unique needs. This decision is further complicated when we consider familial and financial responsibilities. Contrariwise, their decisions to remain in a school is a result of professional support, great resources and curricular autonomy among other

things. However, we find in this study that identity oppression is still persistent for participants who stay, forcing them to find alternative ways to persevere.

Discussion of Themes

The themes a) race, culture and gendered identity; b) impact of school leadership; c) impact of organizations, serve as powerful indicators of Black female teacher career decisions. They also were paramount in drawing comparisons between participants experiences.

Theme 1: The Impact of Race, Culture, and Gendered Identity

Race

Participants in this study explicitly demonstrate a commitment to racial uplift and social justice. In most cases, their experiences growing up in predominately Black schools and communities significantly fuel these expressed commitments. In other cases, such as Dorothy, the recognition of an absence of Black teachers in the field was their biggest reason for wanting to pursue teaching as a profession. These racialized commitments represent a response to a strong need to improve the lives of minoritized, specifically Black students who are marginalized in today's schools. Also, it reveals how racialized identity contributes as a unique factor for Black female teacher career decisions.

Teaching as a Commitment to Racial Uplift

Research has consistently identified that Black, specifically Black female teachers are often drawn to the field to pursue racial uplift (Dixson, 2003; Evans & Leonard, 2013; Farinde-Wu et al, 2017; Foster, 1993; Su, 1997; Fitchet et al, 2017). Black teachers are uniquely positioned to be a strong resource for Black students in the classroom (Irvine, 1989). Others describe their unique pedagogies to ensure racial uplift in their classroom. Dixson (2003) outlines that teaching for Black women is a public service, they use discipline to improve

expectations, they employ other mothering styles, focuses on relationship building and center gender, race and class awareness in the curriculum. Most participants in this study align themselves or embody some of these unique commitments to the classroom. Participants described the unique pedagogies of liberation that they employ in their classrooms. It is their commitments to centering the voices of African-Americans, implementing multicultural perspectives, responding to community and sustaining caring student-teacher relationships that ignites their duties to their students. We see that for the majority of the participants in this study, race was a salient drawing force to the classroom and remains a strong factor in teachers' decisions to stay. This is most evident in Myrlie's and Dorothy's specific stories.

However, my study finds that these race related commitments can go unnoticed and under supported leading to dissatisfaction and eventual move behavior. This is evident in Michelle's story as she discussed leaving because she felt that her efforts to pursue social justice for her minoritized students are going unrecognized and not supported. Further, Myrlie described a lack of support for her social justice advocacy at her school, which has led her to pursue other opportunities in the field of education. More on this will be discussed in future sections. What must be understood is that race is often the impetus of Black female teachers' commitments to teaching, specific classrooms and schools. This charge of racialized commitment aligns with Black feminist concepts of Black women's fervor for racial uplift.

Culture

Community Connectedness and Community Work

Through the years research has found that Black female teachers are strong pillars in Black communities (Anderson, 1988; Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Douglass Horsford, 2010;

Fairclough, 2007; Foster, 1991; 1997; Morris, 2009; Siddle Walker, 1996). Specifically, Foster (1991) explains that:

> The teachers' connectedness to their communities of orientation and those that they serve corresponds according to research on the differences between the feminine and masculine sense of self. This research asserts that women have a sense of self that is connected to the world. Those who have applied this concept to teachers maintain that connectedness is a critical component of responsible teaching. Connectedness is also the theme of scholars who have examined black family life. Several of these studies have described the strong kinship bonds that exist among extended families in black communities, the tendency of non-kin to take on social roles. The studies have posited that the extensive kin networks extant in black communities have contributed significantly to both the material and nonmaterial well being of children (p.251).

These studies and arguments must however be couched in the contexts that they are situated in. In other words, the cited research on Black female teachers' cultural connectedness is most directly related to teachers in urbanized communities, during Jim Crow schooling or recently desegregated schooling. This is not the case for all participants in this study, as they represent a contemporary and diverse set of school communities. Villegas & Irvine (2010) speak contemporarily to the promise of Black and Black female teachers as cultural brokers and translators for Black students. More specifically, Dixson & Dingus (2008) explain that Black women engage with the profession as a "community based" endeavor influenced by the "kinship" they have with their Black female teachers (p.819). They describe that Black women's commitment to teaching is fueled by "one's cultural background, experiences, and beliefs (p.822)."

Participants in this study explained that community commitments are fundamental to their reasons for staying or leaving a school. For these community-oriented teachers, they see their positions in schools as necessary to their duties to the surrounding communities of color. For example, Ruby like the Black female teachers mentioned in the studies above, has been committed to her school because of her community connectedness. However, as the school community relations begin to shift, we find that she grows increasingly dissatisfied and will retire after the school year. This suggests that retaining Black female teachers, requires an in-depth understanding of their cultural and community commitments. Hence, if Ruby's school could have maintained their community relations, they may have been able to retain Ruby for a few more years.

Teaching as a Family profession

Dingus (2003; 2006) and Dixson & Dingus (2008) describe how Black women teachers enter teaching as a result of family, specifically their mothers and other mothers influence. For most participants in this study, their introduction into teaching came from their family members. Education, was a family profession, that implicitly or explicitly pushed the teachers in this study into the field. Connecting to pre and immediately post-*Brown* Black female teachers (Foster, 1991), modern Black female teachers (Dixson & Dingus, 2008) and, future Black female teachers (Gist et al, 2017) this study represents the salience of Black familial influence specifically, mothering into the profession. Having family members in the classroom helped to shape participant's professional acumen. The takeaway from this finding is that Black female teachers are continuously influenced to pursue teaching whether by family members or other mothering from Black teachers in their schooling experiences. However, if retention rates for this

population of teachers continues to decline the influence to teach will also decline, further contributing to our Black female teacher pipeline issues.

Faith, Religion and Spirituality

Participants also remarked that their faith and religion helped them remain committed to their schools. They leaned on these cultural tools (i.e. praying, reading the bible) to help them persevere in the classroom. Dixson & Dingus (2008) describe that "spiritual foundations provided endurance, strength and peace when faced with professional difficulties and obstacles (p.830)" for Black women teachers in their study. These narratives are most evident among Jackie, Maya, Senaya, and Dorothy as they find solace in their spirituality. Endurance is evident in these cases showing how faith and religion help to maintain Black female teachers as they navigate their school environments. Further, in Jackie's case, religion serves as a moral guide to her future career decisions. Hence, her decision to stay is directly related to her orientations towards her faith and religion, more than the conditions of her school environment. Black female teachers' spirituality serves as "armour and protection" (Witherspoon & Taylor, 2010, p.146) as they navigate oppression in their schools. This is vitally important to understand how faith relates to the teacher turnover discussion. What it reveals, is that despite the presence of all the common and relevant turnover factors, that Black female teachers may lean more on faith to make their next career move.

Gendered Experiences

Many of the participants describe motherhood and being partnered as having significant impacts on their professional decisions. However, there is scant research that focuses on the influence of motherhood and partnership on Black female career decisions. In one study, Black female teachers' describe that poor salaries and the financial commitments of single-motherhood

201

present unique challenges to being retained in the field (Farinde et al, 2016). I however, was unable to find any research that explores the impact of partnership on Black female teachers' career decisions.

Balancing Motherhood and Teaching

However, the findings reveal explicit evidence of the impacts of motherhood in terms of entering the profession, remaining at schools as well as choosing to work in specific school communities. For example, Antonia, Octavia and Shirley were both influenced to teach for a more stable career after having children. Further, they all describe choosing school communities that they felt were suitable to bring their children into. Decidedly, they all chose stellar, but predominately white and upper middle-class schools to teach in.

Conversely, Senaya, Dimples, Dorothy and Edwidge discussed the strain on partnerships, family responsibilities and financial obligations. Their career decisions have been significantly influenced by the negotiations between family concerns and the demands of teaching. These findings run counter to quantitative research that suggests that Black female teachers are less likely to cite personal reasons for their decisions to leave. As Carver-Thomas & Darling Hammond (2017) suggest: "Black teachers who left or moved were far less likely to cite personal life reasons than teachers on average. While 30% of teachers, overall, reported moving schools to be in a more convenient location, less than 15% of Black women teachers did so (p.172)." Further they explain, "less than 10% of Black women did (cite personal reasons). Instead Black women teachers tended to cite specific issues with respect to their teaching conditions (p.172)." The specific gendered impacts that affect Black female teachers are an important research area worth further exploration.

Navigating Triple Oppression: Racism, Sexism and Classism

Research has consistently identified Black female teachers' commitment to the profession and to Black students as a form of Black feminist activism (Acosta, 2015; Dixson, 2003;Dingus, 2006; Dixon & Dingus, 2008;Gist et al, 2017). Dixson & Dingus (2008) describe "African American women teachers come to teaching as part of a legacy of Black feminist activism that has sought to maintain cultural practices, address racial and economic inequity, and facilitate the development of youth (p.832)." Farinde et al (2016) uses Black feminism to frame and analyze the career paths of Black women in an urban district, specifically focusing on how teacher advancement, salaries and administrative support affected their career moves. Further, Evans-Winters (2015) explains that the navigation of racism, classism and sexism is a consistent social reality of Black women.

Intersectional Pedagogies

The participants in this study corroborate this research as they cite activist orientations to teaching that keep them committed to the field. Further, their intersectional experiences influence their other mothering and pedagogical practices in the classroom. This is most evident in Dorothy's pedagogy as she seeks to empower her Black students, specifically her Black female students through loving and caring approaches. Sojourner and Edwidge speak to what it means to other mother students and how these responsibilities are deeply connected to their own social realities. Thus, teaching as a part of the social activism brings Black female teachers to the classroom and fuels their sustained commitments to students of color.

Teaching through Intersectional Oppression

Differently, Jackie, Myrlie, and Octavia most eloquently described the juxtaposition of their intersectional lived realities (past and current) with those of their white colleagues and

203

leaders. They recount that their navigation of racism, sexism and classism positions them as other within their school community. They explain that they suffer significant identity costs as a result of working in a primarily white district. Their lived realities and their childhood experiences with racism, sexism, and classism make them characteristically different from their white colleagues. Participants come to the field with different commitments, retain unique dispositions and approaches to teaching. That said, working in a predominately white school environment that holds a separate set of priorities and commitments has implications for Black female teacher's identities. Hence, this begs the question, how do the intersectional realities of Black female teachers contribute to their career decisions? More on the potential impact of this triple jeopardy in school organizations will be discussed in future sections.

The Impact of School Leadership

Some research has identified the effects of school leadership on Black teacher satisfaction (Fairchild et al, 2012; Grissom, 2011; Grissom & Keiser, 2011). They describe that the presence of Black administrators and the impact that they can have on surrounding working conditions, could likely increase Black teacher satisfaction and retention. Williams & Johnson (2011) explains that for early career Black teachers they struggled with administrative surveillance, a lack of consistency and heavy teaching loads. Farinde et al (2016) describes that school leadership can influence turnover for Black female teachers, when there is a lack of follow through, the presence of administrative intimidation, and increased workloads.

Relationships: Black Female Teachers and their school leaders

Black female teachers in this study spoke about their relationships with school administration in diverse ways. For Edwidge, her primary reason for leaving the school at the end of the year is because of her poor relationship with school leadership. Her white female

administrator has employed intimidation practices and has under supported Edwidge's instructional pursuits. Hence, she says "I don't want to work with that woman."

Contrary to popular scholarship on teacher and leader relationships, this research finds that Black female teacher retention is much more complex than simply having a Black administrator. Dimples and Aritha both describe that their administrators were Black, however Aritha a leaver, and Dimples who stays begrudgingly are the most critical of their school leadership. Aritha cites dysfunction, political alliances and puppet leadership practices (teacher factions running the school) that made her teaching experiences much more difficult. For Dimples, she states that leadership is "non-existent" given the lack of visibility and attentiveness to disciplinary issues. Therefore, in this study, having a Black administrator has not increased satisfaction nor retention, suggesting that there is more to be explored.

School Leaders and Mircopolitics

Expanding on school leadership relations, we find that the micropolitics of school environments have an adverse effect on Black female teachers in this study. Black female teachers describe that their school leaders, regardless of race, have engaged in political relations that have adverse effects on their job satisfaction. The clearest examples are in Myrlie and Michelle's statements where they proclaim that their school leaders have privileged the voices of power in the community, who are white, over their unique needs and commitments. In other words, Michelle's and Myrlie's advocacy for minoritized and underserved students are not recognized and paid lip service by their administration. Instead, administration privileges the needs of the dominant student families. Due to these concerns, Michelle has decided to move schools and Myrlie is planning her departure. Participants in this study portray that leadership relationships are keenly important to their willingness to stay in or leave a school. However,

scholarship must move beyond the racial-matching, and instead consider the nature of the relationships between teachers and leaders. Additionally, as Black Feminism posits Black females have specific and unique needs that are specific to their lived realities and their voices are explicit challenges to whiteness, maleness, and classist oppression. By centering their critiques and exploring the subsequent results (move and leave behavior) this study helps to frame Black female teachers' oppositional perspectives of today's schools, structures and policies. Further, it shows how their commitments to social justice are often at odds with the priorities of the organization; this has led to turnover behavior.

Administrative Support and Social Justice

Evans and Leonard (2013), explain that Black female teachers who are not supported in their pursuits of social justice pedagogies, were more likely to leave the school. Antonia and Ruby describe explicit support from school leadership to pursue social justice initiatives and community work. These commitments by administration in the form of discretionary funds and other resources, proved pivotal to their retention. Further, for Antonia it was the support of administration for personal advancement (i.e. leadership opportunities, National Board Certification) that was paramount to her retention.

However, in cases where these social justice initiatives were not supported we find that Black female teachers become increasingly dissatisfied and express intentions to leave. Michelle is the clearest example of this as she describes her social justice advocacy falling on deaf ears. She was committed to getting more support for her Black students, to increasing their presence in gifted programs and to raise concerns about other representational issues on campus that she noticed. Considering current literature and the results of this research, more scholarship about how school administration should support Black female teachers is needed. This research

suggests that administration become more keenly aware of social justice pursuits of Black female teachers as a tool for retention.

Administrative Support and Discipline

One of the significant discussions in the field about teacher turnover posits school discipline is an important factor (Ingersoll, 2001). Scholars have highlighted that warm demander, caring approaches from Black female educators are impactful for Black students specifically when it comes to disciplinary issues (Bass, 2012; Dixson, 2003; Gist et al, 2017; Ware, 2006). Moreover, Griffin & Tackie (2016) describe that Black teachers are often spotlighted as the sole disciplinarian, especially when they are one of the few Black teachers on campus. The participants in this study both substantiate and expand on the burden of discipline issues and the impact they have on their career decisions. They outline three separate ideas; being the sole disciplinarian, a lack of administrative support for discipline and poor discipline policies. First, Dorothy explains that she is often burdened by disciplinary issues on her campus as the only Black female in the middle school. Therefore, she is managing her discipline issues as well as other white teachers who need support in that area. This significantly increases her workload and has a strong impact on her current dissatisfaction with her position. Harriet speaks most directly to the effects of lacking disciplinary support from administration and the effect that can have on career moves. She explains leaving her previous school primarily because she did not have the support she needed from school administration in discipline. She states "I was doing more yelling than teaching." Her decision to move comes from the lack of visibility and weak relationship with a new administrator, especially when she was struggling with classroom management. Further, Dimples and Michelle speak of insufficient discipline policies. In Dimples case the lack of structure and policy has led to demoralization, hopelessness and extreme

dissatisfaction. She describes the lack of order in her school as the primary cause for organizational chaos. For Michelle she takes discipline into her own hands and subsequently increases her teaching workload. Her departure from her school is further influenced as her administration refuses to hear her concerns about the discipline policies and inconsistencies. Taken together, research on Black female teacher turnover must take a more intensive focus on how administration can support discipline issues.

Essentially, this research finds that to retain Black female teachers in contemporary classrooms school leaders must first understand their unique intersectional backgrounds and then support their different needs in the areas of; discipline, social justice, personal advancement, community work, building interpersonal relationships and reducing micropolitics. The most important piece of these findings is understanding that Black female teachers come from extremely diverse and unique backgrounds. Hence, they have unique commitments, contributions, goals and therefore needs from school leadership. These needs are markedly different because of their intersectional identities. For example, Black female teachers' commitment to social justice, comes directly from their background experiences and current social realities of being Black, female and a teacher. It is imperative that school leaders, regardless of race, develop an awareness of these identity related influences and subsequently support their commitments. This is most clear in the support given by Antonia's administration.

The Impact of Organizations

Farinde-Wu et al (2017) posits that Black female teachers are drawn to urbanized schools "because of the diversity in urban schools, their own educational background, and their desires to fulfill the urgent need for highly qualified teachers in many under resourced settings (p.82)." They describe their results as an explicit challenge to the master and deficit narratives about

urbanized schools and the high Black teacher turnover rates within them. Further, they call for more qualitative research committed to identifying the specific issues within those schools, that contribute to heightened Black female teacher turnover. Organizational conditions such as lack of autonomy, low trust, a lack of collegiality, and poor instructional resources, have been cited as having unique impacts on Black and Black female teacher turnover in urbanized schools (Achinstein et al, 2010; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). However, as Farinde-Wu et al (2017) explain, there must be more qualitative exploration of the specific organizational conditions.

Black female teachers in this study specifically highlight the organizational factors that contribute to their willingness to stay or leave the school. They collectively recount their experiences with autonomy, school culture, racialized and intersectional hostility from colleagues.

Retention and Autonomy

Senaya, Shirley and Antonia specifically described being recognized at the school level. They report that much of their satisfaction with their position comes from being in an organization where their voices are not only heard but respected. Further, Ruby, Octavia and Jackie explain how they are deeply invested in school level decision-making. Therefore, the opportunities that they have to influence curriculum, missions and visions for the school are principle factors that contribute to their retention. Moreover, Octavia describes had she not had this influence and the classroom resources, she would not remain in her position. Ruby expresses similar sentiments but suggests that the changes from a community-oriented school have resulted in changes to her commitment to that school. These experiences are consistent with common research on teacher retention and turnover, as autonomy reigns important. What is different in

this study is not just the inclusion of teacher's voices, but the inclusion of Black female perspectives at the school level.

Black Female Teachers and Classroom Autonomy

In a related point, Black female teachers remarked that they prize their classroom autonomy as it is uncommon in other schooling spaces. Jackie and Octavia explain that they take pride in being able to claim ownership over their classroom curriculum. Jackie explains that in her classroom she is "free", while Octavia reminds us that teachers in other schools must engage in what she describes as "soul crushing" curricular uniformity. What one should take away from this is that Black female teacher retention is significantly related to their school and classroom autonomy. When organizations are inclusive spaces that include the voices of Black women they are better positioned to retain them. Moreover, when organizations are conducive to curricular freedom they are also more likely to retain Black female teachers. Participants in this study present the importance of their voice in school and classroom decision making, as it relates to retention.

Organizational Culture

Participants who have happily stayed in the field and their schools for extended periods of time, report that collegial, and high trust environments have been a contributory factor. Octavia describes a "culture of support" which has significantly contributed to her success in her school. The longest tenured teachers, Ruby and Sojourner describe collegial support and trust that has permeated their personal and social lives. I found that having ally's in the school environment reigns as an important dynamic in Black female teacher career decisions. Teachers are more likely to remain in schools where their professional and personal lives are supported by their colleagues.

Black Female Teachers and Toxic School Cultures

Paradoxically, Aritha, Edwidge, Dimples and Dorothy describe different school cultures'. Dimples and Aritha remark about intensively urbanized communities and report that their schools were stained with demoralized teachers. This was related to a lack of "order" by administration and a "revolving door" of curricular changes. The results are chaotic school environments. Aritha further expounded that adversarial relationships among faculty led to health concerns, performance issues, and eventually teacher turnover, including her own departure. Moreover, Edwidge explained a lack of collaboration and investment by teachers at her school which is a key element of a negative school culture. These specific organizational experiences exemplify how toxic and adversarial school culture can affect Black female teacher career decisions. Hence, we see Aritha's departure, Edwidge's end of the year turnover and Dimples' desire to leave. These results suggest that turnover decisions are in many ways connected to a school's cultural dynamics. If organizations lack trust and collegiality they are less likely to retain Black female teachers.

Navigating Hostile Racialized, Gendered and Classist Climates

Kohli (2016) originally coins the term "hostile racial climates," in her description of Black and other minoritized teachers who experience racialized microaggressions, spotlighting and other racialized experiences in their schools (p.1). Others have also documented racialized identity oppression for minoritized teachers in schools (Castenada et al, 2006; Griffin & Tackie, 2016; Kelly, 2007; Lee, 2013; Mabokela & Madsen, 2000; 2003; 2005). Participants in this study describe similar incidents but expand on how it has shaped their career decisions. Further, they describe how their intersectional identities being, Black and female in the school lead to double and triple oppression.

Dorothy, Octavia, Jackie and Michelle's stories most clearly represent the intersectional oppression of the organization. They all report fielding comments about their Black female bodies, hair and attire. Collectively they describe multiple ordeals with white colleagues who have made culturally insensitive comments about their appearances even comparing them to other Black women who they bear no resemblance to. For Dorothy, she explicitly stated that the comments about her and even her students' looks make her feel like a "costume". Accordingly, we see again how participants' intersectional identities are spotlighted, exoticized and as a result this ostracizes them from the norm or standards within the organization.

Differently, Maya and Harriet describe that they have to navigate white "fear of the unknown." Although they do not note intentional, or direct racialized attacks they do describe a distance between them and their white colleagues. Maya, who is new to her predominately white school explains that the white teachers and leaders on campus have created a "wall" between them, suggesting that they just don't know much about interacting with Black people. Harriet explains similar distance between her and her administration at a previous school. She didn't feel like there was authentic care in their relationship, the kind of care she feels she has now with her current administration. Ruby suggests that the white colleagues in her school, although apologetic, are not sincere as they spew their culturally and racially uninformed comments.

Relatedly, this research finds that racialized and intersectional stereotypes are another obstacle that Black female teachers must maneuver. Octavia describes intersectional stereotypes and the paternalistic actions of white colleagues that accompany them. She explains that the white women on her campus shower her with support but operate from the viewpoint that she is a helpless, poor, Black, single mother. Myrlie describes having to deflect stereotypes about minoritized, specifically Black students who are in an intensive math course. Although, no

teacher explicitly states that these conditions are pushing them out, there are clear patterns among participants. Specifically, Dorothy, Michelle and Harriet have all considered or have recently moved schools. Octavia, who speaks most directly to identity oppression bares a significant load of intersectional hostility and paternalism from White colleagues, which presents challenges for her. Hence, the compounding effect of intersectional oppression imposed by white teachers and leaders has taken its toll on Black female teachers in this study. This research reveals that schools are not only "hostile racial climates" (Kohli, 2016 p.1) but are also hostile intersectional climates filled with racist, sexist and classist ideas.

The Isolation and Devaluing of Black Female Teachers

Finally, as it relates to organizational conditions that effect Black female teachers, I find that isolation is a salient factor. Dorothy, Myrlie and Maya all illustrate experiences with isolation on their campuses. They speak to a lack of leadership visibility, organizational support for discussions about race and the absence of professional learning. At their respective schools, their commitments, intersectional identities and professional needs are not a priority. For Myrlie and Dorothy, these conditions have led to thoughts about leaving their schools. Again, we find that the tyranny of the majority reigns true and has adverse effects on Black female teacher career decisions. This research identifies isolation in predominately white schools, that further marginalize Black female teacher perspectives.

Summary

This research finds that Black female teachers are most importantly intersectional beings who have deeply raced, cultural, gendered and intersectional herstories. These background characteristics fuel their commitments to the field, to Black students, to Black female students, and to particular school communities. These commitments manifest themselves in social justice

advocacy, other-mothering pedagogies, community-oriented teaching and other forms of racial and gendered uplift. Their self-imposed responsibilities, that are uniquely connected to their identities, sustain Black female teachers' commitments to schools.

However, when school leaders and organizations are not responsive or supportive of these unique obligations and agendas; Black female teachers are forced to consider moving schools or out of the classroom altogether. Conversely, when leaders work alongside Black female teachers in their pursuits of racial uplift and social justice I find that their retention in those schools increase. Additionally, when organizational conditions are conducive for social change, inclusion and community relations Black female teachers are more apt to remain in those schools. On the other hand, when organizations exhibit intersectional hostility, cultural toxicity and adversarial cultures Black female teacher's both consider and commit to moving schools or leaving the field.

Finally, we must acknowledge that Black female teacher's unparalleled experiences and intersectional identities suffer despite job satisfaction and retention behavior. Each participant chronicles how they have had to persevere and transgress in the profession. Hence, we must do more at the leadership and organizational levels to be more inclusive of Black female teacher's multiple identities in order to increase their presence and retention in all schools.

Scholarly Contributions

Below I outline some of the scholarly contributions put forth by the findings of this research.

Expanding the Policy Narratives on Teacher Turnover

The dominate voices in scholarship on teacher turnover have been white men who approach this research from quantitative perspectives (Connor, 2009; Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll

& Connor, 2009; Ingersoll & May, 2011). Although this work is contributory and helpful to understanding teacher turnover and retention patterns, it proves insufficient in explaining the unique career decisions of Black female teachers. These approaches are devoid of discussions about racism, classism, and sexism. These tools do not measure the impact of Black female teachers' herstories and political commitments to social justice. Further they do not include Black female teachers' relationships with school leadership nor their everyday interactions with organizations. Surveys cannot account for Black female teachers' perseverance and transgression through the systems and organizations that are fundamentally grounded in racism, classism, and sexism.

Thus, this research acts as an avenue for Black women's dialogic ways of knowing to be reinserted in the turnover discussion. This study expounds on previous work (Farinde et al, 2016) that seeks to allow the suffering to speak, expanding our knowledge beyond fixed categories such as stayer and leaver. These powerful voices explain that Black female teacher turnover is complex, multi-faceted and unique to their personal herstories and backgrounds. If we want to increase the presence of Black female teachers, we must first engage with their identities and herstories: this begins with understanding the stories that undergird turnover behavior.

Administrative Support for Black female teachers

As stated in chapter 2, scholars have cited that strong administrative support can increase teacher retention (Brown & Wynn, 2009; Johnson & Birkeland, 2004; Wong, 2004). Further, research (Farinde et al, 2016; Williams, 2011) has considered the effects of administrative support for Black female teachers. However, my research explicitly identifies and expands upon what Black female teachers need from school administration. The most important administrative supportive practices, different than the ones outlined in previous studies include: social justice

215

advocacy, maintaining strong community relationships, including Black female teachers' voice in decision-making at the school level and, having open discussions about race, culture and gender. In this vein, the study expands specifically how administrative support practices can help retain Black female teachers.

Challenging Racism, Classism and Sexism: The Intersectional Hostile Climate

From assessment, to funding, to instruction, schools have historically served as racist structures that marginalized the Black and other minoritized populations that attend them (Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2009). Kohli (2016) originally puts forth the concept of hostile racial climates. However, this research reveals that school organizations can also be intersectionally hostile. Hence, Black female teachers must battle racialized, classist and gendered hostility from white colleagues. The voices in the study suggest that the social realities of Black women in society permeate the school environment, making teaching more taxing on their identities. This is evidenced in the participants discussions about paternalism and the policing of the Black female body for example. That said, Black female turnover in some cases is a symptom of organizations that are stained by intersectional oppression.

Understanding Family and Familial Commitments of Black Female teachers

Further, this research carves a different path of scholarship that examines how Black female teachers balance their familial responsibilities and their careers. It is imperative to understand that many participants experience obstacles within school organizations and with school leadership, however scholarship has yet to specifically investigate the impact of family on turnover and retention. This research highlights that Black female teachers must maintain financial stability, teach in schools that are suitable for their children to attend and negotiate the workload of teaching with family, specifically their partners. This finding shows that Black

female teachers must engage in a balancing act, as their teaching and familial commitments often clash.

Black Female Teacher Retention and Urban Education

Research highlights that Black teacher turnover becomes more complex when we consider that Black teachers are over concentrated in urbanized schools (Achinstein et al, 2010; White, 2016). In these environments Black teachers experience a different set of challenges. Those challenges include but are not limited to high performance pressures, curricular change, faculty and leadership turnover among other significant obstructions to the learning environment (Payne, 2008; White, 2016). Hence there are adverse effects to their commitments to minoritized populations, namely stress (Fitchet et al, 2017). We see the evidence of such obstacles in Dorothy's, Dimples' and Aritha's stories about turnover. What this research adds to the literature is a qualitative narrative that exposes the unique experiences of Black female teachers working in urbanized and intensively urbanized schools. This research chronicles the specific effects of dispossessed urbanized communities, that lack the funding and resources on the Black female teacher turnover problem. Hence, we must further explore these stories to develop context specific approaches to curbing Black teacher turnover in these schools.

Points of Divergence: Black Male and Black Female Teachers

Clear throughout the study processes, findings and analyses are the distinct differences between Black female and Black male teachers that we must pay much closer attention to. It is important to first recognize that Black women are marginalized and othered for reasons that are beyond race. The collective impact of race, class and gender, compounds these oppressive forces (Guy-Sheftal, 1995). This study finds that their oppression rests at the intersection of classism, racism and sexism, that positions them as the opposite of white, wealthy maleness. Patriarchy in

today's society poses a set of challenges that Black women, like white and non-white women are forced to navigate. However, different from other women of color Black women's experiences in this country are significantly influenced by slavery, African and African American ways of knowing (Evans-Winters, 2015), their spirituality, and the history of Black women's leadership in social movements.

Black Male and Black Female Teachers

Black male teachers also experience a considerable amount of oppression in schooling spaces. Black male teachers represent about 2% of the teaching population and are also more likely to leave schools than Black female teachers (Lewis & Toldson, 2013). Black male teachers occupy complex roles in schools that position them as saviors of Black students but also patriarchal disciplinarians (Jackson, Boutte & Wilson, 2013). These roles force them to negotiate their professional identity and personal commitments to Black students, specifically Black male students (Lynn, 2006). Further their increased leave behavior is often fueled by their racial isolation and experiences with racism in schooling spaces (Bristol, 2018). The cited experiences of Black male teachers resonate with my own. I had to find unique ways to navigate racialized oppression from predominately white colleagues, students and parents. It was imperative that I center the experiences of Black people in my history classes, despite the organizational backlash. Further, I had to push back on white colleagues who projected deficit rhetoric and stereotypes about Black students on campus. Also, as one of only two Black male classroom teachers I experienced extreme isolation, physically, politically and socially. My epistemological and social justice-oriented stances were not heard nor supported by other faculty on campus.

On the other hand, I felt that I was positioned in the school as a disciplinarian to "control" Black students rather than teach them. I was given a plethora of opportunities to become a leader

in the school because my administrators were supportive of my disciplinarian disposition. However, I grew weary of the deficit oriented, control narrative and began to seek other opportunities outside of the classroom. I felt no allegiance to the school, the position nor the classroom altogether. This I now realize is a privilege related to my own patriarchal identity. For me, opportunity existed in leadership and endeavors outside of the classroom because I was a male. This made classroom teaching a temporary stop on my journey in the educational sector.

Black female teachers in this study present different perspectives than Black male teachers, like myself. First, Black female teacher participants do not describe being positioned as a patriarchal disciplinarian. In only one case, Dorothy, do we find the acknowledgement of their warm demanding discipline style by colleagues on campus. However, Dorothy explains that her approach to behavioral issues comes from a place of love and empowerment, not control as was my own approach. Conversely, Black women in this study explain their positions in schools as largely invisible. Their ability to teach for racial and gendered uplift, manage classroom behavior and empower students of color goes largely unnoticed in most cases represented in this study. This is a key component that distinguishes Black female teachers from Black male teachers. For example, had I employed some of the practices represented in this study in my own classroom I likely would have received high praise and accolades because of my positioning in the school.

Black female teachers also describe the complexity of their intersectional identity and how that relates to their experiences within the organization. Whereas Black male teachers experience raced issues and are challenged by racism in the school space, Black female teachers feel organizational oppression on multiple fronts. Participants' gendered identity posed a unique set of experiences in what I call Intersectionally Hostile School Climates. Octavia and Myrlie, describe the intensity of organizational oppression that is deeply connected to their intersectional

identity (being Black and woman). They both recognize that their organizations and the white female faculty that comprise it see them as less than and deficient. Dorothy's, Michelle's and Jackie's experiences with body policing is a prime example of how school organizations marginalize Black women that is different than how they marginalize Black male teachers. As a Black male teacher, I never felt that I was deficient nor seen as deficient by colleagues. Conversely, they supported my campus leadership and praised my ability to connect and discipline Black students. Further, my colleagues never commented on my physical appearances like the white teachers represented in this study.

The focus on the experiences of Black female teachers in this study is an important contribution to the literature as we must understand the gendered points of divergence. Black teachers career experiences are diverse and one of the many ways that their experiences may deviate is with gender related experiences. This study explores how intersectionality complicates Black teachers career trajectories and turnover.

Conceptual Framing of Emergent Themes

Black and Critical Race Feminist Concepts	Corresponding Themes/Findings	Making Connections
Triple Oppression Black women must simultaneously navigate racism, sexism and classism	• Faith, Religion and Spirituality • Navigating Triple Oppression: Racism, Classism and Sexism • Navigating Hostile Intersectional School Climates	• Race, Class and Gender Oppression presents intersectional forms of oppression within school organizations. Participants' experience oppressive organizational characteristics including: structures, practices, policies, deficit rhetoric, racialized stereotypes and microaggressions. • These institutionalized forms of racism, classism and sexism are intellectually, emotionally and symbolically violent to their humanity and contribute to turnover considerations. • Black female teachers engage in various tactics, and lean on their spirituality to help guide them through these organizational experiences.

Table 5: Conceptual framing of findings that borrows from CRF and Black Feminism in Education (Evans-Winters, 2015; Wing, 2003)

Table 5 (cont'd)

Intersectional Needs Black women have unique political, social and intellectual needs	• Community Connectedness and Community Work • Balancing Motherhood and Teaching • Leadership Relationships • Administrative support for Social Justice Advocacy	• Black female teachers have specific needs in schools related to their intersectional social realities. • Black female teachers need support for their social justice and community advocacy political agendas • Black female teachers need school communities that are conducive to their social needs related to motherhood and partnership. • Black female teachers need to be intellectually supported through strong administrative, relationships and support for social justice teaching.
Fighting on multiple fronts Black women must concurrently fight for racial, class and gendered justice	• Intersectional Pedagogies	• Black female teachers, teach as a form of intersectional uplift as they personally have experienced the triple oppression of racism, classism and sexism.

Table 5 (cont'd)

Living through intersectional realities Black women's lived experiences fuel their commitments to denounce racism & sexism	• Teaching as Racial Uplift • Teaching as a Family Profession	• Black female teachers' commitments to the classroom are fueled by their familial influences that instilled in them a charge to fight racial oppression. • Black female teachers were mothered and other-mothered into the profession, by Black women which helped to shape their intersectional teaching identity.
Structural Marginalization Traditional policy and practices obscure the realities of intersectional communities	• School Leadership Micropolitics • Administrative Support for Discipline • Autonomy • Organizational Culture • Black Female Teacher Isolation	• Black female teachers' intersectional realities are often marginalized by traditional school leadership practices, organizational structures, cultures, and policies. • Traditional practices, structures and policies that do not account for Black female teachers' intersectional realities, in turn reinforce white male capitalist ideals • Without proper attention to Black female teacher's intersectional, social realities leaders and organizations continue to marginalize their existence. .

This conceptual framework ties the theoretical concepts of Critical Race Feminism and Black

Feminism in education to the emergent themes in this study. This framing serves as a roadmap to

show how I explicitly connect the themes to Black female teachers experiences with turnover in this study.

Theoretical Considerations

"We are not suggesting that all Black women teachers subscribe to Black feminism, or that only Black women can research Black women teachers. Rather, Black women teachers, as in the words of Collins, have a unique angle of vision on our own lives (and our pedagogy) that may be necessary in understanding exactly what we bring to educational practice (and research). In addition, given that regardless of class, Black women (and indeed most women of color) remain marginalized in U.S. society, perhaps Black women—both scholars and nonscholars—will need to interpret and articulate our experiences for ourselves (Dixson & Dingus, 2008 p.812)."

The above quote poses a significant challenge to the research that I attempt to both interpret and analyze. As a Black man I lack the requisite "angle of vision" that Black women have on their own lives and pedagogies. What this means, is that my experience as a classroom teacher and the experiences of the participants diverge at multiple points. I was supported by my administration to control Black bodies on campus. I was celebrated as a disciplinarian rather than an instructor. But, given my position as a Black male, I was praised just for being in the school, regardless of whether I was successful in the classroom. Also, as a Black male in education, there was never an expectation that I would remain in the classroom. I was given multiple leadership opportunities and told that I would make a great school leader. These experiences significantly affected the way that I theorized about this topic.

The Black female teachers in this study were not supported, lauded or praised for their efforts in both instruction and classroom management despite, being more committed than I ever

was. They also describe a stronger social justice commitment and a considerably heavier personal and professional load (as it relates to family concerns), than I could have imagined. Further, their organizational experiences, with regards to race, class and gender exposes the multiple ways that they had to navigate their schools and career decisions. These revelations were both different and beyond my original conceptualization of this work. Hence, I lean upon the work of Black feminist scholars to better speak to their career stories.

After much reading and consultation, I arrived at Black Feminism and Critical Race Feminism as the most logical ways to frame the analysis of this study. The specific concepts and tenants that I draw from include:

1. Black women experience a special kind of oppression, due to their racial and gender identity and access to limited resources in a racist, sexist, classist, society—Black women confront a triple jeopardy (Guy-Sheftal, 1995).

2. The political, social, and intellectual needs of Black women are characteristically different from Black Men and white women—suggesting that Black women must simultaneously fight racial and gender oppression.

3. Black women's commitment to challenging racism and sexism is directly linked to their lived experiences of being Black and woman.

4. Black feminism is theoretical, methodological and political discourse— it illuminates the voices of the Black women as they speak to and address issues of whiteness, maleness, and wealth.

The findings and analysis of the participants stories were guided by the principles above. I explore the significance of their stories as it relates to the triple jeopardy of racism, classism

and sexism. This is most evident when participants speak of their challenges of growing up in dispossessed communities, such as Myrlie and Jackie. Participants who work in predominately white school environments explain how they have to navigate oppression on all three fronts, from their colleagues and their school leadership. From hostile intersectional climates that police their appearances to navigating intersectional stereotypes about single motherhood, we find clear evidence of how Black feminist concepts help to illuminate the study's findings.

Further Evans Winters (2015) suggests that that there is a significant difference between the political, intellectual and social needs of Black women. We see clear evidence of these unique needs when considering the ways that school leadership effects participants' career decisions. For example, those participants who happily stayed in their schools, were able to do so because of the specific support provided by administration. Examples include support for personal advancement, leadership opportunities, support for social justice advocacy and conversations about race. As Black women continue to feel the brunt of double and triple oppression in this country, it becomes a moral imperative for school leaders to support their advancement in the field of education. Further, as Black female teachers continue to lead the charge of racial uplift for Black students, school leaders are compelled to buttress their efforts to retain them.

Black female teachers, much like Black women across the country have a charge to denounce racism and sexism in society, as they have experienced this oppression in their own social lives. This charge is consistent and apparent across all Black female teachers in this study. Their background experiences are the fuel that they use to propel themselves to fight for social justice in today's classroom. Understanding the birth of this commitment helps us to recognize what is needed to increase their presence in the classroom.

Finally, as Evans Winters (2015) states Black Feminism is an essential tool that illuminates Black women's voices as an explicit theoretical, methodological and political challenge to racism, classism and sexism. Centering Black female teachers' voices in this study was a key contribution to literature as their voices disrupt the fixed policy conversations that so often obscure their experiences with turnover. Instead, they paint a more vivid picture of navigating racism from colleagues, classist and sexist conversations among teachers in the building, through their discourse. What these stories give us is depth, but also a critique of systems, organizations and school leadership that are clearly veiled by racist, classist and sexist ideas.

Thus, the merit of this project rests on the focus on Black female teachers' reclaiming their voice in the teacher turnover discussion. The marginalization and outright exclusion of Black women's voices in the turnover discussion significantly flattens their unique experiences in schools. As stated before, turnover literature has not been very inclusive of voices and less inclusive of the voices of intersectional communities. Therefore, the explicit focus on their dialogic ways of knowing, related to their career decisions legitimates the use of Black feminist framing. Hence, the field must move in an identifiable direction that seeks to uplift these voices in research, policy and practice, if the end goal is to retain Black female teachers.

Critical Race Feminism

It is important to understand that Critical Race Feminism, is born out of Critical Legal Studies and Critical Race Theory (CRT). One of the champions of the Critical Race Theory movement was Derrick Bell. Derrick Bell was one of the first to "place race, racism and colonialism squarely at the center of intellectual legal dialogue (Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2009, p.2)." From this scholarly work we see the outgrowth of Critical Race Theory

from legal studies to other fields, namely education. CRT seeks to address the issues of power, race and privilege within social institutions. Within education CRT serves as a framework to challenge and dismantle prevailing notions of fairness, meritocracy, colorblindness, and neutrality in the education of minoritized groups (Gillborn, 2005). CRT rests on five essential themes. First, racism is ordinary and normal: interest convergence- which suggests that advances of Blacks are only supported when there is a residual or primary benefit to whites: also, race is a social construction and therefore a product of social thought rather than an objective category: there is differential racialization, suggesting that groups are racialized differently depending on the needs of the labor force: intersectionality, which suggests that no one person occupies a singular identity: and the idea of counter stories, which suggests that minoritized groups have diverse histories and can speak more poignantly to their own unique stories (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Bell (1995) & Taylor (2009) explains that, CRT identifies racism as permanent and pervasive in society. White privilege and dominance is deeply engrained at the institutional and systemic levels of society. Given its institutionalized nature, racism is not often recognized by whites. Whites assume that, because they don't feel like they are being racist, that they are not individually racist and have not benefited from racism. CRT refutes the aforementioned claims and instead suggests that whites have benefited often unknowingly, from institutionalized racism (Taylor, 2009; Gillborn, 2005; Bell, 1995).

"Black women deserve a theoretical framework that combats racial and gender oppression from multiple standpoints. Critical Race Feminism in education may provide legal and academic stratagem for studying and eradicating race, class and gender oppression in educational institutions (Evans-Winters & Esposito, 2010, p. 19)." It is imperative that we

understand that Black women have historically been overlooked and disregarded in policy and law related discussions. Documents, like the Constitution for example, completely disregard their existence in this country. Further, as Wing (1997) points out, the Critical Legal Studies and Critical Race scholarship focuses more intently on males of color, rather than the unique needs of women of color. Hence, she suggests that there needs to be a more intentional focus on the intersectional experiences of minoritized women in legal and policy discussions. Critical Race Feminism is an important lens because it "centers the roles, experiences, and narratives of women of color" in analyzing systems, structures & institutions (Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015; Pratt-Clarke 2010, p.24). Further, Critical Race Feminism suggests that intersectional oppression goes far beyond the sum of racism and sexism (Wing, 2003). She posits that simply including the voices of women of color, in an already established analytical framework is not enough to achieve liberation. Childers-McKee and Hytten (2015) expound on this work and suggest that traditional policies and practices often obfuscate the experiences of diverse and intersectional communities.

Therefore, the very structure of this project not only centers the voices of Black female teachers, but is an attempt to provide space for critique, reclamation and reconciliation. Hence, preconceived structures that traditionally oppress marginalized communities were not used to analyze data from participants. This research fits into a tradition that shifts our traditional ideological and theoretical gaze on teacher turnover, taking a more liberating approach. It is the space that Black female participants have to critique policy, leaders and organizations that align this project with the Critical Race feminist tradition. The assumptions of CRT and CRF, namely that racism and gender racism is pervasive, significantly influences this scholarship. Therefore, I see this work contributing to CRF in education in a few ways. First, as stated before, teacher

turnover discussions are often addressed in the policy arena. However, if we know that policies obscure the needs of intersectional communities, in this case Black women, then there must be a more critical discourse that explicitly focuses on intersectional needs. Hence, this research challenges traditional approaches to teacher turnover, and offers an alternative approach that intentionally centers Black women's voices in the discussion. Also, this work suggests that although we continue to need policy solutions to Black female teacher turnover, we also must expand our turnover discussions into other arenas, like educational leadership. Educational leaders must be equipped to understand the specific ways that policy related turnover research, only tells a piece of the story. School leaders must be prepared to understand the uniqueness of intersectional communities of teachers if they want to retain them in schools.

Methodological Considerations

As stated in previous sections, we find that the vast majority of research on Black teacher turnover and retention leans on quantitative measures and large-scale data sets (Achinstein et al 2010; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Carver-Thomas & Darling Hammond, 2017). In response to quantitative and policy discussion describing turnover behavior some scholarship has taken a more qualitative approach. In Cochran et al, (2012) the authors lean on longitudinal data of early career teachers, tying their teaching performance, success in the classroom, school culture, climate, and perceptions of support that lead to turnover behavior. They argue that early career decisions occur at different and multiple points and cannot be divorced from school context and teacher's own personal commitments. They develop a different way of thinking about turnover that considers individual teacher's needs and the ability or inability of the organization (school) to respond to those needs. It is in this vein that my research intends to advance our knowledge of turnover and retention behavior.

Differently, Farinde et al (2016) explores Black female teacher pathways into the profession and turnover. They also employ Black feminist framing to the study that helps to highlight how their careers are affected by their intersectional identities. However, this research focuses exclusively on Black female teachers from a single urban district. Although a powerful and important narrative, it does not explore the depth of this issue across experiences and different kinds of schools.

Whereas Cochran et al (2012) considers performance of early career teachers as a key signifier of future career decisions and Farinde et al (2016) focuses on a specific population of Black female teachers; my research focuses the analysis on Black female teachers' decisions to stay or leave a school related to the school leadership practice and organizational characteristics. It employs phenomenological and case characteristics that allow space for Black female teachers to truly make sense of their career journeys. This approach gives ownership and autonomy to participants and subsequently leads to more meaning making evident in chapter four. Moreover, this methodological approach broadens the narrative to include teachers in different contexts to explore the diversity of effects on Black female teacher career decisions. Further, this research contributes to our understanding of how school leadership and organizations can help to retain these populations of teachers. It explores how Black female teachers make sense of their identities and their subsequent interactions with leaders and organizations.

Together, this research complicates the turnover and retention conversation in ways that have not been previously explored in literature. Black female teachers career decisions are implicitly or explicitly fueled by their racial, cultural, and gendered experiences. Further, their interactions with school leadership and school leaders' ability to affirm, exclude, or ignore their unique experiences is telling of eventual turnover or retention behavior. This methodological

turn to focus on turnover and retention narratives gives us more details and insight that can lead to the improvement of leadership practice and organizational structures.

Implications

Policy Implications

Again, traditional approaches to teacher turnover discussions have been quantitative and exclusive of voice. Therefore, much of the discussion around turnover and retention issues are taken up in policy arenas. This research has traditionally focused on turnover trends examining variables such as school context, collegiality, and administrative support to name a few. Accordingly, our responses to teacher turnover have been policy initiatives to increase recruitment and retention, like Teach for America and other programs. However, what this research suggests is that there must be a shift in the narrative as Black female teachers continue to leave the classroom at alarming rates.

Fundamentally, Critical Race and Critical Race feminist scholars have explained that traditional policy initiatives only reinforce white supremacy and further marginalize minoritized populations (Wing, 2003). Critical Race Feminism posits that these policies apply one size fits all approaches to complex raced, classed and gendered issues (Childer-McKee & Hytten, 2015). Evident in the narratives of Black female teachers in this study, we must carve a new path to addressing Black female teacher turnover. Engaging in Critical Race feminist approaches to educational policy and allowing the voices of increasingly marginalized populations to speak to issues of power remains necessary. This research serves as an important example of how we must reframe the teacher turnover problem to consider intersectional oppression. Further, it suggests that we must also reevaluate our policy approaches.

Implications for School Leadership

Research has found that school administration has a powerful impact on teacher turnover (Boyd et al, 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2009; Grissom, 2011; Ladd, 2011). This is no different for Black female teachers (Farinde et al, 2016). However, scholarship has yet to define what specifically school leaders need to do to retain Black and Black female teachers. Without a strong roadmap, we lack the requisite research to empower school leaders to retain Black teachers. Hence, more research, like this study should examine how we engage in retaining Black and Black female teachers. We must uncover the specific support practices, the organizational policies, structures and school community relationships that are necessary in this endeavor.

Culturally Responsive School Leadership has been a powerful theoretical approach for school leaders hoping to address the unique needs of minoritized students in their schools (Khalifa et al, 2015). Culturally Responsive Leadership entails four major strands: Critical self awareness (Gooden, 2005), culturally responsive instructional leadership (Khalifa, 2011), creating culturally responsive school environments (Green, 2015) and engaging students, families and the community (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006). Although this work specifically focuses on urbanized contexts, and the needs of minoritized students and families; it does however suggest a leadership approach that will likely be conducive to retaining Black and Black female teachers. Hence, leaders in this study who aligned themselves with the community and social justice orientations of Black female teachers were more likely to retain them in the classroom. Therefore, I see Culturally Responsive School Leadership as an appropriate approach to retaining Black female teachers in today's schools.

Considering What Works: Recommendations for Educational Leaders to Retain Black Female Teachers

Recommendation 1: Learning the herstories, commitments and social realities of Black female teachers.

School leaders must engage in regular conversations with Black female teachers to understand their herstories, social realities and the obstacles they are facing in the school. What this study shows is that if school leaders are at least aware of the social justice commitments of Black female teachers they can support them and subsequently retain them in the classroom. I recommend that school leaders regularly meet with their Black female teachers on campus, listen to their plights and allow that to guide their subsequent, individualized support practices.

Recommendation 2: Supporting Black Female teachers specific and unique needs.

Engaging in regular conversations will unveil pertinent information about this specific population of teachers. Thus, we can expand school leader's field of view and allowing them to tailor their supportive practices to fit the unique needs of their Black female teachers. Black female teachers need an individualized approach that connects to their raced, classed and gendered realties as well as their social justice commitments.

Recommendation 3: Creating inclusive environments that are informed by Black women's voices.

Next, school leaders must create a school environment that is conducive to the needs of Black female teachers. This study highlights that Black female teachers experience intersectional hostility from white colleagues in the building. Hence, school organizations should be deeply informed by Black women's perspectives and challenge all forms of intersectional oppression.

School leadership should not engage in this challenge unilaterally, but instead lean on the perspectives of Black female teachers in the building.

Recommendation 4: Continuously improving structures, policy and internal capacity for social justice.

Finally, I recommend that school leaders engage in continuous improvement of the structures, policies and other organizational characteristics to ensure the inclusivity of Black female teachers. I would venture to say that because Black female teachers regularly engage in social justice advocacy and serve as cultural translators for minoritized students; their perspectives should be evident in school policies, structures and practices.

Implications for Future Research

This dissertation is only the first stage of a larger project. The second stage of this project leans upon the narratives of Black female teachers to explore how school leaders view the turnover issue. The second stage includes interview data from a diverse set of school leaders' perceptions of Black teacher turnover and how they attempt to retain them. This research will explore the question, how do school leaders perceive their role in retaining Black and Black female teachers?

Further research should explore the career decisions and turnover narratives of other minoritized teaching populations, such as Black male and Latina teachers. We must ask specific questions about how marginalized groups of teachers make sense of their careers and career decisions. Also, we should engage in more research that considers context and community in the discussion. How do urbanized teachers talk about turnover and retention? How do teachers in rural schools discuss turnover and retention? These approaches should prove paramount in

shifting the discussion from one size fit all approaches to turnover, to instead creating context specific approaches to retaining diverse teachers.

Moreover, future research should consider ethnographic approaches to teacher turnover. Exploring the day to day interactions of minoritized teachers in schools would help to paint a more complete picture of how organizations oppress these teachers. I call for a critical interrogation of intersectional hostility in school organizations, that give scholars a sense of the raced, classed and gendered experiences of minoritized teachers in schools.

This research serves as an important step in understanding how to retain minoritized teachers in the classroom by allowing them to tell their career stories. Focusing on narrative leads us onto a path of creating specific supports to retaining diverse teachers. However, there remains much more work to be done.

Concluding Thoughts

Although there is much work to be done, it is important to acknowledge the urgency of retaining Black female teachers in the classroom. The first pioneers of Black emancipation were Black female educators. They have remained at the forefront of every social movement, from women's rights, to civil rights and even #BlackLivesMatter. Black female educators continue to persist as strong community pillars. Inside today's classrooms they engage in soul liberation for so many minoritized youth. However, we have failed them. Research has obscured their realities. Leadership has ignored their advocacy. Policy has marginalized their experiences. Organizations enact violence on their humanity. Yet, Black female educators have found a way to persevere, provide an abundance of love and care and foster success for Black students in contemporary classrooms.

This research acknowledges and attempts to center the discussion on those Black women who have and continue to suffer in schools. This work posits that it is not achievement scores, merit pay, teacher evaluations or summer breaks that get Black female teachers out of the bed. No. Teaching, education, liberation is woven into the fabric of their being. Black women's historical and social realities lead them to the classroom. Their identities push them to pursue racial, cultural and gendered justice in through their praxis. However, school leaders have proven to be blind to these intersectional and emancipatory pedagogies. Educational leaders, trained as they necessarily are don't understand that Black women teach from their heart and their soul, not the curriculum guide. School organizations reinforce white supremacy, male supremacy, and capitalist ideologies that push Black female teachers to the margins. These realties force Black female teachers to negotiate their identities and suppress their desires in order to persevere. Thus, retention in so many of the participant's stories becomes an act of compliance or symbolic transgression in an organization that was never built for them to succeed. Turnover is the space where choosing self over those organizational norms becomes real or actualizes. These career stories serve as a critical intersection where the needs of students, Black female teacher's families, identities and the organizational and leadership demands hang in the balance. It is time for Black female teachers to reclaim their space and time in this discussion.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Interview Consent

Black Teacher Retention (BTR): Consent Form

Greetings Teachers,

`I am Darrius Stanley a 3rd year Doctoral candidate at Michigan State University and former secondary history teacher. In hopes of learning more about our experiences in the field I am asking for your consent and participation in a study that tells our stories.

What the study is about

The purpose of this study is to generate further understanding of our experiences as minority teachers in schools. The goal is to help increase our presence, our retention and work to improve our experiences.

What I am asking you to do

This study will require a 1 hour interview either at your place of employment or some outside social space (i.e coffee shop). The questions will cover your motivations to teach, your experiences in preparation programs, your different assignments and most importantly your experiences with wanting to stay in or leave schools.

Risks and Benefits

There is some risk that you may find that some of the information that you present is sensitive or revealing. Any report of information will be covered by pseudonyms that blind your identity or place of employment. No information will be reported to employers or officials that would cause risk or harm to the participant. Finally, all identifiable information will be kept on a password protected hard drive and locked in file cabinet that only the researcher has access to.

The information from this project will strictly be used to improve conditions for you and all other Black teachers in the field or considering entering the field.

Voluntary

Of course, your participation in this study, although encouraged, is completely voluntary. Therefore, any questions that you wish not to answer will be skipped over and if at any time you feel uncomfortable sharing we will end the interview process.

Questions

If you have any specific questions about this exploratory project feel free to email me at stanl122@msu.edu or call me at 850-694-3536. I am always open to speak about any concerns or questions that you may have.

I _____, consent to participating in this project on Black Teacher Experiences and Retention with the understanding that all data collected and reported will be blinded by a pseudonym.

Signature_____   Date_____

Black Teacher Turnover (Teacher Protocol)

Good afternoon my name is Darrius Stanley a third year PhD student in Educational Leadership at Michigan State University. I really appreciate you agreeing to speak with me about your experiences in your professional career. As a former Black teacher I am really passionate about learning your story and exploring the different ways that you have made sense of these experiences. This project is aimed at illuminating your experiences in the profession from a historical, societal, institutional, and interpersonal perspective. I hope to share these narratives in a manner that will contribute to healing, rebuilding, and re-establishing the Black teacher corps. I will begin with questions about your specific background and move forward with more specific questions about your teaching experiences. To be clear, none of the information that you share with me will be tied to your unique identity. Also, it will not be shared with any of your colleagues, students, parents or employers. These interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed by me. These data will be kept on a password protected hard drive and locked away in a file cabinet that only I have access to. At the conclusion of our interactions I will have you pick a pseudonym that will represent you in a subsequent write up or report. Are there any questions about the process or anything else before we get started?

Phenomenological Phase	Theme from Literature	Question(s)
Life History (Phase 1)	Teacher Background	1. Could you briefly describe your current teaching position and role in school? **Follow Up:** How do you feel about your role/position?
Life History	(Irvine, 1988;Leonard & Evans, 2013; Su, 1997)	2. Tell me about your pathway/journey to your current position? **Follow Up**: What were your motivations to enter the field? Still relevant? Could you tell me a bit about your teacher preparation experience? (Alternative or Traditional experience) Well-Prepared?

Life History		3. Thinking back to when you first entered the field and where you are now. Are there things in your personal and professional life that have affected who you are as a teacher today? **Follow Up:** Were there any significant obstacles to getting to this point? Could you explain specifically how they (obstacles) have affected you?
Critical Movements and Experiences (Phase 2)	General Retention and Turnover (Ingersoll &Connor, 2009;Smith & Ingersoll, 2004)	4. Could you briefly describe the schools/districts (poverty-level, racial make-up, urban, suburban, rural, resources) you worked/work in? **Follow Up:** Could you briefly describe your experiences in these (most recent past and current) schools?) Why did you stay? **or** Why did you leave?
Critical Experiences	General Turnover (Ingersoll 2001;2003)	5.Would you consider leaving this (current) school next year or next few years? Staying? **Follow Up:**

		Why or why not?
	Administrative Support (Boyd et al, 2011; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009)	6. Could you briefly describe the school leadership in your past/current school? Leadership Style? **Follow Up:** Race? Gender?
	Administrative Support (Boyd et al, 2011; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009; Lau et al, 2009; Williams &Johnson, 2011)	7. How would you describe their disposition towards you? **Follow Up:** Do/Did you feel supported? What made you feel that way? (if needed)PD? (if needed) Do you feel like they respect you as a professional?
	Administrative Support (Boyd et al, 2011; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009)	8. How would you describe the leaders' influence on your decision to **stay** or **leave**? **Follow Up:** What did they do to make you want to stay? What did they do to make you want to leave? or What could they have done or could they do differently?
	Administrative Support (Griffin & Tackie, 2016;	9. What role do you feel race (your race and theirs)

	Grissom et al, 2013; Kohli, 2016)	played in your experiences with school leadership?
	Administrative Support	10. If you could or could have changed anything about your school leadership in your past schools that would have made you want to stay, what would those things be? Why? School in general?
	Classroom/School autonomy and Pedagogy (Evans & Leonard, 2013;Ingersoll &May, 2011;Torres, 2014)	11. Did/do you feel like you have autonomy (in most recent past and/or current school)? Could you explain why or why not? **Follow Up:** Did you feel like you had a role in the decision-making at the school? (i.e. discipline, policies) Did you feel like you could teach what or how you wanted?
	Teacher Tracking (Stanley, 2016)	12. Could you briefly describe your previous and/or current classroom composition(s)? Race? Socioeconomic status? Labeled Behavioral/Learning Disabilities? **Follow Up:**

		How did/do you feel like this compared to your other colleagues classrooms? Same? Different? Why do you think that is?
	School Climates (Casteneda et al, 2006;EdTrust, 2016;Kelly, 2007; Kohli, 2016;Mabokela &Madsen, 2005)	13. Could you briefly describe the most recent past and/or current schools' culture? Were/are there any significant obstacles? Could you give me an example? **Follow Up:** Do or did you feel valued? Comfortable? Supported? What role has your race played in these feelings? Could you elaborate?
	Trust, Relational Trust (Boyd et al, 2011; Hanford & Leithwood, 2013; Ingersoll, 2001)	14. Would you describe your current or past school environment as trusting? **Follow Up:** Could you explain why you do or do not feel that way? To what extent do you feel respected by other colleagues? Black? White? Leadership?
	Social Capital (Bristol, 2014, Mabokela & Madsen)	15. Thinking about your social groups at past/current school, could you briefly

		describe who you socialized with? **Follow Up:** What was their racial make up? Gender background? How many?
Making Sense (Phase 3)	Racialized Experiences	16. Thinking back through our discussion, what role do you think your race has ultimately played in these experiences?
	Salaries (Leukens et al, 2004; Zumwalt & Craig, 2005)	17. Did salaries play a role in your decision to **stay** OR **leave** any schools? **Follow Up:** Could you briefly explain how and why?
Making Sense (Phase 3)		18. Are there any comments or important facts about your experiences that I haven't asked about and you would like to share?

Thank you for an inspiring narrative and for agreeing to help tell this story. I am so grateful for this opportunity and look forward to our continued conversation. If you have any questions about the process feel free to contact me. Thanks so much again and we will be in touch.

APPENDIX C: Demographic Information Document

BTR Demographic Sheet

Gender:_____

Race/Ethnicity:_____

Hometown:_____

Teaching Institution (Where you got your degree?)_____

Degree (i.e. Biology
Education):_____

Highest Degree
attained:_____

Family members in
education:_____

Current
District/Position:_____

Years in the
field:_____
_

Years in the
district:_____

Years in current
school:_____

# of different teaching jobs
(schools/districts):_____

_____

Pseudonym_____

APPENDIX D: Research Question and Methodological Alignment

Research Question (s)	Method	Methodological Reasoning
RQ 1: What factors do Black female teachers perceive as most influential to their decisions to stay or leave their schools?	**Artifact Collection** Each participant submits an artifact that "keeps them motivated" to teach and reminds them of why they do it. **Hybrid Phenomenological Interviews (Seidman, 2006)** 60 minute, semi-structured interviews with each teacher, used to ascertain the stories and experiences that contribute to their reasons to stay or leave their schools.	As previously noted, most research on Black teacher retention relies heavily on national data sets and less so on more qualitative inquiry (i.e. Ingersoll & May, 2011). Artifacts provide a powerful description of the context (physical and philosophical) or environment that can be revisited (Merriam, 2009) Interviewing provides the depth and insight into participants lived realities (Yin, 2014)
RQ 2: What role do Black female teachers perceive race to have on their experiences and decisions to stay or leave their schools?	**Documentation** Participants will complete a demographic sheet that identifies particular aspects of their personal and professional backgrounds (i.e. race, gender and undergraduate institution) **Hybrid Phenomenological Interviews (Seidman, 2006)** 60 minute, semi-structured interviews with each teacher, used to ascertain the stories and experiences that contribute to their reasons to stay or leave their schools.	Research the impacts of Black teachers personal backgrounds on their retention is currently marginal (Achinstein et. al, 2010). Documentation is an unobtrusive tool that describes the context of the study, allows for corroboration of data and gives the project stability (Yin, 2014).
RQ3: What role do Black female teachers suggest school leadership plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools?	**Hybrid Phenomenological Interviews (Seidman, 2006)** 60 minute, semi-structured interviews with each teacher, used to ascertain	What is less clear in the research is how Black teachers make decisions to stay in their schools, despite many of the relevant

| | the stories and experiences that contribute to their reasons to stay or leave their schools. | workplace and racialized push factors.

Interviewing provides the depth and insight into participants lived realities (Seidman,2006; Yin, 2014) |
|---|---|---|

APPENDIX E: Connecting Research Questions to Interview Protocol

Research Questions	Interview Questions
RQ 1: What factors do Black female teachers perceive as most influential to their decisions to stay or leave their schools?	**T4, T5, T8,T10,T16,T18,**
RQ 2: What role do Black female teachers perceive race to have on their experiences and decisions to stay or leave their schools?	**T9, T16,T17**
RQ 3: What role do Black female teachers suggest school leadership plays in their decisions to stay or leave their schools?	**T6,T7,T8, T10 T11, T12, T13, T14, T15**

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

Achinstein, B., Ogawa, R. T., Sexton, D., & Freitas, C. (2010). Retaining teachers of   color: A pressing problem and a potential strategy for "hard-to-staff" schools. *Review of Educational Research*, *80*(1), 71-107.

Albert Shanker Institute. (2015). The state of teacher diversity in American education. Retrieved from Washington, DC.

Alinia, M. (2015). On *Black Feminist Thought* : thinking oppression and resistance through intersectional paradigm. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *38*(13), 2334–2340. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.1058492

Allensworth, E., Ponisciak, S. & Mazzeo, C., (2009).The Schools Teachers Leave: Teacher Mobility in Chicago Public Schools. Research Consortium on Chicago School Research: University of Chicago Urban Education Institute.

Alston, J. (1999), "Climbing hills and mountains: black females making it to the Superintendency", in Brunner, C.C. (Ed.), Sacred Dreams: Women and the Superintendency, SUNY Press, Albany, NY.

Alston, J. A., & Jones, S. N. (2002). Carrying the torch of the Jeanes Supervisors: 21st-century African American female superintendents and servant leadership. In B. Cooper & L. Fusarelli (Eds.), The promises and perils facing today's school superintendent (pp. 65-75). Lanham, MD: Scarecrow

Anderson, J. D. (1988). The education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press

Anfara Jr, V. A., Brown, K. M., & Mangione, T. L. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. *Educational researcher*, *31*(7), 28-38.

Bell, D. (1983). Time for the teachers: Putting educators back into the Brown remedy. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *52*(3), 290-301.

Blake, J. J., Butler, B. R., Lewis, C. W., & Darensbourg, A. (2011). Unmasking the inequitable discipline experiences of urban Black girls: Implications for urban educational stakeholders. *The Urban Review*, *43*(1), 90-106.

Borman, G. D., & Dowling, N. M. (2008). Teacher attrition and retention: A meta-analytic and narrative review of the research. Review of Educational Research, 78(3), 367-409

Boser, U. (2014). Teacher Diversity Revisited: A New State-by-State Analysis. *Center for american progress*.

Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2005). Explaining the short careers of high achieving teachers in schools with low performing students. American Economic Review, 95(2),166-171.

Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J (2011). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. *American Educational Research Journal*, *48*(2), 303-333.

Bristol, T. (2014). Black men of the classroom: An exploration of how the organizational conditions, characteristics, and dynamics in schools affect Black male teachers' pathways into the profession.

Bristol, T. J., & Mentor, M. (2018). Policing and Teaching: The Positioning of Black Male Teachers as Agents in the Universal Carceral Apparatus. *The Urban Review*, 1-17.

Brown, K. D. (2014). Teaching in color: a critical race theory in education analysis of the literature on preservice teachers of color and teacher education in the US. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *17*(3), 326–345. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2013.832921.

Brown, K., & R. Wynn, S. (2009). Finding, supporting, and keeping: The role of the principal in teacher retention issues. *Leadership and Policy in schools*, *8*(1), 37-63.

Castaneda, C., Kambutu, J., & Rios, F. (2006). Speaking their truths: Teachers of color in diasporic contexts. *The Rural Educator*, *27*(3).

Carver-Thomas, D., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Why Black Women Teachers Leave and What Can Be Done About it. *Black female teachers: Diversifying the United States' teacher workforce*, 159-184.

Cherng, H. Y. S., & Halpin, P. F. (2016). The importance of minority teachers: Student perceptions of minority versus white teachers. Educational Researcher, 45(7), 407420

Childers-McKee, C. D., & Hytten, K. (2015). Critical Race Feminism and the Complex Challenges of Educational Reform. *The Urban Review*, *47*(3), 393–412. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-015-0323-z

Cochran-Smith, M., McQuillan, P., Mitchell, K., Terrell, D. G., Barnatt, J., D'Souza, L., ... & Gleeson, A. M. (2012). A longitudinal study of teaching practice and early career decisions: A cautionary tale. *American Educational Research Journal*, *49*(5), 844-880.

Creswell, J. W., (2007). Research design: choosing among five approaches.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, *39*(3), 124-130.W

Dee, T. S. (2004). Teachers, race, and student achievement in a randomized experiment. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *86*(1), 195-210.

Dee, T. S. (2005). A teacher like me: Does race, ethnicity, or gender matter?. *The American economic review*, *95*(2), 158-165.

Delpit, L. (1986). Skills and Other Dilemmas of a Progressive Black Educator. *Harvard Educational Review*, *56*(4).

Delpit, L., (1988). The Silenced Dialouge: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children. *Harvard Educational Review*, *58*(3), 280–298.

Digby, T. (1998). *Men doing feminism*. New York: Routledge.

Dillard, C. B. (1995). Leading with her life: An African American feminist (re) interpretation of leadership for an urban high school principal. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *31*(4), 539-563.

Dillard, C. B. (2000). The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: Examining an endarkened feminist epistemology in educational research and leadership. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *13*(6), 661–681. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390050211565

Dingus, J. E. (2006). Doing the best we could: African American teachers' counter-story on school desegregation. The Urban Review, 38(3), 211233

Dixson, A. D. (2003). "Let's Do This!": Black Women Teachers' Politics and Pedagogy. *Urban Education*, *38*(2), 217–235. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085902250482

Dixson, A. D., & Dingus, J. E. (2008). In search of our mother's gardens: Black women teachers and professional socialization. Teachers College Record, 110(4), 805-837.

Douglas, D. M. (2005). *Jim Crow moves north: The battle over northern school segregation, 1865-1954* (p. 26). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L., (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*.

Ethridge, S. (1979). Impact of the 1954 Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education decision on Black educators. The Negro Educational Review, 30(4), 217-232.

Evans, B. R., and Leonard, J., (2013). Recruiting and Retaining Black Teachers to Work in Urban Schools. *SAGE Open* 3, no. 3: 215824401350298. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013502989.

Evans-Winters, V. E. (2015). *Black feminism in education: Black women speak back, up, and out*. New York: Peter Lang.

Evans-Winters, V. E., & Love, B. L. (2015). *Black feminism in education: Black women speak back, up, and out*. New York: Peter Lang.

Evans-Winters, V. E., & Esposito, J. (2010). Other people's daughters: Critical race feminism and Black girls' education. *The Journal of Educational Foundations*, *24*(1/2), 11.

Fairchild, S., Tobias, R., Corcoran, S., Djukic, M., Kovner, C., & Noguera, P. (2012). White and black teachers' job satisfaction: Does relational demography matter?. *Urban Education*, *47*(1), 170-197.

Fairclough, A. (2004). The costs of Brown: Black teachers and school integration. The Journal of American History, 91(1), 4355.

Fairclough, A. (2009). A class of their own: Black teachers in the segregated South. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Farinde, A. A., Allen, A., & Lewis, C. W. (2016). Retaining Black Teachers: An Examination of Black Female Teachers' Intentions to Remain in K-12 Classrooms. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *49*(1), 115–127. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2015.1120367

Farinde-Wu, A., Allen-Handy, A., Butler, B. R., & Lewis, C. W. (2017). The Urban Factor: Examining Why Black Female Educators Teach in Under-Resourced, Urban Schools. In A. Farinde-Wu, A. Allen-Handy, & C. W. Lewis (Eds.), *Advances in Race and Ethnicity in Education* (Vol. 6, pp. 73–92). Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S2051-231720170000006005

Fitchett, P. G., Hopper, E. B., Eyal, M., McCarthy, C. J., & Lambert, R. G. (2017). Racial Congruence, Teacher Stress, and Professional Commitment among African-American Female Teachers. In A. Farinde-Wu, A. Allen-Handy, & C. W. Lewis (Eds.), *Advances in Race and Ethnicity in Education* (Vol. 6, pp. 135–158). Emerald Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S2051-231720170000006008

Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2000). The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. *Handbook of qualitative research*, *2*(6), 645-672.

Foster, M. (1990). The politics of race: Through the eyes of African-American teachers. *Journal of education*, *172*(3), 123-141.

Foster, M. (1991). Constancy, connectedness, and constraints in the lives of African-American teachers. *NWSA journal*, *3*(2), 233-261.

Foster, M. (1993). Othermothers: Exploring the educational philosophy of Black American women teachers. In M. Arnot & K. Weiler (Eds.), Feminism and social justice in education:International perspectives (pp. 101123). London: The Falmer Press.

Foster, M. (1997). Black teachers on teaching. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Fultz, M. (2004). The displacement of Black educators post-Brown: An overview and analysis. History of Education Quarterly, 44(1), 11-45.

Gardiner, M. E., & Enomoto, E. K. (2006). Urban school principals and their role as multicultural leaders. *Urban Education*, *41*(6), 560-584.

Gillborn, D. (2013). The policy of inequity: Using CRT to unmask white supremacy in education policy. *Handbook of critical race theory in education*, 129-139.

Gist, C. D., White, T., & Bianco, M. (2017). *Pushed* to Teach: Pedagogies and Policies for a Black Women Educator Pipeline. *Education and Urban Society*, 001312451772758. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124517727584

Gitomer, D. H., Latham, A. S., & Ziomek, R. (1999). The academic preparedness of prospective teachers. In *annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, Washington, DC*.

Gooden, M. A. (2005). The role of an African American principal in an urban information technology high school. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *41*(4), 630-650.

Graziano, K. J., & Litton, E. F. (2007). First year teachers and diversity: Teacher research through photography. *Issues in Teacher Education*, *16*(1), 7.

Green, T. L. (2015). Leading for urban school reform and community development. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *51*(5), 679-711.

Griffin, A., & Tackie, H. (2017). Through our eyes: Perspectives from black teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *98*(5), 36-40.

Grissom, J. A., and Keiser, L. R.,(2011). A Supervisor like Me: Race, Representation, and the Satisfaction and Turnover Decisions of Public Sector Employees: Race, Representation, and the Satisfaction and Turnover Decisions of Public Sector Employees. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 30, no. 3: 557–80. https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.20579 .

Grissom, J. A., Kern, E. C., & Rodriguez, L. A. (2015). The "representative bureaucracy" in education: Educator workforce diversity, policy outputs, and outcomes for disadvantaged students. *Educational Researcher*, *44*(3), 185-192.

Guy-Sheftall, B. (1995). *Words of fire: An anthology of African-American feminist thought*. The New Press.

Haberman, M. (2017b). Selecting and preparing urban teachers. In. V. Hill-Jackson & D. Stafford (Eds.), Better teachers, better schools: What star teachers know, believe, and do (pp. 177-200). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Press.

Handford, V., & Leithwood, K. (2013). Why teachers trust school leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *51*(2), 194–212. https://doi.org/10.1108/09578231311304706

Hanushek, E. A., Kain, J. F., & Rivkin, S. G. (2004). Why public schools lose teachers. Journal of Human Resources, 39(2), 326-354.

Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G. (2007). Pay, working conditions, and teacher quality. *The future of children*, 69-86.

Hill Collins, P. (1998). *Fighting words: Black women and the search for justice*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Hill-Jackson, V. (2017). …. And Then There Were None:☆ Reversing the Exodus of Black Women from the Teaching Profession. *Black Female Teachers: Diversifying the United States' Teacher Workforce*, 9-48.

hooks, bell. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.

hooks, bell. (2013). *Writing beyond race: living theory and practice* (1st ed). New York ; London: Routledge.

Horsford, S. D. (2011). *Learning in a burning house: educational inequality, ideology, and (dis)integration*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Horsford, S. D. (2012). This bridge called my leadership: an essay on Black women as bridge leaders in education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *25*(1), 11–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2011.647726

Horsford, S. D., & D'Amico, D. (2015). The past as more than prologue: a call for historical research. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *29*(7), 863–873. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-05-2015-0062

Horsford, S. D., & McKenzie, K. B. (2008). 'Sometimes I feel like the problems started with desegregation': exploring Black superintendent perspectives on desegregation policy. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *21*(5), 443-455.

Horsford, S. D., & Tillman, L. C. (2012). Inventing herself: Examining the intersectional identities and educational leadership of Black women in the USA. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *25*(1), 1-9.

Hudson, M. J., & Holmes, B. J. (1994). Missing teachers, impaired communities: The unanticipated consequences of Brown v. Board of Education on the African American teaching force at the precollegiate level. Journal of Negro Education, 63(3), 388-393.

Ingersoll, R. M. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. American Educational Research Journal, 38(3), 499-534

Ingersoll, R. M. (2003). Is There Really a Teacher Shortage? A Research Report. *Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy*.

Ingersoll, R. M., & Conner, R. (2009). What the national data tell us about minority and black teacher turnover. In *annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA*.

Ingersoll, R. M., & May, H. (2011). The minority teacher shortage: Fact or fable?. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *93*(1), 62-65.

Ingersoll, R., & May, H. (2016). Minority teacher recruitment, employment, and retention: 1987 to 2013. Stanford, CA: Learning Policy Institute, Stanford, CA

Ingersoll, R., & Merrill, L. (2010). Who's Teaching Our Children?. *Educational Leadership*, *67*(8), 14-20.

Ingersoll, R. M., & Smith, T. M. (2003). The wrong solution to the teacher shortage. Educational Leadership, 60(8), 30-33.

Ingersoll, R., Merrill, L., & May, H. (2016). Do accountability problems push teachers out? The Working Lives of Educators, 73(8), 4449.

Irvine, J. J. (1988). An analysis of the problem of disappearing Black educators. *The Elementary School Journal*, *88*(5), 503-513.

Irvine, J. J. (1989). Beyond Role Models: An Examination of Cultural Influences on the Pedagogical Perspectives of Black Teachers. *Peabody Journal of Education*, *66*(4), 51–63.

Jackson, T. O., Boutte, G. S., & Wilson, B. S. (2013). Double-talking: The complexities surrounding Black male teachers as both problems and solutions. In *Black Male Teachers* (pp. 117-131). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Johnson, S. M., & Birkeland, S. E. (2003). Pursuing a "sense of success": New teachers explain their career decisions. *American Educational Research Journal*, *40*(3), 581-617.

Jones, B. (2015). Keys to the Schoolhouse: Black Teachers, Privatization, and the Future of Teacher Unions. *What's Race Got To Do With It: How Current School Reform Policy Maintains Racial and Economic Inequality. New York: Peter Lang*.

Kearney, J. E. (2008) Factors Affecting Satisfaction and Retention of African American and European American Teachers in an Urban School District: Implications for Building and

Maintaining Teachers Employed in School Districts Across the Nation *Education and Urban Society* 40, no. 5: 613–27. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124508316047.

Kelly, H. (2007). Racial tokenism in the school workplace: An exploratory study of Black teachers in overwhelmingly white schools. Educational Studies, 41(3), 230254

Kena, G., Musu-Gillette, L., Robinson, J., Wang, X., Rathbun, A., Zhang, J., … Dunlop Velez, E. (2015). The Condition of Education 2015. (NCES 2015-144). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved from http://www.nces. ed.gov/pubsearch

Kirsch, G. (1999) *Ethical Dilemmas in Feminist Research: The Politics of Location, Interpretation, and Publication*. Albany: State University of New York Press. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=5661.

Khalifa, M. A., Gooden, M. A., & Davis, J. E. (2016). Culturally responsive school leadership: A synthesis of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, *86*(4), 1272-1311.

Kohli, R. "Behind School Doors: The Impact of Hostile Racial Climates on Urban Teachers of Color." *Urban Education*, March 11, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916636653.

Ladd, H. F. (2011). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions: How predictive of planned and actual teacher movement? Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 33(2), 235-261.

Lather, P. (2007). Getting lost: Feminist practices toward a double (d) science. *Albany: SUNY*.

LeCompte, M. D. (2000). Analyzing qualitative data. *Theory into practice*, *39*(3), 146-154.

Lewis, C. W., & Toldson, I. A. (Eds.). (2013). *Black Male Teachers*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Lipman, P. (2015). School closings: The nexus of white supremacy, state abandonment, and accumulation by dispossession. *What's race got to do with it*, 59-79.

Lipman, P. (2015). Urban education policy under Obama. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *37*(1), 57-61.

Liu, X. S. (2007). What is the best way to keep teachers? Academy of Educational Leadership Journal, 11(2), 113-120.

Lomotey, K. (1989). *African-American principals: School leadership and success* (No. 124). Greenwood Publishing Group.

Lyson, T. A., & Falk, W. W. (1984). Recruitment to school teaching: The relationship between high school plans and early adult attainments. *American Educational Research Journal*, *21*(1), 181-193.

Mabokela, R. O., & Madsen, J. A. (2003). Crossing boundaries: African American teachers in suburban schools. *Comparative Education Review*, *47*(1), 90-111.

Mabokela, R. O., & Madsen, J. A. (2005). 'Color-blind'and 'color-conscious' leadership: A case study of desegregated suburban schools in the USA. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, *8*(3), 187-206.

Madkins, T. C. (2011). The black teacher shortage: A literature review of historical and contemporary trends. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 417-427.

Madsen, J. A., & Mabokela, R. O. (2000). Organizational culture and its impact on African American teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, *37*(4), 849-876.

Maxwell, J. A. (1996). *Qualitative research design: an interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (2nd ed). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. Jossey-Bass Inc Pub.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation (Revised and expanded from qualitative research and case study application in education).

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. 1994. *Beverly Hills: Sage Publications*.

Milner, R., (2006). The promise of Black teachers' success with Black students. *Educational Foundations*, *20*(3/4), 89.

Milner, H. R., & Hoy, A. W. (2003). A case study of an African American Teacher's self-efficacy, stereotype threat, and persistence. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *19*(2), 263–276. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(02)00099-9

Moi, T. (1989). Men against patriarchy. *Gender and Theory: dialogues on feminist criticism*, 181-8.

Morris, J. E., (2001). Forgotten Voices of Black educators: Critical race perspectives on the implementation of desegregation plan. *Educational Policy*, *15*(4), 575–600.

Morris, J. E., (2009). *Troubling the waters: fulfilling the promise of quality public schooling for black children*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ogletree, C. J. (2004). All deliberate speed: Reflections on the first half century of Brown v. Board of Education. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.

Orfield, G., & Eaton, S. E. (1996). *Dismantling Desegregation. The Quiet Reversal of Brown v. Board of Education*. The New Press, 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10110.

Payne, C. M. (2008). *So much reform, so little change: the persistence of failure in urban schools*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Education Press.

Picower, B., & Mayorga, E. (2015). What's Race Got to Do with It?: How Current School Reform Policy Maintains Racial and Economic Inequality.

Pratt-Clarke, M. (2010). *Critical race, feminism, and education: A social justice model*. Springer.

Quicho, A., and F. Rios. 2000. The power of their presence: Minority group teachers and schooling. Review of Educational Research 70, no. 4: 485–528.

Ragin, C. C. (1992). Casing" and the process of social inquiry. *What is a case*, 217-226.

Ragin, C. C., & Becker, H. S. (1992). What is a case?: exploring the foundations of social inquiry. Cambridge university press.

Reed, L. C. (2012). The intersection of race and gender in school leadership for three Black female principals. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *25*(1), 39–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2011.647723

Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Los Angeles, Calif: Sage.

Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.

Savage, C. J. (2001). "Because We Did More With Less": The Agency of African American Teachers in Franklin, Tennessee: 1890-1967. *Peabody Journal of Education*, *76*(2), 170–203. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327930pje7602_8

Seidman, I. (2006). Analyzing, interpreting, and sharing interview material. *Interviewing as qualitative Research: a guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*, 112-132.

Shircliffe, B. J. (2012). *Desegregating Teachers: Contesting the Meaning of Equality of Educational Opportunity in the South Post*. Peter Lang New York. 29 Broadway 18th Floor, New York, NY 10006.

Sipe, L., & Constable, S. (1996). A chart of four contemporary research paradigms: Metaphors for the modes of inquiry. *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, *1*(Spring), 153-63.

Smith, T. M., & Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover?. *American educational research journal*, *41*(3), 681-714.

Su, Z. (1997). Teaching as a profession and as a career: Minority candidates' perspectives. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *13*(3), 325-340.

Taylor, E., Gillborn, D., & Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). Foundations of critical race theory in education.

Terrell, R. D., & Lindsey, R. B. (2008). *Culturally proficient leadership: The personal journey begins within*. Corwin Press.

Theoharis, G. (2007). Social justice educational leaders and resistance: Toward a theory of social justice leadership. *Educational administration quarterly*, *43*(2), 221-258.

Tillman, L. C. (2004). (Un)Intended consequences? The impact of the Brown v. Board of Education decision on the employment status of Black educators. Education and Urban Society, 36(3), 280-303.

Torres, A. C. (2014). "Are we architects or construction workers?" Re-examining teacher autonomy and turnover in charter schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives/Archivos Analíticos de Políticas Educativas*, *22*, 1-26.

U.S. Department of Education, Bureau of the Census. (1972). Statistical abstract of the United States: 1972. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/library/publications/1972/compendia/statab/93ed.html

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning Evaluation and Policy Development, (2016). The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce. Washington D.C.

Veeman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of 1981 Central States Seminar in Agricultural beginning teachers. Review of Educational Education. Chicago, IL. Research, 54(2), 143-178.

Villegas, A. M., & Irvine, J. J. (2010). Diversifying the teaching force: An examination of major arguments. The Urban Review, 42, 175-192

Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). Preparing culturally responsive teachers: Rethinking the curriculum. *Journal of teacher education*, *53*(1), 20-32.

Villegas, A. M., Strom, K., & Lucas, T. (2012). Closing the ethnic/racial gap between students of

color and their teachers: An elusive goal. Equity & Excellence in Education, 45(2), 283-301.

Walker, V. S. (1996). *Their highest potential: An African American school community in the segregated South*. Univ of North Carolina Press.

Walker, V. S. (2000). Valued segregated schools for African American children in the South, 1935-1969: A review of common themes and characteristics. *Review of Educational Research*, *70*(3), 253-285.

Walker, V. S. (2013). Ninth Annual Brown Lecture in Education Research: Black Educators as Educational Advocates in the Decades Before Brown v. Board of Education. *Educational Researcher*, *42*(4), 207–222. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X13490140

Waters, M. M. (1989). An Agenda for Educating Black Teachers. *The Educational Forum*, *53*(3), 267–279. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131728909335609

White, T. (2016). Teach for America's Paradoxical Diversity Initiative: Race, Policy, and Black Teacher Displacement in Urban Public Schools. *education policy analysis archives*, *24*(16), n16

Williams, E., & Johnson, M. (2011). Politics and principals: Beginning black teachers' perceptions of relationships with administrators in 21st-century schools. Improving Schools, 14(2), 187-199

Witherspoon, N., & Taylor, D. L. (2010). Spiritual weapons: Black female principals and religio-spirituality. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, *42*(2), 133-158.

Wing, A. K. (Ed.). (1997). *Critical race feminism: A reader*. NYU Press.

Wing, A. K. (Ed.). (2003). *Critical race feminism: a reader* (2nd ed. / foreword to second edition by Richard Delgado ; foreword to first edition by Derrick Bell). New York: New York University Press.

Yin, R. K. (1994). Case study research: design and methods. 1994. *Thousand Oaks, CA*.